

ADVISORY

To: All Account Officers, Collectors and Partners

Date: July 8, 2025

Subject: Mandatory Compliance with PCHC Check Format Requirements

In compliance with the updated guidelines issued by the Philippine Clearing House Corporation (PCHC), we are implementing stricter measures on check acceptance and issuance effective July 1, 2025. These guidelines aim to standardize check processing across all financial institutions and avoid unnecessary delays or rejections due to formatting issues.

All account officers, collectors, and partners are strictly instructed to evaluate every check upon receipt and/or prior to release. Checks must fully conform to the PCHC-prescribed format, particularly in the following areas:

- Date format must be written as MM-DD-YYYY, using dashes only (e.g., 07-01-2025). Slashes, dots, or other separators are not allowed.
- Amount in figures must include commas for thousands, and a period for centavos (e.g., 1,234,567.89) without any currency symbols (₱) or special characters (*, #, etc.).
- Amount in words must match the figures and may include the word "Only" at the end; however, it must not be abbreviated or altered with non-standard symbols.
- Payee line must indicate a single payee and must not contain "or Cash" or any alternative phrasing.
- Signatures must appear in the designated area. Slight overflow beyond the signature box is allowed as long as the signature remains legible and within the bounds of the check's layout.

Any check that does not meet these standards shall not be received or honored and must be returned to the issuer for correction. This applies to both checks being released by partners and those being received by account officers or collectors. Ensuring compliance at the point of issuance or acceptance is essential to avoid repeated follow-ups, clearing rejections, and processing delays.

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Please disseminate this information to all relevant personnel and teams. A copy of the official PCHC Check Format Guidelines is attached for your reference.

Should you have questions or require further clarification, you may contact the Finance Department directly.

We thank you for your full cooperation and commitment to maintaining accuracy and compliance in our check handling process.

Sincerely,



Ms. Editha M. Flores
Assistant Vice President – Finance

Re: FIN-000-25-07-205
CC: DC



PHILIPPINE CLEARING HOUSE CORPORATION

Memo Circular No. 3821
July 02, 2024

TO : All Clearing Banks/Institutions

RE : REMINDER ON WRITING INFORMATION ON CHECKS FOR DEPOSIT/CLEARING

1. We have been receiving requests for clarifications regarding different issuances as well as incidents on the non-acceptance of Checks citing reasons that are not listed in any of the published memo circulars of PCHC.
2. With the implementation of the New Check Design effective May 1, 2024, we once again wish to clarify and remind observance of the following guidelines in writing information on Checks for deposit/clearing:

The image shows a sample check form with the following fields and annotations:

- 2.1.3** points to the MICR line (00123456789).
- 2.1.1** points to the Date field (01-02-2025).
- 2.1.2** points to the Amount in Figures field (10,000.25).
- 2.1.4** points to the Signature field.
- 2.1.5** points to the MICR line (00123456789).

The check is issued by "Any Bank" to "MANNY E. MANUEL" for the amount of "Ten Thousand and Twenty-Five Centavos".

2.1. Relevant information

- 2.1.1. The Issue date – the date to be indicated on the Check must be purely numeric MM-DD-YYYY, with dash (“-”) as the only allowed partition symbol. The use of any other symbols to separate the month from the day and the day from the year will render the Check unacceptable for deposit/clearing starting January 2, 2025 when the moratorium for not conforming to the acceptable standard/format is lifted.

Acceptable Format:

The image shows six examples of acceptable date formats on checks:

- 01-02-2025
- 1-02-2025
- 01-2-2025
- 1-02-2025
- 1-2-2025
- 1-2-2025

Not Acceptable starting January 2, 2025:

Examples of wrong writing of date, or with unacceptable partition/format.

The image shows two examples of unacceptable date formats on checks:

- 02-Jan-2025
- 01*02*2025

- 2.1.2. The Amount in Figures – the amount to be indicated inside the amount box should be a standard number where centavos are separated by a period (.), the hundreds from thousands by a comma (,), thousands from millions by a comma, so on and so forth. The numbers in the amount box should not include any symbols before and after to enable accurate character amount recognition. Examples:

Acceptable:

P 10,000.00

P 10,000.25

P 1,010,000.00

Not acceptable starting January 2, 2025

P P10,000.00

P ***10,000.00***

P 10,000.XX

P 10,000—

- 2.1.3. The Payee – except for payment intended for Government Agencies like BIR/BOC where “Payee” name may include additional text like, “FAO Bureau of Internal Revenue...”, the payee line may indicate the name of a person, entity, or “Cash”. While there is no prohibition in adding any symbols before and after the payee name to deter attempt to alter/change the name of the payee, the combination of ‘Person Name and Cash’, ‘Person Name and/or Cash’, ‘Business Name or Cash’, and ‘Business Name and/or Cash’ is considered a Technical Defect and as such, not acceptable for deposit/clearing. Examples:

Acceptable:

PAY TO THE ORDER OF ===MANNY E. MANUEL===

PAY TO THE ORDER OF ***Globe Telecom, Inc.***

PAY TO THE ORDER OF CASH

Not Acceptable:

PAY TO THE ORDER OF Manny E. Manuel or CASH

PAY TO THE ORDER OF Smart Communications, Inc. and/or Cash

- 2.1.4. The Amount in Words – The Amount in Words is a must for a Check to be acceptable for deposit/clearing. There are no restrictions regarding symbols traditionally placed before and after the Amount in Words to deter attempts for alteration. Examples:

Whole Amount (no centavos):

PESOS ***Ten Thousand Only***

PESOS ***Ten Thousand Pesos Only***

PESOS Ten Thousand Only

PESOS Ten Thousand Pesos Only

PESOS ***Ten Thousand Pesos***

PESOS Ten Thousand Pesos

Without the word “Only” for whole amount (no centavos) does not render the Check unacceptable for deposit/clearing.

Amount with centavos:

PESOS Ten Thousand and 25 Centavos

PESOS Ten Thousand Pesos and 25 Centavos

PESOS Ten Thousand and 25/100

PESOS Ten Thousand Pesos and 25/100

PESOS ***Ten Thousand and 25/100 Centavos***

PESOS *Ten Thousand Pesos and 25/100*****

PESOS ===Ten Thousand and 25/100 Cts===

PESOS ===Ten Thousand Pesos and 25/100===

2.1.5. The Signature/s – the presence of drawer's signature validates the Check issued as regular and negotiable. Two signatories may share one signature box and signatures that exceeds the box boundaries do not affect the Check's acceptability for deposit/clearing.

2.2. Conditions where Old Format Checks are still acceptable for deposit/clearing

2.2.1. Post-dated old format Checks when issued and submitted by the Payee to the Depository Bank for warehousing before May 1, 2024. These Checks were stamped, "Warehoused" by the depository bank and deposited to the Payee Account when due.

2.2.2. Bank-Issued old format Checks like Managers'/Cashiers/Gift Checks, Demand Drafts, provided that:

2.2.2.1. the issue date is in the acceptable format, i.e. MM-DD-YYY, MM-D-YYYY, or M-DD-YYYY (with dash as the only allowed partition symbol); and

2.2.2.2. there are no special characters or symbols added before or after the Amount in Figures

2.3. Circumstances where an issued Check should be refused acceptance when deposited:

2.3.1. It is technically defective, i.e. post-dated, stale-dated, no amount in words, no signature, paid to a named person/entity and/or cash, altered, with erasures, or a portion of the payment information is unreadable (torn or covered with ink).

2.3.1.1. Checks with technical defects may be returned by the Drawee within the prescribed period and collects penalty pursuant to Section 3 of CICS OM No. 17-019 dated September 13, 2017.

2.3.1.2. Technically defective Checks if inadvertently accepted for deposit and paid, may be returned by the Drawee Bank using a Charge Slip within a period of three (3) years from date of clearing (Without penalty if returned beyond the prescribed period. Acceptance by the Presenting Bank is mandatory).

2.3.2. Old format Checks which are not bank-issued, nor warehoused before May 1, 2024 (date of issue is on or after May 1, 2024). This could include Demand Drafts.

2.3.3. Checks detected as duplicate when inquired via Decision Support Platform (manually or via API), upon deposit via Mobile Deposit Facility (MDF) and/or Checks detected or seen to be Counterfeits.

3. We highly recommend that you share the aforementioned information/reminder with all your offices/branches to ensure its dissemination to all customers who write/issue Checks.

4. For your information and guidance.


EMMANUELLE E. BARCENA
President & CEO



PHILIPPINE CLEARING HOUSE CORPORATION

Memo Circular No. 3887

July 02, 2025

T O : All Clearing Banks/Institutions

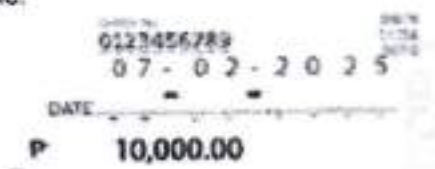
R E : CLARIFICATIONS ON STRICT ENFORCEMENT OF THE NON-ACCEPTANCE OF CHECKS WITH INVALID DATE FORMAT AND UNNECESSARY SPECIAL CHARACTERS/SYMBOLS IN THE AMOUNT IN FIGURES

1. We wish to reiterate that following the second moratorium issued on June 3, 2024 (MC No. 3814) and the subsequent reminder on proper check writing (MC No. 3821 dated July 2, 2024), the implementation date of July 1, 2025 (August 1, 2025 for Manager's/Cashier's Checks), remains firm. Despite prior guidance and public dissemination, we continue to receive numerous inquiries.
2. To address recurring concerns, we emphasize the following clarifications:

2.1 Date of Issue

- Must follow MM-DD-YYYY format or acceptable variants: M-DD-YYYY, MM-D-YYYY.
- Examples for July 2, 2025:
 - 07-02-2025, 7-02-2025, 07-2-2025
- Checks remain acceptable even if the date is printed above, below, or outside the boxes, with or without dashes.

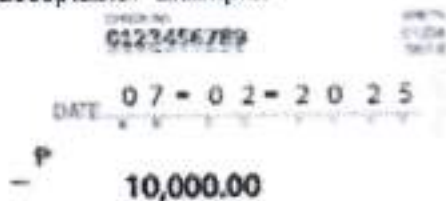
Example:



2.2 Amount in Figures

- Must be in standard number format: commas to separate thousands, a period before centavos (e.g., 10,500.35).
 - No symbols, underlines, or additional markings before or after the number.
 - Acceptable: 10,000.00
 - Not acceptable: ₱10,000.00, 10,000--, ***10,000.35***, 10,000.00/100

- If the amount is printed slightly outside the designated box, the check remains acceptable. Example:



2.3 Amount in Words and Payee

- No restrictions.
- Traditional writing styles, including the use of ampersands (&), dashes (-), or the word "only" are acceptable.
- Centavos may be written as numbers or fractions (e.g., 35/100) without affecting check acceptability.

2.4 Post Dated Checks

- PDCs warehoused before July 1, 2025, remain acceptable for clearing on due date, provided they bear the "Warehoused" stamp on the dorsal side.

2.5 Other Reminders

- The policy applies to Checks presented for deposit/clearing.
- Checks not acceptable due to formatting issues may still be presented directly to the Drawee Bank for payment or encashment by the payee or issuer.

3. Please be guided accordingly.


EMMANUEL E. BARCENA
President & CEO



PHILIPPINE CLEARING HOUSE CORPORATION

Memo Circular No. 3857

December 17, 2024

T O : All Clearing Banks/Institutions

R E : NON-ACCEPTANCE OF CHECKS WITH INVALID DATE FORMAT AND THOSE WITH UNNECESSARY SPECIAL CHARACTERS/SYMBOLS IN THE AMOUNT IN FIGURES

1. We conducted a survey via the issuance of MC No. 3853 dated November 20, 2024 to assess the readiness of participant banks in implementing the non-acceptance of checks with invalid date formats and those that have unnecessary special characters or symbols/marks in the amount in figures.
2. Based on the survey results, with a response rate of 87% from CICS participants, we have decided to extend the moratorium for another six months. The final implementation will now be **July 1, 2025** instead of January 1, 2025.
3. It may be noted that while 70% of respondents expressed readiness for the implementation in January 2025, 37% of participants have requested a deferment due to difficulties in reaching out to all clients for awareness, pending enhancements to bank applications, printing requirements of corporate clients, and third-party application update.
4. The PCHC Management understands that thorough client awareness is crucial for the successful implementation of this change. Hence, we strongly encourage banks to continue their awareness campaigns.
5. We appreciate your usual cooperation and assure you of our willingness to clarify anything regarding required format or acceptable variants.
6. For information/dissemination to all your branches/offices.


EMMANUEL E. BARCENA
President & CEO