

EA Alert Dated: 26 September 2016

EA Alert: Employment Agencies' (EAs) Role in Repatriating Foreign Domestic Workers (FDW)

**Employment Agencies' (EAs) Role in Repatriating Foreign Domestic Workers (FDW)**

1 It has come to our attention that some FDWs sought the assistance of EAs to provide them with housing facilities in neighbouring countries when their official employers had already decided or had made arrangements to allow them to return to their hometown after their work passes had expired, or were cancelled or revoked.

2 Under MOM regulations [1], employers of FDWs have a responsibility to ensure that their FDWs return to their hometown when their work permits expire, are cancelled or revoked. In certain situations, the FDW may request to go to an alternative destination. For example, if the FDW finds employment in another country. This is allowed as long as both the FDW and her employer mutually agree and informs MOM. Once the travel arrangements have been agreed upon, both parties should honour them. MOM takes a serious view if any party decides or assists to frustrate the arrangements.

3 In view of the above, if your EA is approached by FDWs for assistance to travel to destinations other than their hometown (e.g. nearby ports such as Johore Bahru or Batam), you are required to ensure that this arrangement has been mutually agreed between the FDW's employer and the FDW. Your EA should not facilitate any other arrangement if there is no mutual agreement. If you fail to check, the Ministry will not hesitate to take stern action.

4 MOM will continue to share important EA-related information with all EAs through this channel. Please keep your EA email address updated. For further clarification, you may call us at 6438 5122 or email us at MOM\_FMMD@mom.gov.sg.

5 Thank you.

---

[1] Relevant sections of the Employment of Foreign Manpower (Work Passes) Regulations (EFMR):

21. Subject to paragraph 22, the employer shall repatriate the foreign employee to the international port of entry that affords reasonable access to the foreign employee's hometown within the foreign employee's home country when the work permit or visit pass of the employee expires or is cancelled or revoked and if the employee is not earlier employed by another employer. In the event of any dispute about the international port of entry to which the foreign employee shall be repatriated, the dispute shall be referred to the Controller, whose decision shall be final.

22. The employer may repatriate the foreign employee to a destination other than that specified in paragraph 21 — (a) if the foreign employee so requests, and the Controller is informed by the employer of the employer's intention to do so, before the repatriation occurs; or (b) if the Controller so determines.