Republic of the Philippines
QUEZON CITY COUNCIL
Quezon City
23rd City Council

PO23CC-033

27th Regular Session

ORDINANCE NO. SP-3460, S-2025

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING THE "QUEZON CITY SAFE SEAL" RECOGNITION PROGRAM TO PROMOTE SAFETY AND PROTECTION AGAINST EXPLOITATION, INCLUDING HUMAN TRAFFICKING, IN BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS IN QUEZON CITY

Introduced by Councilors ALY MEDALLA, JOSEPH JOE VISAYA, JOSEPH P. JUICO, and DOROTHY A. DELARMENTE, M.D.

Co-Introduced by Councilors Tany Joe "TJ" L. Calalay, Bernard R. Herrera, Charm Ferrer, CPA, MPA, JD, Nicole "Nikki" V. Crisologo, Candy A. Medina, Atty. Voltaire Godofredo "Bong" Liban III, Dave C. Valmocina, Geleen "Dok G" Lumbad, Atty. Christoffer Allan "Tope" Liquigan, Albert Alvin "Chuckie" L. Antonio III, Wencerom Benedict C. Lagumbay, Luigi D. Pumaren, Edgar "Egay" G. Yap, Nanette Castelo Daza, Imee Rillo, Atty. Jesus Miguel Suntay, Raquel S. Malañgen, Alfred Vargas, MPA, Karl Edgar Castelo, Shaira "Shay" L. Liban, Ram V. Medalla, Maria Eleanor "Doc Ellie" R. Juan, O.D., Emmanuel Banjo A. Pilar, Kristine Alexia Matias, RN, Victor "Vic" D. Bernardo, Vito Sotto Generoso, Erwin Rey "Cocoy" A. Medina and Jose Maria "Mari" M. Rodriguez

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WHEREAS, Section 16 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, empowers local government units to exercise powers for the promotion of the general welfare of its constituents;

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 11862, otherwise known as the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2022, recognizes the equal and inalienable rights and inherent human dignity of all members of the family as enshrined in all human rights instruments and international conventions to which the Philippines is a party;

WHEREAS, Section 9 of the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2022 further emphasizes the duties and responsibilities of all tourism enterprises in reporting suspicious trafficking cases within their establishments and requiring the development of their own anti-trafficking tourism policies;

WHEREAS, Section 9 of Republic Act No. 11930, otherwise known as the Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM) Act, states the duties and responsibilities of private sectors like internet service providers, all internet hotspots, cafés or kiosks to act and report to proper authorities any suspicious online sexual exploitation of children;

WHEREAS, Quezon City Ordinance No. SP-2999, S-2020, otherwise known as the Quezon City Anti Trafficking in Persons Ordinance of 2020, declares that Quezon City values the dignity of every person and guarantees full respect for individual rights through institutional mechanisms for the protection and support of trafficked persons;

WHEREAS, Section 6 of Quezon City Ordinance No. SP-3241, S-2023, otherwise known as the Anti-OSAEC Ordinance, reiterates the responsibility of mall owners or operators and owners or lessors of business establishments to report cases of sexual abuse or exploitation;

WHEREAS, Quezon City Ordinance No. SP-3413, S-2024, otherwise known as the Quezon City Tourism Child Protection Policy, institutionalizes policies and programs to prevent and protect children from all forms of abuse and exploitation in the tourism industry;

WHEREAS, Section 17 of Quezon City Ordinance No. SP-2999, S-2020 provides that awards and recognition may be given to persons, organizations, or establishments that champion or support activities contributing to the prevention or suppression of trafficking in persons;

WHEREAS, despite these existing laws and ordinances, there remain alarming reports of abuse and exploitation including trafficking in Quezon City;

WHEREAS, there is a need to establish and institutionalize the Quezon City SAFE (Stops All Forms of Exploitation) Seal program which shall serve as the recognition program of the City Government to all business establishments within Quezon City that promote and implement safety and protection programs in combating all forms of exploitation including human trafficking.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF QUEZON CITY IN REGULAR SESSION ASSEMBLED:

SECTION 1. TITLE. – This Ordinance shall be known as the "SAFE Seal Ordinance of Quezon City."

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY. – It is hereby declared the policy of the Quezon City Government to actively promote the safety, security, and well-being of its constituents. It recognizes that a safe and ethical business environment is crucial for sustainable economic development, investment attraction, and job creation. In this regard, the City Government shall encourage and incentivize business establishments to implement robust measures against all forms of exploitation, including human trafficking, and to uphold the highest standards of safety and ethical conduct.

SECTION 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE QUEZON CITY SAFE SEAL PROGRAM. – The Quezon City Stop All Forms of Exploitation Seal (QC SAFE Seal) Recognition Program is hereby created and shall be implemented across all business establishments in Quezon City with potential exposure to trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation, forced labor, and other forms of abuse, as determined by the Quezon City SAFE Seal Committee herein created.

SECTION 4. PURPOSE. – The QC SAFE Seal Recognition Program aims to encourage voluntary participation and reward business establishments including tourism enterprises that demonstrate proactive response to protect children and women and other vulnerable individuals from all forms of abuse and exploitation.

SECTION 5. DEFINITION OF TERMS. – The following terms, as used in this Ordinance, shall refer to:

a. *Forced Labor – extraction of work or services from any person by means of enticement, violence, intimidation or threat, use of force or coercion, including deprivation of freedom, abuse of authority or moral ascendancy, debt bondage or deception, including any work or service extracted from any person under the menace of penalty;*

b. *Sexual exploitation – participation by a person in prostitution or the production of pornographic materials as a result of being subjected to a threat, deception, coercion, abduction, force, abuse of authority, debt bondage, fraud or through abuse of a victim's vulnerability;*

c. *QC SAFE Seal – the official recognition granted by the Quezon City Government to business establishments that meet the prescribed standards for safety, security, and ethical practices under this Ordinance;*

d. *Business Establishment – any commercial, industrial, or service-oriented entity, including, but not limited to, hotels, restaurants, bars, retail stores, manufacturing plants, and service providers, operating within Quezon City;*

e. *Tourism enterprises – facilities, services, and attractions involved in tourism, such as, but not limited to: travel and tour services; tourist transport services, whether for land, sea, or air transportation; tour guides; adventure sports services involving such sports as mountaineering, spelunking, and other sports activities of significant tourism potential; convention organizers; accommodation establishments, including, but not limited to, hotels, resorts, apartelles, tourist inns, motels, pension houses, and homestay operators; tourism estate management services, and spas;*

f. *Quezon City (QC) SAFE Seal Committee – the primary oversight and policy-making body for the implementation of this Ordinance; and*

g. *Trafficking in Persons – recruitment, obtaining, hiring, providing, offering, transporting, transferring, maintaining, harboring, or receipt of persons with or without the victim's consent or knowledge, within or across national borders by means of threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person, the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation which includes at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude, or the removal or sale of organs.*

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, adoption, or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation or when the adoption is induced by any form of consideration for the purpose of exploitation shall also be considered as Trafficking in Persons, even if it does not involve any of the means set forth in the preceding paragraph, pursuant to Republic Act No. 10364, otherwise known as the Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012.

The use, procuring, or offering of a child for the production and trafficking of drugs shall also be considered as Trafficking in Persons.

The use, procuring, or offering of a child for illegal activities or work, which by nature or the circumstances it is carried out, is likely to harm their health, safety, and morals shall also be considered as Trafficking in Persons.

SECTION 6. SCOPE. – This Ordinance shall apply to entertainment and accommodation establishments, tourism enterprises, and other businesses with potential risks for human trafficking and exploitation such as, but not limited to, hotels, resorts, apartelles, tourist inns, motels, pension houses, homestay operators, condominiums, spas, bars, karaoke establishments, massage parlors, internet cafés, and similar establishments registered in Quezon City as may be determined by the QC SAFE Seal Committee.

SECTION 7. QUEZON CITY SAFE SEAL COMMITTEE. – The QC SAFE Seal Committee, herein also referred to as the "Committee," is hereby created and shall serve as the primary body responsible for the effective execution, monitoring, and evaluation of this QC SAFE Seal Recognition Program. The Committee shall be composed of the heads of the following offices:

a. Chairperson: City Mayor or a designated representative;
b. Co-Chairperson: Business Permits and Licensing Department (BPLD);
c. Vice Chairperson: Quezon City Tourism Department (QCTD);
d. Secretariat: Social Services Development Department (SSDD);
e. Members:
(1) Gender and Development Council Office (GADCO);
(2) Quezon City Health Department (QCHD);
(3) Quezon City Police District (QCPD);
(4) Public Employment Service Office (PESO);
(5) Public Affairs and Information Services Department (PAISD);
(6) Market Development and Administration Department (MDAD);
(7) Local Economic Development and Investment Promotions Office (LEDIPO);
(8) Small Business and Cooperatives Development and Promotions Office (SBCDPO);
(9) City Treasurer's Office (CTO);
(10) Barangay and Community Relations Department (BCRD);
(11) City Legal Department;
(12) City Council Representative; and
(13) One (1) Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Representative.

SECTION 8. FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE. – The Committee shall have the following functions:

a. *Formulate, review, and update the implementing guidelines for the QC SAFE Seal Recognition Program, ensuring gender sensitivity and inclusivity;*

b. *Approve the design of the QC SAFE Seal;*

c. *Approve applications of business establishments for the QC SAFE Seal based on set criteria and guidelines;*

d. *Organize inspection teams for on-site verification of compliance and validate information provided by establishments or individuals;*

e. *Develop templates of the Safe Space Commitment Statement and Child Protection Policy;*

f. *Develop a comprehensive training module as references for capacity-building activities on child protection, sexual and reproductive health, gender and development, gender sensitivity, all forms of exploitation, and other relevant topics;*

g. *Recommend issuance, suspension, or revocation of the QC SAFE Seal, subject to due process;*

h. *Facilitate coordination among relevant agencies and other stakeholders for the seamless implementation of the QC SAFE Seal Recognition Program;*

i. *Maintain a centralized database of establishments with approved, expired, or revoked QC SAFE Seals;*

j. *Coordinate with relevant local and national agencies for the promotion of safety and protection against exploitation;*

k. *Monitor and report non-compliance or violations, and recommend appropriate actions; and*

l. *Prepare and submit periodic reports to the City Mayor on program achievements, challenges, and recommendations.*

SECTION 9. COMMITTEE MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES. – Each member of the Committee shall have the following responsibilities:

a. *BPLD – Receive and coordinate with MDAD, PESO, and SBCDPO on screening and evaluating applications of business establishments for the QC SAFE Seal based on set criteria and guidelines;*

b. *QCTD – Promote establishments with the QC SAFE Seal;*

c. *SSDD – Serve as the Secretariat of the Committee; facilitate the regular and special meetings of the Committee once a month or as may be necessary in the performance of its mandate under this Ordinance; receive communications, concerns and complaints and coordinate with the Committee members or pertinent local agencies to address the same; coordinate with agencies in the performance of the Committee's functions; consolidate and submit regular reports to the Committee in relation to its functions; provide training on child protection;*

d. *GADCO – Provide gender and development capacity-building and training services, including orientation of QC SAFE Seal applicants, and continuous training to recognized QC SAFE Seal establishments;*

e. *QCHD – Provide sexual and health capacity-building and training services, including orientation of QC SAFE Seal applicants, and continuous training to recognized QC SAFE Seal establishments;*

f. *QCPD – Provide capacity-building and training services on exploitation including human trafficking and awareness of the proper reporting channels, including orientation of QC SAFE Seal applicants, and continuous training to recognized QC SAFE Seal establishments;*

g. *PESO – Screen and evaluate applications of Quezon City employers for the QC SAFE Seal based on set criteria and guidelines;*

h. *PAISD – Initiate and promote call for applications for the QC SAFE Seal; implement information and education campaigns for the protection of women and children in accommodation establishments, tourism enterprises, and related businesses, as indicated in Section 10 of this Ordinance;*

i. MDAD – Screen and evaluate applications of Quezon City markets for the QC SAFE Seal based on set criteria and guidelines;

j. LEDIPO – In coordination with relevant agencies, support the conduct of annual business summits aimed at promoting the QC SAFE Seal Recognition Program, during which recognitions and awards may be conferred;

k. SBCDPO – Screen and evaluate applications of Quezon City small businesses and micro-enterprises for the QC SAFE Seal based on set criteria and guidelines;

l. CTO – Coordinate with the SBCDPO, BPLD, and LEDIPO in the implementation of mechanisms for the provision of fiscal and/or non-fiscal incentives in recognition of QC SAFE Seal-certified establishments;

m. BCRD – Facilitate coordination among relevant agencies and stakeholders, particularly at the barangay level, to strengthen the implementation, coordination, and monitoring of the QC SAFE Seal Recognition Program;

n. City Legal Department – Advice and provide technical support on legal matters;

o. City Council Representative – Advice and monitor the implementation of this Ordinance; and

p. NGO Representative – Provide technical and materials support services to the Committee.

SECTION 10. COORDINATION WITH LOCAL BODIES FOR SAFETY AND PROTECTION AGAINST EXPLOITATION. – The Committee shall coordinate and harmonize actions with relevant local bodies in planning, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating the program. These include the Quezon City Council on Anti-Trafficking created through Quezon City Ordinance No. SP-2999, S-2020, otherwise known as the Quezon City Anti Trafficking in Persons Ordinance of 2020, and the Technical Working Group (TWG) for Child Protection in Tourism under Quezon City Ordinance No. SP-3413, S-2024, otherwise known as the Quezon City Tourism Child Protection Policy.

SECTION 11. QC SAFE SEAL CATEGORIES AND CRITERIA. – The QC SAFE Seal shall be granted under three (3) categories with the following criteria:

A. *Basic QC SAFE Seal (Standard Compliance) – This focuses on basic protection and entry-level inclusion. Establishments must meet the following criteria:*

(1) ***Declaration of commitment*** *– The establishment must have a signed Safe Space Commitment Statement and Child Protection Policy, as applicable, indicating zero tolerance of all forms of abuse and exploitation. This shall be publicly posted in the reception or lobby, and online platforms of the establishment;*

(2) ***Training and response protocols*** *– All frontline staff of the establishment, such as receptionists, security or housekeeping shall have attended basic training and orientation on gender and development, gender sensitivity, all forms of exploitation, including human trafficking, and awareness of the proper reporting channels for at least one (1) training or orientation per year. Establishments with existing training programs, recognized by the Committee, shall also be considered;*

(3) ***Guest ID verification practice*** *– The establishment requires the presentation of a valid ID of all adult guests and shall verify the identity and relationship of any accompanying minor/s, as applicable;*

(4) ***Visible posting*** *– The establishment shall prominently display inclusive information, education, and communication (IEC) materials on the protection of children, women, and other vulnerable groups, along with details of the appropriate reporting hotlines;*

(5) ***Safeguarding officer*** *– The establishment shall appoint one (1) staff, such as manager or human resource personnel as the focal person responsible for coordinating response and compliance;*

(6) ***Reporting mechanism*** *– Establishments shall maintain standardized documents or protocols as a guide in case of incidents, ensuring a uniform response, and internal or anonymous reporting channels;*

(7) ***Basic facility compliance*** *– The presence of adequate lighting, signage, and safety exits;*

(8) For tourism enterprises, compliance to Section 5 of the Quezon City Tourism Child Protection Policy on the duties and responsibilities of tourism enterprises; and

(9) Presence of valid business permit.

B. Gold QC SAFE Seal – This focuses on institutional inclusion and community engagement. Establishments must meet the following criteria:

(1) Full Basic QC SAFE Seal compliance;

(2) Conduct of Annual Gender and Inclusion Audit;

(3) Inclusive hiring (People with Disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual+, solo parents, women leaders);

(4) Attained at least seventy five percent (75%) score in all pillars of the Resilient, Inclusive, Climate-conscious, Healthy, Emergency-ready, and Responsive (BE RICHER) Scorecard administered by the BPLD;

(5) Presence of advanced safety features (e.g. closed-circuit television, panic buttons or gender-neutral restrooms);

(6) Conduct of staff background checks;

(7) Conduct of annual refresher orientation to frontline personnel on safeguarding policy; and

(8) Conduct of annual community engagement through at least one (1) outreach or advocacy activity for the benefits of victims of abuse, exploitation, or for abandoned children, in coordination with the Quezon City Government.

C. Platinum QC SAFE Seal – This category is awarded to establishments that have maintained the Gold QC SAFE Seal for at least three (3) consecutive years and demonstrate sustained commitment in safeguarding practices. Criteria include:

(1) Sustained Gold QC SAFE Seal compliance with no violations for three (3) years;

(2) Attained at least eighty percent (80%) score in all pillars of the BE RICHER Scorecard administered by the BPLD; and

(3) Publication of an annual transparency or compliance report in support of this Ordinance.

Provided that, the Committee can include any other criteria deemed necessary to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of this Ordinance.

SECTION 12. PROCESS FOR GRANTING THE QC SAFE SEAL. – The Committee shall devise the process of granting the QC SAFE Seal to eligible applicants upon compliance with these guidelines. The Seal shall be valid for one (1) year and renewable subject to reassessment. It shall be awarded annually during relevant summits and events of the Quezon City Government, upon approval of the Committee.

SECTION 13. QC SAFE SEAL INCENTIVES. – Establishments granted the QC SAFE Seal shall enjoy the following benefits based on their categories:

A. Basic QC SAFE Seal (Standard Compliance)

(1) Priority in processing of renewal of business permit through the "Green Lane" system;
(2) Automatic inclusion in City-led marketing, tourism, and promotion programs; and
(3) Authorization to use the title "QC SAFE Seal Partner" in official business promotions.

B. Gold QC SAFE Seal

(1) All benefits available to establishments granted to the Basic QC SAFE Seal;
(2) Preferential consideration as venue for City government-sponsored trainings, seminars, conventions, and events; and
(3) Eligibility for local government awards and recognition.

C. Platinum QC SAFE Seal

(1) All benefits of the Gold QC SAFE Seal;
(2) Fifty percent (50%) of the three percent (3%) discount on local business taxes;
(3) City Council recommendation recognizing sustained exemplary performance; and

(4) Life validity, subject to review every three (3) years.

SECTION 14. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE. – Recognized business establishments shall be subject to periodic monitoring and compliance checks by the inspection team organized by the Committee, to ensure sustained adherence to the QC SAFE Seal standards.

SECTION 15. REVOCATION. – The Committee shall revoke the seal of any recognized establishment found to be violating the criteria set herein and proven to be engaged in or complicit with trafficking, exploitation, or abuse, subject to due process of law. Any violation of pertinent laws and ordinances such as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012, Anti-Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) and Anti-Child Sexual Abuse or Exploitation Materials (CSAEM) Act, Quezon City Anti Trafficking in Persons Ordinance of 2020, Anti-OSAEC Ordinance, and the Quezon City Tourism Child Protection Policy shall result in the revocation of the QC SAFE Seal.

Once an establishment's QC SAFE Seal is revoked, the same shall also affect its business permit and other related clearances or authorizations issued by the City, subject to due process of law. Any fiscal incentives provided in the same year shall be withdrawn and the establishment shall return any unused or remaining portion of such incentives.

SECTION 16. DISSEMINATION. – The QCTD, BPLD, and PAISD shall lead the implementation of information and education campaigns for the protection of women and children in accommodation establishments, tourism enterprises, and related businesses, in coordination with relevant departments or offices. It shall also promote establishments awarded with the QC SAFE Seal.

SECTION 17. IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS. – The Committee shall formulate the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) necessary for the effective implementation of this Ordinance, within sixty (60) days after its approval.

SECTION 18. FUNDING. – The funding for the initial implementation of this Program shall be sourced from the Office of the City Mayor or from any available funds of the City, in accordance with proper accounting and auditing procedures, other existing laws, rules and regulations. Thereafter, appropriations for the implementation of this Ordinance shall be incorporated in the annual budget of the respective QC SAFE Seal implementing agencies.

SECTION 19. REPEALING CLAUSE. – All executive orders, circulars, memoranda and other issuances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SECTION 20. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. – The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby declared separable and in the event that any such provisions are declared unconstitutional, the other provisions which are not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 21. EFFECTIVITY CLAUSE. – This Ordinance shall take effect immediately after its approval.

ENACTED: November 26, 2025.

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this Ordinance was ENACTED by the City Council on Second Reading on November 26, 2025 and was PASSED on Third/Final Reading on December 3, 2025.

GIAN G. SOTTO
City Vice Mayor
Presiding Officer

APPROVED: DEC 23 2025

MA. JOSEFINA G. BELMONTE
City Mayor

ATTESTED:

ATTY. JOHN THOMAS S. ALFEROS, III
City Government Department Head III
(Secretary to the Sanggunian)