



PHILIPPINE CLEARING HOUSE CORPORATION

CICS OM No. 23-040
January 25, 2023

TO : All Member/Participant Banks
RE : **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW CHECK DESIGN STANDARDS**

1. As recommended by the Clearing Officers Club, Inc. and approved by the PCHC Board, we wish to inform that the implementation of the New Check Design Standards and Specifications is **deferred to May 1, 2024**.
2. To recall PCHC's first Circular on the new Check Design Standards issued on February 11, 2019 (*CICS Operating Memo No. 19-030*), the changes introduced are as follows:
 - 2.1. Standard Issue Date Format adopted is MM-DD-YYYY
 - 2.2. Date Format guide is indicated below the date line
 - 2.3. Individual box is provided for each character of the Issue Date
 - 2.4. Peso Sign is moved out of the box (*Amount in Figures*)
 - 2.5. Boxed white spaces for writing the date of issue, amount in figures, and signature of Issuer /Drawer (*as illustrated in the picture below*)

The image shows a sample check form from 'Any Bank'. The form is yellow and features a date line with a grid for MM-DD-YYYY. The date line is labeled 'DATE' and has a 'P' symbol to its left. Below the date line, there are two boxed white spaces for writing the date of issue, amount in figures, and signature of Issuer /Drawer. The form also includes fields for ACCOUNT No., ACCOUNT NAME, CHECK No., and BRSTN. The bank name 'Any Bank' is prominently displayed, along with its branch name and address. A vertical watermark 'COPYRIGHT COPY' is visible on the right side of the form.

3. The foregoing changes are intended to:
 - 3.a. set a standard or uniform format of writing the date on checks in order to avoid misinterpretation of date of issue; and
 - 3.b. enhance check processing capabilities by providing banks better optical character recognition features that are needed for an automated check verification system.

4. This deferment in implementation is effected with a view to allowing more time for bank clients to exhaust remaining checks or base stocks of printed Checks in their possession. In this connection, we suggest for the clearing banks/participants to inform their clients that -
 - 4.a. **old format checks** (i.e., without boxes) with date of issue written in alphanumeric are acceptable for clearing provided they are dated April 30, 2024 or earlier **and** they are presented for deposit prior to the 180th day from issue date;
 - 4.b. the issue date in alphanumeric on **old format checks** may be written in any sequence, i.e., Month-Day-Year or Day-Month-Year or Year-Month-Day. However, alphanumeric Month-Day-Year sequence is **preferable** for consistency with the MM-DD-YYYY sequence prescribed for issue date in numeric format."
 - 4.c. **notwithstanding the deferment**, nonetheless, the date of issue on checks that are in the **"new format"** (i.e., with boxed spaces) has to be written now in numeric format and strictly in the MM-DD-YYYY or MM/DD/YYYY sequence.
5. Clearing banks/participants are likewise enjoined to again remind their respective clients about the new Check design standards and the purpose of the changes being implemented.
6. This Operating Memo is effective immediately and supersedes OM No. 21-036 issued April 16, 2021.
7. Please be guided accordingly.


EMMANUEL E. BARCENA
President & CEO