

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 8557

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE PHILIPPINE JUDICIAL
ACADEMY, DEFINING ITS POWERS AND FUNCTIONS,
APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR, AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the
Philippines in Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. It is hereby declared a policy of the State to ensure an efficient and credible Judiciary. Towards this end, it is imperative to provide members of the Judiciary and prospective applicants with continuing good education and training.

SEC. 2. To carry out the policy enunciated in Section 1 hereof, there is hereby established a Philippine Judicial Academy, hereinafter referred to as PHILJA, which shall be a separate component unit of the Supreme Court and shall operate under its administration, supervision and control.

SEC. 3. The PHILJA shall serve as a training school for justices, judges, court personnel, lawyers and aspirants to judicial posts. For this purpose, it shall provide and implement a curriculum for judicial education, and shall conduct seminars, workshops and other training programs designed to upgrade their legal knowledge, moral fitness, probity, efficiency, and capability. It shall perform such other functions and duties as may be necessary in carrying out its mandate.

SEC. 4. The Academy shall be located in Tagaytay City, or in such other place or places as the Supreme Court may determine.

SEC. 5. The Academy shall have a Governing Board to be known as the Board of Trustees, composed of the Chief Justice of

the Supreme Court as *ex officio* Chairman, the Senior Associate Justice of the Supreme Court as *ex officio* Vice Chairman; the Chancellor of the Academy, the Presiding Justices of the Court of Appeals and the Sandiganbayan, the Court Administrator, the President of the Philippine Judges Association; and the President of the Philippine Association of Law Schools, as *ex officio* members; and a Judge of a first level court, as appointive member, who shall have served as such for at least five (5) years and has taught in a reputable law school for the same number of years.

The appointive member shall be appointed by the Supreme Court and shall serve for a term of one (1) calendar year, and may be reappointed for another term.

The *ex officio* members of the Board of Trustees shall serve as such for the duration of their incumbency in their respective offices.

All members shall serve without compensation but shall be entitled to reasonable *honoraria*/allowance for the performance of their duties.

SEC. 6. The Executive Officials of the Academy shall be composed of a Chancellor, a Vice Chancellor and an Executive Secretary, to be appointed by the Supreme Court for a term of two (2) years and without prejudice to subsequent reappointments.

The Chancellor and Vice Chancellor shall have as requisite qualifications, unless otherwise provided by the Supreme Court, meritorious service as member of a collegiate appellate court for at least five (5) years, or as Regional Trial Court Judge for at least ten (10) years and, in all these instances, meritorious service as teacher of law in a reputable law school for at least five (5) years.

The Executive Secretary shall have the same requisite qualifications and the same compensation as a Regional Trial Court Judge. He or she shall serve on a full time basis and shall be the same *ex officio* Recorder-Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

The incumbent Executive Officials of the Academy who were duly appointed by the Supreme Court and qualified as such shall continue in their respective positions until the expiration of their initial terms, without prejudice to their re-appointment as provided in this section.

The Chancellor shall have the compensation and privileges of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court.

The Vice Chancellor shall have the compensation and privileges of an Associate Justice of the Court of Appeals.

For purposes of retirement privileges, seniority, and other benefits, service of the executive officials in the Academy shall be considered as service in the Judiciary except in those cases not allowed by law.

The executive officials of the Academy shall not engage in the private practice of any profession.

SEC. 7. The Academy shall be staffed by a Corps of Professorial Lecturers. A Lecturer shall be nominated by any member of the Board of Trustees. Upon a majority vote of the Board, the nomination shall be submitted to the Supreme Court for approval and formal appointment for a term of two (2) years without prejudice to subsequent reappointments.

SEC. 8. The academic courses and the publication of a Judicial Journal and other legal writings shall be determined by the Chancellor in consultation with the Corps of Professorial Lecturers and approved by the Board of Trustees.

SEC. 9. The criteria for the selection and admission of participants shall be determined by the Chancellor in consultation with the Corps of Professorial Lecturers and approved by the Board of Trustees.

SEC. 10. As soon as PHILJA shall have been fully organized with the composition of its Corps of Professorial Lecturers and other personnel, only participants who have

completed the programs prescribed by the Academy and have satisfactorily complied with all the requirements incident thereto may be appointed or promoted to any position or vacancy in the Judiciary.

SEC. 11. The PHILJA may enter into consortium agreements with educational and training institutions for the development and implementation of programs for orientation, career development and continuing judicial education: *Provided*, That the *honoraria*, allowances, and other emoluments of personnel from the institutions involved with the consortium agreements shall not be taken from the funds of the PHILJA.

SEC. 12. All conventions of judges and court personnel shall include pertinent Academy educational programs under such rules and requirements as the Academy may prescribe.

SEC. 13. All income, legacies, gifts and donations for the benefit of the Academy or for its support or maintenance shall be exempt from the payment of all forms of taxes, donors and donees' taxes, fees, income tax, real estate, assessments and other charges of the government, its branches and subdivisions.

SEC. 14. All legacies, gifts and donations to the Academy established under this law shall constitute a special fund to be known as the Judicial Academy Fund. This fund shall be administered and disbursed by the Board of Trustees of the Academy exclusively for the purposes of this Act.

SEC. 15. All properties, real or personal, now pertaining to the Academy shall be deemed automatically transferred to the Academy established herein upon the effectivity of this Act, unless otherwise provided in the original deed of conveyance, donation, grant or transfer.

SEC. 16. The amount necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act, including the operation, maintenance and improvement of the Academy shall be included in the General

Appropriations Act for 1999 and every year thereafter under the program of the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

SEC. 17. If any of the sections or provisions of this Act is adjudged invalid, all its other provisions not affected thereby shall remain in force.

SEC. 18. All laws, rules and regulations that may be inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or amended accordingly.

SEC. 19. This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its complete publication in the *Official Gazette* or in at least two (2) newspapers of general circulation, whichever comes earlier.

Approved, February 26, 1998.