

Belmonte warns vaccine registration app developer

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The Quezon City government yesterday warned the company that developed its online vaccine registration system to fix the technical glitches that prevented residents from signing up for COVID-19 vaccination or face charges.

Mayor Joy Belmonte said they are considering terminating the contract with Zuellig Pharma Corp. over the technical difficulties encountered by eZConsult system, which handles the city's online vaccine registration.

"We have issued an ultimatum to Zuellig to upgrade the system and provide all the deliverables this Friday as agreed in a meeting last week. If not, we have no other choice but to get another company that can do the job quickly and efficiently," Belmonte said.

"The sacrifices of our medical frontliners and the time and sanity of our residents are being compromised by this inefficient system. They committed a seamless service but they failed repeatedly," she added.

The eZConsult website and mobile application have repeatedly encountered technical glitches since the start of the vaccine rollout in March.

Last week, thousands of residents were not able to access the platform for hours when the local government opened COVID-19 vaccination slots for economic frontliners or those belonging to the A4 category.

City hall said eZConsult issued public apologies for the delays and technical errors encountered by the system attributed to heavy traffic on its platform.

While the website is already accessible, Zuellig said in an advisory that users may still experience intermittent slowness as the company continues to work on system improvements.

The city government said it is also considering filing a damage suit against the company if it fails to quickly meet its obligations.

"If the improvements under the contract are not met, we will terminate the deal and file charges against the company," Belmonte said. "Quezon City residents deserve nothing but the best service. We have improved our system in vaccination centers where people no longer have to line up and go through the entire inoculation process within a maximum of 45 minutes."

City legal officer Orlando Casimiro wrote to Zuellig, through its general manager Danilo Cahoy, demanding liquidated damages in connection with the technical failures of eZConsult.