

## 12 QC barangay workers fired for holding Christmas party

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Tempo · 26 Dec 2020 · 3 · (Jel Santos)

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Twelve staff members of Barangay Batasan Hills, Quezon City, were fired for conducting a Christmas party despite the current health restrictions being imposed to stop the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), the local government unity (LGU) of Quezon City said on Thursday night.

Mayor Joy Belmonte said she was informed by Chairman Jojo Abad that he removed 12 barangay staff due to quarantine violations.

In a letter dated Dec. 23, he identified them as Leticia Samar, Michelle Saragcon, Ma. Elena Olesco, Nora Elizaga, Meann Ubang, Rowena Almonicar, Jocelyn Leonero, Ritchie Ancero, Manilyn Mejia, Gemma Relata, Marizen Misolas, and Alejandro Cabello.

“This termination of appointment is issued against the above-mentioned names from the Office of the Chairman due to disrespect of office protocols and insubordination,” the barangay chairman wrote.

With this, Abad told his former staff to turn over all barangay properties in their possession for proper inventory, such as uniform, frontliner ID, and barangay radio.

For her part, Belmonte lauded Abad for his quick action on the matter, which came to fore after some netizens called them out for failure to observe social distancing, based on the pictures posted by Misolas on social media.

May this incident, Belmonte said, become a lesson for all public employees in the city.

“May we always follow the protocols and become good examples to the public.”

Misolas, in a social media post, admitted she was the one who invited a team of barangay employees and volunteers for some dinner and drinks.

But Misolas insisted that they followed the necessary health protocols, especially the 30-percent venue capacity as indicated in the localized guidelines issued by the city government.

The LGU noted, however, that the city’s guidelines were pertaining to essential work-related gatherings such as conferences, trainings and workshops.