

BEST PRACTICES FOR PLACEMENT OF MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS

[From 1 June 2022](#), Employment Agencies (EAs) are required to provide a refund option of at least 50% of the service fees paid by the employer if the migrant domestic worker's (MDW) employment is terminated within the first six months of employment. [A summary of the refund policy can be found in [Annex A](#).]

EAs play a crucial role in matching employers to suitable MDWs who are able to meet their household needs. With the introduction of the service fee refund policy, EAs that are better able to facilitate suitable matches will benefit from having fewer early terminations and consequently having to deal with fewer requests from employers for refund.

The Association of Employment Agencies (Singapore), in consultation with MOM, has developed the following best practices to help EAs to improve their matching outcomes for MDWs and their employers.

Before placement:

- Understand the **needs and preferences of both the MDW and employer**.
 - Ask the employer to provide the **typical daily/weekly work schedule for the MDW**. The work schedule can be given to the MDW before a job offer is accepted to give her a better understanding of the job scope.
 - Clarify with the employer what the **primary and secondary roles of the MDW are, and the employer's expectations of the MDW's work experience**. For example, the main responsibility of the MDW could be to care for an elderly family member, but she would also need to perform selected household chores as a secondary task. If an employer is looking for an MDW to take care of young children, ask if the employer needs the MDW to have prior caregiving experience or is prepared for the MDW to learn on the job.
 - If the MDW's main role is to care for member(s) of the employer's household, ensure that this is stipulated in the service agreement signed with the employer. [See [Annex B](#) for suggested sample clause.]
 - Encourage both parties to **share as much information as possible, to better ascertain the MDW's fit with the household**. [See [Annex C](#) for suggested list of areas of employment to clarify with the MDW and employer.]
- Obtain the **employment and hiring histories of the MDW and employer** and share the information with the respective parties. Tap on the [eService](#) for MDW Work Permit transactions to obtain such information where available.
 - If a previous employer provided **feedback on the MDW**, you should share the details of this feedback with the prospective employer. At times, the previous employer may [leave their contact details with MOM](#) as they would like to share their experience with the prospective employer. You should also help to facilitate the contact.
- **Go through the clauses in the service agreement** with the employer and give the employer time to seek clarifications before signing it.

- **Explain fully and clearly the fees and terms**, including the breakdown of fees charged, and refund and replacement terms in the service agreement.
- **Provide your agency or agent's contact information** and inform the employer of the avenues of support they can tap on should they encounter issues with their MDWs over the course of employment.

After placement:

- **Offer your agency's support** to the employer when you conduct your checks with the employer and the MDW within three months after the MDW's deployment. Refer to the [suggested questions](#) provided by MOM during the announcement of the mandatory post-placement EA checks.
- If contacted by the MDW or employer for assistance over the course of employment, **listen to both parties and recommend solutions to resolve the issue**. For example, if the employer's feedback was that the MDW tends to be forgetful and does not follow up on all the tasks given, ask the MDW about the difficulties she faces and provide advice on how to improve her work performance (e.g. seek clarifications if unsure, write down tasks given).
- **Encourage employers to communicate with their MDW** to provide feedback on their work performance and check on their well-being. For example, encourage employers to have performance review chats with the MDW every month on pay day.
- If an MDW's employment is terminated early, **seek to find out more about the reasons** from both the MDW and employer. Take the information into consideration when facilitating a new match for the MDW and/or employer.
- If the employer wishes to terminate the MDW's employment contract, **communicate the options available to the employer**: (i) refund of service fees; or (ii) replacement MDW. Explain to the employer that the refund option is available to the employer provided that the employer has hired no more than three MDWs through the EA, and each of their employment was terminated within the first six months of employment.

Annex A: Service refund policy for MDW employers

Refund of service fees paid by MDW employers from 1 June 2022

Employment agencies (EAs) must provide employers with a refund option of at least 50% of the service fees paid by the employer, if the MDW's employment was terminated within the first six months of her employment. This refund option is available to the employer provided that the employer has hired no more than three MDWs through the EA, and each of their employment was terminated within the first six months of her employment.

This new refund policy will apply to all service fees paid on or after 1 June 2022. EAs will not be required to provide a refund if:

- There was no matching service provided by the EA, i.e., the EA was engaged by the employer solely to perform administrative work required to hire the MDW;
- The employer breaches any employment laws or commits any offence against the MDW; or

- The MDW was hired as a caregiver, and the caregiving need no longer exists (e.g., the person being cared for has passed away or has moved to alternative care).

Employers who are seeking a refund will need to inform their EA before the MDW's employment is terminated. This would allow the EA to speak to both the MDW and employer so as to understand the reason(s) for termination. With this understanding, the EA would then be able to provide better matches.

Annex B: Sample clause suggested by AEA(S) to include in service agreement if MDW is hired as caregiver

I _____ (Name of Employer) herein declare that _____ (Name of MDW) is hired to provide Caregiving for the following Care Recipients:

- | | |
|--------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Full Name | NRIC / FIN (Last 4 Digits) |
| 2. Full Name | NRIC / FIN (Last 4 Digits) |
| 3. Full Name | NRIC / FIN (Last 4 Digits) |

Note: List the member(s) of the household (e.g. elderly, children) for whom the MDW will be providing caregiving.

Annex C: Areas of employment to clarify with employers and MDWs

Examples of areas to clarify (Not exhaustive)

Clarify with both parties:

- Rest day arrangements (e.g. which day to take, start and end time)

Clarify with the employer:

- Caregiving needs (e.g. for child care, how many children, and of what age; for elderly care, the gender of the elderly and whether they have mobility issues or require round-the-clock care)
- Caregiving arrangements (e.g., whether the MDW needs to travel to grandparent's/relative's place in the day with the children under their charge)
- Less common household chores that MDW may need to undertake (e.g. taking care of pets, car washing)
- Basic amenities (e.g. what will be provided by employer)
- Living arrangements (e.g. single or shared room for MDW)
- House rules (e.g. pertaining to mobile phone usage)

Clarify with the MDW:

- Cooking arrangements (e.g. whether the MDW is comfortable cooking for a large household, the types of food she can cook, whether the MDW prefers to cook their own food or eat what the employer provides)
- Religious practices, and dietary and food-handling restrictions