

## QC eases curfew hours for 'Simbang Gabi'

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The **Quezon City government** has eased curfew hours from 12 midnight to 3 a.m. in time for the start of "Simbang Gabi" on Dec. 16.

The new guideline is in accordance with the latest pronouncements of the Inter Agency Task Force and the Metro Manila Council (MMC).

"Bahagi na ng pagdiriwang ng kapaskuhan ng ating kultura ang Simbang Gabi kaya kahit may pandemya, nais nating panatilihin buhay ang diwa nito," **Mayor Joy Belmonte** said. However, Belmonte reminded that churches should not exceed 30 percent of the venue's capacity and basic health protocols must be followed, such as social distancing and wearing of face masks and face shields.

"Hindi natin dapat kalimutan na mayroon pa ring pandemya at kailangan tayong mag-in-gat upang maiwasan ang pagkalat ng virus," she stressed.

Traditional caroling is also banned in the city and families are encouraged to limit holiday celebrations to their immediate household.

"We also strongly discourage commingling of multiple households in activities such as large family reunions," said Belmonte, adding that nonessential gatherings of more than 10 persons remain strictly prohibited.

Only persons between age 15 to 65 are allowed to leave their home, provided they have company ID, school ID, or any government issued-ID. Those younger or older than the permitted ages are allowed to leave their homes only to buy essential needs.

Public gatherings shall be allowed subject to health protocols.

For trade shows and bazaars, organizers are required to obtain a special permit from **the Business Permits and Licensing Department (BPLD)**.

Organizers of work-related or commercial gatherings must keep a log of all attendees for contact tracing purposes and should be ready to submit the log to the barangay health officer or the City Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit (CESU) any time upon request.

The city government also encourages the use of a digital contact tracing method, such as Safe Pass for easy contact tracing.