

Foreigners easier to get 'green cards' in Shanghai FTZ

Permanent residence will enjoy the same rights as Chinese citizens in areas such as investment, housing purchases and schooling. [Photo/Xinhua]

The latest benefit of the Shanghai Free Trade Zone (FTZ) is to its non-Chinese residents, who can apply for permanent residence in China simply with a letter of recommendation from the FTZ authorities.

According to the social security bureau of Shanghai Pudong New Area, the new policy will take effect in mid-April, and apply to both the applicants and their spouses and minor children.

The move was made following 10 rules related to China's entry and exit policy announced by the Ministry of Public Security (MPS), which authorize Shanghai Zhangjiang National Innovation Demonstration Zone and Shanghai FTZ to recommend high-level foreign staff for permanent residence permits, Chinese "green cards".

Those with permanent residence will enjoy the same rights as Chinese citizens in areas such as investment, housing purchases and schooling.

The reform is to support Shanghai's ambition of becoming a world sci-tech innovation hub.

Those who qualify for the fast track application include well-known award winners or high-level talent scheme finalists, such as Nobel laureates, the Chinese government "Friendship Award" and other world-class, national and municipal awards; people in charge of Shanghai FTZ-based national laboratories, engineering laboratories, foreign investment R&D institutions, and top-level talent from innovation and start-up enterprises.

A Chinese green card is one of the hardest to obtain with no more than 7,000 issued since 2004, when the policy was introduced. That compares with about 600,000 foreigners currently living in China, and the application procedure is rather complicated.

In 2016, 1,576 foreigners became permanent Chinese residents, an increase of 163 percent on the previous year, according the MPS.

China has made huge progress in easing its residence and entry policies for foreigners since September 2015, which has helped attract more talent from overseas as well as boosting international exchanges and the economy, according to a ministry statement.

Shanghai saw six times more permanent residence applications from foreigners and their families in 2016 from 2015. The number of such applications in Beijing last year increased 426 percent.

10-year plan for youth development unveiled



A group of high school students play basketball. [File Photo]

Chinese central authorities released a detailed 10-year youth development plan Thursday, vowing better education, employment and healthcare for the nation's youth.

"Youth" in the context of the plan released by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council refers to those aged from 14 to 35.

The Middle- and Long-term Youth Development Plan (2016-2025) sets a general goal of establishing a "youth development policy system and work mechanism" by 2020 and improving the system by 2025.

Specifically, the plan sets educational goals of an average 13.5 years of education for the newly added labor force and a gross higher education enrollment rate of over 50 percent within 10 years. It aims for 90 percent of the groups to meet physical standards and give them more accesses to mental and physical care.

"Youth is the country's future and the nation's hope," reads the plan.

Authorities will strengthen educational campaigns targeting different ages within the group to champion patriotism and socialism with Chinese characteristics, making the "Chinese dream" a common goal for them, according

to the plan.

The government will also narrow the educational gap across the country and pump more capital and resources into the less developed western areas, it says.

[China punishes Weibo for porn](#)

Weibo, a Chinese Twitter-like service, has been punished for spreading pornography, as part of a nationwide crackdown, the anti-pornography authority said Friday.

The National Office Against Pornographic and Illegal Publications in February launched a new round of its national campaign against the production, sale and distribution of illegal publications and online erotic content that could affect juveniles.

Investigators found that Weibo started providing audio-visual programs in February 2015 without obtaining a license, and such content contained obscene videos.

Weibo was fined 30,000 yuan (4,359 U.S.dollars) by Beijing administrative law enforcement, and required to immediately rectify the problem.

The office asked all online service providers to learn lessons from the Weibo case, tackle pornography and shut down accounts with illegal content.

[Illegal parking in Beijing to face double punishments](#)



Drivers parking illegally in Beijing may get double punishments. [File Photo]

Drivers parking illegally in Beijing may get double punishments if a new draft regulation is finalized, Beijing News reported.

According to the draft launched by the Legal Affairs Office of the People's Government of Beijing Municipality and open for public opinion from April 11 to May 10, a driver who parks their car illegally in a non-designated spot may be fined 200 yuan (\$29), and have three demerit points included on their driver's license.

In China, drivers will be disqualified from driving after accumulating 12 demerit points, according to current law. The city's traffic administration displays "No Parking" signs at busy roadsides and places around hospitals and shopping centers, the report said.

With seven sections and 61 rules, the draft also sets regulations on issues such as the planning and construction of parking facilities, and has specifications on companies that provide parking services.

The new regulation may take effect this year, according to the Beijing Municipal Commission of Transport.

This will be the capital's first local law focusing on parking management.

Infectious diseases kill 1,589 in China in March

A total of 1,589 people died as a result of infectious diseases on the Chinese mainland in March, official data have shown.

According to the National Health and Family Planning Commission, there were 544,132 cases of infectious diseases reported on the mainland last month.

More than 325,791 cases were classified as Class B infectious diseases under China's Law on the Prevention and Treatment of Infectious Diseases, resulting in 1,579 deaths.

Viral hepatitis, tuberculosis, syphilis, gonorrhoea as well as bacterial and amoebic dysentery accounted for 95 percent of these cases.

Category C diseases were responsible for 218,341 cases and 10 deaths. Infectious diarrhea, foot and mouth disease, and influenza were the most prevalent in this category, accounting for 90 percent of cases.