

## QC bans discrimination vs COVID frontliners, patients

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Quezon City Mayor Joy Belmonte has prohibited acts of discrimination against frontliners and patients suspected or confirmed to have contracted the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Belmonte signed an executive order penalizing those who will discriminate against persons infected with COVID-19 and members of their households.

The order also covers health and emergency workers as well as their families.

“Discrimination has no place in the city, especially during this time of crisis. We must stop discrimination once and for all,” Belmonte said.

She issued the directive in line with the call of the Department of the Interior and Local Government for local officials to pass measures that would protect frontliners and COVID-19 patients.

Health workers and COVID-19 patients were reported to have been evicted from their homes, harassed, maltreated or injured due to possible exposure to the virus.

Some were also refused services by stores, transportation, boarding houses and other establishments over fears of COVID-19 infection.

Belmonte specifically prohibited discriminatory acts such as denial of access to any place or service, including housing, food and transportation.

She also barred the unauthorized disclosure of the identity or personal information of unconfirmed COVID-19 patients.

Public officials were also instructed not to refuse assistance to any person under monitoring or investigation for the disease.

Violators face charges for violating provisions of Republic Act 11332 or the law on mandatory reporting of notifiable diseases and health events of public health concern, Data Privacy Act and Cybercrime Prevention Act.