

INFORM

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Safe Working Conditions Must Be In Place Before You Are Allowed To Clean Window Exteriors

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) has put in place stricter rules for employers who require their foreign domestic workers (FDWs) to clean window exteriors above ground level. The move will enhance safe working conditions for FDWs.

This means that if your employer asks you to clean window exteriors, you must ensure that:

1. **There are window grilles and they are locked at all times during the cleaning process; and**
2. **Your employer or an adult is physically present to supervise you.**

If you do not observe these requirements, your Work Permit may be cancelled and you may be repatriated.

I always make sure the window grilles are properly locked before I start cleaning the windows, so that I will not fall.

— Tita, an FDW who works in a flat on the 18th floor in Singapore

MOM hopes that these stricter rules will prevent further falls from height. Since January this year, nine FDWs have fallen to their deaths while working in their employers' homes, and most of them fell while cleaning window exteriors. The new rules will ensure that FDWs are safe when cleaning window exteriors.

"I always make sure the window grilles are properly locked before I start cleaning the windows, so that I will not fall", says Tita, an FDW who works in a flat on the 18th floor in Singapore. "While your employer must ensure that your work environment is safe, you must also take care of yourself and avoid dangerous work practices."

Remember to apply the safe work practices which you have learnt from the Settling-In Programme or the previous Safety Awareness Course. If you face any difficulty at work, do not be afraid to seek help from your employer."

SAFETY TIPS

YOU SHOULD TAKE NOTE OF WHEN CLEANING WINDOWS



Lock window when cleaning the **window interior**.



When cleaning the **window exterior** of homes above ground level:

- Windows have grilles and they must be locked at all times;
- Ensure your employer or an adult is present to supervise.



WORKING SAFELY IN SINGAPORE

From 1 May 2012, first-time foreign domestic workers (FDWs) in Singapore will attend a one-day Settling-In Programme (SIP) that will enable them to be better orientated and equipped with the basic knowledge of living and working safely in Singapore. The SIP includes teaching FDWs the safe ways to clean windows and hang laundry. The SIP subsumes the Safety Awareness Course which FDWs had to attend before 1 May 2012.

For FDWs who need more help in learning how to carry out your house chores in a safe manner, the Foreign Domestic Worker Association for Skills Training

(FAST) has a programme just for you. Jointly conducted with Grace Management & Consultancy Services Pte Ltd (GMCS), FAST has rolled out a new safety awareness course to help FDWs be more aware of their personal safety and be able to identify potential hazards such as retrieving objects from a window ledge.

If you are interested to sign up for this course, you can contact 6299 4333 for more information.

"I feel confident that I will be able to carry out my house chores safely after attending the course." Marilyn Espinosa, an FDW from the Philippines

"This course has indeed enabled my FDW to be more vigilant when working around the window areas. I encourage all employers to send their FDWs to attend the course as well." Foo LiLi, an FDW employer

KEEPING YOURSELF SAFE AT WORK

Nuraini, a foreign domestic worker (FDW), had difficulties hanging laundry. One day, she stood on a stool and leaned out of her employer's 12th-storey flat to hang the laundry out. She lost her balance. Instead of plunging 12 floors, she managed to land on the ledge on the 11th storey. Nuraini was rescued by her neighbours and the Singapore Civil Defence Force officers.

After the incident, Nuraini shared her experience with our officers. While she remembered being told at the Settling-In Programme not to stand on a stool and lean out of the window when hanging laundry, desperation and instinct drove her to stand on a stool to have a better grip of the laundry poles which were stuck. Before she knew it, she was hanging

on the ledge and shouting for help.

Nuraini had this advice for other FDWs, "Always be careful when doing household chores, and to quickly seek help from your employer. Never do anything dangerous and risk your life."

SCHEDULE OF SUBSIDISED COURSES

Are you interested in attending training programmes during your free time to upgrade your skills? If you are, we have listed a line-up of courses that are tailored for you. To register, you can contact the respective training providers for more details.



Programme
CARE GIVING FOR INFANTS CONDUCTED BY FAST

(Module 1 & 2 – Theory & Practical)

- Proper techniques in caring for infants

Course Duration

Module 1 (1 session on Sunday)
3 hrs | 10am – 1pm

Module 2 (1 session on Sunday)
3 hrs | 10am – 1pm

Course Fee After Subsidy

\$10 (includes course material)

Contact

Please call Kampong Ubi Community Club at 67423564 for registration



Programme
SEWING CLASS
Choice of Dress Making (Module 1 & 2)

Course Duration

Module 1 & 2

6 sessions per module
3 hrs per session Sunday
10am – 1pm or 2pm – 5pm

Course Fee After Subsidy

\$100 per module

Contact

Please call Rosni at 63424824 for registration



INFORM catches up with FDWs Jocelyn Jimenez and Joy Romualdo to find out what they have to say after attending courses conducted by non-profit organisation, Aidha.

Jocelyn Jimenez, an Aidha graduate, aspires to open her own cafe one day. Working as a Foreign Domestic Worker (FDW) in Singapore for 20 years, her story is one that tells of success and great promise.

Aidha, a non-profitable Singapore-based organisation, creates opportunities for FDWs through its offering of financial-related courses. Students learn how to use a computer, communicate effectively and manage their finances to provide for their families back home.

"Aidha's teachers are excellent. They have taught me many things, but most importantly, it has given me a new way

of thinking. Now I cook my lunch instead of eating out, and I shop carefully too," says Jocelyn.

Every month, Jocelyn will set aside 60-70% of her salary as savings and she hopes to study at a culinary arts school in future.

Another Aidha graduate, Joy Romualdo, is glad that Aidha has made a positive impact on her life too.

"I was really bored on my days off on Sundays. I have always wanted to go to a learning centre to upgrade my skills and learn new things. Aidha is perfect for me," says Joy. Through Aidha, she has learnt

to save money every day regardless of the amount, so as to be able to open her dream bakery back home.

If you are also interested to attend the courses, please go to www.aidha.org, or call (+65) 6732 5434 for more information. The campus, located at 2 Nassim Road, is open every Sunday from 10am to 5pm.



Weekly Rest Day

From January 2013

You are entitled to a rest day every week, **if your work permit is renewed or issued from 1 January 2013.**

A rest day will give you an emotional and mental break from work. Being well-rested and recharged means you can concentrate better and be a more productive worker when you are back at work.

If your employer needs your help to care for his/her family on your rest day, your employer may:

- Compensate you at least one day's wage, on top of your monthly salary, or
- Request that you take your rest day on another day (but it should be within the same month).

UPCOMING
EVENTS



Foreign Domestic Worker Day!

Come Join Us for a Day of Fun!

If you have some free time on Sunday, 2 Dec 2012, how about joining in the fun at the 3rd Foreign Domestic Worker (FDW) Day at the Singapore Polytechnic Convention Centre from 12pm to 5pm? FDW Day promises to be fun and exciting and it is a great opportunity for you to come and get to know other FDWs.

FDW Day is celebrated on the 1st Sunday of every December to give recognition to FDWs' contributions to families in Singapore. This event also aims to promote harmonious working relationships between FDWs and their employers and FDWs can get to know various learning opportunities and programmes at the exhibition.

This year's event is co-organised by FAST and AEAS [Association of Employment Agencies (Singapore)] and supported by 10 Non-Government Organisations, sponsors and supporters. The Guest of Honour is Mr Hawazi Daipi, Senior Parliamentary Secretary for Ministry of Education & Ministry of Manpower. An exciting programme awaits you! There will be cultural performances, exhibitions, and the announcement of the winners of the 7th FDW of the Year and FDW Employer of the Year competition. Plus, the winner of the FDW of the Year will walk away with a cash award of \$2,000!

So, look out for more publicity on the competition and details of the event in the next 2 months.

USEFUL CONTACTS

KEEP THE NUMBERS BELOW FOR HELP OR EMERGENCY



MOM Foreign Domestic Worker (FDW) Helpline 1800-339 5505

This hotline is for FDWs seeking assistance and advice on well-being, salary and other employment-related matters

OTHER EMERGENCY LINES

Ambulance / Fire 995

Police 999

EMBASSIES AND HIGH COMMISSIONS

Bangladesh 6255 0075

India 6737 6777 / 6238 2538

Indonesia 6737 7422 / 9295 3964

Myanmar 6735 1672

Philippines 6737 3977

Sri Lanka 6254 4595

Thailand 6737 2475 / 8421 0105

OTHER HELPLINES

ACMI Hotline 6280 5424

Humanitarian Organisation for Migration Economics (HOME) Hotline 6341 5525 / 1800-797 7977

Transient Workers Count Too 1800-888 1515

Samaritans of Singapore (SOS) Toll-Free Hotline 1800-221 4444



SPEAK UP!

"This is my first time working in Singapore, I'm lucky to have a good employer who treats me well and whenever I have a problem, they will comfort me and give me advice. I am thankful to have such a good employer."

Ambar Wati Siti Nur Azizah, Indonesia

"I would like to say Thank You to my employer, Madam Susan and Sir Albert. Thank you so much for being such an understanding employer. You are there when I need a listening ear and whenever I need your help. Thank you for the trust and respect that you have given me. I will always remember your kindness. I'm proud to tell all my friends and family in Philippines that I have a good employer."

Rosalie Caspillo Agno, Philippines

"I have been reading INFORM for the past few months and I'm glad I did. The articles and tips are very informative and useful. I have learned how to keep stress away and make the best of my time here. Thank you so much, INFORM!"

Wiwit Setiawati, Indonesia

We welcome your feedback. Write in to us to share your experience or what you wish to see featured in future issues of INFORM. Send your letters to: Media, Promotions & Education Branch, Foreign Manpower Management Division, Ministry of Manpower Services Centre, 1500 Bendemeer Road #02-01, Singapore 339946

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