

QC fights fraud, red tape at city hall

By **CHITO CHAVEZ**

The Quezon City government has come up with new and more effective measures to fight the twin evils of fraud and red tape in government transaction.

City Building official Isagani Versosa said his office is now using receipt verifier gadgets to determine whether documents presented to them are genuine or fake. The fake receipts are the ones issued by illegal fixers who, he said, continue to roam the city hall victimizing unsuspecting clients.

At the same time, Versosa said his office is now undertaking the Regulatory Simplification Project (RSP) method to minimize the incidence of irregularities and red tape. Under this new setup, the public will now have to interact with only two offices down from the 28 offices they

had to deal with in the past in completing their transactions.

"Unlike before when an applicant has to secure vital documents to several offices, one is now required to be at one business center provided that he has complied with all the requirements necessary," Versosa said.

To further reduce red tape, Versosa said his office has started implementing a "one-stop shop" policy in securing building and other related permits for mall owners. Under the new policy, the number of required documents has been substantially reduced.

Moreover, the QC Building official said the transacting public can download the required application forms, follow up and inquire on the requirements and other information on securing business and building permits through the Internet. The public is advised to visit the Quezon

City government website (www.quezon-city.gov.ph).

With the new measures, Versosa said the long queues of clients and circuitous routes of documents – the conditions that allow fixers to thrive – are minimized.

In the past, tenants in shopping malls independently secure their permits from the Building Office Department (BOD) where 22 to 25 documents are required.

Meanwhile, Councilor Victor Ferrer Jr. has renewed his warning to the public against transacting with fixers, saying that these unscrupulous people provide them with no real benefits since they overcharge and issue fake documents.

Ferrer said he will meet with his fellow councilors this week to map out plans on how to drive fixers and other unscrupulous individuals out of the city hall premises.

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In a bid to put an end to red tape in the bureaucracy, particularly in Quezon City Hall, Mayor Herbert "Bistek" has ordered the expansion of an executive order he earlier had issued in connection with the processing of building permits, most particularly for warehouses.

He cited Executive Order 17-B which effectively stretched out the coverage of the previously released order that cut down procedural steps

in the issuance of building permits mostly to mall tenants operating in the city.

Under the new executive order, other transactions such as clearances and business dealings that pertain to the construction and operation of warehouses to ensure compliance with building standards, will be included.

Aside from eliminating corruption on availing of building permits, *The Tribune* was told that the mayor's

directive was also intended to make easier the procedures to give the service-seeking public the comfort of having a short waiting time as they seek services at the city hall.

The implementation of this building permit one-stop-shop system is in line with the city government's commitment to improve its ranking in terms of ease of doing business, the city chief executive said.

Adding to the recently listed

establishments that will benefit from the new executive order are warehouses not more than two-story high bearing a total floor area not bigger than 2,000 square meters.

The department of building official, the city planning and development office and the Bureau of Fire Protection-QC have been directed to strictly enforce the guidelines set by the expanded executive order. **Artie O. Calalo**

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Councilor calls on QC officials to cut red tape

Councilor Restituto B. Malangen urged Quezon City officials, notably department and office heads, yesterday to exert effort to cut red tape in their workplace.

"Unless stopped, red tape would result in inefficiency and corruption in the public service," Malangen, minority leader in the city council said in an interview.

He claimed that those who're seeking the fast processing of their papers and documents have resorted to bribery at city hall.

The councilor from the fourth district alleged that "a poor individual needs to shell out money to elicit attention from a capricious city employee."

Malangen, however, took note of the efforts of Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. to rid the city hall of red tape - in line with the campaign waged by President Arroyo - since his election to the top city post.

Malangen at the same time urged city employees to report for work early and for city officials to attend to the signing and processing of papers and documents immediately. (Sel A. Baysa)

anti-red tape campaign