



# 1. Before hiring a migrant domestic worker (MDW)



Before you hire an MDW, have you considered other options and services for your needs?

## Have you considered the following?

- How much it will **cost to hire an MDW?** Besides her salary and levy, there is also the cost of her food, medical expenses, air ticket home and other unexpected expenses, for example, potentially large fees if she has to stay in hospital.
- Is there room in your home to provide your MDW with **proper accommodation?** Accommodation should include basic amenities (mattress, pillow, blanket and so on), and provide enough space, ventilation, safety, privacy and protection from the elements (rain, sun and so on).
- It can be stressful for you and your MDW in the first few months, especially if it is her first time working in Singapore. **Be patient and provide suitable guidance.** Everyone can make mistakes.

# 2. Applying to employ MDW



If you have decided to hire an MDW, the following will guide you on what you need to do.

## A) Using an employment agency (EA)

- Make sure the EA you go to is **licensed**. Check this using the EA directory ([www.mom.gov.sg/ea-directory](http://www.mom.gov.sg/ea-directory)), which also has information on the EA's track record and contact details.
- You should check with the agency on the fee as it depends on the range of services provided. The fee usually includes the following:

- ⚠️ **Agency fee** (each agency can charge a different fee)
- **Settling-In Programme** if your MDW is working here for the first time (\$75)
- **Work permit application** (\$35 administrative fee)
- **Work permit issuance** (\$35 administrative fee)
- **MDW levy** (\$300 a month without concession; \$60 with concession)
- **Security bond of \$5,000** in the form of an insurance or banker's guarantee
- **Medical insurance cover** of at least \$60,000
- **Personal accident insurance (PAI)** of at least \$60,000

Look at the items covered under your insurance plans, including the ward class that is covered under the medical insurance, and discuss with your agent whether you want to add extra cover.



- To choose a suitable MDW who meets your needs, check her **standard biodata and employment history** which the agency must give you.
- Ask to **interview** (face-to-face or overseas phone call) the MDW to get to know her better before you decide to employ her.
- Look out for the following important items that must be included in the **service agreement** you sign with your agency. They are:
  - ⚠️ A **breakdown of the fees** you will be paying;
  - The circumstances under which you may be **eligible for a refund** and how soon the refund should be given;
  - The **number of replacement MDWs** you are eligible for and the action you can take if your agency cannot find a replacement MDW; and
  - How service-related disputes between you and your agency will be dealt with.
- Sign the safety agreement provided by your employment agency. This will make sure that both you and your MDW are aware of, and understand, MOM's requirements when cleaning the outside of windows.



## B) Application procedures



If you are applying to employ an MDW, you must do the following:

- Complete the **Employers' Orientation Programme (EOP)** if you are a first-time employer. You can choose to do this online or in a classroom. For information on the training providers for EOP and how to register, please see: [www.mom.gov.sg/eop](http://www.mom.gov.sg/eop)
- Set up a **general interbank recurring order (GIRO)** account for **monthly levy deductions** by the Ministry of Manpower (MOM). You must keep enough money in your GIRO account for these deductions or MOM may revoke your MDW's work permit.
- Make sure your MDW has a **pre-employment medical examination**.

## Useful Links



This brochure provides important information about hiring an MDW and is not meant to be exhaustive. For more details, please see the following websites.

**Ministry of Manpower**  
<http://www.mom.gov.sg>

**Employer Requirements**  
[www.mom.gov.sg/fdw-employer](http://www.mom.gov.sg/fdw-employer)  
• Provides information on the requirements and conditions you must meet if you want to employ an MDW.

**Employment Agency Directory**  
<http://www.mom.gov.sg/ea-directory>  
• An e-service that allows you to search for all licensed employment agencies.

**Online Publications for MDW Employers**  
[www.mom.gov.sg/fdw-employer-resources](http://www.mom.gov.sg/fdw-employer-resources)  
• A list of publications targeted at MDW employers, including the MDW employer guidebook, safety pamphlet, past issues of INFOCUS, and so on.

**Association of Employment Agencies (Singapore)**  
<http://www.aeas.org.sg/>

**Small Claims Tribunals - State Courts Singapore**  
<http://www.statecourts.gov.sg/CJTS/>

- Deals with disputes you may have with your employment agency.

## Getting you started

If you need to employ a migrant domestic worker (MDW), please take some time to go through this brochure to understand the responsibilities of an MDW employer under the Work Permit Conditions. It also provides useful tips that can help you maintain a harmonious relationship with your MDW.

## C) Choosing a migrant domestic worker

When choosing an MDW, remember the following:



- Make sure she is from a country approved by MOM, is **at least 23 years old** and has **at least eight years of formal education**. For more information on the requirements, please see:

<http://www.mom.gov.sg/fdw-requirements>

- Take note of any **requirements imposed by the country** she is coming from (if this applies). These requirements are set by the overseas government. You may want to contact the relevant embassy for more information.

- One of the main reasons employer and MDW relationships break down is due to **communication issues**. Do consider choosing an MDW who can understand the language you speak.

- If you have any special requirements for your MDW, carry out a **face-to-face interview** with her to get to know her and assess if she has the relevant skills and experience before you decide to employ her.

- Make sure the MDW brings the necessary **educational certificates** as proof of her education. Otherwise, she will not be allowed to attend the Settling-In Programme (SIP) which is necessary for the work permit to be issued.

## 3. Knowing your responsibilities as an employer



Employing an MDW is a major responsibility. This section will help you better understand what these responsibilities are.



You must do the following:

- Your MDW must meet certain requirements. These include:

- Attending the **Settling-In Programme (SIP)** within 3 days of MDW's completion of SHN (if this is her first time working here);
- Passing a medical examination** by a Singapore registered doctor and submit a request to MOM for her work permit to be issued within 14 calendar days upon arrival; and
- Registering her for fingerprinting and phototaking** at MOM Services Centre – Hall C within 7 calendar days after her work permit is issued.

- Draw up an **employment contract** with your MDW that sets out the terms and conditions of employment such as wages, rest days, duties and notice for ending the contract, to avoid misunderstanding.

- Spell out the **rest day arrangements** in the employment contract with your MDW. She is entitled to a weekly rest day or compensation in lieu. If you want to change the rest-day arrangements, you must do so in writing to avoid misunderstandings and disputes.

- Bring your MDW for her **medical examination every six months**. Otherwise, MOM will withdraw her work permit.

- Keep a **proper record of the monthly salary** you pay to your MDW. This involves recording the amount and the date the salary is paid. There should be an acknowledgement by you and your MDW on the record.

- You should allow your MDW to manage her own salary. Some MDWs agree for their employers to keep their salaries for them. It is not a good idea to do this as it could give rise to misunderstanding if your employment relationship breaks down or when either you or your MDW decide to end the employment relationship early.

- As a good practice, you should take your MDW to **open a local bank account** so that you can pay the salary each month into that account. Look for banks which offer accounts to MDWs without a minimum balance (for example, DBS / POSB bank has a scheme called 'POSB Payroll Account for Migrant Domestic Worker (MDW)' which allows your MDW to open a new account without an initial deposit and a minimum balance).

- You must look after the overall **well-being of your MDW**.

- To ensure your MDW's safety, give her clear instructions on what she can do and what she cannot do.

**!** If your home is above ground level and you need your MDW to clean the outside of the windows, you must make sure the window grilles are installed and locked, and you or another adult is present to supervise your MDW. Your MDW cannot clean the outside of the windows if there are no window grilles installed.

- If your **MDW goes missing** and you have made reasonable efforts to find her, you may lose part of your security bond. You must inform the police and cancel your MDW's work permit within seven days. If you do not do this, you may lose the full security bond.

- You have to **pay to send your MDW back** to her home country when she ends her employment with you.



USEFUL CONTACT INFORMATION	
General enquiries (MOM)	6438 5122
Cancel a Work Permit	
Notify MOM of changes	http://www.mom.gov.sg/notify-about-mdw
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You need to notify MOM of changes during your MDW's employment, including changes in residential address and worker's passport details, worker's pregnancy, missing worker or death of a worker.</li> </ul>	



# Hiring A Migrant Domestic Worker?

