



Republic of the Philippines
Department of Migrant Workers

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Adoption of the Enhanced Reform Programs for Filipino Domestic Workers and Promotion of their Rights, Dignity, and Welfare

Pursuant to the policy directives of President Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr. to uplift the dignity and well-being of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), and in line with the Department of Migrant Workers' commitment to international labor standards on fair and ethical recruitment, the Department, after thorough consultation with all concerned stakeholders, hereby issues this Advisory on the formal adoption of the Enhanced Reform Programs for Filipino Domestic Workers.

These reforms reinforce the Philippine government's commitment to decent work, ethical recruitment, and strengthened welfare mechanisms for Filipino domestic workers deployed abroad.

1. Increase in Minimum Monthly Wage of Domestic Workers

To ensure just remuneration and uphold the right of every domestic worker to fair wages, the Department shall implement an increase in the minimum monthly wage for Filipino domestic workers from USD 400 to at least USD 500, without prejudice to existing rules and policies implementing a higher wage and subject to the following:

- The increase shall be integrated into all employment contracts processed by the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW);
- The new wage floor reflects the recognition of domestic work as work of equal value deserving of fair compensation; and
- Migrant Workers Offices (MWOs) are directed to engage host governments and foreign recruitment agencies to ensure the discussion and implementation of this wage standard.

2. Annual Medical Check-ups and Hospitalization/Treatment

To ascertain fitness for work and the well-being of the OFW domestic workers, annual medical check-ups will be implemented initially on a voluntary basis. In cases of work-related accidents and illnesses, the PRAs and principals (FRAs and foreign employers) shall cause the hospitalization and/or treatment of OFW domestic workers.

3. Implementation of Mandatory "Know Your Employer" (KYE) Protocol to Ensure Transparency and Informed Consent



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To promote ethical and transparent recruitment in line with ILO's fair recruitment principles, the DMW shall require the implementation of a "Know Your Employer" (KYE) scheme as follows:

- Mandatory video conferencing between the prospective domestic worker and employer shall be conducted before contract finalization;
- Allow the worker gain direct knowledge of job duties, workplace conditions, household composition, rest periods, and accommodation;
- Obtain full, prior, and informed consent of the worker before deployment; and
- For the DMW and MWOs to monitor or audit these virtual meetings to ensure compliance and detect red flags.

Private Recruitment Agencies (PRAs) are reminded that informed employer-employee matching is a core component of ethical recruitment and strengthens worker protection at the pre-deployment stage.

4. Implementation of the "Kumusta Kabayan?" Digital Welfare Monitoring System

Implement the "Kumusta Kabayan?" digital welfare monitoring system for continuous protection and access to grievance mechanisms. Key features of the DMW and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA)'s Kumusta Kabayan? App include:

- Regular digital check-ins through calls or messaging platforms conducted by designated welfare case officers;
- Initial outreach shall begin with a simple engagement with the OFWs, "Kumusta Ka Na, Kabayan?," and responses will be evaluated to identify potential welfare issues or concerns; and
- The system shall ensure timely referral to legal, medical, psychosocial, financial, or reintegration assistance as needed.

5. Reskilling, Upskilling, and Career Mobility Program

As part of the reform package, an upskilling and career mobility program shall be implemented to expand the future prospects of Filipino domestic workers. In partnership with TESDA and relevant government agencies, this initiative will offer progressive training in the following areas:

- Caregiving (including elder care and childcare)
- Household management
- Hospitality services (such as food and beverage services)
- Digital literacy
- Language proficiency

The aim is to empower domestic workers to transition to higher-skilled and better-paying employment, thus elevating their status to caregiving work when the tasks involve care of a child, the elderly, or a sick family member of the household where the OFW is employed.

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Returning workers may also avail of reintegration support, including livelihood grants, enterprise development assistance, and financial literacy training.

6. Stricter Standards for Recruitment Agency Accommodation Facilities

To protect household service workers prior to deployment, the Department issued Memorandum Circular No. 02, Series of 2025, imposing stricter standards on accommodation houses operated by PRAs and FRAs. Facilities must be registered with the Licensing and Regulations Bureau and supported by lease or ownership papers, barangay clearance, fire safety certificates, and sworn consent for inspections. Housing must be safe, habitable, and accessible, with proper ventilation, sanitation, and lighting, or agencies must provide free transportation.

Agencies shall provide food, mattresses, functional toilets with toiletries, secure lockers, and internet access, maintain a logbook of tenants, and submit quarterly reports. Non-compliance shall result in denial or cancellation of registration and administrative sanctions.

The Department shall also coordinate with host governments to observe host country laws and regulations, and harmonize standards for accommodation facilities.

7. Whitelisting Policy for Recruitment Agencies

To strengthen ethical recruitment, the Department issued Memorandum Circular No. 04, Series of 2024, establishing a whitelisting system for PRAs and FRAs for countries with whitelisting requirements. Only agencies with proven compliance and ethical practices may deploy workers, and each must designate a welfare desk officer.

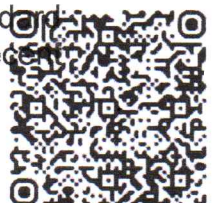
Non-compliant agencies shall face sanctions or removal from the whitelist.

8. Rights-based Approach through Legal and Other Forms of Assistance Under the AKSYON Fund

In upholding the human and employment rights of the Filipino domestic workers, the Department shall utilize the *Agarang Kalinga at Saklolo para sa mga OFW na Nangangailangan* (AKSYON) Fund to cover legal, medical, financial and emergency assistance.

The Department reiterates that passports are the property of the Philippine Government and must remain with the worker at all times, pursuant to Section 13 of R.A. 8239 (Philippine Passport Act of 1996) as amended. Employers, recruiters, and third parties are prohibited from withholding passports except for justified purposes such as visa stamping, after which they must be promptly returned. Violations shall result in disciplinary action, including suspension, cancellation, or disqualification.

The Department also maintains the strict implementation of the Standard Employment Contract (SEC) for domestic workers to guarantee decent

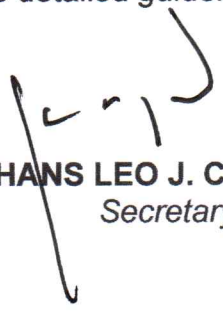


accommodation, adequate living conditions, and at least one full rest day per week, complemented by a proposed annual mandatory medical check-up in coordination with host governments and overseas posts.

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Reforms under item numbers 1-4 of this Advisory shall apply to all PRAs and principals (FRAs and foreign employers) with newly hired domestic workers under employment contracts entered into, or with vacationing or returning domestic workers under contracts renewed, 60 days after issuance thereof.

All PRAs, PDOS providers, principals, and MWOs are directed to comply with the provisions of this Advisory. The DMW shall issue detailed guidelines to operationalize each component of the reform package.


HANS LEO J. CACDAC
Secretary

22 August 2025

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