

UNI CALLS FOR REINSTATEMENT OF OVER 80,000 BARANGAY HEALTH WORKERS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Saturday 16 December 2023, by [Uni Global Union](#) (Date first published: 6 December 2023).

On Friday, 1 December, more than 80,000 community health workers in the Philippines, commonly referred to as Barangay Health Workers (BHW), found themselves suddenly out of work with no notice.

The shocking development took place soon after new officeholders who won the recent Barangay elections held on 30 October, assumed their position, and unceremoniously terminated all BHWs that had been appointed by previous officials. In the Philippines, Barangays are the basic administrative division equivalent to a village, district, or ward. In metropolitan areas, the term refers to an inner-city neighborhood or a borough.

The **UNI Global Union Philippine Liaison Council (UNI PLC)** issued a [statement](#) on Saturday (2 December), condemning in the strongest possible terms *“the unjustified, cruel and inhumane termination of employment by more than 80,000 Barangay Health Workers nationwide as a result of the recently concluded Barangay elections.”*

BHWs play a critical role in ensuring the country’s healthcare system is brought to these local levels, delivering basic health education and primary healthcare services such as maternal and child health, vaccinations, first aid and environmental health, and providing referral services to primary health facilities. These workers were on the frontline during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, risking their health and their lives.

UNI Asia & Pacific Regional Secretary Rajendra Acharya said, “We are very stunned by this mass termination with basically no notice to the affected workers. We strongly urge the Philippines Government and the newly elected Barangay officials to reinstate all the BHWs to ensure that basic health services are not disrupted in the communities.

The UNI PLC also said this unwarranted termination violated the Joint Memorandum Circular No. 2023-001 issued by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) and Department of Health (DOH) on the **Retention and Continued Service of Barangay Health Workers**.

The joint memorandum reinforces the Republic Act (RA) 7883 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) in ensuring the uninterrupted delivery of basic health services by the Barangay Health Workers to their respective communities.

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