



Republic of the Philippines
QUEZON CITY COUNCIL
Quezon City
22nd City Council

PO22CC-442

113th Regular Session

ORDINANCE NO. SP- 3432, S-2025

AN ORDINANCE MANDATING A PAPERLESS DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM IN ALL QUEZON CITY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS, OFFICES, OR UNITS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND PROVIDING FOR THE LEGAL EFFECT OF ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS

Introduced by Councilors AIKO S. MELENDEZ and JOSEPH JOE VISAYA

Co-Introduced by Councilors Bernard R. Herrera, Tany Joe "TJ" L. Calalay, Dorothy A. Delarmente, M.D., Joseph P. Juico, Nikki V. Crisologo, Charm M. Ferrer, Candy A. Medina, Aly Medalla, Dave C. Valmocina, Tatay Rannie Z. Ludovica, Godofredo T. Liban II, Kate Galang-Coseteng, Geleen "Dok G" G. Lumbad, Albert Alvin "Chuckie" L. Antonio III, Don S. De Leon, Wencerom Benedict C. Lagumbay, Atty. Anton L. Reyes, Imee A. Rillo, Raquel S. Malañgen, Irene R. Belmonte, Nanette Castelo-Daza, Marra C. Suntay, Alfred Vargas, MPA, Ram V. Medalla, Maria Eleanor "Doc Ellie" R. Juan, O.D., Eric Z. Medina, Emmanuel Banjo A. Pilar, Vito Sotto Generoso and Victor "Vic" Bernardo

WHEREAS, the global community is facing critical environmental challenges, including deforestation, pollution and the depletion of natural resources, which necessitate immediate actions to reduce ecological footprints and promote sustainability;

WHEREAS, pursuant to Section 16 of Republic Act No. 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, local government units are empowered to promote the general welfare, which includes ensuring a balanced ecology and fostering technological advancement for efficient governance;

WHEREAS, the Quezon City Government is committed to environmental sustainability and it recognizes the need to reduce the consumption of paper in government operations as part of its broader effort to minimize waste, conserve resources and promote climate action;

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WHEREAS, technological advancements in information technology and digital platforms now provide efficient and secure alternatives to paper-based systems, which can improve operational efficiency and reduce environmental impact;

WHEREAS, the Republic of the Philippines has enacted laws such as Republic Act No. 8792, otherwise known as the Electronic Commerce Act and Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, which provide the legal framework for the use of electronic documents and digital signatures, ensuring their security, privacy and legal validity;

WHEREAS, the adoption of a paperless documentation system within Quezon City's government offices will not only contribute to environmental sustainability but will also enhance the transparency, accessibility and efficiency of government services, making them more responsive to the needs of the public;

WHEREAS, the use of digital tools and systems for documentation, filing and communication will foster a culture of innovation and modernization in Quezon City's governance, ensuring that government operations remain efficient, cost-effective and secure;

WHEREAS, the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Quezon City recognizes the need to establish a comprehensive legal framework for the implementation of a paperless documentation system in all government departments, offices and agencies to promote environmental sustainability, improve service delivery and comply with national laws governing electronic transactions.

NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF QUEZON CITY IN REGULAR SESSION ASSEMBLED:

SECTION 1. TITLE. – *This Ordinance shall be known as the “Quezon City Paperless Documentation System Ordinance.”*

SECTION 2. DECLARATION OF POLICY. – *It is the policy of the Quezon City Government to promote environmental sustainability by reducing paper usage in all government departments, offices or units, and to foster the adoption of digital tools and systems for documentation, filing and communication. This initiative is aligned with the City's commitment to reducing its ecological footprint and enhancing government efficiency and transparency.*

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SECTION 3. DEFINITION OF TERMS. – As used in this Ordinance, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this Section. Any term not defined shall be given its plain and customary meaning/s, unless the context requires otherwise, and shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the purpose and spirit of this Ordinance:

- a. **Authentication** – the process of verifying the identity of a user or the origin of an electronic document to ensure its validity and integrity;
- b. **Business Continuity Planning** – a proactive planning process to ensure that critical services or products are delivered during disruptive events;
- c. **Certification Authority** – an entity authorized to issue digital certificates used to verify the authenticity of electronic signatures and secure communications;
- d. **Cloud-Based Document Management System** – a digital platform that allows for the secure storage, retrieval and management of documents through cloud technology;
- e. **Cybersecurity Audit** – a systematic evaluation of an organization's information systems to assess vulnerabilities, risks and compliance with security standards;
- f. **Data Breach** – an incident when sensitive, protected or confidential information is accessed, disclosed or stolen by an unauthorized party;
- g. **Digital Signature** – an encrypted electronic signature that verifies the authenticity of electronic documents and ensures they have not been altered during transmission;
- h. **E-Signature** – a broader term referring to any electronic sound, symbol or process attached to or logically associated with a document, adopted by a person to signify consent or approval. While it may be legally binding, it may lack the advanced security features of a digital signature unless combined with authentication methods;
- i. **Electronic Document** – any information or data that is recorded in electronic form, capable of being stored, retrieved or processed by a computer system;

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- j. **Electronic Submission** – the process of transmitting official documents, communications or files through digital means such as email, online portals or electronic filing systems;
- k. **Encryption** – a method of converting data into a secure code to prevent unauthorized access;
- l. **IT Security Compliance Unit** – a dedicated unit under the Quezon City Information Technology Development Department (QCITDD) responsible for monitoring and enforcing cybersecurity best practices within the paperless system and platform;
- m. **Multi-Factor Authentication** – a security process requiring two (2) or more verification methods to confirm a user’s identity before granting access; and
- n. **Timestamping** – a secure method of recording the date and time an electronic document was created or modified.

SECTION 4. MANDATE FOR PAPERLESS DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM. – All departments, offices or units of the Quezon City Government are hereby mandated to implement a paperless documentation system in their operations. This includes the following:

- a. Transitioning from paper-based to digital records for all official documents, communications, forms and submissions;
- b. Ensuring that the use of paper is minimized and replaced with electronic storage, filing and transmission systems, wherever feasible and consistent with data privacy laws; and
- c. Promoting the use of digital platforms, including, but not limited to, emails, e-signatures, online forms and cloud-based document management systems, to conduct all internal and external government transactions.

SECTION 5. LEGAL EFFECT OF ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS. – All electronic submissions, communications and documents generated, signed or filed through an authorized digital platform or system in compliance with applicable laws, including Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, shall be legally recognized and have the same force and effect as paper-based documents, provided they are properly authenticated in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance.

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- a. *Electronic submissions shall include, but are not limited to, applications, requests, permits, licenses, certifications and other official documents submitted via authorized online portals, email or digital filing systems; and*
- b. *Digital signatures, where applicable, shall be legally binding and equivalent to manual signatures under the provisions of Republic Act No. 8792, otherwise known as the Electronic Commerce Act of 2000, and other pertinent laws.*

SECTION 6. AUTHENTICATION OF ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS. – *The legal effect of such electronic submissions shall be subject to proper authentication as follows:*

- a. *Electronic documents and submissions shall be authenticated using a secure digital signature, issued by a recognized Certification Authority, in accordance with the provisions of the Electronic Commerce Act;*
- b. *In cases where a digital signature is not required, the submission shall be authenticated using secure login credentials, multi-factor authentication or other secure methods as determined by the QCITDD; and*
- c. *The QCITDD shall develop and maintain a system to ensure the integrity and authenticity of electronic documents, which may include encryption, timestamping and other security measures to prevent unauthorized access, tampering or alteration of documents.*

SECTION 7. EXCEPTIONS TO THE PAPERLESS SYSTEM. – *In recognition of the varying capacities of individuals to access or adapt to digital platforms, exceptions to the paperless documentation requirement shall be made in the following cases:*

- a. **Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)** – *Individuals with disabilities who require assistance in accessing or utilizing digital platforms shall be provided with alternative means to submit documents in paper format or through assisted digital services;*
- b. **Senior Citizens** – *Senior citizens who may face difficulties in using digital systems shall be accommodated by allowing the submission of paper documents or by providing direct assistance through designated personnel or help desks;*

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- c. **Persons with Limited Technological Literacy** – Individuals who are not familiar with digital platforms or lack access to the necessary technology shall be allowed to submit documents in paper format or be assisted in navigating digital platforms by authorized personnel;
- d. **Foreigners and Visiting Dignitaries** – Foreign nationals and dignitaries who require certificates and other physical evidence shall be accommodated with the issuance of paper documents as necessary; and
- e. **Other Special Circumstances** – Other exceptions, based on the discretion of the respective offices, departments or units, may be made on a case-by-case basis to ensure accessibility and inclusivity.

To ensure that these exceptions are properly supported, all government departments, offices and agencies shall establish designated help desks or assistance desks to provide guidance and aid to those requiring support under this Section.

SECTION 8. DOCUMENTS EXEMPTED FROM THE PAPERLESS SYSTEM. – The following documents shall be exempted from the requirements of this Ordinance:

- a. Any document that legally requires notarization, such as complaints, affidavits, contracts, special power of attorney and other court filings;
- b. Any document required by the Commission on Audit and Civil Service Commission to be paper-based;
- c. Infrastructure Form B-3 Plans originating from the City Architect Department;
- d. Financial transactions that require submission of original and/or photocopy of supporting documents in compliance with auditing rules and regulations pertinent to the extension of financial assistance by the Social Service Development Department; and
- e. Any other document requiring paper records for archiving and/or for legal evidence under national law or policy.

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SECTION 9. TRANSITION AND IMPLEMENTATION. –

- a. *All City Government departments, offices or units are required to implement a structured three (3)-year rollout plan to ensure smooth adoption of the paperless system, commencing at the start of Fiscal Year 2026. During this period, at least 70% of their public records must be transitioned to digital format;*
- b. *Each department, office or unit shall develop and implement an action plan for the full digitization of its respective operations, which shall be submitted to the QCITDD for approval; and*
- c. *The Quezon City Government shall allocate the necessary resources, including budget and training, to ensure the effective implementation of the paperless system.*

SECTION 10. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE QUEZON CITY DIGITAL GOVERNANCE BOARD. – *To ensure effective oversight and governance of the paperless system, a Quezon City Digital Governance Board shall be established. This Board shall be composed of representatives from the QCITDD, City Legal Department, City General Services Department, and other relevant departments. The Board's primary responsibilities shall include:*

- a. *Establishing comprehensive policies and compliance guidelines for the adoption and implementation of the Paperless Documentation Management System, which shall be developed in accordance with Memorandum Circular 21-04-01 of the National Archives of the Philippines and shall provide guidelines for electronic records management;*
- b. *Evaluating and approving budget allocations and Information and Technology (IT) infrastructure investments to support the transition;*
- c. *Overseeing system security protocols, ensuring legal compliance, and implementing robust risk management measures; and*
- d. *Conducting periodic performance evaluations to identify areas for improvement and ensure the system's effectiveness and efficiency.*

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SECTION 11. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN IT SECURITY COMPLIANCE UNIT. – *The QCITDD shall establish an IT Security Compliance Unit responsible for monitoring and enforcing cybersecurity best practices within the paperless system and platform. The QCITDD shall also conduct regular cybersecurity audits, business continuity planning and data protection compliance checks to prevent unauthorized access, ensure system integrity and align with relevant national laws on information security and data privacy.*

SECTION 12. QC DIGITAL RECORDS PORTAL. – *To enhance accessibility and empower citizen engagement, the Quezon City Government shall launch a Quezon City Digital Records Portal as one of the key outputs of this Ordinance. This portal shall serve as a centralized platform for public access to digital records, supporting self-service transactions and improving government transparency.*

SECTION 13. SANCTIONS FOR NON-COMPLIANCE. –

- a. *Any department, office or unit that fails to comply with the requirements of this Ordinance shall be subject to administrative sanctions, including but not limited to, withholding of funds or other penalties as may be prescribed by the Sangguniang Panlungsod; and*
- b. *Employees who engage in fraudulent or unlawful practices in the submission, management or storage of electronic documents may face disciplinary actions in accordance with Civil Service laws and rules.*

SECTION 14. FUNDING. – *Each department, office or unit responsible for implementing the Paperless Documentation System shall allocate funds for its own digital infrastructure needs, including the necessary upgrades, software, hardware and training of personnel. Additional funding for this project may be sourced from other available funding sources as deemed appropriate by the Quezon City Government.*

SECTION 15. SEPARABILITY CLAUSE. – *If, for any reason, any section or provision of this Ordinance is held unconstitutional or invalid, the other sections or provisions hereof shall not be affected thereby.*

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SECTION 16. REPEALING CLAUSE. – All ordinances, resolutions, executive issuances, rules and regulations, or parts thereof, which are inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby deemed repealed, amended or modified accordingly.

SECTION 17. EFFECTIVITY CLAUSE. – This Ordinance shall take effect after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation, and after posting a copies in conspicuous locations within Quezon City.

ENACTED: March 25, 2025.


GIAN G. SOTTO
City Vice Mayor
Presiding Officer

ATTESTED:


MARILYN JANET B. BUL-LALAYAO
Legislative Staff Officer VI
OIC, City Council Secretary

APPROVED: APR 30 2025


MA. JOSEFINA G. BELMONTE
City Mayor

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this Ordinance was APPROVED by the City Council on Second Reading on March 25, 2025 and was PASSED on Third/Final Reading under Suspended Rules on the same date.


MARILYN JANET B. BUL-LALAYAO
Legislative Staff Officer VI
OIC, City Council Secretary