
PRESS RELEASE
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**PCC supports pro-competition measures
in inter-agency streamlining of telco infra permits**

The Philippine Competition Commission (PCC) joins other agencies in issuing the guidelines meant to streamline the processing of permits and allow infrastructure sharing to expedite the rollout of telecommunications and internet infrastructure.

On 25 October 2021, the Anti-Red Tape Authority (ARTA) and the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) inked their Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 1, series 2021 together with the PCC, Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD), Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP), National Telecommunications Commission (NTC), Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC), and National Electrification Administration (NEA).

The JMC streamlines the issuance of permits for the erection of poles, construction of underground fiber ducts, and installation of aerial and underground cables. It directs local government units to require only a single excavation permit for a series of projects within their area, and to set up a one-stop shop to process applications. It also removes redundant requirements and limits the processing time to seven (7) working days.

“Cutting red-tape and sharing of essential infrastructure lower the barriers to entry and unlock market efficiencies. The pro-competition features of the JMC will provide relief to millions of subscribers through improved telecommunication services,” said PCC Chairperson Arsenio M. Balisacan.

The JMC prescribes the sharing of existing poles and other physical infrastructures, and prohibits anti-competitive acts relating to their access. Consistent with competition principles, it requires owners to provide other market players access to such infrastructures on a non-discriminatory basis, and prohibits them from giving preferential access to related firms. Refusal to grant access should be based on

objective, transparent, and proportionate criteria, such as lack of technical suitability and available space.

As one of the oversight agencies, the PCC is tasked to prohibit anti-competitive acts in relation to the JMC, and to adopt rules detailing the procedure for access requests and transparency of information concerning poles and other physical infrastructures.

“To achieve a truly inclusive connectivity for Filipinos, competition should be present in the different aspects of operations in the telecommunications sector. Through the JMC, the increase of market players at the network level is now complemented by the accelerated rollout of infrastructure on the ground,” added Balisacan.

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