

EXCERPT TAKEN FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE REGULAR SESSION OF THE SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF THE CITY OF ALAMINOS, PANGASINAN HELD ON NOVEMBER 29, 2022

PRESENT:

Vice Mayor Jan Marianne R. Fontelera	- Presiding Officer
Councilor Michelle S. Segundera	- Presiding Officer Pro-Tempore
Councilor Carolyn D. Sison	- Majority Floor Leader
Councilor Kelvin Theus O. Humilde	- Minority Floor Leader
Councilor Verna S. D. Rabago	- Assistant Majority Floor Leader
Councilor Arthur C. Celeste, Jr.	- Member
Councilor Apple Joy B. Tolentino	- Member
Councilor Joselito O. Fontelera	- Member
Councilor Raul B. Bacay	- Member
Councilor Oscar A. Boling, Sr.	- Member
LBP Salvador P. Dona	- Ex-Officio Member
PPSKP Lovely V. Bernabe	- Ex-Officio Member

ABSENT:

Councilor Dahlia M. de Leon	- On official business
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ORDINANCE NO. 2022-18

AN ORDINANCE ENJOINING ALL BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENTS AND LOCAL TRANSPORTATION IN THE CITY OF ALAMINOS, PANGASINAN TO ADOPT QR PH DIGITAL PAYMENTS IN LINE WITH THE PALENG-QR PH PROGRAM

Sponsor:

Councilor Raul B. Bacay

WHEREAS, financial inclusion is defined as having effective access to a wide range of financial products and services by all Filipinos. Financial services, such as savings account, payment, credit, and remittances are tools that can help Filipinos improve their welfare and achieve their goals for their household and enterprises;

WHEREAS, account ownership is considered the gateway to financial inclusion. Through a formal account with a banking/financial institution, one can not only safely save money, but also conveniently send and receive cash assistance, collect payment from customers, and pay taxes, purchases and bills;

WHEREAS, payments are basic financial transactions. As demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic, the digitalization of payments proved to be effective in facilitating the continuation of business and government transactions amid mobility restrictions. This has enabled the government and private institutions to provide lifelines of support for the vulnerable sectors. To be able to transact digital payments, one needs to have an account;

WHEREAS, over the years, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) has established the regulatory foundation to promote account ownership and digital payments in the country. This includes the introduction of the basic deposit account (BDA) and e-money as a no-frills and affordable account designed for the low-income unbanked clients; the cash agent regulation which allows banks to tap third-party retail outlets, such as pawnshops and convenience stores to serve as cash-in and cash-out (CICO) points for bank clients; the launch of InstaPay to facilitate real-time electronic fund transfers between accounts held in different participating financial institutions; and the launch of QR Ph to promote use of quick response (QR) technology as an expedient and cost-efficient means for digital payment;

WHEREAS, launched in November 2019, QR Ph is the national QR code standard which serves as an instrument for cost-efficient digital payments, whether for person-to-person (P2P) or person-to-merchant (P2M) transactions. With QR Ph, small entrepreneurs need not invest in costly equipment, such as point of sale (POS) terminals to accept digital payments from their customers. Instead, merchants only need to print and display the QR Code tied to their transaction account, which their customers can scan to pay digitally;

WHEREAS, on 28 January 2022, the Financial Inclusion Steering Committee (FISC) launched the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI) 2022-2028 as a six-year blueprint to achieve the vision of driving financial inclusion toward broad-based growth and financial resilience. The NSFI aims to harness a coordinated whole-of-government approach to accelerate financial inclusion in support of the country's broader inclusive and sustainable development agenda. The FISC, chaired by the BSP and with 20 agencies as members including the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), oversees and drives the implementation of the NSFI;

WHEREAS, one of the priority initiatives in the NSFI is the promotion of digital payments in markets and local transport by utilizing QR Ph. Payment for local transportation and purchases from the public market are part of the daily payment pattern of a typical Filipino. By being able to pay market purchases and local transport fares digitally through their accounts, the public will realize the convenience and benefits of using a transaction account and other digital financial services (DFS). Promoting digital payments among market vendors and tricycle drivers is thereby crucial in expanding the country's digital payments ecosystem toward greater financial inclusion;

WHEREAS, in view of the above, the DILG and BSP jointly developed the Paleng-QR Ph Program to promote digital payment in public markets and local transportation in support of the NSFI;

WHEREAS, The Paleng-QR Ph Program builds on the QR Ph initiative by promoting financial inclusion and cashless transactions at public markets, community stores, and local transportation hubs around the country. It aspires to build a digital

ecosystem based on basic payment behaviors among Filipinos, raise the utility of transaction accounts, and aid in the promotion and adoption of these accounts;

WHEREAS, on 22 June 2022, The DILG and the BSP released Joint Memorandum Circular (JMC) No. 01, Series of 2022 on the Paleng-QR Ph program, which established guidelines enjoining Local Government Units' (LGUs) participation in the Paleng-QR Program. The JMC provided the guidelines for the country-wide adoption and implementation of Paleng-QR Ph Program by the LGUs to promote digital payments among market vendors, sari-sari store owners, tricycle drivers, consumers, and commuters;

WHEREAS, it is in the best interests if the public will adopt to Paleng-QR Ph Program within the LGU-Alaminos City;

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE SANGGUNIANG PANLUNGSOD OF THE CITY OF ALAMINOS, PANGASINAN, IN SESSION ASSEMBLED, that:

SECTION 1. TITLE. — This Ordinance shall be known as the “**PALENG-QR PH ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF ALAMINOS, PANGASINAN.**”

SECTION 2. DEFINITION OF TERMS. —

- a) **Digital payment** – refers to a monetary payment transaction between two (2) parties through a digital payment instrument in which both the payer and the payee use an electronic channel.
- b) **Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT)** – refers to transfer of funds between two (2) transaction accounts in the same or in different financial institutions supervised by the BSP, which are initiated and received using electronic devices and channels to transmit payment transactions.
- c) **InstaPay** – an electronic fund transfer facility offered by a participating bank or electronic money issuers (EMI) to its clients to allow them to instantly transfer funds from their account to another held in other participating banks or EMI in the Philippines.
- d) **Public transportation** – a motorized vehicle granted a franchise by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to operate and transport passengers within LGU-Alaminos City.
- e) **Public Motorized Tricycle** – is a tricycle-for-hire rendering transport services on regular trips and rates to the general public.
- f) **QR code** – short for “Quick Response code”, is a two-dimensional image-based bar code capable of holding large amounts of information. QR codes store information using patterns of black dots and white spaces, arranged in a square grid. It can be read by a smartphone camera that is equipped with a barcode reader. When personal and financial information are stored in it, a QR code can be used to send and receive money such as payment transactions. A recipient of the funds shows his /her QR code to the payer or sender who will scan the code to initiate the payment transaction.

- g) **QR Ph** – QR Ph is the national QR Code standard that allows a quick, low-cost, and safe method to pay, transfer to and receive funds from other bank and e-money accounts in the Philippines. This is aligned with the Europay-Mastercard VISA Co (EMVCo) standard, the global standard for secure payments, which unifies the various domestic cashless payment schemes that make use of the QR code as a form factor.
- h) **Seller** – shall refer to a person who sells goods, commodities, or foodstuffs other than inside a public market.
- i) **Buyer** – shall refer to a person who purchases goods, commodities or foodstuffs to a vendor or seller.
- j) **Vendor** – shall mean a person who sells goods, commodities, or foodstuffs, within the public market.
- k) **Ambulant Vendor** – also known as "*Mobile Trader*" or "*Peddler*" is a person who, either for himself or commission, travels from place to place and sells his goods or sells and offers to deliver the same, using a vehicle.
- l) **Hawkers** – refer to ambulant vendors who set their wares on daily basis.
- m) **Transaction Account** – refers to a bank or e-money account held with a BSP-regulated financial service provider (FSP) that can be used to store, send, and receive funds. Examples of transaction accounts are as follows:
 - 1. **Basic Deposit Account (BDA)** – refers to interest or non-interest-bearing bank account with an initial minimum deposit of no more than one hundred pesos (Php 100.00), no minimum maintaining balance, no dormancy charges, maximum balance of fifty thousand pesos (Php 50,000.00) and with simplified know-your-customer or KYC requirements.
 - 2. **Electronic Money (E-money)** – a monetary value as represented by a claim on its issuer, that is:
 - a. electronically stored in an instrument or device;
 - b. issued against receipt of funds of an amount not lesser in value than the monetary value issued;
 - c. accepted as a means of payment by persons or entities other than the issuer;
 - d. withdrawable in cash or cash equivalent;
 - e. issued in accordance with Section 702 of the BSP's Manual of Regulations for Banks.

SECTION 3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION. — This Ordinance shall cover the following:

- a. All public market vendors;
- b. All public transportation in the City of Alaminos;
- c. All stores and business establishments, including but not limited to, sari-sari stores, ambulant vendors and hawkers.

SECTION 4. QR PH ENABLED PAYMENTS. — All public market vendors, sari-sari store owners, Tricycle Operators and Driver Associations (TODAs)/local transportation and other local merchants in the City of Alaminos are hereby enjoined to make QR Ph payments available for their customers, in line with the Paleng-QR Ph program.

Public transportation, public market and business establishments, at their own discretion, may select as their alternative mode of payment from any QR Ph-ready financial service providers (FSP) participating in the Paleng-QR Ph program of the City,

Provided, however, that nothing in this Ordinance shall prohibit payment in cash when otherwise chosen by the patrons, consumers, buyers, passenger, or clients.

SECTION 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES. —

a) The LGU shall:

1. Authorize the City Mayor to enter into and sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), on behalf of the City Government of Alaminos with the chosen qualified FSPs for the Program implementation if warranted.
2. Coordinate with key local stakeholders, such as the vendor associations, TODA, and the market superintendents, to ensure effective implementation of the Program;
3. Invite FSPs to participate in the program and negotiate for deals/special offers to encourage target participants to open a transaction account and use QR code digital payment. The LGU can partner with as many participating FSPs as deemed appropriate;
4. Assist target participants (e.g., vendors and tricycle operators) in the opening of accounts by, among others, providing additional relevant documents, such as LGU certification to support the know-your-customer (KYC) requirements of the FSP;
5. Organize a special "*account opening day(s)*," in coordination with participating FSPs, to ensure ease and convenience of account opening by covered users and their clients, including the provision of QR code printouts that can be readily displayed in their stores, terminals, and vehicles;
6. Coordinate with the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) in line with the latter's programs such as the Free Wi-Fi for All (FW4A);
7. Provide banners, standees and other Paleng-QR Ph markers in public markets, TODA terminals, and tricycles using the template provided (Annex "B"): incorporate the standard branding of the Paleng-QR Ph (Annex "C") in the promotional and information materials used for the program's IECC;

8. The LGU shall develop its information, education and communication campaign (IECC) to promote and sustain the objective of the Paleng-QR Ph program. This will cover, among others, a financial literacy program using appropriate channels on key topics such as effective use of digital payments in business; financial services for micro and small enterprises; and financial consumer protection.
9. Disseminate through appropriate channels/methods (e.g., LGU's official social media pages) Paleng-QR Ph, financial inclusion and financial literacy materials developed by the BSP and other stakeholders.
10. Maintain a record on participating merchants under the Paleng-QR Ph program.

b) The Participating Financial Service Providers (FSPs) shall:

1. Provide personnel, customer assistance booths, and other appropriate resources, including QR code printouts, deemed reasonable to ensure successful conduct of LGUs of Paleng-QR Ph program "account opening day(s)":
2. Provide target users with appropriate materials on opening a transaction account, using QR Code payments and other digital financial services;
3. Provide resource speakers and contents, as requested, for the LGU's financial literacy program;
4. Assign competent contact person(s) to the LGU for efficient and timely coordination on the program implementation; and
5. Provide special offers for accounts opened under the Paleng-QR Ph program such as free microinsurance coverage for a certain period (e.g., three months; t-shirts and other wearables; and special user rebates for a limited period.

Participation of FSPs in the program shall be non-exclusive.

c) The Covered merchants and local transportation shall:

1. Open and maintain a QR Ph-ready transaction account. In the event the covered entity does not have an account, entity commits to have an account six months after effectivity of the ordinance;
2. Explicitly display their QR Ph code in their store or vehicle where it is visible to customers and passengers;
3. Make QR PH payments available as a method of payment:
4. Participate in the information campaign, financial literacy program and other relevant activities that will be facilitated by the LGU and FSPs.

SECTION 6. COMPLIANCE MONITORING. — The Business Permit and Licensing Office (BPLO) with the assistance of the City Market and Cemetery Section (CMCS) and the Transport Regulation Unit (TRU) with the assistance of the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board, the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Public Order & Safety Office (POSO) are hereby tasked to monitor compliance to this Ordinance.

SECTION 7. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. — All ordinances, rules, orders and regulations contrary to or inconsistent with this ordinance if any are hereby repealed, modified or amended according

SECTION 8. EFFECTIVITY. — This ordinance shall take effect fifteen (15) days following the publication in a newspaper of general circulation.

SO ORDAINED/ENACTED....

I HEREBY CERTIFY to the correctness of the foregoing ordinance consisting of seven (7) pages including this page.

LUZ B. VALE
Secretary

ATTESTED:

JAN MARIONNE R. FONTELERA
City Vice Mayor/Presiding Officer

MICHELLE S. SEGUNDERA
Presiding Officer Pro-Tempore

CAROLYN D. SISON
Majority Floor Leader

KELVIN THEUS O. HUMILDE
Minority Floor Leader

VERNA S. D. RABAGO
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Ex-Officio Member

LOVERLY V. BERNABE, PPSKP
Ex-Officio Member

APPROVED BY:

ARTH BRYAN C. CELESTE
City Mayor

Date