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Rest days, health and well-being for migrant domestic workers

As an employer, you are responsible for the health and well-being of your migrant domestic worker (MDW). You must provide for rest days, medical care and more.

Rest days

Your MDW is **entitled to one rest day** per week. You and your MDW must mutually agree on which day of the week she should take the rest day.

From 1 January 2023, all employers must ensure their MDWs have **at least one rest day each month that cannot be compensated away**.

If your MDW agrees to work on the remaining rest days in the month, you must compensate her with one of the following:

- At least 1 day's salary.
Note: This is an additional payment and is **not counted into the MDW's basic salary**.
- A replacement rest day taken within the same month.

Note


If your MDW is currently receiving compensation in-lieu of **all** her rest days (i.e. she has no rest days in a month), you must let her take at least 1 rest day a month from 1 January 2023 and discuss with her how her rest day will be taken.

Update your MDW's number of rest days in  **FDW eService**, after discussing with her how her rest day can be taken.

Rest days can be taken flexibly to suit the needs of both employers and MDWs:

- The rest day can be taken as one full day or over two half days.
- The MDW may choose to spend her rest day at home.
- If the MDW is unable to take her rest day in a particular month, it can be deferred by up to one month. This means that the MDW should take her rest day by the end of the subsequent month.

To find out more on the rest day requirement, read the  **press release on mandatory rest days for migrant domestic workers**, our **guide for employers** .

Employers who require further information or advice on the rest day arrangement may contact us through our  **online feedback form**.

Initial difficulties

A new MDW from a rural area may encounter some of these difficulties:

- Understanding and communicating in your language.
- Using modern household appliances.
- Adjusting to living in high-rise buildings.
- Having different practices in taking care of children.

She will need time to familiarise herself with your way of life. You can help by taking time to orientate and train her, especially in the early stages of her employment.

Accommodation

You must ensure that your MDW's accommodation meets the following requirements:

- **Adequate shelter:** the accommodation must adequately protect your MDW from environmental elements such as sun, rain or strong winds.
- **Basic amenities:** you must minimally provide your MDW with a mattress, pillow, blanket, bathroom amenities and toiletries. Examples of toiletries include soap, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.
- **Sufficient ventilation:** your MDW's accommodation must be sufficiently ventilated. Mechanical ventilation (e.g. electrical fan) must be provided if natural ventilation is inadequate.
- **Safety:** your MDW must not sleep near any dangerous equipment or structure that could potentially cause harm or hurt to her.
- **Modesty:** your MDW must not sleep in the same room as a male adult or teenager. If you install video recording devices at home, you must inform your MDW of the devices and where they are placed. You must not install them in areas that will compromise her privacy or modesty, e.g. where she sleeps, change clothes, or the bathroom area.
- **Space and privacy:** you should provide your MDW with a separate room. If that is not possible, you must ensure that her accommodation has adequate space and privacy.

Adequate food

You must provide your MDW with 3 meals a day.

An example of a day's food intake for a female engaged in moderate activity is as follows:

- Breakfast: 4 slices of bread with spread.
- Lunch: 1 bowl of rice + three-quarter cup of cooked vegetables + palm-sized amount of meat (fish/poultry/beef/lamb) + fruit
- Dinner: 1 bowl of rice + three-quarter cup of cooked vegetables + palm-sized amount of meat (fish/poultry/beef/lamb) + fruit

Be sensitive to your MDW's needs when it comes to food. Do not force your MDW to eat food that she is not supposed to or is not comfortable with. For example, your MDW may not be able to eat certain food due to her religious beliefs, or she may not be accustomed to your family's dietary requirements (e.g. vegetarian food or porridge).

Medical care and vaccination

As an employer, you are responsible for your MDW's medical needs. This includes:

- All medical costs, including hospitalisations and **six-monthly medical examinations**

- **Medical and personal accident insurance**

MDWs need to meet certain **vaccination requirements**. You should also assist your MDW with keeping her vaccination status up-to-date and providing sufficient rest after vaccinations.

Tip

You may share **resources on vaccinations** in your MDW's native language.

Open communication

You MDW may experience homesickness and loneliness. You can help her cope with those feelings by teaching her how she could contact her family and how she could send letters home.

Family integration

You should try your best to integrate your MDW into your family. You can do that by being patient and tolerant and making an effort to understand her background.

Safe work conditions

You must ensure that the MDW works safely. She will have to follow the approved work practices stipulated in **MOM's** training materials and courses (e.g. the **Employers' Orientation Programme**).



Related questions

How do I calculate my MDW's pay in-lieu of a weekly rest day?

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