

NEWS ADVISORY

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Sexual relations outside wedlock illegal in UAE

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration warned Filipino workers that sex outside marriage is a crime in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Being a Muslim country governed by the Sharia Law, the UAE considers living together out of wedlock as illegal and is punishable by three to six months imprisonment and eventual deportation.

The Philippine Consulate in Dubai reported that a number of expatriate couples, including Filipinos, are now behind bars for this violation.

The Consulate also received numerous requests of repatriation from Filipinos in Dubai and Northern Emirates who have children out of wedlock in the belief that the Consulate can simply endorse them to Dubai Immigration without having them detained. Unfortunately, immorality is not negotiable under the UAE penal system. Pregnancies and childbirth outside marriage carry a punishment of 6 months in jail, deportation, and a lifetime ban.

Single women and men who are in a relationship and have plans to live together should get married so they can live as husband and wife in the UAE.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said it has a Legal Assistance Fund to help overseas Filipinos in distress for their litigation expenses, court fees, and bail bond. However, those who are entitled to the legal assistance fund are Filipinos accused of murder or any case that has a sentence of life imprisonment or death.

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