

PRESS RELEASE

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Alien spouses of Pinoys need visas to enter PH - BI

MANILA, Philippines - The Bureau of Immigration (BI) told foreigners who have Filipino spouses and dependents that they can only enter the Philippines if they have the appropriate visas.

"It is clear from the latest updates from the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) Resolution 60 that foreigners, including spouses of Philippine citizens, allowed to enter country must have the proper visas prior their arrival in the country," BI Commissioner Jaime Morente said in a statement.

He added that the same requirement applies to children of Philippine citizens and children with special needs, regardless of age, as well as to foreign parents of Filipino and children with special needs, also regardless of age.

Morente pointed out that prior to the issuance of said IATF-EID resolution, non-visa required foreign nationals married to Filipinos were indeed allowed to enter the country upon presentation of their marriage certificates and other proof of their matrimonial relationship.

"But that is no longer the case with the issuance of this latest IATF-EID resolution . Foreign spouses of Filipinos must now secure entry visas from our Consulates abroad before traveling to the Philippines. Otherwise, they will be denied entry by our immigration officers and sent back to their ports of origin," Morente warned.

BI Port Operations Acting Chief Grifton Medina disclosed that pursuant to the said IATF-EID resolution, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) issued a Foreign Service Circular 36 - 2020, last 03 August 2020, exempting the said foreigners from the suspension of visa issuance by Philippine Consulates abroad.

Medina, however, clarified that the visa requirement applies only to foreign spouses, dependents and parents of Filipinos who do not have existing visas.

"Those aliens who already hold valid permanent and temporary resident visas which they acquired by reason of marriage to Filipinos under Section 13(a) of the Philippine Immigration Act can enter the country anytime," Medina said.

He explained that said aliens don't need to apply for new entry visas, as being immigrants and holders of long-term visas, they already fall in the categories of aliens allowed to enter the country since 01 August 2020.

Medina also reminded foreign spouses of Filipinos that they must always bring with them their authenticated marriage certificates and other supporting documents when traveling to the Philippines so they could readily present them when asked to do so by immigration officers.

"There have been many instances already wherein foreign passengers claiming to be spouses of Filipinos were turned back by our officers at the airport due to their failure to show proof of marriage," he added.