



Republic of the Philippines
House of Representatives
Quezon City, Metro Manila



Nineteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6938

Introduced by Representative Maria Jamina Katherine B. Agarao

EXPLANATORY NOTE

This bill seeks to regulate the practice of microbiology in the Philippines.

Microorganisms provide a multitude of benefits to humans. They are utilized in the production of food and condiments, such as bread, cheese, beer, and soy sauce. Pharmaceuticals also use microorganisms in the production of antibiotics, vaccines, vitamins and hormones such as insulin. Environmental clean-up, as well as cultivating biogas and bioethanol require the use of microorganisms. Utilizing such microscopic organisms has proven beneficial due to their sustainability. Microorganisms also recycle elements such as carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, phosphorus, and sulfur in both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. Furthermore, microorganisms serve as sources of nutrients at the base of the ecological food chains. In addition, microscopic organisms are employed in scientific research and technology.

The underlying foundation of microbiology sets the stage for modern biotechnology, which includes genetic engineering, and cell and tissue culture. On the other hand, there are also evident downsides in using microorganisms. These include the spoilage of food and processed goods and postharvest losses. In addition, microbes serve as the cause of multiple diseases humans acquire, such as HIV and cholera, as well as food poisoning; in livestock, such as foot and mouth disease; and various other crop diseases.

Hence, it is crucial to enact a proper regulation in the handling of microorganism as this requires adequate skills and prior educational background to utilize it to its full potential efficiently. Background knowledge on the fundamentals of microbes is essential for quality control of processed food and manufactured goods, in controlling environmental pollution

and in repairing degraded soils. This will also aid in alleviating epidemics among humans, animals, and crops, as well as to produce microbial-based goods and services efficiently. This can be ensured by providing academic preparation and training in universities and colleges. However, due to existing differences in philosophical beliefs, facilities, and resources, these courses may differ from institution to institution. With the crucial role played by microbiologists, this bill seeks to regulate the profession and overall practice of microbiology.

The COVID-19 pandemic further emphasizes the microbiologists' role in responding to public health emergencies. The regulation and standardization of the practice of microbiology in the country will safeguard the Filipinos' health for the present and the future. It will ensure high quality delivery of technical services in the monitoring, surveillance, prevention and control of future epidemics.

In synergy and convergence with other professions regulated by the Professional Regulation Commission where microbiology is an essential component of their practice, Doctors of Medicine, Doctors of Veterinary Medicine, Medical Technologists, Agriculturists, Pharmacists and Food Technologists, among others, shall continue to practice microbiology without registering under this Act.

In view of the foregoing, the approval of this bill is earnestly sought.



MARIA JAMINA KATHERINE B. AGARAO

HB NO. 6938

AN ACT REGULATING THE PRACTICE OF MICROBIOLOGY IN THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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

ARTICLE I. TITLE, DECLARATION OF POLICY AND OBJECTIVES

SEC. 1. Title. - This Act shall be known as the "Philippine Microbiology Act of 2022."

SEC. 2. Statement of Policy and Objectives. - The State recognizes the vital role of microbiologists in national advancement. Therefore, it is the objective of this Act to institute a regulatory system guaranteeing the delivery of technical services to ensure food safety and a high quality of manufactured goods, preventing the rapid spread of microbiologically caused diseases in human, plant, and animal populations, and providing a safe and healthy environment for the general public. This Act also aims to foster competent, ethical, globally competitive, and well-rounded professionals, who shall observe the highest standards of excellence through a credible licensure examination to be administered by the Professional Regulation Commission (hereinafter referred to as the Commission), an attached agency of the Department of Labor and Employment.

ARTICLE II DEFINITION OF TERMS AND SCOPE OF PRACTICE

SEC. 3. Definition of Terms - As used in this Act:

- a. Accredited Professional Organization (APO)** - shall refer to the professional organization established for the benefit and welfare of professionals of microbiology, the advancement of the microbiology profession and attainment of other professional ends, and complies with all the requirements for accreditation, subject to the approval of the Commission.
- b. Microbiology** - shall refer to a multi-disciplinary study of the structure, form and function of microorganisms such as bacteria, archaea, fungi, algae, protozoa, and acellular infectious agents. It covers several branches of biology such as physiology, molecular biology, genetics, ecology, evolutionary biology, systematics and other related fields.

c. **Registered Microbiologist** - shall refer to a person who has been issued a Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification Card by the Board and the Commission.

d. **FIELDS OF MICROBIOLOGY:**

1. Bacteriology - shall refer to the branch of microbiology that specifically deals with the biochemistry, physiology, morphology, evolution, genetics, and ecology of bacteria, a large domain of single-celled prokaryotic microorganisms. Bacteriology also deals with the study of medically- and industrially significant bacteria, such as those which cause major infectious diseases, food spoilage, and those which ferment food or produce valuable pharmaceuticals and enzymes.

2. Archaeal Biology - shall refer to the discipline that is concerned with the study of the biology of archaea, a domain of prokaryotic microorganisms that are distinct from bacteria and eukaryotes.

3. Virology - shall refer to the branch of microbiology that specifically deals with viruses, and subviral particles such as prions and viroids, which usually cause disease in animals, plants, and humans. Virology studies the taxonomic classification and ultrastructure of agents, such as their genetic make-up, mode of infection, as well as their interactions with their respective hosts.

4. Protozoology - shall refer to the branch of microbiology that studies protozoans, a diverse group of eukaryotic, heterotrophic microorganisms. This study is concerned with the taxonomy, physiology, evolution, biochemistry and metabolism of protozoans. As several protozoans cause diseases, protozoology is also concerned with studying the modes of infection, transmission, life cycles, as well as their interactions with their host organisms.

5. Phycology - shall refer to the branch of microbiology that studies algae, which is a large group of chiefly aquatic macroscopic and microscopic organisms similar to plants in terms of metabolism and structure. Phycology studies the ultrastructure, biochemistry, metabolism and ecology of different algae, such as species of seaweeds and phytoplankton, among others.

6. Mycology - shall refer to the branch of microbiology that studies yeasts, molds and mushrooms, collectively referred to as fungi. This study is concerned with the physiology, taxonomy, biochemistry, ecology, and genetic properties of fungi. Several fungi possess properties that cause diseases, while others produce antibiotics and secondary metabolites. Hence, the study of mycology deals with the significance and application of specific fungal species in the medical and industrial fields.

7. Medical Microbiology- shall refer to the branch of microbiology that specifically deals with the study of the characteristics of pathogens, their modes of transmission, and their mechanisms of infection and growth. This study is also concerned with the interactions of pathogens with their hosts and the environment, as well as applications of microbes for the overall improvement of one's health. For purposes of this Act, clinical microbiology is excluded from the definition and scope of medical microbiology.

Clinical Microbiology refers to the branch of microbiology that relates to the diagnosis, treatment, management, and prevention of infectious diseases among patients in hospitals and clinical laboratories. It also entails the environmental surveillance and monitoring of hospital facilities to ensure that safety measures and guidelines are established to contain infections. This field of practice encompasses several different sciences applied to hospital and clinical laboratories, including bacteriology, mycology, virology, parasitology, immunology, and molecular diagnostics. It involves culture, analysis, and identification of pathogenic and other clinically relevant bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites isolated from clinical specimens, and other non-biological specimens. This study also involves susceptibility testing to guide antimicrobial therapy and provide antibiograms to health facilities and local communities to demonstrate the prevalence of various pathogens and emerging antibiotic resistance.

8. Public health microbiology - shall refer to the branch of microbiology that specifically deals with the detection and identification of microbial pathogens, their vectors, animal and environmental reservoirs and modes of transmission as they impact public health. It also includes monitoring and surveillance measures for the effective prevention, control and mitigation of the spread of infectious diseases in the community and the general population. It involves various disciplines, such as microbiology, pharmacy, medical technology, nursing, midwifery, medicine, and veterinary medicine, working on the investigation and management of public health incidents as well as the monitoring and evaluation of such interventions.

9. Environmental Microbiology -shall refer to the branch of microbiology that deals with the study of indigenous microorganisms on land, water, and air systems, as well as their interactions with organic and inorganic pollutants, and the application of their products for the benefit of human health and welfare. It is the applied part of microbial ecology dealing with the study of the interactions of microorganisms with the biotic and abiotic environment.

e. Related Fields in Microbiology - shall include cell biology, helminthology, immunology, molecular biology and biotechnology, parasitology, plant pathology, and public health.

SEC. 4. Scope of Practice of the Microbiology Profession - The practice of microbiology shall refer to the profession requiring the application of the fundamental principles of microbiology pertinent to the conditions and requirements of food safety and manufacturing standards, disease prevention, environmental protection, conservation, and quality management. This shall include the following, among others:

- a. Consultation, valuation, investigation, and management services on the identification of microbial agents in food, feeds, and human, plant and animal diseases, and in environmental impact assessments.
- b. Management or supervision and the preparation of design plans, specifications, project studies, and estimates for microbial-based processes and related manufacturing and waste management facilities;
- c. Conduct of research and development, training and extension work, and consultancy services on the various areas of microbiology, such as general microbiology, food microbiology, agricultural microbiology, industrial microbiology, veterinary microbiology, medical microbiology, public health microbiology, aquatic microbiology, and environmental microbiology, as well as on microbiological facilities/services, systems and technologies;
- d. Microbiological testing and inspection of food, pharmaceutical, agricultural, fishery, and forest products;
- e. Management, manufacturing, and marketing of microbial and microbial-based products. Marketing of the microbial and microbial-based products are not exclusive to the practice of microbiology and shall include other professions mentioned in Section 26;
- f. Quality control on microbiological concerns in the manufacture of food, food additives and preservatives, feeds, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, biofuels, biofertilizers, among others;
- g. Teaching microbiology subjects (as defined in the Act), and offering degree programs and training courses in microbiology in higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Philippines in conjunction with Section 11 of Republic Act No. 8981 and the rules and regulations of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED); and
- h. Other practices which require the knowledge and expertise of a registered microbiologist.

ARTICLE III

CREATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY BOARD FOR MICROBIOLOGY

SEC. 5. Creation and Composition of the Professional Regulatory Board for Microbiology - There is hereby created a Professional Regulatory Board for Microbiology hereinafter referred to as the Board, under the administrative supervision and control of the Commission. The Board shall comprise of a Chairperson and two (2) Members of the Board who shall be appointed by the Secretary of the Department of Labor and Employment from among a list of three (3) recommendees for each position submitted by the Commission from among a list of nominees for each position submitted by APO.. The Board shall be organized not later than sixty (60) days from the effectivity of this Act.

SEC. 6. Qualifications of the Chairperson and Members of the Board. -

The Chairperson and Members of the Board shall, at the time of appointment, possess the following qualifications:

- a. Must be a Filipino citizen;
- b. Must be of good moral character;
- c. Must have not been convicted by a competent court of any offense involving moral turpitude;
- d. Must be a holder of at least a Master of Science degree in microbiology-related field, conferred by a CHED-recognized Philippine higher educational institution or foreign university;
- e. Must have at least ten (10) years of practice in microbiology, with at least five (5) years in the academe, either in government or in a private institution;
- f. Must not have any business interest or financial connection, directly or indirectly, in any HEI conferring academic degree necessary for admission to the practice of microbiology or where review classes in preparation for the microbiology licensure examination are being offered or conducted; nor shall one be a member of the faculty or the administration thereof.
- g. Must not be an incumbent officer of the Accredited Professional Organization /Accredited Integrated Professional Organization pursuant to EO No. 496.

SEC. 7. Tenure of Office for the Chairperson and Members of the Board.

- The Chairperson and Members of the Board shall hold office for a term of three (3)

years from the date of appointment or until their successors shall have been qualified and appointed. The Chairperson and Members of the Board may be reappointed for a second term but in no case shall they serve continuously for more than six (6) years. Any vacancy in the Board shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term of the member who vacated the position. On the constitution of the first Board, the Chairperson and the Members of the Board shall automatically be registered and issued Certificates of Registration and Professional Identification Cards. Each Member of the Board shall take the proper oath of office prior to the assumption of duty before a duly authorized officer.

SEC. 8. Meetings of the Board. - The Board shall have a regular meeting once a month. Special meetings may also be held upon the call of the Chairperson or by request of its members. Reasonable notice of all meetings shall be given in the manner prescribed by the rules of the Board.

SEC. 9. Compensation and Allowances of the Board. - The Chairperson and Members of the Board shall receive compensation and allowances equivalent to those being received by the Chairpersons and Members of existing professional regulatory boards under the Commission as provided for in the General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 10. Powers and Functions of the Board. - The Board shall be vested with the following powers and functions:

- a. Promulgate, administer and enforce rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act;
- b. Prescribe the subjects in the licensure examination and their relative weights, determine the syllabi and Table of Specifications (TOS) for the subjects on which the examination questions shall be based, and submit the examination results to the Commission;
- c. Evaluate and approve applications for licensure examination;
- d. Administer oaths, and issue certificates of registration and the professional identification cards to persons admitted to the practice of the profession of microbiology;
- e. Submit to the Commission an annual report at the close of each fiscal year on the proceedings and accomplishments of the Board during the year, as well as make recommendations for the purpose of upgrading and improving the conditions

affecting the practice of microbiology in the Philippines;

- f. Oversee the conduct of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) program for microbiologists;
- g. Recommend necessary measures for the upgrading, enhancement, development, and growth of microbiology in the Philippines;
- h. Conduct regular inspection and monitoring of conditions affecting the practice of microbiology, e.g., training facilities and microbiology laboratories, in establishments and research institutions where microbiology is being practiced and recommend measures to upgrade and improve such as deemed necessary, as defined in this Act. Pertinent support and partnership with the Department of Science and Technology and the CHED will provide mechanisms for students to have adequate learning experience and will ascertain that the professional standards are complied with;
- i. Approve registration of microbiologists without examination;
- j. Issue special temporary permits to microbiologists of foreign nationalities subject to the requirements and conditions prescribed by the Board;
- k. Conduct reviews every five years or as the need arises to ensure consistent and non-discriminatory implementation of the law that is responsive to the challenges and conditions of the society; and
- l. Consult with different government agencies such as the Department of Budget and Management and the Civil Service Commission for updating or creating position classification and qualification standards for microbiologists, and with CHED for the development of policies, standards, and guidelines for microbiology program as a separate discipline.

The policies and resolutions, rules and regulations, orders, or decisions issued or promulgated by the Board shall be subject to the review and approval of the Commission; Provided, that the decisions, resolutions, and orders rendered by the Board which are interlocutory in an administrative case shall be subject to review on appeal.

SEC. 11. Removal of Board Members. - The Chairperson or any Member of the Board may be suspended or removed from office by the President of the Republic of the Philippines upon the recommendation of the Commission for neglect of duty, incompetence, tolerance of irregularities in any examination given by the Board, unprofessional, or unethical conduct. Any such person shall be afforded due process according to the laws of the Republic of the Philippines.

SEC. 12. Supervision of the Board, Custodian of the Records, Secretariat, and Support Services. - The Board shall be under the general supervision and administrative control of the Commission. The Commission shall keep all records of the Board, including applications for examination papers and results, minutes of deliberations, administrative cases, and other investigative cases involving microbiologists.

ARTICLE IV EXAMINATION AND REGISTRATION

SEC. 13. Licensure Examination. - Unless otherwise provided in the Act, every applicant seeking to be registered and licensed as microbiologist shall take and pass a written examination to be given by the Board at least once a year in places and dates the Commission designates.

SEC. 14. Qualifications for Examination. - Any person applying for admission to the licensure examination for microbiologist shall meet the following requirements:

- a. Must be a citizen and resident of the Philippines: Provided, that citizen of a foreign country may be allowed to take the examination, subject to the requirement of reciprocity pursuant to Section 30 of this Act;
- b. Must be of good moral character;
- c. Must not have been convicted by a competent court of any offense involving moral turpitude; and
- d. Must hold a baccalaureate degree in Microbiology or Biology major in Microbiology, or graduate degree in Microbiology, or any related field with at least twenty-four (24) units of microbiology, to include the courses covered in the licensure exam.

SEC. 15. Scope of Examination. - The licensure examination for microbiology shall cover six (6) subjects:

- a. General Microbiology, Code of Ethics for Microbiology and the Philippine Microbiology Act of 2022
- b. Virology
- c. Microbial Physiology
- d. Microbial Ecology
- e. Medical Microbiology
- f. Applied Microbiology (Food and Industrial)

The Board, subject to the approval of the Commission, may revise the scope of the

examination and any of the subjects and their syllabi to conform to technological advances brought about by global trends and developments in the profession.

SEC. 16. Release of the Results of Examination. - The Board shall correct and release the licensure examination results within three (3) days from the date of the examination, unless extended for valid reason.

SEC. 17. Rating in Examination. - To pass the licensure examination for microbiology, an examinee must obtain a general average of at least seventy-five percent (75%) and no rating lower than fifty percent (50%) in any subject. An examinee with a general average of seventy-five percent (75%), and with grade lower than fifty percent (50%) in any subject, may retake the subject(s) in which the examinee failed, at most twice. If still unsuccessful after the second retake, the examinee shall be required to retake the entire examination. There is no limit to the number of retakes.

SEC. 18. Oath. - All persons qualified to register with or without examination shall take their oath of profession before the Chairperson or any Member of the Board, or any authorized officer of the Commission prior to entering the practice of microbiology.

SEC. 19. Issuance of the Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification Card. - A Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification Card shall be issued to a person who has complied with all the requirements for registration under this Act. The Certificate of Registration shall serve as evidence that the microbiologist can lawfully practice the profession. It shall remain in full force and effect until withdrawn, revoked, or suspended in accordance with this Act.

A Professional Identification Card bearing the registration number and date of issuance, its expiry date, and the signature of the Chairperson of the Commission shall likewise be issued to every qualified registrant.

SEC. 20. Registration Without Examination. - The Board shall register without examination any person who can present evidence or proof satisfactory to the Board that:

- a. The person is a Filipino citizen;
- b. The person is of good moral character;
- c. The person is a holder of a Master of Science or Doctoral Degree in Microbiology, or in a related field from an HEI duly recognized by CHED. Provided that:
 1. the person has at least 24 units of Microbiology courses or the equivalencies as stipulated in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR), such as dissertation units and/or research publications.
 2. the person has substantial work experience in the field of microbiology in terms of length of service, position and accomplishments in the profession as defined in the

IRR.

Furthermore, individuals who have been certified as Registered Microbiologists conducted by a reputable, well established, and long-standing professional organization in microbiology prior to the implementation of this Act shall be registered without examination by the Board.

All qualified applicants, as provided in Sec 20, must apply for registration within two (2) years from the effectivity of IRR of this Act. Thereafter, anyone who wants to be registered will have to take the examination.

SEC. 21. Refusal to Register. - The Board shall refuse to issue a Certificate of Registration to those who have been:

- a. Convicted of any offense involving moral turpitude by a court of competent jurisdiction;
- b. Found guilty of immoral or dishonorable conduct after due investigation by the Board;
- c. Summarily adjudged guilty for violation of the general instructions to examinees by the Board; and
- d. Declared to be of unsound mind by a court of competent jurisdiction.

In refusing such registration, the Board shall give the applicant a written statement setting forth the reasons thereof and shall file a copy of this in its records.

SEC. 22. Revocation or Suspension of the Certificate of Registration. -The Board shall have the power, after giving proper notice and hearing to the party concerned, to suspend or revoke the practitioner's Certificate of Registration, or to cancel the special temporary permit granted to a foreigner microbiologist, for any of the grounds or causes cited in Section 21 of this Act, thereof, or on any of the following grounds:

- a. Violation of any provision of this Act, its IRR, Code of Ethics, Code of Good Governance, Code of Technical Standards for the Practice of Microbiology, or other policy measure of the Board or the Commission;
- b. Perpetration or use of fraud in obtaining one's Certificate of Registration, Professional Identification Card, or Special Temporary Permit;
- c. Gross incompetence, negligence or ignorance resulting to death, injury or damage;
- d. Aiding or abetting the illegal practice of a non-registered and non-licensed person by allowing another to use one's Certificate of Registration or Professional Identification Card, or both, or Special Temporary Permit;
- e. Practicing the profession during suspension from the practice; or
- f. Proven addiction to drug or alcohol, impairing one's ability to practice the profession, or declared with unsound mind by a court of competent jurisdiction. In case of drug or alcohol addiction, a finding to this effect of a medical or drug testing

facility shall be sufficient.

Any person, firm, or association may file charges in accordance with the provision of this section against any registrant, or the Board may, on its own, investigate any of the above-mentioned violations. An affidavit of complaint shall be filed together with the affidavits of witnesses and other documentary evidence with the Board, through the Legal Service Office. The Board may conduct an investigation, *motu proprio*, on a matter relating to the commission of a violation:

Provided, that such decision to investigate shall be embodied in a formal charge to be signed by at least majority of its members. The rules on administrative investigation issued by the Commission shall govern the hearing or investigation subject to applicable provisions of this Act, Republic Act No. 8981 and the Rules of Court.

SEC. 23. Reissuance of Revoked Certificate of Registration, Replacement of Lost or Damaged Certificate of Registration, Professional Identification Card or Special Temporary Permit. - The Board may, upon petition, reinstate or reissue a revoked Certificate of Registration after two (2) years from the effectivity of the period for revocation, which is the date of surrender of the Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification Card, if still valid, to the Board and the Commission. The Board may not require the holder thereof to take another licensure examination. The petitioner shall prove to the Board that there are valid reasons to practice the profession. The Board shall issue a BoardResolution granting the petition, subject to the approval of the Commission.

In the case of a lost or damaged Certificate of Registration, Professional Identification Card, or Special Temporary Permit, the replacement may be issued upon application of the valid license holder in accordance with the prescribed procedure and subject to the payment of the prescribed fees.

SEC. 24. Renewal of Professional Identification Card. - The Professional Identification Card shall be renewed according to the existing rules and regulations of the Commission and upon satisfying the requirements imposed by the Board, such as compliance with a CPD and payment of the corresponding fees.

SEC. 25. Roster of Microbiologists. - The Professional Registry Division of the Commission shall keep a roster of duly registered and licensed microbiologists, indicating their names, registration numbers, and other pertinent information. The Board shall regularly update such roster and make it available to all interested parties subject to the provisions of R.A. No. 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

SEC. 26. Practice of Microbiology in Other Professions Registered with the Professional Regulation Commission. - In synergy and convergence with other professions regulated by the Commission where microbiology is an essential component of their practice, Doctors of Medicine, Doctors of Veterinary Medicine, Medical Technologists, Agriculturists, Pharmacists, and Food Technologists, among others, shall continue to practice microbiology without registering under this Act.

SEC. 27. Practice through Issuance of Special Temporary Permits. - Without prejudice to the existing laws on the practice of professions by foreigners in the Republic of the Philippines, and subject to the approval of the Commission and payment of fees, the Board may issue a special temporary permit to practice microbiology in the Philippines to the following:

- a. Foreign registered or licensed microbiologist or a recognized expert in microbiology called in by the Philippine government or any private institutions for consultation or for any specific activity; and
- b. Foreign registered or licensed microbiologist who have distinguished themselves in their respective fields of specialization, and who are either directly hired or employed as professors, lecturers, or instructors in Microbiology by Philippine schools, colleges, universities, or research institutions; Provided, that their practice of the profession shall be limited to the particular work for which they have been commissioned; Provided further, that the special temporary permit shall be valid for a maximum period of one (1) year, subject to renewal at the discretion of the Board and the Commission.

ARTICLE V PRACTICE OF MICROBIOLOGY

SEC. 28. Prohibitions and Limitations in the Practice of Microbiology. No person shall practice or offer to practice as a microbiologist in the Philippines or offer oneself as a microbiologist without a Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification, or a valid Special Temporary Permit; or make use of any word, letter, figure, or sign tending to convey the impression of being a microbiologist, or advertise qualifications to perform the work as such, without holding a valid Certificate of Registration in accordance with the provisions of this Act, except as provided under Section 27 hereof. However, persons occupying positions as microbiologists shall be allowed to practice for two (2) years after the promulgation of this Act, after which, they shall take the licensure exam in order to continue practicing as microbiologists.

SEC. 29. Code of Ethics. - The Board, in consultation with the APO, shall formulate

the Code of Ethics for Microbiology.

SEC. 30. Foreign Reciprocity. - No foreign microbiologist shall be admitted to the licensure examination, or be given a certificate of registration and a professional license, or be entitled to any of the privileges under this Act, unless the country of which the person is a subject or citizen specifically permits Filipino microbiologists to practice within its territorial limits under the same conditions and an equal basis as its own subjects or citizens.

ARTICLE VI PENAL AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 31. Penal Clause. - Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this Act shall, upon conviction, be imposed with a fine of not less than Fifty Thousand Pesos (P50,000) but not more than One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000), or with imprisonment of not less than six (6) months nor more than five (5) years, or both, at the discretion of the Court.

SEC. 32. Appropriations. - The savings from any item of appropriations of the Commission shall be utilized for the initial implementation of this Act. Thereafter, such sum as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual General Appropriations Act.

SEC. 33. Implementing Rules and Regulations. - Subject to the approval of the Commission, the Board shall adopt and promulgate such rules and regulations within ninety (90) days, to carry out the provisions of this Act, and which shall be effective fifteen (15) working days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in at least one (1) major newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

SEC. 34. Separability Clause. - If any provision, section, or part of this Act shall be declared unconstitutional or invalid, such judgment shall not affect, invalidate or impair any other provision, section, or part hereof, but shall be merely confined to the provision, section, or part thereof that is directly involved in the issue upon which judgment has been rendered.

SEC. 35. Repealing Clause. - All laws, decrees, executive orders, rules and regulations or parts thereof which are in conflict with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly. Provided, however, that nothing in this Act shall be construed as repealing or amending any portion of the laws of other professions regulated by Commission.

SEC. 36. Effectivity. - This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication

in the official Gazette.

Approved.