

EA Alert Dated: 24 January 2018

EA Alert: EAs to Comply with In-Principle Approval (IPA) Letter Requirements

Dear Key Appointment Holder and EA Personnel,

This is a reminder to all employment agents on the importance of ensuring compliance with In-Principle Approval (IPA) letter requirements for the employment of foreign employees.

2 As communicated previously via an EA alert sent on 11 November 2016, the IPA letter informs foreign employees about their key employment terms and their rights and responsibilities. It is important for all foreign employees to receive their IPA letter early as it provides them the opportunity to clarify their key employment terms with their local agents. The IPA letter also informs them of their employment rights and responsibilities prior to their arrival in Singapore.

3 As employment agents, you are required to ensure that the IPA letter is received by the foreign employees at least 3 to 7 days^[1] prior to their departure for Singapore. EAs are also required to allow foreign employees to retain their IPA letter.

4 The Ministry has conducted two rounds of compliance checks with foreign domestic workers (FDWs) at the Settling-In Programme to assess the industry's compliance level. These were the findings:

Findings from Compliance Checks



Vast majority (99%) of FDWs **received their IPA letters** prior to their departure to Singapore.

Tip: Are you the 1%? Work out a suitable arrangement with your overseas counterpart if you do not liaise directly with the FDWs.



Only about 1 in 3 FDWs received their IPA letters **at least 3 days** prior to their departure for Singapore. Late receipt was an especially prevalent problem amongst Myanmar and Indonesian FDWs.

Tip: Avoid getting penalised by requesting your overseas counterparts to show proof that the FDWs received their IPA letters within the given time frame, e.g. FDW signs on the IPA and indicates the date of receipt.



7 in 10 FDWs received their IPA letters **in their entirety**.

Tip: Are you the 30%? It is illegal not to send the IPA letters in their entirety. The IPA lists out the key employment terms, rights and responsibilities of the FDWs. Send all pages of the IPA letter and remind your overseas counterparts to comply.



7 in 10 FDWs **retained their IPA letters** even after arriving in Singapore.

Tip: Do not be among those who failed to let the FDWs retain their IPA letters. If you have to hold on to them for administrative reasons (e.g. SIP registration), make copies and return them to the FDWs.

**We want to hear your views on this EA Alert! Click here (<https://goo.gl/forms/v2PawLQhmkiWCOvV2>)*

4 While majority of the EAs were able to fully comply with the IPA requirements, non-compliant EAs have been issued with demerit points. The Ministry will take stronger action against EAs who do not take appropriate steps to ensure compliance.

Yours sincerely

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Footnotes

[1] The 3 to 7 days refer to calendar days. For instance, if a foreign employee is due to depart his or her home country to Singapore on 5th January 2018, then he or she should have received the IPA letter no later than 2nd January 2018.

[2] EALC 9A, 9B, and 9C (in effect 1 Dec 2016)

- EALC 9A. The licensee shall take all necessary steps to ensure that the foreign employee's copy of the In-Principle Approval letter, in its entirety as furnished by the Ministry of Manpower, is received by the foreign employee within a reasonable time prior to the foreign employee's departure for Singapore. The reasonable time period must be in accordance with the requirements in any written law, directive, guideline, circular or other similar instrument issued by the Commissioner.
- EALC 9B. The licensee shall keep proper documentation of the steps taken by the licensee to ensure the timely receipt of the In-Principle Approval letter by the foreign employee.
- EALC 9C. The licensee shall allow the foreign employee to keep the In-Principle Approval letter.