

Minister Chang Emphasizes Government's Commitment to Protecting the Rights and Interests of Mainland Spouses Living in Taiwan at "Care for Mainland Spouses and Summer Family Activity" Jointly Held by the MAC and SEF

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The Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) stated that Minister Chang Hsiao-yueh joined Mainland spouses and their children for a fun dumpling-making event at the "Care for Mainland Spouses and Summer Family Activity" held today (July 21, 2017) at the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) by the MAC and SEF.

During the activity, Minister Chang said that every Mainland spouse who crosses the Taiwan Strait for love is faced with not only caring for family and raising children, but also adapting to Taiwan's culture and customs, living habits, and social systems. The MAC deeply understands the efforts made by Mainland spouses to socially integrate in Taiwan. Since taking office, Minister Chang has held listened to the voices of Mainland spouses during exchanges and interactions in Pingtung, Taichung, Hualien, and Kaohsiung, and in hearth-side chats with Mainland spouses early in the year. In the future, the MAC will continue to protect the rights and interests of Mainland spouses living in Taiwan and provide strong support for Mainland spouses.

The MAC stated that, to care for Mainland spouses living in Taiwan, it recently convened a meeting joined by relevant agencies to study and discuss issues related to visits by family members of Mainland spouses who have not yet obtained an I.D. card, including the degree of affinity and frequency of trips allowed for such visits, as well as financial, social welfare, and other life issues. The meeting found that some problems may be due to misunderstanding resulting from insufficient promotion. For example, Mainland spouses with a residence permit can apply for a mobile phone number, receive Uniform Invoice prize awards, sign surgery consent forms, and receive labor insurance pension. Furthermore, since October 2016, Mainland spouses have been allowed to serve as temporary staff at agencies (institutions) and schools. Related agencies will also continue to study other issues involving regulatory amendments to facilitate life in Taiwan for Mainland spouses and help them to promptly integrate with society in Taiwan.

Regarding the public-concern issue of family-related visits to Taiwan by relatives of Mainland spouses, Mainland spouses with identification cards can apply for relatives up to the third degree consanguinity to make family-related visits to Taiwan. The government has recommended that the limit be relaxed to also allow such visits by the spouses of relatives up to the third-degree of consanguinity (e.g. aunts, and nieces-in-law). It has further recommended that, in cases of Mainland spouses without an identification card, the current rules only allowing parents to visit Taiwan be relaxed to allow applications for such visits by relatives up to second degree of consanguinity and their spouses (e.g. siblings, sisters-in-law, and brothers-in-law). The MAC and National Immigration Agency are now assessing further relaxation of restrictions in view of family ethics needs and the promotion of positive cross-Strait exchanges. This will be followed up by the government's promotion of regulatory amendments considering the needs of cross-Strait family relations, while also meeting the expectations of Mainland spouses.

The MAC also stated that, in addition to caring for the working rights and life needs of Mainland spouses, the government also pays close attention to the children of Mainland spouses. The MAC and SEF jointly planned a fun activity for parents and children during the summer vacation period to foster closer parent-child relations and leave the children with happy memories from their summer vacation.