PRESS RELEASE

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46 BI workers infected with COVID-19

MANILA, Philippines - The Bureau of Immigration (BI) disclosed that 46 of its employees have tested positive for COVID-19.

BI Commissioner Jaime Morente said that of the 46 employees infected by the virus, nine have already recovered while the 37 are still housed in government-accredited quarantine facilities.

"The good news is that, so far, none of our employees have succumbed to the virus," Morente said. "We are doing our best in seeing to it that health protocols aimed at preventing the spread of the virus are strictly observed in our offices and workplaces."

He added that only one of the BI employees with confirmed COVID-19 infection is presently confined and recovering in a hospital.

Morente said that half of those who contracted the virus are currently assigned at the BI main office in Intramuros, Manila. The rest are stationed in other places such as the international airports in Pasay and Cebu, and the bureau's satellite and extension offices in Metro Manila, and elsewhere nationwide.

The BI Chief also said that the Bureau had 93 suspected COVID-19 cases among its workers but half of them were already cleared, and were found negative for the virus after undergoing home quarantine.

Morente said the public should not be surprised that some BI employees were infected by the virus.

"We are one of the few government agencies whose personnel render frontline services, not only in our offices, but in the ports of entry as well. It is unavoidable that some of our employees do come in contact or are exposed to persons who are carriers of this virus," he said.

He pointed out that BI personnel are always exposed to the risk of getting the virus whenever they report for duty. Immigration offices and ports of entry are always crowded with people who transact business or are embarking on trips to and from abroad.