



Immigration Department  
The Government of  
the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

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## **Quick Guide for the Employment of Domestic Helpers from Abroad**

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# I. Eligibility Criteria

Employers who wish to employ a domestic helper from abroad (Helper) have to satisfy the following criteria:

- (a) the employer is financially capable of employing a Helper. In general, for **every** Helper to be employed, the employer must have a household income of no less than HK\$15,000 per month or asset of comparable amount to support the employment of a Helper for the whole contractual period;
- (b) the Helper and the employer shall enter into a standard Employment Contract (ID 407);
- (c) the Helper shall only perform domestic duties for the employer as specified in the standard Employment Contract (ID 407);
- (d) the Helper shall not take up any employment with any other person during his/her stay in Hong Kong;
- (e) the employer will pay the Helper a salary that is no less than the minimum allowable wage as announced by the HKSAR Government. If no food is provided to the Helper, the agreed amount of food allowance should not be less than the applicable food allowance announced by the HKSAR Government;
- (f) the Helper shall work and reside in the contractual address only<sup>1</sup>;
- (g) the employer shall provide the Helper with suitable accommodation and with reasonable privacy;
- (h) the bona fides of the employer and the Helper are not in doubt;
- (i) there is no known record to the detriment of the employer and the Helper; and
- (j) the employer is a bona fide Hong Kong resident.

2. A Helper must be in possession of a proper visa before he/she travels to the HKSAR. The issuance of a visa to individual Helper is subject to the normal immigration requirements being met (such as holding a valid travel document with adequate returnability to his/her country of residence or citizenship; be of clear criminal record and raises no security or criminal concerns to the HKSAR, has no likelihood of becoming a burden on the HKSAR; etc). Employers who satisfy the above criteria should not assume that their Helper's visa application would be approved automatically.

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<sup>1</sup> Employers who have obtained the Director of Immigration's approval before 1 April 2003 to let their Helpers live out can continue to do so, so long as they continue to employ Helpers without a break of more than 6 months.

3. This entry arrangement does not apply to Chinese residents of the Mainland, Macao and Taiwan as well as nationals of Afghanistan, Cuba, Laos, Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Nepal and Vietnam.

## II. Entry Visa Application

4. The following application forms and documents are required for a new Helper from abroad:

- (a) completed application forms (ID 988A and ID 988B);
- (b) an original copy of the standard Employment Contract (ID 407), which should have been notarised by the appropriate consulate in the HKSAR if so required by the relevant consulate. Other three copies of the contract are for the retention of the employer, the Helper and the consulate concerned (if applicable) respectively;
- (c) a copy of the employer's Hong Kong identity card. If the employer is not a Hong Kong permanent resident, a person with right to land or on unconditional stay, please make a copy of the travel document showing the employer's personal particulars and the latest landing endorsement / landing slip / extension of stay label;
- (d) financial proof of the employer, such as the latest notice of assessment and demand for tax issued by the Inland Revenue Department; bank passbook/statements showing auto-payment of the monthly salary for the last three months; or salary statements/slips for the last three months;
- (e) proof of the employer's residential address<sup>2</sup> as reported in the standard Employment Contract (ID 407), such as the latest demand for rates note or water/telephone/electricity etc. utility bills within the last three months;
- (f) a testimonial of the Helper showing he/she has at least two-year working experience as a domestic helper; and
- (g) copies of the Helper's travel document and his/her Hong Kong identity card (if any).

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<sup>2</sup> If the contractual address is a flat in a housing estate run by the Housing Department/Hong Kong Housing Society, a consent letter from the Housing Department/Hong Kong Housing Society granting permission for the Helper to reside in the premises and copies of page one to four of the tenancy agreement with the Housing Department/Hong Kong Housing Society showing the address and personal particulars of the family members are required. Additional proof to show the relationship is also required if the documentary evidence is not in the employer's name.

### **Submission of Application**

5. Entry application may be sent by post or in person to Director of Immigration, Receipt and Despatch Unit, 2/F, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.

### **Processing Time**

6. It normally takes about four to six weeks to process an application for the employment of a Helper upon receipt of all necessary documents.

### **Fee**

7. If the application is approved, the employer will be notified by letter to collect the visa label at the Immigration Department. The employer will be required to pay a visa fee. For details, please refer to Fee Leaflet (ID 912). Payment of visa fee can be made in cash, by cheque or by Easy Payment System. Cheque must be crossed and made payable to “The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region”. Post-dated cheque will not be accepted.

## **III. Contract Renewal with the Same Employer**

### **Contract renewal after the existing contract has run its two-year full course**

8. Helpers who wish to renew their employment contracts with their existing employers after the existing contract has run its two-year full course may submit fresh applications in person or by authorised person to the Foreign Domestic Helpers Section or any Immigration Branch Offices (except Hong Kong Island Travel Documents Issuing Office). Applications may also be made by post, drop-in, or online. Applications made by post should be addressed to the Foreign Domestic Helpers Section, 3/F, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai. Drop-in boxes are also provided at the Foreign Domestic Helpers Section. Alternatively, applications may be made online at [www.gov.hk/esapplication](http://www.gov.hk/esapplication). In submitting the application, the Helpers should produce the following documents:

- (a) Visa/Extension of Stay Application Form for Domestic Helper from Abroad (ID 988A) completed and signed by the Helper;
- (b) Application for Employment of Domestic Helper from Abroad (ID 988B) completed and signed by the employer;
- (c) original copy of the new standard Employment Contract (ID 407) (see note (i) below);

- (d) original of his/her travel document (for in-person application); **or** copy of the Helper's travel document including the pages showing his/her personal particulars, photo, passport validity, latest visa label and latest landing endorsement/landing slip (for application made by post, drop-in or online);
- (e) copy of the proof of employer's financial position (see note (ii) below); and
- (f) copy of the proof of the employer's residential address (see note (ii) below).

Note: (i) For applications submitted online, the original employment contract (notarised, if so required by the local consulate) should also be submitted for inspection upon collection of extension label.

(ii) Proof of employer's financial position and residential address is not required (provided that the employer's average household income remains no less than HK\$15,000 (for each domestic helper to be employed) and there is no change in the residential address). Nevertheless, further supporting documents may be required in individual cases.

9. Application for contract renewal will normally be accepted **within eight weeks** prior to the expiry of the existing contract. Application submitted after the expiry of the existing contract and the Helper's valid limit of stay in Hong Kong will not be accepted.

### **Home Leave**

10. At the end of the two-year contract, the Helper shall return to his/her place of origin for vacation before commencing a new contract. If circumstances do not permit the Helper to return to his/her place of origin for vacation immediately upon expiry of the old contract, subject to mutual agreement with the employer, the Helper may apply for an extension of stay of normally not exceeding one year for him/her to defer the home leave.

## **IV. Change of Employer**

### **Change of employer within two-year contract**

11. Application for change of employer in the HKSAR within the two-year contract will not normally be approved. If the Helper wishes to take up employment with a new employer in the HKSAR, the Helper must return to his/her place of origin and apply for a new visa to the Director of Immigration either by post or through his/her new employer.

### **Change of employer at the end of two-year contract**

12. At the end of the two-year contract, the Helper will be required to return to his/her place of origin for vacation. An application for change of employer by the Helper at the end of the two-year contract may be made in the HKSAR **within four weeks** prior to the expiry of the contract. However, the application must be submitted by the Helper in person to the Foreign Domestic Helpers Section. The Helper should submit a release letter from the current employer showing the date of expiry/termination of the current contract, original of the Helper's travel document as well as the forms and documents required under paragraph 4 above except the Helper's testimonial.

13. Application for a visa to enable the Helper to return to the HKSAR to start employment with a new employer may be made but the Helper is required to go back to his/her place of origin within his/her limit of stay under the old contract before returning to the HKSAR to work under the new contract. If circumstances do not permit the Helper to return to his/her place of origin immediately upon expiry of the old contract, subject to mutual agreement with the new employer, the Helper may apply for an extension of stay of normally not exceeding one year for him/her to defer the home leave.

## **V. Completion or Termination of Contract**

14. Helpers are required to leave Hong Kong at the end of or upon termination of their employment contracts. They are permitted to remain in Hong Kong for the remainder of the permitted limit of stay or two weeks from the date of termination of contract, whichever is earlier. Only in exceptional circumstances that they may submit applications to Foreign Domestic Helpers Section to extend their stay in Hong Kong as a visitor by completing Application for Extension of Stay (ID 91).

## **VI. Undertaking and Breaches**

15. Any breach of the standard Employment Contract (ID 407) or undertaking to the Government of the HKSAR under ID 988A/ID 988B, or conviction of any related offences under immigration laws or labour laws will be an adverse consideration in considering the employer's future application for a Helper or the Helper's future application for employment visa or for extension of stay in the HKSAR.

## **VII. Levy**

16. The requirement for the collection of the Employees Retraining Levy (Levy) from employers of Helpers has been abolished after the expiry of the suspension of its collection on 1 August 2013.

17. Nevertheless, employers who owe an overdue levy to the Director of Immigration are still required to settle the outstanding payment immediately. Should any employer fail to settle the outstanding payment, Immigration Department would take into account such adverse record and he/she may be considered ineligible for employment of Helpers for a certain period of time.

18. All levy paid is not refundable under any circumstances.

## **VIII. Warning**

19. It is an offence to make false statements or representations to an immigration officer. To verify the authenticity of the information and documents submitted with a visa application, field visits may be conducted. A person who knowingly and wilfully makes a statement or gives information which he/she knows to be false or does not believe to be true shall be guilty of an offence under the Laws of Hong Kong and any such visa/entry permit issued or permission to enter or remain in the HKSAR granted shall have no effect.

## **IX. Addresses and Office Hours**

20. Below are the addresses and office hours of Receipt and Despatch Unit, Foreign Domestic Helpers Section and Immigration Branch Offices (except Hong Kong Island Travel Documents Issuing Office):

### **Receipt and Despatch Unit**

*2/F, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.*

### **Foreign Domestic Helpers Section**

*3/F, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong.*



## **Immigration Branch Offices:**

**(i) East Kowloon Office**

*Level 2, Sceneway Plaza, Sceneway Garden, 1-17 Sceneway Road, Lam Tin, Kowloon.*

**(ii) West Kowloon Office**

*G/F, 28 Kimberley Street, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon.*

**(iii) Sha Tin Office**

*3/F, Sha Tin Government Offices, 1 Sheung Wo Che Road, Sha Tin, N.T.*

**(iv) Fo Tan Office**

*Shops 405-407, 4/F, Jubilee Square, 2-18 Lok King Street, Fo Tan, N.T.*

**(v) Yuen Long Office**

*1/F, Yuen Long Government Offices, 2 Kiu Lok Square, Yuen Long, N.T.*

**(vi) Tuen Mun Office**

*1/F and 2/F, Tuen Mun Siu Lun Government Complex, 19 Siu Lun Street, Tuen Mun, N.T.*

## **Office Hours**

- **Receipt and Despatch Unit and Foreign Domestic Helpers Section**  
Monday – Friday: 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- **Immigration Branch Offices (except Hong Kong Island Travel Documents Issuing Office)**  
Monday – Friday: 9:00 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday: 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

## **X. Enquiries**

21. This pamphlet serves as a quick reference for the employment of domestic helpers from abroad. In case of need, please refer to “Guidebook for the Employment of Domestic Helpers from Abroad” [ID(E) 969] or contact the Immigration Enquiry Hotline at (852) 2824 6111 and (852) 2877 7711 (fax). You may also visit the Immigration Department website [www.immd.gov.hk](http://www.immd.gov.hk).

## XI. Checklist of Forms and Documents Required for Application for Domestic Helpers from Abroad

S/N	Forms/Documents required	Type of Application			
		Entry visa	Contract renewal after contract has run its 2-year full course	Completion of remaining period of the current contract	Change employer
1.	Visa/Extension of Stay Application Form for Domestic Helper from Abroad (ID 988A)	✓	✓	✓	✓
2.	Application for Employment of Domestic Helper from Abroad (ID 988B)	✓	✓		✓
3.	An original copy of the new standard Employment Contract (ID 407)	✓	✓*		✓
4.	Original of the Helper's travel document		✓**	✓**	✓
5.	Copy of the Helper's travel document	✓	✓***	✓***	✓
6.	Copy of the Helper's Hong Kong Identity Card (if any)	✓			✓
7.	Copy of the employer's Hong Kong Permanent Identity Card/Hong Kong Identity Card/passport	✓			✓
8.	Proof of the employer's financial position (Copy)	✓	✓****	✓****	✓
9.	Proof of the employer's residential address (Copy)	✓	✓****	✓****	✓
10.	Testimonial of the Helper	✓			
11.	Release letter from current employer showing the date of expiry/termination of the contract				✓
12.	Employer's supporting letter to confirm continuous employment			✓	

**Note:** \* For applications submitted online, the original employment contract (notarised, if so required by the local consulate) should also be available for inspection upon collection of the extension label.

\*\* For in-person applications only.

\*\*\* For applications made by post, drop-in or online. After receiving the collection letter, the applicant or employer (or authorised representative) should bring along the collection letter (and authorisation letter, if applicable) and the applicant's travel document to collect the extension label at the Foreign Domestic Helpers Section.

\*\*\*\* Proof of employer's financial position and residential address is not required (provided that the employer's average household income remains no less than HK\$15,000 (for each domestic helper to be employed) and there is no change in the residential address). Nevertheless, further supporting documents may be required in individual cases.