

EA Alert Dated: 19 November 2020

EA Alert: Be Responsible in Facilitating Transfer of Workers to New Employers

Dear Key Appointment Holders and Employment Agency Personnel,

Under the current rules on change of employer, a firm may hire workers who are already working in Singapore to benefit from experienced workers and faster deployment time, and to save on the costs of bringing in new workers.

If the current employer agrees to the transfer, the Work Permit application for an existing worker can be made while the worker's Work Permit is valid. In such cases, EAs must obtain the employer's consent in writing. MOM will ask for the consent to be produced before allowing the Work Permit to be issued.

Where the transfer is made without the agreement of the current employer, the application can only be made 40 to 21 days before the expiry of the Work Permit. If the Work Permit has already been renewed, the application for transfer cannot be made.

Some employment agencies (EAs) have been offering your services in facilitating a change of employer to workers and firms. The Ministry would like to remind all EAs to be responsible in offering such services.

EAs may advertise and offer your matching services to workers and new employers, but should be mindful to do so in a professional manner. Advertisements and offers should be factual and should not contain misleading or enticing messages or information to coax workers to switch employers. For example:

- Do not provide false or excessive assurances: *"Guarantee higher pay"*
- Do not offer services other than your matching services: *"Let us teach you how to change employer"*

EAs should not entice workers to change employers using any of the above messages or methods, or similar ones. EAs also should not visit workplaces or workers' place of residence to do so.

MOM will investigate complaints of irresponsible or unprofessional EA practices, and may take enforcement action against the EAs involved.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Teoh
Commissioner for Employment Agencies
Ministry of Manpower