New Legitimation Law to benefit illegitimate children of underage parents

The signing into law of Republic Act 9858, or the Act Providing for the Legitimation of Children Born to Parents Below Marrying Age by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo last December 20, 2009 can be considered as one of the best if not the best gift for illegitimate children born to such circumstances.

The new law has amended Article 177 of the Family Code which states that, only children conceived and born outside of wedlock of parents, who at the time of the conception of the former, were not disqualified by any impediment to marry each other, may be legitimated. The impediment as provided under the Family Code was seen by child rights advocates as unfair and unjust to children who could not be legitimated due to minority of their parents during their conception.

PhilCRIS 3.0 all set for 2010

The much awaited Philippine Civil Registry Information System or PhilCRIS 3.0 (Windows Version) will finally be launched in the first quarter of 2010. This is according to the latest Memorandum of the Administrator to all Regional Directors regarding PhilCRIS. PhilCRIS 3.0 is the latest version of civil registry information system to provide Local Civil Registry Offices with a civil document retrieval system using the new Civil Registry Forms. It is completely re-designed to deliver civil registry information management in a new, more user friendly and efficient way. Trainings will be conducted for the smooth implementation of the new system.

2010 Census of Population and Housing to Ask Birth Registration Status among others

The birth registration status of the citizenry will be among the questions to be asked during the conduct of the Census of Population and Housing (CPH) comes May 2010. Data to be gathered from the undertaking will serve as basis for the Office of the Civil Registrar General, Local Civil Registry Offices and other stakeholders to develop policies for the furtherance or improvement of civil registration in the country.

It was in the 2000 CPH where such questions was first asked to the populace. The country’s total population in 2000 was recorded at 76.6 million. Of this, around 5 million (6.5%) were not registered of which 2.6 million (3.3%) are children.
Unauthorized Marriage Counselors

Have you ever seen billboards or signage displayed near City Halls with the words Marriage Counselors? Were you ever handed calling cards bearing the name of a Minister, Pastor or Reverend that identifies them as “Marriage Counselors”? Are these Ministers, Pastors, or Reverend authorized by their churches to solemnize marriage and registered with the Office of the Civil Registrar General (OCRG), real marriage counselors?

As provided for by law, a pre-marriage counseling seminar certificate is needed as additional requirement in securing a marriage license particularly in case where parental consent or advise is needed. Such certificate can be issued by a priest, imam or minister authorized to solemnize marriage under Article 7 of the Family Code or a marriage counselor duly accredited by the proper government agency. The Civil Code Revision Committee, UP Law Center had clarified in its letter dated September 23, 1988 to the National Statistics Office (NSO) that the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) is the agency that accredits marriage counselors.

Prospective contracting parties are advised to be watchful whether marriage counselors who are offering their services are accredited. Otherwise, they are dealing to an unauthorized marriage counselors. There are reports reaching the NSO that there are solemnizing officers and marriage counselors who offered package services such as securing marriage license, marriage counseling, wedding ceremony and reception up to securing a NSO certified copy of the marriage contract in security paper. Under such circumstances, the contracting parties must think twice, thrice before tapping the services of the solemnizing officer.

Related to this, there are also solemnizing officers who apart from offering their services as marriage counselors also offers civil registry assistance. To know more about the Revised Guidelines in the Accreditation of Marriage Counselors (MCs), log on to the DSWD website (www.dswd.gov.ph) – browse for Administrative Order No. 12, Series of 2007.

Effectivity of Revocation of CRASM may be on the Date of Receipt of Notice

In the case of revocation of authority of the Certificate of Registration of Authority to Solemnize Marriage (CRASM), what is the effectivity date, is it the date when the revocation was prepared by the National Statistics Office or is it the date when it was received by the concerned Solemnizing Officer?

This is the case of Pastor “A” of Church “B” whose CRASM was cancelled by the Regional Director upon the recommendation of Pastor A’s church superior. The effectivity of the cancellation of his CRASM as reflected in the notice of revocation was on the same date it was prepared. The said notice was sent to the pastor through conventional means and for unknown reasons, it was received by the pastor late as evidenced by post office markings.

The concerned pastor appealed to the Regional Director and requested if there is a possibility that the effectivity of the cancellation of his CRASM be on the date of his receipt so as not to affect the validity of the marriages he had officiated between the preparation of the CRASM and the date of receipt of the notice of revocation. The Regional Director favorably endorsed the request to the Civil Registrar General for comments. The Director of the Civil Registry Department, in her capacity as Officer-In-Charge at that time concurred for the Administrator, the recommendation of the Regional Director.

CRASM Applications Pour at NCR

A total of 2,178 application for the registration of authority to Solemnize Marriage (CRASM) were processed and issued by the Regional Office. Of this number, 443 were received on December 2009.

A CRASM expires every 31st of December of the third year from its issuance as provided for by RA 6514. The complete decentralization of processing of CRASM was devolved to Regional Offices and Provincial Offices in 2002.

News in a brief....... SM Supermall Exhibits

The NCR Regional office and the District Offices put up statistical and civil registration exhibits at SM Supermalls last October 2009. This was in connection with the celebration of Statistics Month and National Children’s Month. Similar exhibit conducted by the Regional Office in 2008 was adjudged as the Best Statistical Exhibit for the 2008 National Statistics Month celebration. The award was presented during the 2009 National Statistics Month opening ceremonies.

(turn to page 3)
New Legitimation Law... (From page 1)

The new law as emphasized by the proponents both from the House of Representative and the Senate will remove the child discrimination and relieves the biological parents from going through costly and lengthy adoption proceedings. Since the passage of the Family Code in 1988, children under such circumstances have long unjustly suffered discrimination considering that the other siblings born or conceived after the subsequent marriage of their parents are automatically legitimated or are born legitimate.

It was during the Unregistered Children Project (UCP) days that the move to legislate reforms particularly on legitimation was pushed through as this has been identified through study as one of the barriers in civil registration. In September 2009, the National Statistics Office-NCR and the Department of Social Welfare and Development have jointly conducted a forum to solicit support from stakeholders for the immediate signing of the President into law. Representative Magtanggol Gunigundo I, 2nd District, Valenzuela City, the main author of House Bill No. 5279 (House Version Bill) was the Guest Speaker on the said occasion. Likewise, National Statistics Office Administrator and Civil Registrar General Carmelita N. Ericta presented the legitimation process.

As provided by the new law, the Office of the Civil Registrar General will spearhead the crafting of the Implementing Rules and Regulations in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee of Revision of Laws of the House of Representative, and the Committee on Youth, Womens and Family Relations of the Senate, the Council for the Welfare of Children, the Department of Justice (DoJ), the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), the Office of the Supreme Court Administrator, the Philippine Association of Civil Registrars (PACR), and UP Law Center.

2010 Census of Population... (From page 1)

The 2010 birth registration status query will also serve as assessment whether the policies and programs conducted by the office in partnership with other stakeholders (Unregistered Children Project and Birth Registration Project) after the 2000 CPH had reduced the number of unregistered children.

CRG Announces Theme for 2010 Civil Registration Month Celebration

Administrator and Civil Registrar General Carmelita N. Ericta has this early announced the theme for the 2010 Civil Registration Month celebration for February 2010. In an e-mail sent to all Officers of the National Statistics Office, the Civil Registration Month will carry the theme, “Wastong Rehistro: Lahat Panalo”.

The early announcement will enable NSO field officials to line up activities that are in consonance with the theme. Relative to this, the National Capital Region has started lining up activities to commemorate the celebration to include exhibits at SM Supermalls and the traditional Civil Registration Quiz.

Civil Registration Month is celebrated every February pursuant to Proclamation No. 682 issued by then President Corazon C. Aquino on January 28, 1991.

News in a brief... (from Page 2)

Las Piñas City “Outstanding” Civil Registry Office Award presented to Mayor Aguilar

The NSO-NCR Regional Office and NCR VI was invited during the presentation of the Best Civil Registry Office to Las Piñas City Mayor Vergel “Nene” Aguilar on December 16, 2009. Mrs. Dorothea Lilia R. Nuesca represented Regional Director Lourdes V. Homecillo during the said presentation. The current Las Piñas City Civil Registrar Josefin Villorante and NCR VI Officer-In-Charge Paciano Dizon were also present during the said occasion. The awards among civil registry offices were accorded to outstanding civil registry offices nationwide during the 6th National Convention of Solemnizing Officer last August 2009.

NCR V joins Taguig LCRO Seminar at Subic

NCR V and the entire Taguig City Civil Registry Office conducted an out of town de-briefing on civil registration at the White Rock Hotel, Subic Zambales last December 19 to 20, 2009. Resource persons were Mr. Levitico Balajadia, Provincial Statistics Officer; Mr. Enrique Enriquez, Ms. Luz Dioneda, both NCR V Staff; Atty. Maribeth C. Pilimpinas, Chief-Legal Services Division; and Ms. Aurelia Alido of the Civil Registry Department Court and Legal Instruments Section.
The Need to Have a Birth Certificate - from a student point of view
By: Ben Jay B. Espelimbergo

The need to have a birth certificate these days especially for a student, like me, is extremely necessary. It is a must to have your name be registered at the civil registry office in the place where you were born. Our society nowadays, demands for it, at work, at school, travelling abroad, personal transactions for SSS, LTO, GSIS, NBI, CRASMS, and many more.

For a student like me, the birth certificate serves as a “passport” for college education because it is a main requirement by every university/college where you are enrolled. Moreover, having an original and authenticated Birth Certificate from the NSO entitles a person to it’s many privileges that can be useful in his/her career.

Knowing that I, as a student, registered as an official citizen of my country, counted as an individual in the Population Census done by the NSO, and has a Birth Certificate in the records of the NSO can be rest assured that when I need a copy of my birth certificate, I just go to the NSO, apply for it and conveniently obtained an authenticated copy. The NSO serves as the archiving body where you can get a copy of your birth certificate.

Christmas: “Sanctuary of a Troubled Land”
By: Ben Jay B. Espelimbergo*

Christmas is a time to rejoice,
Amidst the trouble and controversies noise,
After a year of hard work that we’ve put in,
It’s time to relax, celebrate Christ birth and settle in.

In a year that saw Filipinos in hap,
Let’s just thank God we’re still here and others in His lap,
Christmas serves as a sanctuary in our troubled land,
It’s time to be good and lend a helping hand.

Joyful Carolers are in the streets,
Singing their Christmas songs with a happy beat,
Colorful lights and giant Christmas trees,
Are the perennials of this gift-giving spree.

Noche Buena on Christmas Eve is a happy sight,
The whole family is together in this wonderful night,
Feasting on what ever is on the table,
Even though tomorrow’s life is unstable.

*The author is an On The Job Trainee at NCR-CRIMD. He studies at the Polytechnic University of the Philippines. The poem was interpreted by the CRIMD Staff during the Regional Christmas Program last December 22, 2009.

The Quarter in our Civil Registration History

- October 21, 1901—Act No. 273—Creation of the Bureau of Archives. The Bureau became the official depository of civil registry records.
- October 17, 1988—Issuance of Administrative Order No. 1 Series of 1988 or the Rules and Regulations governing the Granting of Authority to Solemnize Marriage To Bishops, Heads of Religion and Religious Sects, Priests, Rabbis, Imams and Religious ministers and Their Registration With the Office of the Civil Registrar General.
- November 26, 1930—Act 3753 or the Civil Registry Law was approved.
- December 20, 2009—R.A. 9858 or the Legitimation Law was signed into law by President Gloria-Macapagal Arroyo.

"Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."
John F. Kennedy

Did you know that in other countries, an illegitimate child is labeled as:

- adulterine child; bachelor's baby; basborn; base-begotten child; base-son; blankard; a blotch on the escutcheon; bastardly gullion; born in the vestry; born on the wrong side of the blanket (or covers); a blotch of the escutcheon; born out of wedlock; bush child; by -blow (-chop; -scape; -slip); catch colt; chance child; come-by-chance; come through the side door; fatherless child; filius nullius; fruit of adultery; illegitimate child; left-handed son/daughter; love begotten child; love child; merry-begotten; misborn; natural child; offspring of adultery; side-stroke; sinfant; slip-up; spurious off-spring; whore’s kitling; whore’s son; woods colt; whorephan; whoreson.
Why is it that annulled marriages still exist at the Indices of Marriage?

Civil registration records are permanent in nature, hence annulled marriages are not physically removed from the Indices of Marriage for reference purposes. The annotation or remarks entered into the certificate of such annulled marriage serves as basis to prove that such marriage has been severed or dissolved.

Is non-appearance in securing a marriage license allowed?

No. An application for a marriage license need to be sworn hence personal appearance before the Local Civil Registrar of the city whom the application was filed or to a person authorized to subscribe oath is necessary.

What is the effect to the marriage if a marriage license was issued through non-appearance?

The marriage remains valid although there is an irregularity in securing the marriage license. However, the parties involved in the irregularity may be administratively, civilly or criminally liable.

Is the certification from the venue or restaurant an official requirement in the registration of marriage?

No, nowhere in the civil registry law requires such certification.

Can a Civil Registrar collect fees in subscribing an application for marriage license?

No, as provided for by Article 69 of the Civil Code of the Philippines, it is the duty of the local civil registrar to prepare the documents required, and to administer oath to all interested parties without any charge.

Is a divorce obtained by a Filipino abroad recognized in the Philippines?

No, A divorce obtained by a Filipino in another country, like in Japan for example is not recognized here in the Philippines.

What is the liability of Filipino who obtained divorce abroad and subsequently remarried in the Philippines on the belief that the divorce is valid?

He is liable for bigamy.
GIFT OF THE “MAGI”: Rep. Magtanggol “Magi” Gunigundo I delivers his lecture during the Forum on Legitimation of Children born to Parents below Marrying Age. Also in photo are NSO Administrator Carmelita N. Ericta and other guests.

OUTSTANDING CIVIL REGISTRY OFFICE: Las Piñas City Mayor Vergel “Nene” Aguilar receives the Outstanding Civil Registry Award presented by Mrs. Dorotea Lilia R. Nuesca, who represented Regional Director Lourdes V. Homecillo. Also in photo are City Civil Registrar Josefina Villorante, NSO-NCR VI Officer-In-Charge Paciano B. Dizon and an unidentified Staff of the Local Civil Registry Office.

MOST CHILD FRIENDLY CITY ANEW? Makati City Mayor Jejomar C. Binay, talks to members of the Regional Council for the Welfare of Children (RCWC) validating team during the validation of the city’s report (entry) to the Search for the Child Friendly City. The city bids to replicate what it got as the Most Child Friendly City in the 2008 search. The National Statistics Office-NCR is an active member of the NCR-RCWC.

The NCR-CRN is the official newsletter of the National Statistics Office - National Capital Region on Civil Registration.

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Congratulations!

To the Newly Appointed Regional Directors:
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