



PART II: COUNSELING



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STANDARDS AND CAPACITY
BUILDING GROUP, DSWD

STANDARDS BUREAU, DSWD

Published 2020

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FOREWORD

The enactment of Republic Act (RA) No. 7160 otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991 has transferred the power and authority of some national government agencies to perform specific functions and responsibilities to the Local Government Units (LGUs). The DSWD, as one of those national agencies, has shifted its role from direct implementers of programs and services to provision of technical assistance and resource augmentation to its local social welfare and development offices.

The Department in collaboration with the Commission on Population and Development (POPCOM), Department of Health (DOH), Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) has issued Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 1 series of 2018 approved last September 10, 2018 on the implementation of Pre-Marriage Orientation and Counseling (PMOC) program at the local level. The said JMC clarified the difference between the responsible parenthood and family planning orientation session and the pre-marriage counseling session. As such, the DSWD was tasked to lead the enhancement of the Part II of the PMOC manual on the Pre-Marriage Counseling (PMC) session given that the Department regulates the accreditation of the Pre-Marriage Counselors.

Consequently, as committed, the manual on pre-marriage counseling was enhanced to update the sessions that would provide better opportunities for would-be-married couple/s to dialogue, discuss, and compromise on matters that would likely affect their relationship as married couples. This initiated the creation of a Technical Working Group (TWG) within the Department to spearhead the enhancement of the manual through a series of activities which included a writeshop, a number of consultation meetings, and pre-testing of the manual.

This manual lays out activities, procedures, and discussion points that would help would-be-married couple/s in the process of identifying potential conflicts emanating from their differences that would equip them with practical tips in nurturing their similarities and resolving probable conflicts.

It is hoped that this manual would enable the Local Social Welfare and Development Officers (LSWDOs) and other practitioners to improve the conduct of PMC session to would-be-married couples resulting to deeper understanding of the realities of marriage.



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Undersecretary

Standards and Capacity Building Group

PART 2

COUNSELING MANUAL GUIDE



TIME ALLOTMENT: Minimum of 3 Hours

Introduction

The second part of this manual introduces the processes involved in counseling would-be-married couple/s particularly those that are aged 18-25 years old as required under Article 16 of the Executive Order (EO) No. 209 or the "Family Code of the Philippines of 1987".

This counseling session aims to provide opportunities to look into the preparedness of the of the "would-be-married couple/s" which shall be referred to as "participant/s" in this manual, and to help deepen their understanding on the realities of marriage based on their accomplished Marriage Expectation Inventory (MEI) Form. The counselor is expected to provide the needed intervention by letting the participants undergo the process of identifying potential conflicts emanating from their differences and equipping them with practical tips in nurturing their similarities and resolving probable conflicts.

This manual was developed and designed to serve as the counselor's guide in conducting counseling for participants.

Accordingly, to direct the course of discussions and processing, below are the objectives of this session:



OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE

At the end of the Counseling, the participants are able to discover the differences and similarities on their marriage expectations, as well as the factors that influence their perspectives. These may include their manner of coping and communicating to resolve identified conflicts, and other challenges that may affect their future married life.

ENABLING OBJECTIVES

Specifically, this session shall enable participants to:

1. Describe one's self as a person and his/her future spouse;
2. Identify similarities and differences based on the accomplished MEI Form and the factors affecting their individual perception which would eventually affect their future married life;
3. Identify tips and ways to manage conflict through meaningful conversations and engaging participant/s in a dialogue.

In view of the aforementioned purposes, this manual is divided into three major sessions which focus on (1) appreciating the self; (2) understanding individual differences; and (3) valuing the importance of communication in resolving those differences.

To provide a summary of the entire session, below are brief descriptions of the content of this manual.



OPENING ACTIVITY

A brief introduction and leveling off among the counselor and participants with a brief explanation or discussion on the relevance of the counseling session for the participant/s.

Session 1: You and Your Future Spouse

Share important aspect of one's self-awareness and introspection that will underscore self-awareness, acceptance and appreciation of their own uniqueness and of their future partners.

Session 2: Understanding Individual Differences

Focus on identifying the differences of the participants and the factors affecting those differences.

Session 3: Importance of Communication in Marriage

Focus on initiating meaningful conversation and dialogue that will be valuable in resolving potential conflicts and differences.

Session 4: Lifetime Commitment

Encourage would-be-married couple/s to express their commitment to their future spouse.



CLOSING AND SUMMARY

Synthesize the lessons learned and evaluate the conduct of the session provided.



PREPARATION NOTES FOR COUNSELOR/S:

1. Introduce yourself and build rapport with the participants.
2. Set the tone of the session. Ensure participants that everything that will be disclosed shall remain confidential and that they will not be forced to share or answer if they do not want to.
3. Secure copy of the accomplished MEI Form of participants.
4. The review of accomplished MEIs of participants is a must. This will serve as your reference in determining key points to emphasize.
5. Complete the information on Annex 3 (Directory of Services) and have them printed before the session.
6. Use a reward system to sustain interest and participation of the couples from the morning session depending on available resources at the local level.
7. Check profile of participants and be sensitive to their needs e.g. use of local dialect
8. Ensure that all participants have accomplished the evaluation form.
9. Translate contents/items in local language or dialect.
10. Modify activities and conduct of session for participants with special needs to match their learning capacities.
11. Ensure that there are no children during the session.
12. Refrain from interrupting participants when asking analysis guide questions.

SESSION PROPER



OPENING ACTIVITY

The counselor shall make a brief introduction and overview of the session to be conducted by emphasizing the importance and the need to undergo the counseling session.

INPUT

This session is a requirement under Article 16 of the Family Code of the Philippines (1987) prior to securing the Marriage License.

The Counseling session is a deeper level from the orientation which aims to provide assistance and guidance to contracting parties towards an informed decision about their forthcoming married life.



KEY MESSAGE

Marriage between contracting parties is entered into in accordance with the law for the establishment of conjugal and family life¹; thus, this Counseling session is required by the law and is important to prepare would-be-married couple/s for married life and its challenges.



COUNSELOR'S NOTE

For the introduction, please take note of some items enumerated in the preparation notes for counselor/s.

¹ Family Code of the Philippines, (Republic of the Philippines: 1987).



SESSION 1: YOU AND YOUR FUTURE SPOUSE



OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

Identify how one's positive and negative characteristics, weaknesses and strengths operate in daily life and affects marital relationships. This session will underscore self-awareness, acceptance and appreciation of uniqueness of your future spouse, as well as the importance of knowing their partner's level of self-esteem.

TIME ALLOTMENT	50 minutes
METHODOLOGY	Individual Exercise/Dyads
MATERIALS NEEDED	Pen and paper/ PMC Notebook; water and tissue paper

PROCEDURE

The counselor shall:

1. Give the participants needed time to answer the following questions on a piece of paper: *(only if no pens/pencils and papers are available can you let them use their cellphone to list down their answers)*
 - a. What do you like most about yourself?
 - b. What do you like most about your partner?
 - c. What do you dislike about yourself?
 - d. What do you dislike about your partner?
 - e. What are your strengths?
 - f. What are your weaknesses?
2. Allow the participants at least ten (10) minutes to answer the questions.
3. After the activity, allot 10 minutes for participants to share their answers with

4. After the sharing between couples, the counselor may ask them to share any insight or realization on the activity.
5. After which, the counselor can use the questions below for self-reflection.



ANALYSIS (PERSONAL REFLECTION GUIDE QUESTIONS)

1. Based on your answers, what were your realizations about yourself and your partner?
2. Do you think your answers to the questions given will affect your marriage in the future?
3. How do you intend to work out the thing/things that you dislike about yourself and your partner?



ABSTRACTION AND KEY LEARNING MESSAGE/S

1. *How do you define self-esteem?*

Self-confidence and self-esteem are two (2) different things. Self-esteem, which is internal, refers to a person's feelings about the self. Self-confidence has to do with a person's interactions with the external world.² It is confidence in oneself and one's power and abilities.

Self-esteem is how a person regards one's self. Most often than not, how we relate and establish relationships with other people is based on our self-perception. When one's self-esteem is inferior from others, characteristics such as negativity/pessimism, low regard of one's capacity and submissiveness become evident. Whereas, when one's self-esteem is superior, characteristics such as being always right, imposing, and aggressiveness are manifested. Being inferior and superior are both unhealthy behaviors which could ruin a marriage if not understood by one another completely (You may refer to your cue cards).

Self-esteem can influence your relationship satisfaction just as much as it affects your partner's. When you either feel good or bad about yourself, it can affect the way you act with your partner and the way you feel would have an impact on both of you.³

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/self-confidence>

³ *Marriage Counseling Service Manual* (Philippines: Department of Social Welfare and Development, 2002)

2. *What do you think will happen if a person does not have healthy self-love in the context of marriage?*

If a person does not have a healthy self-love, which includes self-respect, confidence and belief in oneself and relating intimately, it will result in the following: Either the couple will be at war in order to maintain their identity, because any difference or disagreement is taken as a threat or a personal affront, signaling a lack of love; or one person will lose his or her identity by holding back and giving in, being absorbed by the other; or there can very well be a combination of both results (You may refer to your cue cards).⁴

An important emotion for feeling positive about oneself is taking pride and feeling good about your accomplishments and by knowing your self-worth.

On the other hand, those who feel a bit insecure and low about oneself is probably because you have regrets or have experienced failure.

Thus, regardless if you are feeling positive or low about yourself right now, your promise of self-worth and pride must be greater than your fear of failure and regret. Your positive thoughts should be greater than your negative thoughts because how you view yourself will eventually affect your married life and partner.

3. *Does it help knowing each other's strengths and weaknesses?*

Knowing oneself is just as important as knowing your spouse. One's self-perception will bring about a lot on your relationship. Hence, it is important to have an idea of how you are going to be on your marriage and how you will deal with it.

One's weaknesses and strengths as an individual might become one of the strains in married life. Hence, it is important for an individual to know one's personal weaknesses and strengths which he or she will bring in to married life. Being aware of these things about oneself, the person will have a better chance at resolving issues and conflicts about relationships and marriage. (You may refer to your cue cards)⁵



APPLICATION

The counselor shall instruct the participants to:

Write a letter to your partner on how you intend to make use of what you have learned from this session in your married life and relationship.

4 Dionisio, Maribel and Allan, *Thinking of Marriage: Love, Relationship, and Intimacy* (Philippines: Salsasiana BOOKS, Don Bosco Press, Inc., 2011)

⁵ *Marriage Counseling Service Manual* (Philippines: Department of Social Welfare and Development,



COUNSELOR'S NOTE

- Be mindful of the time but prioritize the participants' needs.
- Re-assure the participants that there are no wrong answers, and encourage them to answer honestly.
- You may opt to use a PMC session notebook as part of the PMC kit (if possible and available) that may be given to the would-be-married couples which they could use whenever they are to write their answers in certain activities in this manual. After the PMC, the couple could keep their notebooks with them.
- If the participant is unable to write, encourage the participant to his/her express thoughts.

SUGGESTED TRANSITION MESSAGE:

Appreciating oneself and your partner's individuality is an important part of your journey of further discovering your differences and similarities which will affect your married life. Thus, as we move on to the next session, we will try to understand how those differences are most likely influenced by internal and external factors.



SESSION 2: UNDERSTANDING INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES



OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

Account the number of differences and similarities based on the Marriage Expectation Inventory (MEI) Form and at the same time identify factors which have influenced their differences in expectations.

TIME ALLOTMENT	60 minutes
METHODOLOGY	Self-Assessment, Games, Dyads and Interactive/Group Discussion
MATERIALS NEEDED	Accomplished Marriage Expectation Inventory Form, pens and paper, flipchart/easel boards, pentel pens or meta cards and masking tapes,



ACTIVITY 1: *Accounting of MEI*

PROCESS

The Counselor shall:

1. Distribute to the participants their individual MEI forms which was accomplished prior to the session.
2. In dyads, instruct the would-be-married couple/s to count the number of similarities and differences based on their responses on the MEI Form.
3. Allow participants at least 10 minutes for the activity.
4. Afterwards, ask the participant/s to stand based on the number of differences noted. You will do a count off until all the participant/s have stood up.
5. Ask the participant/s to face their co-participant/s while saying this phrase "Congratulations! This preparatory session is for you!"

6. Convey to the participants that knowing those expectations are important as it has a significant effect on their marriage life. Therefore, those expectations should be clear between would-be-married couple/s.
7. Proceed to the next activity: Fast Talk



ACTIVITY 2: *Fast Talk*

PROCESS

The counselor shall:

1. Give each participant a pair of meta cards with this written: Babae and Lalaki.
2. Instruct the participants to raise one (1) card (Babae/Lalaki) that they believe would best perform/fit the roles that would be enumerated by the counselor as fast as possible.

List of roles:

- a. Child rearing
- b. Budget/manage finances
- c. Go to the market/buy groceries
- d. Do the laundry
- e. Cook
- f. Housekeep/clean the house
- g. Go to work/earn money
- h. Discipline the children
- i. Pay utility bills
- j. Entertain guests/friends/family
- k. Attend PTA meetings in school
- l. Wash the dishes
- m. Keep savings

Note: The counselor can add to the list other roles.

3. Ask the participants to take note and account those in which they have different answers.
4. After the activity, ask each pair to account the number of their different answers.
5. Afterwards, ask the participants this question: What do you think are the reasons behind your differences?

6. Note or write their answers on a board or in a meta card. Encourage the participant/s to answer and cite as many reasons they could think of.
7. Ensure that their answers are visible to them.
8. Proceed to discuss and explain the factors affecting and influencing those differences in expectations.



COUNSELOR'S NOTE

In congratulating the participants, emphasize that having recognized their differences makes them aware of it. Affirm that awareness of these differences is the first step to doing something about them. Explain that these differences will not measure the kind of relationship that they have and will have in the future but rather this session will help them understand the foundation of those differences.



OPTIONAL ACTIVITY : *Family Reflection*

PROCESS

The counselor shall:

1. Distribute the activity sheet. Each participant should have a copy. (Annex 3 on Family Reflection).
2. Instruct the participants to accomplish the exercise individually. Give them at least two (2) minutes.
3. After accomplishing the exercise, ask the participants to share their answers to their future spouse for five (5) minutes.
4. Ask for insights and realizations from the participants based on their sharing.
5. Proceed to the discussion of the inputs based on the following concepts.



ANALYSIS (PERSONAL REFLECTION GUIDE QUESTIONS)

The counselor shall wrap-up the session by asking the following questions:

1. What do you think of your responses on your Marriage Expectation Inventory (MEI) Form?
2. Why is it important for you to know some relevant factors which influenced your differences?
3. How do you think those factors that were discussed have influenced your responses on your MEI?
4. What struck you most about this session?
5. What were your insights, realizations, and learning from this session?



ABSTRACTION AND KEY LEARNING MESSAGE/S

SEVERAL FACTORS INFLUENCING MARITAL/MARRIAGE EXPECTATIONS

1. Biological Differences

A man and woman are obviously physically different and the most evident difference is their reproductive system.

But in addition to that, a man and a woman's biological make-up are majorly affected by their HORMONES.

As defined, Hormones are the body's chemical messengers and are part of the endocrine system. The **endocrine system** regulates our heart rate, metabolism- (i.e. how the body gets energy from the foods we eat) –appetite, mood, sexual function, reproduction, growth and development, sleep cycles, and more. In other words, hormones affect our body's functions, from growth, sexual development and mood to how well we sleep, how we manage stress and how our body breaks down food.⁶ So, when your partner is eating too much, you might think your partner is just too stressed-out, but in reality, the hormones have something to do with it one way or another.

⁶ <https://www.hormone.org/hormones-and-health/hormones>

The hormones present in our body affect the physiological activities in both sexes as well as the physical attributes of the male and female human body. *So if your partner is not in the mood, that does not mean there is a loss of affection, it could be just the hormones.* However, these biological differences do not conclude the main and sole difference between a man and a woman which influences one's perception and behaviour. Rather this is just an attempt to explain the possible reasons behind those differences.

You've got to remember that men are men and women are women. And although there are a lot of similarities, there are some real differences". – *Helen Fisher*

2. Gender Culture and Role Expectations

Individuals bring to the marriage their own expectations with regard to how various needs should be met and how various roles should be performed.

Given the distinct biological differences between the two sexes, gender culture came into perspective. Gender culture is a set of behaviours or practices associated with femininity and masculinity. Each culture has its own expectations of the roles of men and women.

At this juncture, the counselor may refer back to the answers of the participants on Activity 2 (Fast Talk) to provide concrete examples.

There are many cultural and social expectations about appropriate behavior for male and females. Presumptively, to fulfill marriage expectations, each family member is expected to play his/her roles which then give perspectives to marital role. Marital roles are expectations of husbands and wives in a particular society at any given time.⁷

Usually, these roles are cultural creations rather than biological imperatives. Roles provide the facility for the smooth running of society by a division of labor for men and women.

Cultural variations and the purposes of spouses may bring about changes in marital roles. In modern society, there are no definite patterns of behavior or roles for men and women. There is a wide disparity in role conceptions. This changing nature of gender roles creates confusion on marital role and expectations. Hence, it could be one of the reasons for the differences in your responses in the Marriage Expectation Inventory Form (MEIF).

⁷ Chacko, Teresa, Introduction to Family Life Education Vol.2, (New Delhi-110020, Indira Gandhi National Open University: Gita Offset Printers, 2010)

The role expectations vary with different cultures. Culture conditions the personality of an individual. Marital roles are determined by the culture in which one grew up. The couple coming from two different cultures will behave differently in a given situation. They will be having different expectations and their goals in marriage will be different. There may be few common interests. Each brings from his/her culture quite often different values, attitudes, customs and style of living.

With that said, there are no general role patterns. Each couple has to work out a pattern of their own. In a nutshell, here are some factors that may influence marital roles and expectations.⁸

Peer Group

The peer group is oriented towards new attitudes and expectations for both sexes. They create new role expectations. These are usually in direct contrast to customary roles.

Culture

Men have more freedom of action while women are expected to behave according to norms dictated by the society. Education has given her social and economic quality, but still she is restrained to traditional roles by our culture.

Family

Customary roles are learnt largely from the family. It is through the attitudes, expectations and habits formed in the family that a boy or girl gets basic training in role expectations for him or her as well as for the opposite sex.⁹

This concept provides a subtle approach on discussing gender culture as a benchmark in explaining role expectations along marriage which is important to help would-be-married couple/s understand the differences on their marriage expectations.

The value being underscored is not on the gender roles or expected marital roles but rather, realizing the essence of clear role expectations between would-be-married couple/s in their future married life. And while differences are being underscored and identified as part of culture, this should not become a basis for any abuse and disempowerment but rather build a foundation of respect towards each other's cultural differences.

⁸ Chacko, Teresa, Introduction to Family Life Education Vol.2, (New Delhi-110020, Indira Gandhi National Open University: Gita Offset Printers, 2010)

⁹ Dionisio, Maribel and Allan, *Thinking of Marriage: Love, Relationship, and Intimacy* (Philippines: Salesasiana BOOKS, Don Bosco Press, Inc., 2011)

Although culture and society has a great amount of influence in one's behavior and perceptions, still, it is not enough to understand one's values and characteristics which bring about the differences.

3. Family Influences

Understanding one's family of origin will provide insights on how values and customs were handed down from generation to generation, which will then give the participants an idea on how their partner was actually raised.⁹

In order for participants to have a grasp and understanding of the concept, the counselor **may either opt to** administer the optional activity of this session using the Family Reflection exercise or refer to the answers provided by the participants in Activity 2 (Fast Talk) and identify which perspectives were influenced by their families based on the enumerated roles.

Family of origin refers to the significant caretakers and siblings that a person grows up with, or the first social group a person belongs to, which is often a person's biological family or an adoptive family. Our early experiences have a major influence on how we see ourselves, others and the world and how we cope and function in our daily lives.¹⁰

How do you think one's individual family affects him/her?

Family dynamics determine our self-esteem and self-confidence. Family values shape our character. Family experiences influence our concepts of how marriage should be structured, how children should be raised and how we should view work, relationships, recreation, education, money, politics, and religion. We all look at our families and decide either to repeat the pattern if our experience was basically positive, or try to create an opposite situation, if our experience was basically negative. We are profoundly affected by the attitudes and actions of the family we grew up in.

Why do you think it is important to understand one's Family of Origin?

Understanding one's Family of Origin provides some insights into how one's family works, i.e.– family patterns of behavior that may have been passed down from generations that are still evident in our families today. They range from how we celebrate occasions and holidays, how we practice or do not practice our faith or religion, how we resolve conflict or avoid it and many other things. We discover how we fit into the scheme of things in the context of our family tree.

⁹ Dionisio, Maribel and Allan, *Thinking of Marriage: Love, Relationship, and Intimacy* (Philippines: Salesasiana BOOKS , Don Bosco Press, Inc., 2011)

¹⁰ *ibid.*

Further, we need to understand that the marriage of two persons means marriage of six persons:

1. The groom
2. Everything his mother has taught him;
3. Everything his father has taught him;
4. The bride;
5. Everything her mother has taught her; and
6. Everything her father has taught her;

This includes patterns of behavior, history, expectations, attitudes, beliefs and core values among others. Therefore, the new married couple means the joining of two families.¹²

Overall, this session attempted to explain some factors which influence one's expectations. Hence, this will give participants ideas on further understanding one's values and traits which are influenced by various internal and external factors.

ADDITIONAL INPUTS

1. The differences in the responses of the MEIF are natural. Those differences will not ruin a relationship but rather a stepping stone in making the relationship stronger. Knowing it is just but a start of an unending journey towards discovering each other.
2. It should be clear to the participants that the differences in their responses are mainly caused by a lot of factors that has influenced their perspectives as individuals, perspectives which they would bring into their marriage. Regardless, as unique individuals, having differences is natural since no person is alike.
3. The factors that were presented and discussed are just among the major explanations as to the possible causes on the differences of the responses on the MEIF; thus instrumental to understanding how those differences came to be.
4. As would-be-married couple/s, it is important to note that those differences can be a key to developing new patterns/dynamics which will work for them.
5. If the reasons for those differences in expectations are not clear and are not understood by each other, possible conflicts may arise due to unrealistic, unclear and vague expectations.

¹¹ Dionisio, Maribel and Allan, *Thinking of Marriage: Love, Relationship, and Intimacy* (Philippines: Salesasiana BOOKS , Don Bosco Press, Inc., 2011)

¹² *ibid.*

6. Understanding each other's differences is not the end, but rather a start to make initial steps of adjustment. As would-be-married couple/s, it is important for you to manage these differences rather than letting all these manage your married life.
7. Understanding those differences will help you adjust in your married life and at the same time manage future conflicts.



APPLICATION

The counselor shall ask the participants to reflect on the following questions:

1. How do you intend to resolve those differences?
2. How do you intend to make sure that the two most important things to you (those you marked with a star) be realized in marriage?
3. How will I make use of my capabilities to perform my role as a wife/husband and as a future parent?
4. Which among the various role expectations would be applicable in your future married life and how do you intend to perform these roles?

After the time given for self-reflection, let the participants keep their answers to themselves.



COUNSELOR'S NOTE

- *Couples should take note where these answers are clearly different, meaning a major difference in human-moral-spiritual values. A sizable number of these major differences indicate that they will need more personal follow-up with the counselor for final assessment regarding their realistic compatibility to incompatibility for marriage.*
- *The facilitator should be careful in processing the participant's answers which may borderline to gender and development issues.*
- *Be conscious with the time in facilitating the activities.*

SUGGESTED TRANSITION MESSAGE:

Knowing the differences on your responses gives you an idea on the things that may cause rift or misunderstandings in your marriage. Hence, knowing the things that will help you understand each other will give you ideas on things that you need to work out. But, how will you work it out? On the next activity, we will give you tips on how to dialogue or communicate with your partner on those areas that you need to work out or agree on.



SESSION 3: IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION IN MARRIAGE



OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

Demonstrate basic dialogue skills as a method to initiate meaningful conversation with your partner highlighting the value and importance of communication in resolving differences.

TIME ALLOTMENT	50 minutes
METHODOLOGY	Role Playing/Audio Visual Presentation (AVP)
MATERIALS NEEDED	Sample Script: As a prelude, the counselor will initiate a role playing to be played by colleagues or co-facilitators who shall provide tips on having a dialogue.

PROCEDURE

The counselor and/or co-facilitators shall:

1. Play the part of the husband-to-be and the wife-to-be.
2. Demonstrate the given scenario based on the sample script. You can choose to be innovative and tweak some parts of the script as long as the purpose of this activity is conveyed clearly.
3. Ask the participant/s to observe the activity and possibly take down notes based on their observations.
4. The role playing will be done in three (3) minutes.
5. After the role playing, discuss to the participant/s their observation before proceeding to the actual dialogue between would-be-married-couple/s.

6. Highlight the following during the discussion of their observations:
- The role play is just an example; you can discuss your concerns based on your talking styles, but remember to be very careful in the use of words.
 - While talking about your differences and conflicts, pay attention to the good things your partner does rather than paying too much attention on his/her faults.
 - Control your temper.
 - Learn to compromise and negotiate, meaning, learn to agree on things in a win-win situation.
 - Learn how to be flexible in order to settle differences.
 - Lay down all your cards on the table. As much as possible, provide needed information and consequences before reaching a decision.
 - Be willing to listen.
 - Be willing to accommodate.
 - Always remember that the person you are talking with is the person you love and intend to live with forever.

After discussing the participant/s' observations, the counselor will proceed to the discussion of the mechanics for the next activity. However, before starting with the activity, it is important to ensure that privacy and confidentiality will be observed.



ACTIVITY 2: *Couple's Dialogue*

PROCESS

The counselor shall:

- Instruct the participant/s to identify their top three (3) significant expectations and/or differences which they would want to talk about. Further, the counselor may add circumstances or realistic examples for discussion that is relevant and timely with their present/current set up (i.e if they have kid/s; they are living-in, etc)
- Instruct them to find a comfortable place within the venue to talk about it.
- Allow the participant/s thirty (30) minutes to dialogue.

After the activity, proceed with the analysis and processing of the activity.



ANALYSIS (PERSONAL REFLECTION GUIDE QUESTIONS)

After the sharing/activity, the counselor shall ask the participants to share their insights on the session using the questions listed below as guide.

- a. What were your insights/realizations/learning on the activity?
- b. What were the challenges/difficulties you encountered in doing the activity?
- c. How did this activity help you?



ABSTRACTION AND KEY LEARNING MESSAGE/S

Conflict, tension, and disappointment occur when expectations are unmet, leading to dissatisfaction in marriage (Grafton, 1977).

The other areas bringing about conflicts in marriage are struggle for domination, money management, sexual incompatibilities, etc. However, the most difficult problem is communication. The failure in communication occurs at a deeper level of sharing feelings, expectations, intentions and personal needs.¹³

Communication with our partner is an important means to grow in our love for one another. As we talk and dialogue about the many areas of personal, home, and work life together and make decisions and plans, our sense of commitment and care for each other grows and deepens. Hence, in this session, would-be-married couple/s will be guided on how to communicate and dialogue with each other.

1. What is the possible result for unclear and unexpressed expectations?

Unexpressed, unstated and unclear expectations could lead to conflict and other feelings of dissatisfaction. It is important that expectations are made explicit so they will not become "destructive and frustrated demands" (Brorby, 1981).¹⁴

2. What are the identified Do's and Don'ts in compromising and/or resolving conflicts?

¹³ Ehnis, Daniel K, "A study of the Relationship Between Marital Expectations and Satisfaction for First Married and Remarried Couples on Factors Extracted from Two Marital Adjustment Scales, (Dissertations, 1986) 2297.

¹⁴ Ibid.

In resolving conflict, there might be no hard and fast rule, it depends on how applicable it is in knowing your respective partners. Nonetheless we would like to share the following:

In Conflict Resolution, it is suggested that the couple: (You may refer to your cue cards)

1. Agree to resolve the conflict.
2. Take turns talking and do not interrupt. - The biggest communication problem is we do not listen to understand. We listen to reply.
3. Avoid Name Calling.
4. Be truthful about what is bothering you, and state it clearly.
5. Listen to the other person. Be sure you understand his/her issue and how he/she understands your issue.
6. Be willing to compromise.

ADDITIONAL INPUTS

1. No two persons are alike. There are differences in attitudes, behaviors and beliefs; hence, disagreements and fights are inevitable in any romantic relationship. These disagreements can be big or small, ranging from what to eat for lunch, or failing to complete a chore to arguments about finances, career, deciding on children's religious upbringing and the list could go on.¹⁵
2. Fighting/quarreling with your partner isn't a sign that there is a real trouble in your relationship. In fact, when handled properly, fighting can improve your relationship. If you never talk about the things that bother you, you will never solve them. Hence, by dealing or managing those conflicts constructively, you can gain better understanding of your partner and arrive at a solution that works both for you. Compromise it is.
3. Dealing with your differences and arriving at a compromise surely is not easy. But the key to resolving those differences is by knowing, accepting and adjusting to those differences, hence, the best method to solve the differences in a reasonable way is by negotiating with each other. In other words, you have to find a common ground which will work for both of you, that way both of you can have a satisfying marriage life.¹⁶

¹⁵ <https://www.psychologytoday.com/vs/blog/close.encounters/201704/10-tips-solving-relationship-conflicts>

¹⁶ Chacko, Teresa, Introduction to Family Life Education Vol.2, (New Delhi-110020: Indira Gandhi National Open University: Gita Offset Printers, 2010)

4. This activity is not really all about conflict resolution, what is being emphasized in this activity is the value of communication, the importance of talking and discussing things you do not agree on or are significant to you because the biggest communication problem is we do not listen to understand, we listen to reply. This is just a practice to listen, talk, and express your thoughts which will create long lasting connection with your partner. As the saying goes, practice makes things permanent.



APPLICATION

The counselor shall ask the participants to reflect on the question below .

"How are you going to use what you have learned in this activity in resolving potential issues/conflicts/ differences in your future married life?"

The counselor may close the session with this quotation:

"To sustain love, we have to learn how to negotiate differences of all kinds, and to speak to each other in ways that allows us to be heard, that allows us to be received. "-Dee Watts-Jones (Printed copies; refer to the cue cards)

IMPORTANT:

The counselor may prompt couples that if they have difficulty in settling issues, they could seek help and consult them or other counselors for another appointment and help.



COUNSELOR'S NOTE

The counselor may play a soft music to lighten the mood of the participants/environment

SUGGESTED TRANSITION MESSAGE:

The things you have discovered from your partner are necessary in settling your differences and communicating what is acceptable in your marriage. This session will not yet solve the problems in your marriage, but is an overview of what lies ahead.



SESSION 4: LIFETIME COMMITMENT



OBJECTIVES OF THE SESSION

Synthesize the over-all counseling session experience by expressing commitments

TIME ALLOTMENT	20 minutes
METHODOLOGY	Self-Reflection Activity, Commitment Setting
MATERIALS NEEDED	Bond papers, pens/pencils, and evaluation and feedback survey sheet.



ACTIVITY 1: *Commitment Setting*

PROCESS

The counselor shall:

1. Give each participant a piece of bond paper.
2. Instruct the participant/s to fold the paper into half. Instruct them to write their top five (5) marriage commitment on the left side of the paper, and their top five (5) marital needs on the other half (on the right). Give the participants at least five (5) minutes to do this.
3. Ask the participant/s to share their answers to their partner for five (5) minutes.
4. Afterwards, ask the participants to recite or read aloud two (2) of their commitments to their partner for the whole group to hear.



ANALYSIS (PERSONAL REFLECTION GUIDE QUESTIONS)

After the sharing, the counselor shall ask the participants to share their insights on the session using the questions listed below as guide:

1. How do you feel while writing your commitments?
2. What help would you need from your partner in order to fulfill your commitments?



ABSTRACTION AND KEY LEARNING MESSAGE/S

Expectations are a critical variable in marital relationships as they significantly affect the satisfaction of the couple and the success of the marriage. In a research study, it stated that "Expectations are not only what you want from your partner, they are also what you are willing to give".¹⁷

In counseling, the goal is to assist would-be-married couple/s to work through a mutually contracted agreement. First, by learning and becoming aware of one's needs and expectations from a relationship and next is to report what they want from each other and what they are willing to give or compromise.



APPLICATION

The counselor shall ask the participants to reflect on the question below.

How are you going to apply what you have learned in your future married life? (Allow participant/s to reflect on this question for awhile).

¹⁷ Ehnis, Daniel K, "A study of the Relationship Between Marital Expectations and Satisfaction for First Married and Remarried Couples on Factors Extracted from Two Marital Adjustment Scales" (1986). Dissertations. 2297



CLOSING AND SUMMARY

1. The PMC as we have discussed at the very start of this session is required for the issuance of your marriage license. But the value of this session, hopefully, does not end when you receive your respective certificates. What you learned today; what you discovered about each other, let all these guide your relationship and your future marriage.
2. Knowledge of one's needs, wants, desires, plans, values, aspirations are necessary. Self-esteem is one of the most important foundations of marriage.

A loving, close relationship takes effort and there's a strain that naturally emanates from differences among men and women.

Fulfilling one's aspirations is as important as supporting your spouse fulfill his/her aspirations. As a couple, let him/her feel that you are happy with his/her achievements.

Family of origin strongly affects values and behavior patterns which vary in every individual. Hence, being aware of those differences will help the couple settle and communicate what they desire and deem acceptable for their own family.

3. The experience you had in PMC is yours and your decision to get married is definitely also yours to make. The topics we discussed and the activities that were designed for this PMC, are meant to make you reflect and think about your decision.



KEY MESSAGE

Marriage is a lifetime journey. This Pre-Marriage Counseling is only the beginning as you prepare yourself to enter married life. Surely, you will encounter several challenges, and you must get help from the right people along your journey. We encourage you to be connected with a small group of couples/counselors who could provide you the positive support you will need.



NETWORK SERVICES

The counselor may end the session and share the directory of existing services available for their further counseling needs. This should be prepared ahead of the PMC session schedule.



EVALUATION

The counselor will distribute evaluation forms and ask the participants to rate the activity and express their comments using the evaluation form.

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Annex 1

Family Code Infographics



DID YOU KNOW??

The Family Code of the Philippines states that...

Art. 16. In the cases where parental consent or parental advice is needed, the party or parties concerned shall, in addition to the requirements of the preceding articles, attach a certificate issued by a priest, imam or minister authorized to solemnize marriage under Article 7 of this Code or a marriage counselor duly accredited by the proper government agency to the effect that the contracting parties have undergone marriage counseling. Failure to attach said certificates of marriage counseling shall suspend the issuance of the marriage license for a period of three months from the completion of the publication of the application. Issuance of the marriage license within the prohibited period shall subject the issuing officer to administrative sanctions but shall not affect the validity of the marriage.

Source: Executive Order No. 209, Family Code of the Philippines



Source: Philippine Statistics Authority, Civil Registration Service, Vital Statistics Division

Annex 2

MEI Form

Instruction. *This Marriage Expectations Inventory Form is designed to help you assess your expectations about marriage so you can engage each other in a dialogue to make your relationship stronger. Kindly check or provide your answer that corresponds to your level of agreement or disagreement.*

MEI ON MARRIAGE AND RELATIONSHIPS

Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Reason/s
1. I will allow giving financial support to my in-laws/relatives.				
2. I will allow receiving financial support from my parents/in-laws/relatives.				
3. I am comfortable if my partner checks out my personal stuff such as mobile phone, wallet, social media account, etc.				
4. I feel loved when:				
• My partner gives me compliments or praises				
• We do things together				
• I receive gifts, flowers, small things, etc.				
• My partner willingly provides a helping hand				
• My partner shows physical affection (ex. holds my hand, embraces/cuddles/kisses me)				
5. When we talk, I expect my partner to be sensitive/cautious to:				
• Tone of voice				
• Words spoken				
• Gestures, body language, eye to eye contact				
• Listening with undivided attention				
6. I know well my spouse strengths and weaknesses.				
7. If we will have conflicts, as husband and wife, we will solve it by:				
• Talking it out				
• Writing letters				
• Spiritual methods				

MEI ON RESPONSIBLE PARENTHOOD

Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Reason/s
• Silent treatment				
• Third party mediation (in-laws, god parents, friends, counselors, etc.)				
1. After getting married, we will live independently from our parents/ relatives.				
2. I will allow my spouse to work for a living.				
3. I believe that it is the husband who should make the major decisions on financial matters.				
4. Only the wife is in charge of the household chores.				
5. If we cannot have children, I will consider alternative parental care (adoption, foster care).				
6. Disciplining, nurturing and rearing our children is a shared responsibility by both parents.				
7. I believe in physical punishment in disciplining children.				
8. I believe that the children should observe their father's religion.				
9. If I will have a child with special needs, I will:				
• Send my child to school				
• Put up for adoption/send to DSWD or similar facility				
• Confine my child at home				
10. For me, having a child is:				
• A gift from God				
• For continuity of lineage				
• Additional income earner				
• Provider in our old age				
• Means for a stronger relationship				

MEI ON PLANNING THE FAMILY

Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Reason/s
1. I prefer to have less than three children.				
2. If we have problems in having children, I will submit myself to fertility tests/ work- out.				
3. I believe that the number and spacing of children is a shared decision of husband and wife.				
4. I believe that sex in marriage is:				
• a duty				
• my right				
• an expression of love				
• for procreation purposes only (pagkakaroon ng anak)				
5. I believe that the wife may initiate sex.				
6. Husband's consent is necessary for the wife to use family planning methods.				
7. I will use modern family planning methods to limit and space childbirth.				

MEI ON MATERNAL, NEONATAL, CHILD HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Reason/s
1. I believe that ensuring safe and healthy pregnancy is a responsibility of the wife.				
2. I believe that child care and nutrition are responsibility of the wife.				
3. I will go to a birthing facility (clinics/ lying-in or hospitals) for the delivery of my baby.				
4. I want my newborn baby to be breastfed after delivery.				
5. I will subject my baby to newborn screening.				
6. For me, the husband's roles to ensure safe pregnancy and delivery are:				

Statement	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Reason/s
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accompany the wife during pre-natal check-up 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formulate a birth plan with the wife. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that either husband or wife is enrolled with PhilHealth. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know the nearest Philhealth-accredited facility in your place. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare the important things the wife needs before, during and after pregnancy including that of the baby. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Together with the wife, start saving for hospital fees and other financial considerations that may occur. 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Know the emergency signs of pregnancy, and secure contact numbers of service provider. 				
7. I believe in keeping intimacy during pregnancy through:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Going on a date once a week or more 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Going out with Friends 				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having a sexual intercourse 				

Annex 3

Family Reflection

FAMILY REFLECTION

Ask the couple to answer the following for 5 minutes:

1. I am the (birth order) child in my family. Generally, I feel (identify which among the words inside parentheses describes your feeling)(very happy, happy, unhappy, very unhappy) because (state your reason for feeling that way)
2. I (choose from the parenthesis) (like, do not like) my father because _____
My father/guardian as a husband is _____
3. My father/guardian to his children is _____
4. I _____(like, do not like) my mother because _____
5. My mother/guardian as a wife is _____
6. My mother/guardian to her children is _____

FOR MEN:

As a husband I would like to _____

As a father I would like to _____

FOR WOMEN:

As a wife I would like to _____

As a mother I would like to _____

Annex 4

Sample Script

Husband to be: Para sa akin, okay lang magbigay ng pera sa magulang ko ng monthly kasi ganun din yung tatay ko dati sa mga magulang nya.

Wife to be: Magbibigay ka eh meron naman silang monthly pension. Ok lang magbigay ngayon kasi wala pa tayong anak. Pero pag nagka-anak na tayo, hindi na dapat.

Husband to be: Panganay kasi ako, nuon pa man, nagbibigay na ako sa kanila. Para sa akin, mas responsable ang mga anak na nagbibigay ng pera sa mga magulang kahit may asawa na.

Wife to be: Tingin ko, walang masama na magbigay sa magulang kahit may asawa ka na subalit, ngayong mag-aasawa na tayo, ano na ba ng dapat nating pagkasunduan na makakabuti para sa ating bubuuang pamilya? Sa kinalakihan ko kasi, yung mga kapatid kong nag-asawa na, hindi na sila nagbibigay ng monthly financial help sa mga parents namin. Kung may emergency na lang or may okasyon.

Husband to be: Mahalaga kasi iyon sa akin. Pwede bang kahit every two months at magkano?

Wife to be: Sige. Pero pag nagka-anak na tayo, tignan nating yung financial status kung kaya pa ang every two months. Tingin ko dapat nating i-consider kung ano ang makakabuti para sa pamilyang bubuuin natin.

Husband to be: Ok. Thank you sa pang-unawa mo. I love you!

Annex 5

List of Counseling Services Available in the LGU (Template)

Directory of Counseling Services Available in the LGU

For individual, marital and family consultations/sessions, you may contact any of the following:

Network	Contact Details	Services
LSWDO		
Local Health Offices		
Barangay		
NGOs		
CSOs		
POs		
Parish		
Churches		

Annex 6

Session Evaluation Sheet

Name (optional): _____ Date: _____

Thank you for participating! It will be of great help if you can write down your feedback from today's session. Please mark your rating with a (✓).

Coverage/ Rating	Excellent	Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Fairly Satisfactory	Poor
Effectiveness of the speakers: _____ Mr. /Ms.					
Adequacy of the materials used:					
Handouts					
Presentation materials					
Schedule: Day and time					

What I learned in today's session is/are:

What I like best in this session is:

What I least like in this session is:

My suggestions for future sessions are:

Annex 7

Basic Counseling Microskills

¹⁸ The term “microskills” refers to specific competencies for communicating effectively with others. Professional education for social workers, mental health practitioners, and other helping professionals often includes microskill training to provide developing professionals with the essential building blocks for counseling, therapy, advocacy, mediation, and other methods of intervention. The earliest social work textbooks on microskills referred to them as interviewing skills. More recent textbooks have recognized that interpersonal communication skills, or competencies, are useful not only for interviewing individuals but also for social work with individuals, families, groups, communities, and other social systems.

¹⁹ Microskills are the basic foundational skills involved in effective helping relationships. They are the foundational tools on which the success of interventions with clients may depend. They help create the necessary conditions from which positive change can take place.

Below are essential counseling microskills that may aid the counselor/s in providing counseling sessions:

a. Rapport

- Development of rapport starts with the initial contact and continues throughout the counseling process.
- Effective rapport is crucial for individuals seeking counseling, as this may be the first encounter with a professional counselor and this interaction may either encourage or discourage the client from seeking counseling in the future or following up for subsequent counseling sessions.
- These skills are presented as a hierarchy that is organized within a systematic framework. At the bottom of the hierarchy are the basic attending skills such as patterns of eye contact, body language, and tone of voice while a bit farther up of the skills hierarchy is the basic listening sequence, which includes questioning, paraphrasing, summarizing, and reflection of feelings.

¹⁸ <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com>

¹⁹ https://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/education/counseling-microskills_4.pdf

b. Attending Skills

- Good communication involves more than just verbal content-much communication takes place non-verbally.
- Clients ranked nonverbal gestures and presentation and body language as the most important alliance building factors.
- Non-verbal attending behaviors communicate a counselor's interest, warmth and understanding to the client, and include such behaviors as eye contact, body position, and tone of voice.

b.1 Eye Contact

- Maintaining good eye contact is how a professional counselor conveys interest, confidence, and involvement in the client's story.
- There should be natural breaks in eye contact; eye contact should be more of an "ebb and flow" as you collect your thoughts and listen to your client's story.
- It is essential to be sensitive to differences in how eye contact is expressed across cultures.

b.2 Body Position

- Your body position should convey to the client your interest and involvement.
- Face the client and adopt an open, relaxed, and attentive body posture, as this will assist in putting your client at ease.
- Do not cross arms and legs.
- Do not sit behind a desk or other barrier.
- Slightly lean in the upper body toward the client.
- Let your clients decide the physical distance between you and them by offering to let them arrange the chairs at an individual comfort level, but make sure to set up your own personal space boundaries too.

b.3 Vocal Tone

- Emotions are frequently conveyed via tone of voice. The pitch, pacing, and volume can all have an effect on how a client responds emotionally to a professional counselor.

- Your voice can do much to help create a soothing and anxiety-regulating atmosphere for the client.²⁰

b. 4 Verbal Underlining

- Giving increased vocal emphasis to certain words or short phrases—helps convey a sense of empathic understanding.

c. The Basic Listening Sequence

- Represents a set of interrelated skills used to achieve three overarching goals:
 - To obtain an overall summary and understanding of the client's presenting issue;
 - To identify the key facts of the client's situation; and
 - To identify the core emotions and feelings the client is experiencing.
- The skills involved in the basic listening skill sequence are: open and closed questions, paraphrasing, reflection of feelings and summarizing.

c. 1 Questioning

- Is a primary skill that allows professional counselors to gather important and specific information about clients.
- Questions allow us to make an accurate assessment of the client's issues and guide and focus our clients so we can make the most effective use of the counseling session, but if used inappropriately, questioning can impede communication and block client disclosure.

♦ Open Questions

- Open questions usually elicit fuller and more meaningful responses by encouraging the client to talk at greater length.
- Open questions typically begin with what, how, could, would, or why, and are useful to help begin an interview, to help elaborate the client's story, and to help bring out specific details.
- Be careful when using "why" questions and questions that are leading in nature. Questions that begin with "why" often:

²⁰ https://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/education/counseling-microskills_4.pdf

- › Cause the client to intellectualize and can lead to a discussion of reasons²¹
- › Cause a client to begin to rationalize or intellectualize their problems, when what we really want them to do is to explore the deeper meaning and feelings behind their issues²²
- › Cause the client to become defensive and to feel "put on the spot"

♦ Leading Questions

- Leading questions often contain a hidden agenda because the answer or expectation is already imbedded within the question.

♦ Closed Questions

- Closed questions can be used when professional counselors need to obtain very specific concrete information and get all the facts straight.
- Closed questions typically elicit either a "yes/no" type of response or provide specific factual information.
- The use of too many closed questions can cause the client to shut down and become passive because in essence you are training the client to simply sit back and wait for the next question to answer. „Begin with open questions (*i.e., general*), and as you gather information and hear the client's story, move to more closed questions (*i.e., specific*) to obtain the specific details important for the assessment and subsequent intervention plan.

C.2 Reflecting Skills

- The reflecting skills represent a set of interventions used to help stimulate clients' exploration of their thoughts and feelings related to the presenting problems.
- These skills will also stimulate a deeper understanding of the problem so that the client can examine the issues more objectively.
- Reflecting skills include: paraphrasing, reflecting feelings, and summarizing.

²¹ https://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/education/counseling-microskills_4.pdf

²² Ibid.

♦ Paraphrase

- A paraphrase is how we feed back to the client the essence of what has just been spoken in our own words. By paraphrasing, one reflects the content and thoughts of the client's message.
- A counselor is mirroring back to the client, in a nonjudgmental way, an accurate understanding of the client's communication and the implied meaning of that communication
- It is important that the paraphrased information is accurate by checking in with the client. „This “checking in” also allows for the building of a collaborative relationship with your clients and conveys your interest and care in accurately understanding their message.

♦ Reflecting Feelings

- By reflecting feelings a professional counselor can help the client become aware of the emotions experienced in relation to the issue at hand.
- Reflecting feelings can promote the development of accurate empathy and help to create a safe environment for the client.
- To reflect feelings one must be able to recognize and put words to those feeling states observed in the client.

To aid in identifying a client's feelings:

- › Pay attention to the affective component of the client's communication;
- › Pay attention to the client's behavior (e.g., posture, tone of voice, facial expression); and
- › Use a broad range of words to correctly identify the client's emotions. Silently name the client's feeling(s) to yourself.

In reflecting feelings to your client:²³

- › Use an appropriate introductory phrase (e.g., sounds like..., you feel..., it seems...etc);
- › Add a feeling word or emotional label to the stem;
- › Add a context or brief paraphrase to anchor or broaden the reflection;

²³ https://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/education/counseling-microskills_4.pdf

- › Pay attention to the tense (present tense reflections can often be more powerful);
- › Do not repeat the client's exact words;
- › Reflect mixed emotions; and
- › Check out the accuracy of the reflection of feeling with the client.²⁴

♦ Summarizing

- By summarizing, a professional counselor can begin to put together the key themes, feelings, and issues the client has presented.
- By distilling the key issues and themes and reflecting this back to the client, counselors can begin to help clients make sense of what may have originally seemed to be an overwhelming and confusing experience.
- A summary is not only to be used at the end of the session or begin a new session by re-capping the previous session, but can be used periodically throughout the session, helping to keep a focus and putting together the pertinent issues at hand for the client.

A summary may be appropriate when:

- › Your client is rambling, confused, or overly lengthy in comments;
- › When your client presents a number of unrelated ideas;
- › To provide direction to the interview;
- › To help move from one phase of the interview to the next;
- › To end the interview ; and
- › To provide an opening to the interview by summing up the prior interview.

Three common types of summaries:

- › Focusing summaries are often used at the beginning of the session to pull together prior information the client has given and to provide a focus to the session.
- › Signal summaries are used to "signal" to the client that you have captured the essence of their topic and that the session can move on to the next area of concern
- › Planning summaries help to provide closure and are used to recap the progress, plans, and any recommendations and agreements made.

²⁴ https://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/education/counseling-microskills_4.pdf

Annex 8

Amended Guidelines in the Accreditation of Pre-Marriage Counselors



Memorandum Circular No. 01
Series of 2019

SUBJECT: **AMENDED GUIDELINES IN THE ACCREDITATION OF PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELORS**

I. RATIONALE

Pursuant to Article 16 of the Family Code of the Philippines otherwise known as Executive Order No. 209 series of 1987 the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is mandated to accredit marriage counselors through a letter issued by the Civil Code Revision Committee, UP Law Center to the National Statistics Office on September 23, 1988. The Family Code of the Philippines gives emphasis on the importance of family and marriage. Thus, it recognizes the crucial role of marriage counselor in enabling would-be-married couple/s to be ready in assuming their respective roles as couple and future parents to their children. Hence, by virtue of Executive Order No. 221 series of 2003 "Redirecting the Functions and Operations of the DSWD", the Department, developed and issued policies, manual and guidelines covering the accreditation of Pre-Marriage Counselors (PM Counselors).

The realization of said mandate was supported by the Joint Circular (JC) No. 01-89 which provided for the implementing rules and regulations of Article 16 of the Family Code issued by the DSWD and the Office of the Local Civil Registrar General, National Statistics Office in November 1989. Subsequently, in 2002 the DSWD, Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), Commission on Population (POPCOM) and Department of Health (DOH) issued a Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No.01 on the Revised Pre-Marriage Counseling Implementation as mandated by Presidential Decree (PD) 965 of 1976.

For the past eight (8) years of PMC implementation, several concerns and issues were raised based on the existing JMC. Among the most pressing, was the gap between the numbers of trained PM Counselors versus the accredited PM Counselors as shared by the POPCOM. This gap was mainly due to some confusion on the Joint Memorandum Circular and accreditation guideline which is mandated by two separate laws. This resulted to the distress at the Local Government Units (LGUs) as Article 16 of the Family Code states that only a duly accredited PM Counselor shall issue the PM Certificate otherwise, an administrative sanction shall be enforced to those who violated the law under Article 315 of the Revised Penal Code. Hence, the said JMC was reviewed for enhancement to ensure that its provisions are aligned with existing policies and laws particularly of the Family Code, PD 965 and of the RPRH Law otherwise known as RA 10354 of 2012.

This guideline further aims to enhance the accreditation process including documentary requirements and qualifications required for accreditation. This guideline also seeks to clarify the topical content covered by the PMC session and the methods in the delivery of topics and sessions.

Thus, this guideline is hereby revised to respond to the demand and concerns that were practically experienced and raised to ensure that standards set are aligned and compliant to laws, realistic and will ascertain quality service delivery to its intended clients/beneficiaries.

II. LEGAL BASES

A. Executive Order No. 209 series of 1987, otherwise known as the Family Code of the Philippines

Article 16, In the cases where parental consent or parental advice is needed, the party or parties concerned shall, in addition to the requirements of the preceding articles, attach a certificate issued by a priest, imam or minister authorized to solemnize marriage under Article 7 of this Code or a marriage counselor duly accredited by the proper government agency to the effect that the contracting parties have undergone marriage counseling.

"The Civil Code Revision Committee, UP Law Center in its letter dated September 23, 1988 to the National Statistics Office clarified this provision that the DSWD is the proper government agency to accredit marriage counselors."

B. Executive Order No. 221 series of 2003 entitled "Redirecting the Functions and Operations of the DSWD.

Sec. 3, (a) set standards, accredit and provide consultative services to public and private institutions, organizations and persons engaged in social welfare activities, and monitor, performance and compliance to standards by institutions, organizations and persons engaged in social welfare activities, both public and private.

C. Joint Circular No. 1-89 issued by the Office of the Civil Registrar General, National Statistics Office and Department of Social Welfare and Development

Rule 1. Seminar on marriage counseling shall be conducted by a priest, imam or minister authorized to solemnize marriage and registered as such with the Office of the Civil Registrar General, or by a marriage counselor duly accredited by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

D. Joint Memorandum Circular No. 01 series of 2018 issued by DSWD-POPCOM-DOH-DILG and PSA, Revised Pre-Marriage Orientation and Counseling (PMOC) Program Implementing Guidelines of 2018

No. 9.0 Accreditation of Pre-Marriage Counselors. The accreditation of pre-marriage counselors shall be governed by a separate guidelines issued by the DSWD.

III. OBJECTIVES

General Objectives:

Establish a clear procedural process on the accreditation of Pre-Marriage Counselor.

Specific Objectives:

- 1. Clarified procedures on the accreditation of Pre-Marriage Counselors with the decentralization in effect;*
- 2. Institute new processes and mechanisms along the accreditation process; and*
- 3. Delineate and clarify roles and functions of the Field Office and Central Office OBS along the implementation of this guideline.*

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

This section aims to establish a common understanding on the key terms used in this document.

- a. Accreditation-** refers to the process of providing official recognition by the DSWD to an individual's expertise to provide Pre-Marriage Counseling Service after the applicant's compliance to the set requirements and procedures.
- b. Certificate of Marriage Counseling (MC)** – a certificate issued by an accredited PM Counselor to contracting parties who have completed the pre-marriage counseling session.
- c. Counseling-** the provision of assistance and guidance in resolving personal, social or psychological problems and difficulties, especially by a professional (*Oxford Dictionary*).
- d. Marriage Expectation Inventory** – the form used in identifying the opinions/ beliefs of the would-be-married couple/s, as well as potential problems and issues in their relationship that may be clarified in the counseling session.
- e. Pre-Marriage Counseling (PMC)** – pursuant to Article 16 of the Family Code, it refers to the mandatory counseling session required to all contracting parties where one or both parties are 18-25 years old in addition to their attendance to the Pre-Marriage Orientation (PMO). Contracting parties above 25 years old may also avail of this service. The session provides assistance and guidance to the contracting parties towards an informed decision about their forthcoming married life.
- f. Accredited Pre-Marriage Counselor (PM Counselor)** – refers to a recognized professional duly accredited by the DSWD to conduct Pre-Marriage Counseling sessions to would-be-married couple/s applying for marriage license.

V. GENERAL POLICY

The DSWD Field Offices as the main implementer of this guideline shall be guided accordingly by the following:

1. Provide technical assistance and/or respond to LGU requests related to PMC accreditation services/concerns;
2. Observe the protocol and Code of Ethics for DSWD Assessors/Accreditors implementing regulatory services in the accreditation of PM Counselors;
3. The conduct of PM Counseling session should be provided to a maximum of six (6) would-be-married couples per counselor;
4. The accreditation tool must be filled-out properly and completely;
5. The requirements and indicators enumerated in the accreditation tool must be fully complied prior to the issuance of accreditation certificate;
6. The accreditation certificate shall be signed by the Regional Director of the Field Office or his or her authorized representative;
7. The certificate of accreditation issued to a PM Counselor shall be non-transferable;
8. The accreditation number of the PM Counselor shall be composed of the region, sequence number which shall be assigned by the FOs and the year it was issued (See **Annex E** for the sample certificate of accreditation);
9. Maintain an updated directory of accredited PM Counselors at the DSWD Field Office website;
10. Only an accredited Marriage Counselor/Pre-Marriage Counselor with valid accreditation certificate is authorized to sign and issue the Certificate of Marriage Counseling of would-be-married couple/s aged 18 to 25 years old, in accordance to Article 16 of the Family Code.

VI. COVERAGE

This guideline covers all social workers and other professionals/service providers both at the private and public sectors who have met the required qualifications as stated herein.

VII. EXEMPTIONS FROM THE ACCREDITATION

The following are exempted from the DSWD accreditation by virtue of Article 16 of the Executive Order No. 209 (Family Code of the Philippines):

“... [P]riest, imam or minister authorized to solemnize marriage under Article 7 of this Code...”

VIII. QUALIFICATIONS FOR PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELOR ACCREDITATION

1. Must have a Bachelors Degree in Social Work or any behavioural and social sciences course, i.e BS in Psychology, BS in Guidance and Counseling, AB in Sociology, AB in Political Science and etc.;
2. Must have attended at least twenty-four (24) hours basic training on Counseling/Pre-Marriage Counseling and/or other similar seminars/trainings on marriage counseling conducted by the DSWD and other National Government Agencies and other accredited training institutions prior to application;
3. Either of the following prior to application:
 - 3.1. Must have any experience in the conduct of counseling for at least a minimum of six (6) sessions; or
 - 3.2 Must have assisted in the conduct of PMC for at least a minimum of six (6) sessions and/or any type of counseling session.

IX. DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCREDITATION

Applicants for accreditation must submit a duly accomplished application form together with one (1) photocopy of the following documents (original copies must be presented):

A. For New Applicant

1. Any of the following as proof that the applicant is a graduate of four (4) year course:
 1. Photocopy of Certificate of graduation/college diploma or transcript of records; or
 2. Certified photocopy of valid PRC ID.
2. Photocopy of Training Certificates/Certificates from seminars, conferences, training, and other related activities on basic counseling service for at least twenty-four (24) four hours. If original copy is unavailable, a certified true copy of the certificate of participation/attendance from the training provider will be accepted;
3. Any of the following as proof that applicant is tasked to assist/conduct PMC sessions and/or part of the local PMC Team, if applicable:
 - a. Certification from immediate Supervisor; or
 - b. An approved resolution.

4. Documentation of at least six (6) PMC sessions, which captures the role performed by the applicant as proof that he/she has assisted in the PM Counseling session; and
5. Other documents to be made available during the assessment visit.
 - a. Accomplished Marriage Expectation Inventory Form of would-be-married couple/s present during the validation visit.

B. For Renewal of Accreditation

1. Certificates of training, seminars, orientation and other related or similar activities on marriage counseling or topics related to pre-marriage counseling such as but not limited to Gender and Development, Human Maturity, Value Clarification and Responsible Parenting for at least twenty-four (24) hours within the validity period of the preceding certificate.
2. Accomplishment Report for the past year with at least a minimum of ten (10) PMC sessions conducted preceding the application using the template provided by DSWD (***Annex D***);
3. Summary documentation of PMC session/s conducted for the past year using the template provided by DSWD (***Annex C***);
4. Other documents to be made available during the validation visit.
 - a. Accomplished Marriage Expectation Inventory Form of would-be-married couple/s present during the validation visit.
 - b. Accomplished and consolidated result of client feedback/satisfaction survey (See ***Annex F*** for the template) of about fifty (50) percent of the total number of counselled couple for the past year; and
 - c. A summary/record on the number of Certificate of Marriage Counseling issued.

X. THE PMC SESSION

The conduct of PM Counseling session should be provided to a maximum of six (6) would-be-married couples per counselor.

XI. AREAS FOR ACCREDITATION

The following are the areas to be assessed for the accreditation of PM Counselors:

1. *Documentary Requirements* – refers to the documents enumerated in *Section IX* of this guideline.
2. *Knowledge* – the PM Counselor's capacity to deliver the session shall be appraised based on the knowledge foundation listed in the accreditation tool.

3. *Skills* – the PM Counselor's skills along listening, leading, reflecting, summarizing, confronting, interpreting, informing, facilitating, documenting, interviewing and lecturing shall be assessed based on the rubric assessment tool.
4. *Attitude* –the conduct/manner demonstrated by the PM Counselor toward the would-be-married couple/s during the session as specifically enumerated in the accreditation tool shall be evaluated.
5. *Ratio*- the number of would-be-married couple/s served should be consistent with the given ratio.
6. *Venue* – the environment on which the counseling session is conducted shall also be assessed, under the following circumstances:
 - 5.1 For new applicants, non-compliance on set indicator shall not discriminate the result of the accreditation assessment, but rather serve as basis for recommendation and improvement, however;
 - 5.2 For renewal of certificates, compliance to set indicators is a Must.

XII. THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

The applicant shall submit the application form and the documentary requirements to the concerned Field Offices.

The DSWD Field Offices shall be guided by the following activities along the accreditation process.

A. *Pre-Validation*

Upon receipt of application and required documents, the DSWD Field Offices shall act on the application **within five (5) working days**:

1. Review the veracity of the submitted documents;
2. Coordinate and acknowledge the application conformed with the following circumstances:
 - 2.1 Should the submitted documents suffice and qualify for accreditation, the acknowledgement shall specify the date of the on-site accreditation visit in coordination with the applicant;
 - 2.2 Should there be lacking documents, however, the applicant has met the minimum qualification (*Sec. VIII*), the acknowledgement should indicate the date of the on-site accreditation visit and the list of requirements to be submitted during the said visit; and
 - 2.3 Should the documents found to be insufficient and the applicant was unable to meet the set qualifications, the acknowledgement shall contain regret and thereby inform the applicant with the needed qualifications and requirement for accreditation.

B. Validation Proper

Upon confirmation of the applicants on their availability, the accreditation schedule shall be finalized. Hence, the DSWD FO Staff/Accreditor shall conduct the assessment of the applicant within a minimum period of **half-day to one (1) whole day** and shall observe the following procedure during the actual validation:

1. Courtesy call to the Local Chief Executive (LCE) or his/her designated representative/supervisor, if applicable;
2. Conduct a brief orientation to the PM Counselor applicant relative to the guidelines and provide the mechanics for the accreditation assessment;
3. Review other documents such as logbook and MEI during the on-site assessment and/or additional submitted requirements
4. Observation assessment during the actual conduct of the PMC session;
5. Conduct a post assessment session with the PMC applicant to discuss observations, if any, or to come-up with an action plan to comply with remaining requirements for submission, if necessary or to provide technical assistance on areas needing improvement, if applicable; and
6. Conduct an exit conference with the PMC applicants and Local Chief Executive or his/her designated representative or supervisor.

C. Post Validation

After the on-site accreditation assessment, the concerned DSWD Field Office shall:

1. Prepare a confirmation report on the assessment result of the PM Counselor within **seven (7) working days** after the conduct of the assessment visit;
2. If the result of assessment is favourable, the preparation and approval of the accreditation certificate shall be facilitated **within five (5) working days**.
3. Update the directory of Accredited PM Counselors at the regional website.

The whole process of accreditation shall cover at least a **total of nineteen (19) working days** including the date of application, for details you may refer to **Annex G (Process Flow and Citizens Charter)**.

XIII. ASSESSMENT FALLING BELOW THE STANDARDS

In cases where the applicant has not met set standards per assessment of the accreditor, the said applicant shall be provided with appropriate technical assistance on areas needing improvement and shall be re-assessed after three (3) months for accreditation.

Should the applicant still not qualify, he/she shall be advised to submit a new application for accreditation assessment after six (6) months from the date of re-assessment.

XIV. VALIDITY PERIOD OF THE ACCREDITATION

The Pre-Marriage Accreditation Certificate issued to an accredited PM Counselor shall be printed using the official Security Paper of the Department, duly signed by the Regional Director or his/her authorized representative and shall include the accreditation number of the PM Counselor, its validity and date of issuance.

a. For Newly Accredited

The accreditation certificate for newly accredited PM Counselors shall be valid for a period of three (3) years and will be encouraged to file application for renewal within sixty (60) days prior expiration of accreditation provided that the applicant is qualified and has submitted the required documents for renewal.

b. For Renewed Accreditation

The accreditation certificate for renewed accreditation shall be valid for a period of five (5) years and will be encouraged to file succeeding applications within sixty (60) days prior expiration of accreditation provided that the applicant is qualified and has submitted the required documents for renewal.

XV. BENEFITS OF AN ACCREDITED PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELORS

A. An Accredited PM Counselor shall be prioritized for any:

1. Continuing technical assistance to include attendance to lecture series, seminar workshops, and other forms of capability building;
2. Consultation meeting/s, program development, policy formulation and other related activities of the Department; and
3. Recommendation for scholarships, fellowships, and postgraduate studies in regional, national and foreign level courses or training relative to pre-marriage counseling.

B. Recognition/appreciation for having been accredited during flag ceremony at DSWD FOs/LGUs or in any fitting ceremony.

C. Valid practice of pre-marriage counseling service nationwide.

D. Private practitioners shall have the authority/entitlement to charge fee/honorarium for the pre-marriage counseling services rendered from those seeking his/her service based on prevailing rates which is subject to existing rules and regulations in the locality where he/she is practicing.

XVI. REPORTORIAL REQUIREMENTS

The accredited PM Counselor is required to submit his/her annual accomplishment report following the template (**Annex D**) to the Field Office every 30th of January of the succeeding year.

XVII. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

A. DSWD Field Office

1. Advocate compliance of LGUs for the effective implementation of the PMC program per JMC;
2. Issue Accreditation Certificates;
3. Address complaints and issues related to PMC through the Regional TWG.
4. Represent the Department and participate to the Regional Technical Working Group (RTWG) on PM Orientation and Counseling (PMOC) led by the POPCOM;
5. Coordinate with other concerned agencies (POPCOM, PSA, DILG, and DOH) to assist in the advocacy with the Local Government Units in the implementation of the PMC Program to ensure adequate resources, logistics requirement and policy support to the program;
6. The Standards Section shall oversee and ensure the following:
 - 6.1 Provide technical assistance to PM Counselor in complying with the accreditation standards;
 - 6.2 Conduct assessment of applicants for accreditation;
 - 6.3 Conduct annual meeting with accredited PM Counselors for updates on newly enacted laws, policies/guidelines and issues affecting families and among others;
 - 6.4 Respond to requests for resource persons/technical assistance on activities conducted by the Commission on Population related to PMC at the regional level;
 - 6.5 Maintain a regional databank of accredited, expired PMCs and LGUs; and
 - 6.6 Submit a quarterly report on PMC Accreditation to the Standards Bureau using the provided template (SB-Form-005-C) every 10th day of the first month of the quarter.

7. The Capability Building Section shall ensure the following:
 - 7.1 Provide technical assistance in the conduct/provision of PMC related capability building activities.
 - 7.2 Conduct a performance assessment of accredited PM Counselor and furnish the SWIDB with the result of the assessment.
8. The Community-Based Section shall provide technical assistance along provision of PM Counseling service.

B. DSWD Standards Bureau

1. Ensure nationwide dissemination of the guidelines;
2. Provide technical assistance to Field Offices on the interpretation of guidelines on PMC accreditation;
3. Represent the Department in the National Technical Working Group for PMOC;
4. Respond to requests for resource persons/technical assistance on activities conducted by the Commission on Population related to PMC at the national level;
5. Address complaints and issues related to PMC thru the National TWG for PMC;
6. Enhance and/or develop responsive policies related to MC accreditation;
7. Maintain a national databank of accredited and expired PMCs;
8. Monitor implementation of PMC accreditation in the Field Offices;
9. Develop and disseminate Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials on PMC accreditation; and
10. Conduct policy review whenever deemed necessary to address any policy concerns.

C. Social Welfare Institutional Development Bureau

1. Provide technical assistance in the development of PMC Manual;
2. Develop training modules along marriage/pre-marriage counseling services to enhance the skills of the accreditors/assessors as well as of the service providers;

3. Ensure continuous provision of training programs with CPD credits to Pre-Marriage Counselors and Accreditors to further enhance their competence in providing quality service to target client group.

D. Community-Based Programs and Services Bureau

1. Provide technical assistance/inputs to Field Offices and PM Counselors along provision of Pre-Marriage Counseling service; and
2. Provide technical assistance in the development of PMC Manual.

XVIII. TRANSITORY PROVISIONS

Applicants for PM Counselor Accreditation shall be given one (1) year transitory period from the effectivity of this guideline or such other period as may be determined by the Department, to comply with the training requirement of this policy (e.g basic training on pre-marriage counseling or other courses/seminars related to counseling) in the event that said applicant has yet to undergo said training provided further that:

- a. All PM Counselors with valid accreditation shall still be honored; hence, they may discharge their function as an accredited PM Counselor.
- b. All applicants for PM Counselor accreditation under this guideline shall be treated as "new applicants" upon effectivity of the provisions herein stated.

XIX. COMPLIANCE TO REPUBLIC ACT No. 11032

In the revision of this guideline, pertinent provisions on RA No. 11032 of 2018 otherwise known as the Ease of Doing Business and Efficient Government Service Delivery Act were considered, hence resulting to less requirements and defined period on processing application for accreditation.

XX. REPEALING CLAUSE

All administrative orders, rules and regulations and other issuances or parts thereof which are inconsistent with this Memorandum Circular are hereby repealed, amended, and/or modified accordingly.

As for the accreditation of Full-Fledged Marriage Counselors, the *Administrative Order No. 14 s. of 2009 entitled Omnibus Guidelines on the Accreditation of Marriage Counselors* shall remain as basis for its implementation.

XXI. EFFECTIVITY

This guideline shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the official DSWD website and filing with the University of the Philippines Law Center.

Issued this 8th day of January, 2019 at Quezon City Philippines.


ROLANDO JOSÉ D. BAUTISTA
Secretary

Annexes

1. Annex A (Application Form)
2. Annex B (Assessment Tool)
3. Annex C (Documentation Report Template)
4. Annex D (Annual Accomplishment Report)
5. Annex E (PMC Accreditation Certificate Template)
6. Annex F (Feedback Survey Template and Form)
7. Annex G (Citizen's Charter and Process Flow)

Certify True Copy:


MYRNA H. REYES
DIC-Division Chief
Records and Archives Mgt. Division

Republika ng Pilipinas
(Republic of the Philippines)
Kagawaran ng Kagalingang Panlipunan at Pagpapaunlad
(Department of Social Welfare and Development)
Region: _____

Application Form for the Accreditation of Pre-Marriage Counselor

Instruction: Kindly fill-in the needed information.

Region: _____ Date: _____
LGU (if applicable): _____

Status of Accreditation:

☐ New ☐ Renewal

Status of Assessment:

☐ 1st Assessment ☐ Re-Assessment

A. Personal Information:

Name: _____ Age: _____ Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

(Full Print)

Civil Status: ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Widow ☐ Separated Others, specify: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Mobile No/Tel.No: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Residential/Home Address: _____

Course: _____ Post Graduate studies, if any: _____

B. Work Information (if applicable):

Name of Agency/LGU: _____

Office Address: _____

Position and Designation: _____ No. of mos./years in current position: _____

No. of Years in Service: _____ No. of mos. / years as PM Counselor: _____

Total No. of PMC Sessions conducted/assisted and would-be-married couple/s served for the past year: _____; _____

Total No. of PMC Sessions conducted/assisted and would-be-married couple/s served for the past year: ____; ____

C. Previous Work Experience from Present to Past (Please use separate sheet when necessary)

<i>Name of Agency</i>	<i>Position/Designation</i>	<i>Date From-To</i>

D. Training Courses/Seminars Attended related to PMC/Counseling for the last three (3) years. (Start with the recent training/seminar attended. Please use separate sheet when necessary)

<i>Title</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>No. of Hours/Duration</i>	<i>Conducted/Organized by</i>

E. Experience in providing/assisting Pre-Marriage Counseling or other form of Counseling Service/s (Please use separate sheet when necessary)

- Describe your most significant/difficult experience/s in providing/assisting counseling to couples/clients, and how were you able to deal with this/these?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- What were your insights/learning from this/these experience/s?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Signature over Printed Name
Applicant

Republika ng Pilipinas
(Republic of the Philippines)
Kagawaran ng Kagalingang Panlipunan at Pagpapaunlad
(Department of Social Welfare and Development)
Field Office: _____

ASSESSMENT TOOL IN THE ACCREDITATION OF PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELORS

Date: _____

NAME:

(First Name, Middle Name and Last Name)

Position and/or Designation (if applicable): _____
Profession: _____

NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE OFFICE/AGENCY (if applicable):

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____ **CONTACT NO./MOBILE NO.** _____

STATUS OF ACCREDITATION (Mark the box with ✓)

☐ New ☐ Renewal

STATUS OF ASSESSMENT (Mark the box with ✓)

☐ 1st Assessment ☐ Re-Assessment

I. REQUIREMENTS

Instructions: Mark the corresponding item with ✓ if complied and x if not.

A. For New

Documentary Requirements	Compliance	Remarks (Indicate the course, date of training, Executive Order No, if any, and dates of counseling sessions conducted, and other observations/findings)
1. Certificate of graduation/college diploma or transcript of records/certified true copy of PRC ID		
2. Training Certificate/Certificates of seminars, orientation and other related activities to pre-marriage counseling/counseling attended or		

the Certified true copy of the certificate of participation/attendance, if original document is unavailable.		
3. Certification/Endorsement from immediate supervisor and/or an Executive Order that applicant is tasked to conduct/assist in the conduct of Pre-Marriage Counseling and/or other forms of counseling sessions, if applicable		
4. Documentation of PMC sessions/ other counseling sessions conducted/assisted by the applicant covering the required number of sessions as enumerated in section VIII (<i>Qualification of PM Counselors</i>)		

B. For Renewal

Documentary Requirements	Compliance	Remarks (Indicate the date & title of training, dates of counseling sessions conducted and other observations/findings)
1. Certificates of training, seminars and other related/similar activities on topics related to PMC but not limited to Gender and Development, Human Maturity, etc.		
2. Accomplishment report for the past three years preceding the application.		
3. Summary Documentation of PMC sessions conducted for the past three (3) years		
4. Other Documents		
4.2 Consolidated result of client feedback/satisfaction survey		
4.3 Summary/ Records of issued PMC Certificates		

II. KNOWLEDGE

Instructions: Mark the corresponding item with ☒ if complied and ☐ if not.

TOPICS/FOUNDATION	Compliance	Remarks (Indicate significant observations / findings /assessment)
Article 16 of the Family Code "PM Counselor must be able to explain the legal basis and purpose of the counseling session".		
PMC Topics • Key messages of each		

topic/session are emphasized and highlighted (<i>kindly refer to Annex G for the table of PMC topics and its key messages</i>)		
1. Self-Awareness/Inner Self		
2. General concept on the difference of a man and woman <i>Explain generally the difference of a man and a woman as unique individuals.</i>		
3. Family Dynamics "Explain the dynamics in the family, to include family relationships, values clarifications, <u>culture</u> , <u>child bearing and rearing</u> , <u>conflicts</u> , <u>household chores</u> , <u>finances</u> , and etc." per MEI Result		
Processing of Marriage Expectation Inventory "PM Counselor uses the MEI processing the session"		

III. SKILLS

Instructions: Mark the corresponding item with ✓ for the specific criteria met based on your assessment. All the skills enumerated below shall be assessed and shall contribute to the overall score. The total score needed to pass the assessment is indicated below.

Scores:

New Applicants	Renewal
20 points above-Passed	21 points above - Passed

CRITICAL SKILLS	Poor (1)	Fair (2)	Good (3)	Outstanding (4)	Points
1. Listening	Counselor is unable to respond to the questions of the counselee/s.	Counselor is able to respond to questions and inquiries of the counselee/s. but did not further validate and clarified their concern.	Counselor is able to validate, confirm and respond to the concerns raised by the counselee/s.	Counselor is able to observe, respond and address verbal and non-verbal cues, gestures and postures demonstrated by counselee/s.	
2. Leading	Counselor is unable to establish the purpose of the discussion.	Counselor is able to ask questions that catches the attention of the would-be-couple/s.	Counselor is able to maintain the focus of discussion on the topic/concerns raised.	Counselor is able to gently lead the conversation in directions that gives useful information.	

3. Reflecting	Counselor does not respond to the feelings expressed by the counselee/s.	Counselor is able to respond to the feelings expressed by the counselee/s.	Counselor is able to bring or to surface the feelings felt by the counselee/s.	Counselor is able to articulate the feelings/thoughts of the counselee/s based on his/her response.
4. Summarizing	Counselor is unable to put together the ideas/concerns/feelings expressed by the counselee/s.	Counselor is able to gather the thoughts/feelings/concerns expressed by the counselee/s.	Counselor is able to gather the thoughts/feelings/concerns expressed by the counselee/s' and is able to put the thought together	Counselor is able to synthesize the key discussions and experience of the counselee/s during the entire session.
5. Informing	Counselor is unable to give necessary facts and information relevant to the situation of the counselee/s.	Counselor is able to share simple facts and information.	Counselor is able to give information based on what is shared by the counselee/s.	Counselor is able to provide relevant facts and information appropriate to the situation of the counselee/s.
6. Facilitating	Counselor is unable to draw opinions and/or thoughts from the counselee/s.	Counselor recognizes the participation and sharing of counselee/s.	Counselor has provided activities which encourages participation among counselee/s.	Counselor is able to draw participation from the counselee/s on the session conducted.
7. Documenting	Counselor is unable to capture relevant information and observations in the documentation report on sessions provided.	Counselor's has a record and information of the session conducted.	Counselor's documentation report contains information and details on the discussions and agreements during the session.	Counselor's documentation report has captured essential information/details on both verbal and non-verbal cues demonstrated by the counselee/s during the session.
Over-All Points				

Remarks/Other Observations:

IV. ATTITUDE

Instructions: Mark the corresponding item with ☒ if satisfied and ☐ if not satisfied. All qualities are essential and therefore should be satisfied in order to pass the accreditation.

ESSENTIAL QUALITIES	Compliance	Remarks (Indicate significant observations/findings/assessment)
1. Creates a friendly and comfortable atmosphere among the would-be-couple/s. Ex: Greets the couple politely, asks if they are comfortable, etc.		
2. Uses appropriate body language such as non-threatening posture, maintaining eye contact and respecting the would-be-couple/s. personal space. Tip: Hand and body languages are not stiff and awkward.		
3. Maintains a reassuring and comforting way of speech—the tone of voice, speed of speech and style of delivery. Tip: Sensitive to the couple, does not raise voice or call out names to catch attention or make unnecessary remarks that would make counselee awkward.		
4. Remains impartial and non-judgmental. Tip: Does not make unnecessary examples out of the counselee's responses.		
5. Shows genuine openness and enthusiasm for the couple's needs and welfare. Tip: Patient in processing the counselees' responses.		
6. Demonstrates willingness to learn, to try new things, and to see alternatives. Ex: Encourages counselees to speak out and share their insights.		

V. RATIO

Instructions: Mark the corresponding item with ✓ if complied and x if not.

Ratio	Compliance	Remarks (Indicate significant observations/findings/assessment)
1 PM Counselor: 6 would-be-married couple/s		
For every excess of one (1) to four (4) would-be-married couple/s per session, the PM Counselor should have one (1) assistant/co-facilitator in conducting the session.		

Mode of Verification: Accomplishment Report, Documentation Report, and Certification of the Supervisor/Resolution identifying the concerned personnel who shall assist/co-facilitate in the conduct of PMC session/s.

VI. VENUE

Instructions: Mark the corresponding item with ✓ if complied and x if not.

	Compliance	Remarks (Indicate significant observations/findings/assessment)
1. Promotes an atmosphere of privacy and interaction between the pre-marriage counselor and would-be-couple/s.		
2. Well ventilated, well-lighted and free from any form of distraction/disturbance.		
3. Permanent venue with adequate space and necessary equipment and supplies for conduct of PMC sessions.		

VI. ASSESSMENT

VII. RECOMMENDATION

Assessed by:

Signature over Printed Name

Designation and Position

Date: _____

DOCUMENTATION REPORT ON COUNSELING/PM COUNSELING SESSION

1. Date of Session: _____

2. Total No. of would-be-couples served: _____
18 and below 25 years old _____; 25 years old above _____

3. Issues and Concerns

Concerns/Questions/Issues/Highlights	Clarifications /Recommendations

4. Recommendations for Future Action:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Prepared by:

Signature over Printed Name_____
Position and Designation

Date: _____

Noted by:

Supervisor

ANNUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT REPORT

CY _____

Region _____

Name of PM Counselor: _____

Office/Agency Name and Address, if applicable: _____

Total No. of Would-be-Couple (s) served: _____

Total No. of PM Certificates signed and issued: _____

Average appraisal in the Feedback/Satisfaction Survey: _____

Table 1

Age Cluster	No. of Couples Served
Above 25 years old	
Above 18 and below 25 years old	
TOTAL	

Table 2: Issues and Concerns

Issues /Concerns/Problems Encountered	Action Taken	Recommendations

Table 3: Over-all Score for Satisfaction Feedback Survey

No. of Administered Satisfaction Feedback Survey Form	Average Score/Adjectival Rating

Key Learning Insights as Counselor

Prepared by:_____
Signature over Printed Name_____
Position and Designation

Date Accomplished: _____

Noted by:_____
Supervisor

Republika ng Pilipinas
(Republic of the Philippines)
Kagawaran ng Kagalingang Panlipunan at Pagpapaunlad
(Department of Social Welfare and Development)

Municipality/Branch/Region

CERTIFICATE of MARRIAGE COUNSELING

This is to certify that _____ and
_____ have undergone pre-marriage
counseling on _____ of _____, CY _____.
(day) (month)

This certification is issued as a pre-requisite for securing the marriage
license of the above couple as provided for in Article 16 of the Family Code.

Signature over Printed Name

Position/Profession: _____

Date: _____

DSWD Accreditation No. _____

SATISFACTION FEEDBACK SURVEY

Service/Intervention: Pre-Marriage Counseling Session

Office Address: _____

Name of PM Counselor: _____

Date of PM Counseling Session: _____

Instruction: Rate the kind of service provided from 1 to 5 based on the below listed indicators where 1 as the highest and 5 as the lowest.

No.	Areas for Rating	Rating
	SESSION	
1	The session was comfortable.	
2	The session was informative.	
3	The session was able to give me ideas on what to expect on my marriage life.	
4	The session was helpful in discovering my inner self and that of my partner.	
5	The session has given me an opportunity to reflect on my decision to pursue with the marriage.	
	COUNSELOR	
1	The PM Counselor was friendly and accommodating.	
2	The PM Counselor was facilitative and helpful.	
3	The PM Counselor made us feel comfortable during the entire session.	
4	The PM Counselor was open to our questions and concerns.	
5	The PM Counselor was knowledgeable.	
	TOTAL SCORE	
	Average Score and Adjectival Rate	

Do you have other comment/s? Feel free to share them here:

Signature of Applicant: _____

Average Score = Total Score/ No. of items

1 to 1.5 (**Impressed**); 1.6- 2.0 (**Delighted**); 2.1-3.0 (**Happy**); 3.1-4.5 (**Passive**); and 4.5-5 (**Disappointed**)

Template for the Consolidation of Satisfaction Survey

No. of Sessions	No. of Surveys	Total Average Score	Over-all Average Score
-----------------	----------------	---------------------	------------------------

*Over-all Average Score = Total Average Score/No. of Surveys

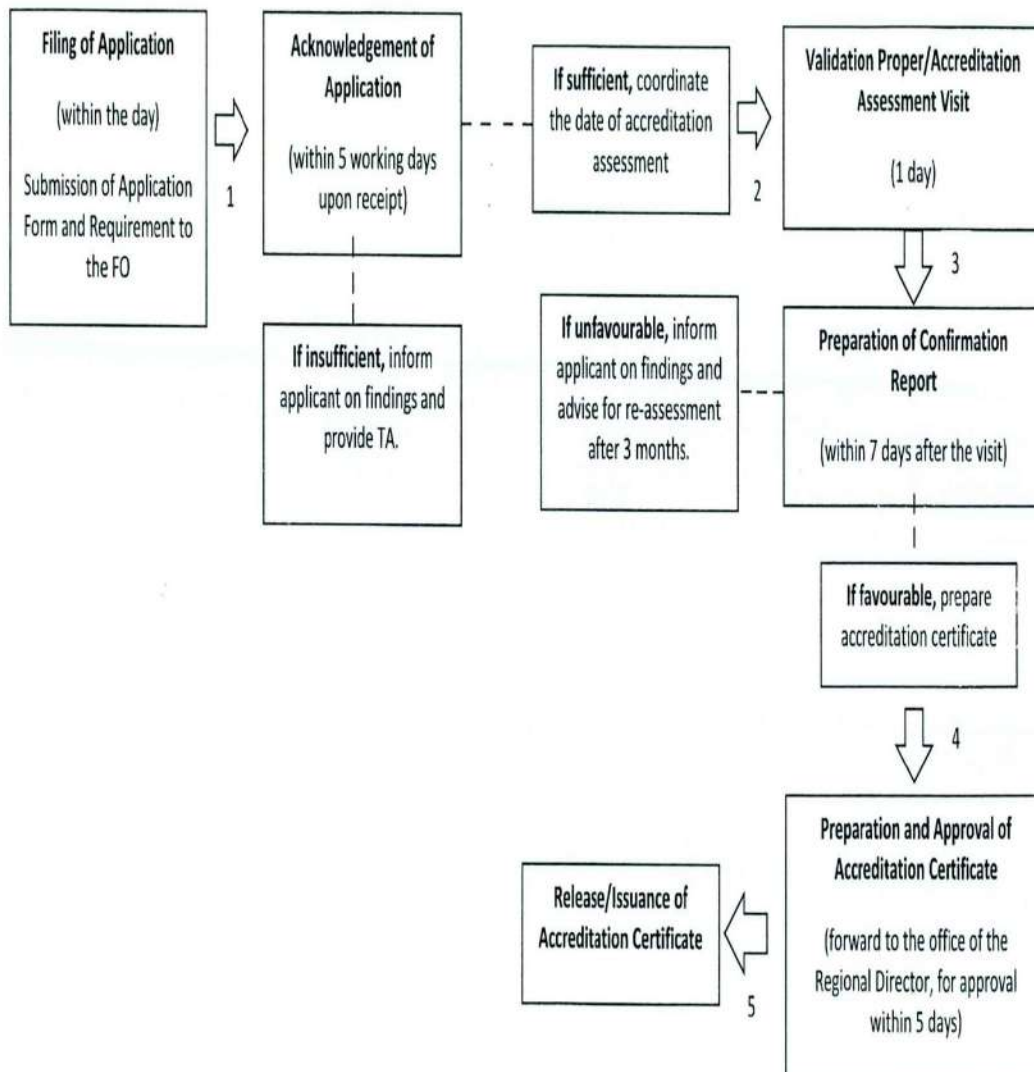
ACCREDITATION OF PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELOR

Annex G_PMC Form

Step	Client Action	Necessary Form/s	Office Activity/Process	Office/Staff Responsible	Location	Fees	Duration
1	Submits Application form together with the complete set of documents	Application form and Requirements	Records receipt of application and forward to the assigned staff	Standards Section/ Administrative Personnel	DSWD Field Office		within the day
2	Awaits for acknowledgement or notification relative to the application		<p>Reviews and assesses the completeness of the requirements/documents submitted to wit:</p> <p>If found complete/sufficient, acknowledge receipt of application and notifies applicant and coordinate for the schedule of assessment visit.</p> <p>If found insufficient/have not met required qualification and requirements, acknowledge receipt and notify the applicant on the lacking requirements and provide necessary technical assistance.</p>	Standards Section/Assigned Technical Staff	DSWD Field Office		<p>within five (5) working days</p> <p>Classified as simple transaction</p>
3	Prepare for the Actual Assessment	PMC Accreditation Tool	<p>Conducts validation assessment to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Brief overview on the assessment process; -Observation on the counseling session; ; and -Exit Conference 	Standards Section/Assigned Technical Staff	DSWD Field Office		one (1) working day

Step	Client Action	Necessary Form/s	Office Activity/Process	Office/Staff Responsible	Location	Fees	Duration
4	Awaits the approval of the application/ confirmation report/issuance of the Certificate	PMC Accreditation Tool	<p>Final Assessment of the application documents and result of the actual accreditation assessment.</p> <p>Prepares the confirmation report, with the following possible content:</p> <p>If favorable, inform applicant on the approval of his/her accreditation.</p> <p>If unfavorable, recommend for re-assessment.</p>	Standards Section/Assigned Technical Staff	DSWD Field Office		<p>within seven (7) working days after the visit</p> <p>classified as complex transaction as this requires careful thought and assessment on the part of the accreditor</p>
		Confirmation Letter/Assessment report and accreditation certificate	Forwards to the office of the RD for approval/signature.	Standards Section/Administrative Staff	DSWD Field Office		
		Confirmation Report and Accreditation Certificate	Approval and signature of the documents	Office of the Regional Director/Authorized representative	DSWD Field Office		within five (5) working days
5	Receives the Accreditation Certificate	Confirmation Report and Accreditation Certificate	Release of Certificate	Standards Section/Records Section/ Administrative Staff	DSWD Field Office		for mail: within two (2) days; for personal receipt: per agreed schedule

PMC ACCREDITATION PROCES FLOW



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank the following individuals, regional offices and LGUs for their support and contribution in the development of the PMC Manual: Part II

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*Special thanks to the Commission on Population and Development
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