

## RECENT LEGISLATION

### REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1401

THIRD CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF THE PHILIPPINES  
SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

H. No. 2850

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1401]

AN ACT CREATING A JUVENILE AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS COURT IN THE CITY OF MANILA, AMENDING FOR THIS PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED FOUR HUNDRED AND NINE, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF MANILA.

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

SECTION 1. Republic Act Numbered Four hundred and nine is amended by inserting between sections thirty-eight and thirty-nine thereof a new Article, to be known as Article VIII-A, to read as follows:

"ARTICLE VIII-A.—*The Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court*

"SEC. 38-A.—*The Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court.*—There shall be a Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court in the City of Manila for which a judge who shall possess the same qualifications, enjoy the same privileges and receive the same salary as judges of courts of first instance, shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines with the consent of the Commission on Appointments.

"Provisions of the Judiciary Act to the contrary notwithstanding, the court shall have exclusive original jurisdiction to hear and decide the following cases after the effectivity of this Act:

"(a) Criminal cases cognizable by the Municipal Court and the Court of First Instance of Manila wherein the accused is under sixteen years of age at the time of the trial;

"(b) Cases involving custody, guardianship, adoption, paternity and acknowledgment;

"(c) Annulment of marriages, legal separation of spouses, and action for support;

"(d) Proceedings brought under the provisions of articles one hundred sixteen, two hundred twenty-five, two hundred fifty-two and three hundred thirty-two of the Civil Code;

"(e) Petitions for the declaration of absence and for the change of name;

"(f) Actions for the separation of property of spouses;

"(g) Proceedings affecting a dependent or neglected child, as hereinafter defined.

"The court shall likewise have such incidental powers as are generally possessed by courts of first instance.

"If any question involving any of the above matters should arise as an incident in any case pending in the ordinary courts, said incident shall be determined in the main case.

**"SEC. 38-B. 'Dependent' or 'neglected' child defined.**—The term 'dependent child' or 'neglected child' shall mean any child under sixteen years of age who is dependent upon the public for support or who is destitute, homeless or abandoned; or who has no proper parental care or guardianship, or who habitually begs or receives alms, or who is found living in any house of ill fame or with any vicious or disreputable person, or whose home, by reason of neglect, cruelty or depravity on the part of its parents, guardian or other person in whose care it may be, is an unfit place for such child.

**"SEC. 38-C. Proceedings concerning a 'dependent' or 'neglected' child.**—The Social Welfare Administrator or his representative who is a resident of the city, having knowledge of a child in the city who appears to be a 'dependent' or 'neglected' child may file with the clerk of the court a written petition, setting forth the facts constituting the child 'dependent' or 'neglected'; which petition shall be verified by the affidavit of the petitioner. It shall be sufficient, if the affidavit shall be upon information and belief. Such petition shall set forth the name of the parent or parents of such child, if known, and their residence; and if such child has no parent living, then the name and residence of the guardian of such child, if it has one.

"Upon the filing of such petition, the judge of said court shall fix the day and time for the hearing of such petition. If it appears that one or both of such parents, or guardian, if there be no parents, reside in the city, the clerk of said court shall immediately issue summons, which shall include a copy of the petition, and which shall be served on such parent, parents, or guardian, if any, if either can be found in the city, not less than two days before the time fixed for said hearing, requiring them to appear on said day and hour to show cause, if any, why such child should not be declared by said court to be a 'dependent' or 'neglected' child. If it appears from the petition that neither of said parents is living, or do not reside in the city and that said child has no guardian residing in said city, or in case one or both of said parents, or the guardian in case there be no parents, shall indorse on said petition a request that the child be declared a 'dependent child', then the summons herein provided for shall not be issued; and the court may thereupon proceed to a hearing of the case. In case neither of the parents or guardian is found, then the court shall appoint some suitable person to represent said child in said case.

"Upon such hearing of such case the child shall be brought before said court; whereupon, the court shall investigate the facts, and ascertain whether the child is a 'dependent child', its residence, and, as far as possible, the whereabouts of its parents or near adult relatives, when and how long the child has been maintained, in whole or in part, by private or public charity, the occupation of the parents, if living, whether they are supported by the public or have abandoned the child, and to ascertain, as far as possible, if the child is found dependent, the cause thereof. The court may compel the attendance of witnesses on such examination. The city fiscal, when requested by the court, shall appear in any such examination in behalf of the petitioner. It shall be the duty of the city fiscal, upon the request of the court or any petitioner, to file a petition and to conduct any necessary proceedings in any case within the provisions of this article.

"In the hearing of such case, the court shall not be bound to follow the technical rules of evidence. If the said child shall be found after such hearing to be a 'dependent' or 'neglected' child, as defined herein, it shall be adjudged a 'dependent child', and an order may be entered making such disposition of the care and custody of said child as the court deems best for its moral and physical

welfare. It may be turned over to the care and custody of any suitable person or any suitable institution in the city organized for the purpose of caring for 'dependent children', and which is able and willing to care for same. If there be no such person or suitable institution, the child shall be referred to the Social Welfare Administration. And when such child is so turned over to the custody of such person or institution, such person or institution shall have the right to the custody of said child, and shall be at all times responsible for its education and maintenance, subject at all times to the order of the court.

"In any case where the court shall award any 'dependent' or 'neglected' child to the care of any individual or institution, the child, unless otherwise ordered, shall become a ward and be subject to the guardianship of the institution or individual to whose care it is committed. Any institution or individual receiving any such child under the order of the court shall be subject to visitation or inspection by any person appointed by the court for such purpose; and the court, may at any time, require from any institution or person a report containing such information as the court shall deem proper or necessary, to be fully advised as to the care, education, maintenance and moral and physical training of the child, as well as to the standing and ability of such institution or individual to care for such child. The court may change the guardianship of such child, if, at any time, it is made to appear to the court such change is to the best interests of the child. If, in the opinion of the court, the causes of the dependency of any child may be removed under such conditions or supervision for its care, protection and maintenance as may be imposed by the court, so long as it shall be for its best interests, the child may be permitted to remain in its own home and under the care and control of its own parent, parents or guardian, subject to the jurisdiction and direction of the court; and when it shall appear to the court that it is no longer to the best interests of such child to remain with such parents or guardian, the court may proceed to a final disposition of the case.

"In case any child is adjudged to be 'dependent' or 'neglected' then such parents or guardian shall thereafter have no right over or to the custody or services of said child except upon such conditions in the interest of such child as the court may impose, or where, upon proper proceedings, such child may lawfully be restored to the parents or guardian.

"*Sec. 88-D. Proceedings in other cases.*—In the hearing and disposition of cases other than that covered by the preceding section, the court shall be governed by the Rules of Court and the laws properly applicable in each particular case.

"In cases between husband and wife, and between parent and child, however, the hearings may be held, upon petition of any party, in chamber or with the exclusion of the public. All information obtained at such hearings shall be deemed privileged and confidential and shall not be divulged without approval of the court.

"*Sec. 88-E. Appeal from decision and order of the Court.*—Decisions and orders of the court shall be appealed in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as appeals from the court of first instance.

"*Sec. 88-F. The clerk of court and subordinate employees.*—The Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court shall be a court of record and shall have a clerk of court and such subordinate employees as may be necessary who shall be appointed in the same manner and shall receive the same compensation as similar officials and employees of the court of first instance."

SEC. 2. Upon the organization of the Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, the Secretary of Justice shall cause all cases and proceedings pending before the municipal court and the court of first instance of Manila properly cognizable by the court herein created to be transferred thereto.

SEC. 3. The sum of seventy-five thousand pesos is hereby appropriated, out of any funds in the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the salary and emoluments of the judge and personnel of this court as well as for the rental and other incidental expenses of the court and shall include a similar amount thereafter in the annual general appropriation acts.

SEC. 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved, September 9, 1955.

## REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1404

THIRD CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF THE PHILIPPINES  
SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

S. No. 207  
H. No. 2574

[REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1404]

AN ACT TO AMEND CERTAIN SECTIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NUMBERED TWO HUNDRED AND NINETY-SIX, OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE JUDICIARY ACT OF 1948", AS AMENDED, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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

SECTION 1. The second, third and ninth paragraphs of section forty-nine of Republic Act Numbered Two hundred and ninety-six, as amended, are hereby further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 49. *Judicial Districts.*—Judicial districts for Courts of First Instance in the Philippines are constituted as follows:

"The First Judicial District shall consist of the Provinces of Cagayan, Batanes, Isabela, and Nueva Vizcaya, and the Subprovince of Apayao, Mountain Province;

"The Second Judicial District, of the Provinces of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Abra, City of Baguio, Mountain Province, except the Subprovince of Apayao, and La Union;

"The Eighth Judicial District, of the Province of Laguna, the City of San Pablo, the Province of Batangas, the City of Lipa, and the Provinces of Oriental Mindoro and Occidental Mindoro and Marinduque;"

SEC. 2. The first, second, third, sixth, seventh, eleventh, twelfth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth paragraphs of section fifty of Republic Act Numbered Two hundred and ninety-six, as amended, is further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 50. *Judges of First Instance for Judicial Districts.*—Six judges shall be commissioned for the First Judicial District. Two judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of Cagayan, Batanes and the Subprovince of Apayao in the Mountain Province, and shall be known as judges of the first and second branches thereof, respectively, the judge of the First branch to preside also over the Court of First Instance of the Subprovince of Apayao and the

judge of the second branch to preside also over the Court of First Instance of Batanes; two judges shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Isabela, and shall be known as the judges of the first and second branches thereof; and two judges shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Nueva Vizcaya, to be known as the judges of the First and Second branches thereof.

"Eight judges shall be commissioned for the Second Judicial District. Two judges shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Ilocos Norte; two judges shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Ilocos Sur; one judge shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Abra; one judge shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of the City of Baguio and Mountain Province, except the Subprovinces of Apayao, Kalinga, Bontoc and Ifugao; and two judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of La Union and the Subprovinces of Kalinga, Bontoc and Ifugao, and shall be known as judges of the First and Second branches thereof, respectively, the judge of the Second branch to preside also over the Courts of First Instance of the Subprovinces of Kalinga, Bontoc and Ifugao.

"Eight judges shall be commissioned for the Third Judicial District. Seven judges shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Pangasinan and shall be known as judges of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh branches thereof, respectively; the judges of the First and Second branches to preside over the Court of First Instance of Lingayen; the judges of the Third and Fourth branches to preside over the Court of First Instance of the City of Dagupan; the judge of the Fifth branch to preside over the Court of First Instance of Urdaneta; the judge of the Sixth branch to preside over the Court of First Instance of Tayug; and the judge of the Seventh branch to preside over the Court of First Instance of Alaminos, Pangasinan. One judge shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Zambales.

"Twenty judges shall be commissioned for the Sixth Judicial District. They shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Manila and shall be known as judges of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth branches thereof, respectively.

"Eleven judges shall be commissioned for the Seventh Judicial District. Seven judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of the Province of Rizal, Quezon City and Pasay City and shall be known as judges of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh branches thereof, respectively; three judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of the Province of Cavite and the Cities of Cavite and Tagaytay, and shall be known as judges of the first, second, and third branches thereof, respectively; and one judge shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Palawan.

"Eight judges shall be commissioned for the Eleventh Judicial District. Two judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of Capiz, Roxas City and Romblon and shall be known as judges of the first and second branches thereof, respectively; five judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of the Province of Iloilo and the City of Iloilo, and shall be known as judges of the first, second, third, fourth and fifth branches thereof, respectively; and one judge shall preside over the Court of First Instance of the Province of Antique.

"Seven judges shall be commissioned for the Twelfth Judicial District. Five judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of Occidental Negros and the City of Bacolod, and shall be known as judges of the first, second, third, fourth, and fifth branches thereof, respectively; and two judges shall

preside over the Courts of First Instance of Oriental Negros, Dumaguete City and the Subprovince of Siquijor.

"Seven judges shall be commissioned for the Fourteenth Judicial District. Six judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of the Province of Cebu and the City of Cebu, and shall be known as judges of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth branches thereof, respectively; and one judge shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Bohol.

"Six judges shall be commissioned for the Fifteenth Judicial District. One judge shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Surigao; one judge shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of Agusan and Butuan City; two judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of Oriental Misamis, Cagayan de Oro and Bukidnon, and shall be known as judges of the first and second branches thereof, respectively; and two judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of Lanao and the Cities of Dansalan and Illigan, and shall be known as judges of the first and second branches thereof.

"Ten judges shall be commissioned for the Sixteenth Judicial District. Three judges shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of the Province of Davao and Davao City; two judges shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Cotabato, to be known as judges of the first and second branches thereof; one judge shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of Occidental Misamis and Ozamis City; one judge shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Zamboanga del Norte; one judge shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Zamboanga del Sur; one judge shall preside over the Courts of First Instance of Zamboanga City and Basilan City; and one judge shall preside over the Court of First Instance of Sulu."

SEC. 3. Section fifty-one of Republic Act Numbered Two hundred and ninety-six, as amended, is further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 51. *Detail of judge to another district or province.*—Whenever a judge stationed in any province or branch of a court in a province shall certify to the Secretary of Justice that the condition of the docket in his court is such as to require the assistance of an additional judge, or when there is any vacancy in any court or branch of a court in a province, the Secretary of Justice may, in the interest of justice, with the approval of the Supreme Court and for a period of not more than three months for each time, assign any judge of any court or province whose docket permits his temporary absence from said court, to hold sessions in the court needing such assistance or where such vacancy exists. No judge so detailed shall take cognizance of any case when any of the parties thereto objects and the objection is sustained by the Supreme Court.

"Whenever a judge appointed or assigned in any province or branch of a court in a province shall leave the province by transfer or assignment to another court of equal jurisdiction without having decided a case totally heard by him and which was duly argued or opportunity given for argument to the parties or their counsel, it shall be lawful for him to prepare and sign his decision in said case anywhere within the Philippines and send the same by registered mail to the clerk of the Court to be filed in the court as of the date when the same was received by the clerk, in the same manner as if the judge had been present in the court to direct the filing of the judgment: *Provided, however,* That if a case has been heard only in part, the Supreme Court, upon petition of any of the parties to the case and the recommendation of the respective district judge,

may also authorize the judge who has partly heard the case to continue hearing and to decide said case notwithstanding his transfer or appointment to another court of equal jurisdiction."

SEC. 4. The first, second, third, fourth, fifth, eighth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth paragraphs of section fifty-two of Republic Act Numbered Two hundred and ninety-six, as amended, are further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 52. *Permanent stations of district judges.*—The permanent station of judges of the Sixth Judicial District shall be in the City of Manila.

"In other judicial districts, the permanent stations of the judges shall be as follows:

"For the First Judicial District, the judge of the first branch of the Courts of First Instance of Cagayan, Batanes and the Subprovince of Apayao in the Mountain Province, shall be stationed in the Municipality of Tuguegarao, Province of Cagayan, the judge of the second branch, in the Municipality of Aparri, same province; one judge shall be stationed in the Municipality of Ilagan, Province of Isabela; one judge shall be stationed at Cauayan, Isabela; and two judges, in the Municipality of Bayombong, Province of Nueva Vizcaya.

"For the Second Judicial District, two judges shall be stationed in the Municipality of Laoag, Province of Ilocos Norte; two judges in the Municipality of Vigan, Province of Ilocos Sur; one judge in the City of Baguio; one judge, in the Municipality of Bangued, Province of Abra; and two judges, in the Municipality of San Fernando, Province of La Union.

"For the Third Judicial District, two judges shall be stationed in the Municipality of Laoag, Province of Ilocos Norte; two judges in the Municipality in the City of Dagupan; one judge in the Municipality of Urduyeta, Province of Pangasinan; one judge, in the Municipality of Tayug, and another in the Municipality of Alaminos, same province; and one judge in the Municipality of Iba, Province of Zambales.

"For the Seventh Judicial District, the three judges of the first, second, and sixth branches of the Court of First Instance of Rizal shall be stationed in the Municipality of Pasig, Province of Rizal; those of the third and seventh branches, in Pasay City; and those of the fourth and fifth branches in Quezon City; one judge, in the Municipality of Puerto Princesa, Province of Palawan; and three judges, in the City of Cavite.

"For the Tenth Judicial District, three judges shall be stationed in the City of Naga, Province of Camarines Sur; two judges, in the Municipality of Legaspi, Province of Albay, one of whom shall also hold court in the Municipality of Virac, Province of Catanduanes, once a year for as long as the interest of justice requires but not exceeding six months a year; one judge, in the Municipality of Sorsogon, Province of Sorsogon; and one judge, in the Municipality of Masbate, Province of Masbate.

"For the Eleventh Judicial District, one judge shall be stationed in Roxas City; one judge, in the Municipality of Calivo, Province of Capiz; one judge, in the City of Iloilo, one judge, in the Municipality of Guimbal, Province of Iloilo, one judge, in the Municipality of Santa Barbara, same province, one judge, in the Municipality of Pototan, same province, and one judge, in the Municipality of Ajuy, also of the same province; and one judge, in the Municipality of San Jose de Buenavista, Province of Antique.

"For the Twelfth Judicial District, five judges shall be stationed in the City of Bacolod; and two judges, in the City of Dumaguete.

"For the Fourteenth Judicial District, six judges shall be stationed in the City of Cebu; and one judge, in the Municipality of Tagbilaran, Province of Bohol.

"For the Fifteenth Judicial District, one judge shall be stationed in the Municipality of Surigao, Province of Surigao; the judge of the first branch of the Courts of First Instance of Oriental Misamis, Cagayan de Oro City and Bukidnon shall be stationed in the City of Cagayan de Oro, and the judge of the second branch, in the Municipality of Malaybalay, Province of Bukidnon; the judge of the first branch of the Courts of First Instance of Lanao and the Cities of Dansalan and Iligan shall be stationed in the City of Dansalan, and the judge of the second branch, in the City of Iligan; and one judge, in the City of Butuan.

"For the Sixteenth Judicial District, three judges shall be stationed in the City of Davao; the first branch of the Court of First Instance of Cotabato shall be stationed in the Municipality of Cotabato while the second branch shall be stationed in the Municipality of General Santos, Province of Cotabato; one judge in the Municipality of Oroquieta, Province of Occidental Misamis; one judge in the Municipality of Dipolog, Province of Zamboanga del Norte; one judge in the Municipality of Pagadian, Province of Zamboanga del Sur; one judge in the City of Zamboanga; and one judge in the Municipality of Jolo, Province of Sulu."

SEC. 5. The first, tenth and eleventh subparagraphs of the second paragraph of section fifty-four of Republic Act Numbered Two hundred and Ninety-six, as amended, are further amended to read as follows:

"SEC. 54. *Places and time for holding court.*—

"First Judicial District: At Santo Domingo de Basco, Province of Batanes, on the first Tuesday of March of each year. A special term of court shall also be held once a year, in the Municipalities of Ballesteros and Tuna, both of the Province of Cagayan.

"Fifteenth Judicial District: At Cantilan, Province of Surigao, on the first Tuesday of August of each year; a special term of court shall also be held once a year in either the Municipality of Tandag or the Municipality of Hinatuan, Province of Surigao, in the discretion of the district judge; at Mambajao, Province of Oriental Misamis, on the first Tuesday of March of each year. A special term of court shall, likewise, be held, once a year, either in the Municipality of Talisayan or in the Municipality of Gingoog, Province of Oriental Misamis, in the discretion of the district judge. The judge of the second branch of the Courts of First Instance of Oriental Misamis, Cagayan de Oro City and Bukidnon shall also hold court in Cagayan de Oro City and/or Oriental Misamis whenever the interest of justice so requires. A special term of Court shall be held at any time of the year at the Municipality of Baroy, Province of Lanao.

"Sixteenth Judicial District: Terms of court shall be held in the Municipality of Sindangan, Province of Zamboanga del Norte, on the dates to be fixed by the district judge; at the City of Basilan, at least four times a year on dates to be fixed by the district judge; and at Baganga and Mati, Province of Davao, terms of court shall be held at least once a year on dates to be fixed by the district judge."

SEC. 6. All the present district judges shall continue as such, but if any district judge is commissioned for the court of first instance of two provinces or cities, and a separate district judge has been provided for herein for one of such courts, or one province or city is removed from the jurisdiction of his court and grouped with another province or city, and in the latter event a new province or city is grouped with the remaining province or city of the former jurisdiction of his court, such district judge shall have the option to select the court over which he shall continue to preside and notify the President of his selection within a reasonable time. If the number of branches in any court of first instance has been increased, the district judge presiding over any branch thereof in a particular place shall continue to preside over such branch notwithstanding a change in its number under the provisions of this Act, unless such district judge affected by the increase prefers to preside over the new branch, in which event he shall be given such preference to be exercised in the same manner as hereinbefore provided without the necessity of a new appointment.

SEC. 7. The sum of four hundred twenty thousand pesos or so much thereof as may be necessary to implement the provisions of this Act is hereby appropriated out of any funds of the National Treasury not otherwise appropriated.

SEC. 8. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved, September 9, 1955.

## REPUBLIC ACT NO. 1289

THIRD CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF THE PHILIPPINES  
SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

H. No. 2695

[REPUBLIC ACT No. 1289]

AN ACT TO AMEND ARTICLE THREE HUNDRED SIXTY OF THE REVISED PENAL CODE BY AMENDING THE THIRD PARAGRAPH THEREOF.

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

SECTION 1. Article three hundred sixty of the Revised Penal Code is hereby amended to read as follows:

"ART. 360. *Persons responsible.*—The person who shall publish, exhibit or cause the publication or exhibition of any defamation in writing or by similar means, shall be responsible for the same.

"The author or editor of a book or pamphlet, or the editor or business manager of a daily newspaper, magazine or serial publication, shall be responsible for the defamations contained therein to the same extent as if he were the author thereof.

"The criminal and civil action for damages in cases of written defamations as provided for in this chapter, shall be filed simultaneously or separately with the court of first instance of the province or city where any of the accused or any of the offended parties resides at the time of the commission of the offense: *Provided, however,* That where the libel is published, circulated, displayed, or exhibited in a province or city wherein neither the offender nor the offended party resides the civil and criminal actions may be brought in the court of

first instance thereof: *Provided, further,* That the civil action shall be filed in the same court where the criminal action is filed and vice-versa: *Provided, furthermore,* That the court where the criminal action or civil action for damages is first filed, shall acquire jurisdiction to the exclusion of other courts: *And provided, finally,* That this amendment shall not apply to cases of written defamations, the civil and/or criminal actions to which, have been filed in court at the time of the effectivity of this law.

"No criminal action for defamation which consists in the imputation of a crime which cannot be prosecuted *de officio* shall be brought except at the instance of and upon complaint expressly filed by the offended party."

SEC. 2. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved, June 15, 1955.