

The Legislative Yuan Passes Third Reading of “Farmers’ Health Insurance Act” Article 5 Amendment

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The Legislative Yuan passes third reading of the “Farmers’ Health Insurance Act”, particularly the article 5 amendments on December 14, 2015. The farmers’ association members and non-members participated in the agricultural insurance eligibility conditions and review process has been adjusted to conformance criteria to resolve the burdens and other issues since the implementation of the agricultural insurance.

COA said the current insurees of Farmers’ Health Insurance are divided into two types: members of farmers’ association (FA) and farmers over 15 years old who are actually engaged in agricultural works. It has been controversial because of differences of additional insurance status and eligibility criteria, with a different review process. By amending the law, farmers can participate in agricultural insurance with consistent eligibility. There is only one standard to be qualified as agricultural insurees, which is different from the past while there were several different regulations for the qualifications. From now on, it does not matter whether the FAs are members or not but those who are qualified by the current standard.

COA further explained that after amending the law, it has already disconnected the FA membership with farmers who are qualified for agricultural insurance. By doing so, the farmers’ identify during the past decades become more clarified and realistic. For example, those self-employed farmers with FA membership might give away farmlands to children with different home registration, but the self-employed farmers can still hold the status of agricultural insurance. In addition, those land-leasing farmers with FA memberships can participate in agricultural insurance programs without the over-1-year farming operation requirement.

COA said that “Provisional Act Governing the Welfare Allowance for Elderly Farmers” issued on July 16, 2014 already extended the minimum qualification of senior farmer allowances from 6 months to 15 years. For farmers wishing to participate in agricultural insurance, they should apply for field investigation and keep track of their farmland activities.

By amending the law, farmers, who participate in agricultural insurance eligibility criteria, follow the standard of participating in social insurance. The agricultural insurance system becomes more comprehensive, towards the future farmer annuities program. Besides, a farmer’s FA membership is no longer linked with the agricultural insurance qualification. The FA membership goes back to the regulations of Farmers Association Act, which protects the freedom of group engagement by individual farmer’s willingness.

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