

## QC TOLD: GIVE BIKERS TIME TO FOLLOW HELMET RULE

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COMMUTER group The Passenger Forum (TPF) is asking the local government of Quezon City to consider the situation of bicycle riders as it implements an ordinance that requires bike commuters to wear helmets.

Primo Morillo, the group's convenor, said the local government should provide leeway for bike riders and properly inform them of Quezon City Ordinance No. 2942, requiring the use of helmets for all bicycle riders and penalizing violators.

Bikers caught by law enforcement authorities are fined P1,000 for the first offense, P3,000 for the second offense, and P5,000 for the third offense.

"We ask Mayor Joy Belmonte and the QC Council to consider the first phase of the implementation of Ordinance 2942 as an information drive. Instead of immediately imposing fines against our poor bikers, it is better to educate them by giving them a primer on the said ordinance," Morillo said.

He said the group has received reports that enforcers have already apprehended a number of bikers.

"We understand that this may be a well-meaning ordinance for the safety of bikers. However, it is already public knowledge that the capacity of our public transportation is very limited and the use of bikes is one of the adaptive mechanisms of the public. We ask for consideration especially now when no one can afford not to go to work in these trying times brought about by Covid-19. In fact, due to the situation of mass transportation in Metro Manila, bike commuting is helpful in ensuring physical distancing," Morillo said.

Aside from this, TPF has also received reports that some enforcers apprehend bike commuters for wearing slippers.

"We have checked Ordinance 2942 and nothing is mentioned about slippers. It seems that even the enforcers of this law need to be educated about it. Unless they consider it as an opportunity to harass and extort bicycle riders," Morillo said.

He said the group hopes to sit with government officials for an open dialogue.

"We think the biking community is also interested in having a dialogue about this ordinance," Morillo said.