



# A Guide for Expectant Parents: Hiring & Managing a Domestic Worker for Baby Care

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Holly Wong Yoga



## Hello and congratulations!

Having a baby is an exciting and busy time. We created this guide to help families who are considering employing a domestic worker primarily to help with baby care. We will walk you through hiring and managing a domestic worker, with expert content by Fair Employment Agency and Uplifters. As a wonderful addition, we have soothing pre-natal yoga resources from Holly Wong.



**Uplifters** is a non-profit organisation that helps migrant domestic workers break the cycle of poverty, and build lives they want for themselves. This is achieved through online education and community support. Uplifters' core online courses focus on money management and personal growth. In 2021, they will be launching a [Baby Care Online Course](#).



Holly Wong Yoga

**Holly Wong** is an experienced Pregnancy Yoga Teacher, Parent Educator, and Mother. She is passionate about providing education and resources to inspire a positive pregnancy and childbirth.



**Fair Employment Agency** is a nonprofit agency that helps employers hire great domestic workers. Their mission is to set a new standard for professionalism, ethics, and service for recruitment in the sector.



# HIRING THE RIGHT PERSON FOR YOUR FAMILY & NEW ARRIVAL!

by [Fair Employment Agency](#)

## Getting Started

Transparency is vital at the start of the hiring process; it leads to a much better chance of success, for both employer and domestic worker. Use our step-by-step guide to determine which characteristics work best for you:

**1) Determine your needs:** Before you hire a domestic worker, you need to determine the two skills which are most important to you and your family. It's unlikely that a domestic worker will be an expert at everything!

**Ask yourself:** What precisely do you need your domestic worker to take care of? What is the most important goal for you? These may be tasks such as childcare, housework, cooking, pet care, gardening or laundry.

**2) Understand your management style:** Everyone has different expectations of their relationship with a domestic worker. Some prefer to keep it entirely professional, whilst others prefer a domestic worker to become part of the family. It's important to communicate this during the interview.

Although having the domestic worker as 'part of the family' is a pleasant prospect, we should bear in mind that, first and foremost, they will be an employee, and you, their employer.

**3) Determine personality and fit:** We strongly recommend you "hire for attitude, train for skills." Attitude is the most important trait to look for when hiring. This includes adaptability and a willingness to learn. Also, imagine how the applicant would fit into your home life.

Most chores and tasks can be learned, personality; on the other hand, is often what determines how well suited a domestic worker may be for your family.

**4) Communicate your needs:** Once you have determined your needs, management style, ideal personality and fit, use this to structure your interview. Communicate this during the interview stage to assess whether the applicant is a good fit for your family.



# How should I structure a domestic worker interview?

When interviewing a potential domestic worker, we recommend structuring the interview in five parts:

**1) Situational questions:** It is a good idea to find out how the applicants will react in different scenarios. The goal of this exercise is to improve your understanding of their personality and how they problem-solve. We can gauge this by asking 'situational questions', for example:

- You accidentally drop a plate. What would you do?
- How would you put a baby to sleep? What if she cries for a long time?
- What steps would you take to prepare a bath for a baby?
- Imagine you are home alone and a workman rings the doorbell. Your employer didn't inform you beforehand. What do you do?

**2) Work experience questions:** Next, delve into the domestic workers' previous work experience. Try and understand the management style of their former employer and how does this differ from your style? Example questions could be:

- Did you manage your own tasks or did your employer set a schedule?
- Did you cook using recipes or were you shown a method by your employer?
- Did you have any issues with your previous employers? How did you resolve any conflicts?

**3) Your schedule:** Explain your basic weekly plan and the tasks you would expect the domestic worker to manage. How much flexibility is there if she

needs to change things? When would she be taking her weekly and annual leave?

#### 4) Other important discussion items:

- Will you give a food allowance or will you provide food?
- Go over any specific important home rules or childcare preferences.

**5) Applicant's questions:** Ensure you allow some time for the domestic worker to ask questions; it will help her determine whether she is a good fit for your family.



## How do I hire a domestic worker?

There are many agencies with poor business models. Their priority being profiting from the fees, rather than finding the best fit for the client, and a suitable workplace for the domestic worker. But there is a better way.

When hiring is carried out fairly, workers are not charged for securing jobs and can avoid difficult debt situations. Employers benefit because the agency is motivated to find a worker who will be a good match for their family.

## Choosing an agency

There are many domestic worker employment agencies in Hong Kong, but choosing the right one is imperative. Below are some pointers:

**1) Check License:** Regardless of which employment agency you choose, as a minimum, you should check that it is fully licensed and accredited by the [Hong Kong Labour Department](#). Additionally, the agency should be certified by the consulate of the home country of the domestic worker.

**2) Stay informed:** Agencies operating illegally will take advantage of misinformation:

- Ask the employment agency, beforehand, for a detailed breakdown of costs for yourself and the worker.
- Ask the domestic worker what they already paid.
- Ask the domestic worker if they have access to their passport or whether the agency is holding it as collateral.

### 3) Be aware of red flags

- **Offers low prices:** If an agency is offering unusually low prices, this usually means that maybe taking advantage of the domestic worker.
- **Offers speedy processing:** When an agency promises particularly fast processing times, usually these are simply unrealistic marketing tactics. Agencies have almost no control over the processing time.



**Fair Agency**

## Get in Touch with Fair Agency

We're here to help you with the hiring process! Our vetting and matching process is designed to help you find the right person to join your home and family needs. Reach out to learn more about our services.

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Email](#)



## WORKING AS A TEAM FOR YOUR BABY

by [Uplifters](#)

Planning and preparation can help you, and your domestic worker succeed in working together to care for your baby. Here, we'll share some 'food-for-thought' and practical guides.

- Defining expectations
- Helping your baby bond with your domestic helper
- Making your domestic worker an ally
- Clear guidelines for emergencies
- Checklist

## Defining expectations

During the hiring process, you may have shared your priorities and requirements with your domestic worker, but it shouldn't end there! A crucial part of a successful working relationship is to regularly communicate your expectations and needs and provide opportunities to evaluate performance together.

For example, what are your expectations for your domestic workers' role within your family?

- **If you are working full time at the office**, how would you expect her to structure her day for your baby? Will you provide a set schedule or a general daily task list to be completed? How do you want her to check-in with you whilst you are at work, and how frequently?
- **If you work from home**, how would you prefer for your domestic worker to communicate with you during your workday? Would you want her to allow your baby to interrupt whilst you are working?
- **If you are a stay at home parent**, what are your domestic workers' responsibilities concerning the baby?
- **If grandparent(s) help to take care of the baby**, how will your domestic worker be expected to interact and communicate with them? What duties will be hers? Would she only report to you, or them as well?

## Helping your baby bond with your domestic helper

It has been scientifically proven that babies with strong and secure bonds with their caregivers develop into happier and well-adjusted adults. The



first few months after birth are crucial for future mental and emotional well-being. So parents and their domestic worker have a critical role to play as a team!

A common concern for new parents, or those unfamiliar with employing a domestic worker, is the confusion for the baby. But, rest assured, children, recognise their parents early on. Babies know their mothers' smell, and it's a bond that is not easily replicated.

We encourage you to regard your domestic worker as part of your team for providing the best care for your baby. This relationship is a special and important one.

To establish healthy boundaries and trust, talk about your preferences and help your domestic worker to understand them. For example:

- What language would you like your domestic worker to speak in with your baby?
- What ways of showing affection are you comfortable with? Cuddling, hugging and kissing your baby? For older children, is it ok to kiss on the face?
- When helping your baby fall asleep, what methods would you prefer e.g. rocking, patting, white noise, sucking thumb or pacifier?

## Seeing your domestic worker as an ally

When it comes to young babies, you may want to make clear specific tasks, such as feeding, nap times, and diaper changes. For older babies and children, the information differs. Your domestic worker should update you on behaviours such as achievements, sharing toys, milestones and also tantrums, unusual crying or irritation etc.

Communication on development and well-being will help you stay aligned with your domestic worker. It will also allow you to address these directly with your children. Help your domestic worker adopt this perspective by:

- Sharing your observations about your child with her.
- Encouraging her to share her views or her observations.
- Asking her specific questions: “How was the playgroup?” “Who did he/she play with?” “How long did he/she nap for?” etc.



By asking questions regularly, and setting the expectation that she should keep track of your requests, she will become familiar with what's important to share with you. You may also want to set up a regular weekly meet time, so she knows she has time to share, raise issues and ask questions.

## Clear guidelines for emergencies

Emergencies are always subjective and difficult. For example, a child bitten by another child may be considered as an emergency by some parents and a minor situation by others. To communicate what you would regard as an emergency, it is essential to spend time discussing and providing examples to your domestic worker.

Below is a table of potential scenarios for you to consider. We've added examples but you may want to create ones specific to you for your domestic worker.

You should also provide a comprehensive list of emergency contact numbers as well as consider providing first-aid training. If you and your domestic worker signed up for Uplifters' Baby Care course, you will both receive information on first aid reflexes in case of emergencies. This, however, does not replace real-life, hands-on training on first-aid techniques and CPR.

### What to do in an emergency

Issue	Action
Life-threatening emergencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-In a life-threatening emergency, call 911.</li><li>-If another person is present, have them call whilst you administer care.</li><li>-Only notify the parents once there are professionals taking care of the child.</li><li>-The child's safety comes first.</li></ul>
Non-life-threatening emergencies e.g. accidents requiring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>-Accidents which require doctor or hospital attention should be communicated to the parents immediately.</li><li>-If no response, send an emergency WhatsApp message and call the family doctor (number XXXX).</li></ul>

doctor/hospital, stitches, a broken leg etc	
Minor injuries e.g. falling in the playground, scratches, bruises, nose bleeds etc	-Send a WhatsApp message to the parents (attach photo if necessary).
Fever above 37.5 C	-Ask parents via WhatsApp to clarify whether to give medicine.
Vomiting	-Note down the time. -If repeat occurrence, inform parents via WhatsApp message.
Diarrhoea	-Note down the time. -If repeat occurrence, inform parents via WhatsApp message.
Refusal to eat or finish a bottle	-Note down time and any other relevant information.
Doesn't want to sleep	-Note down the time and any other relevant information.
Breaks an object	-Note down as a reminder to inform parents.
Hurts someone else e.g. bites or scratches another child	-Note down details and any other relevant information.
Has a tantrum	-Stay calm and distract her/him; Note down details.

## Checklist

We recommend that you work through the below checklist to ensure that your domestic worker fully understands your expectations:

- My domestic worker understands how to react in an emergency. I have and provided an emergency contact list.
- My domestic worker understands general personal hygiene and disease prevention best practices.
- My domestic worker understands the most common risks and safety tips when taking care of a baby.
- My domestic worker understands how I expect her to bond with my baby and provide regular care daily.
- My domestic worker understands when and how to prepare and give bottles and/or meals for my baby.
- My domestic worker understands food safety and hygiene rules including cleaning and sterilising utensils.
- My domestic worker understands how to keep me updated on my baby's day.
- My domestic worker understands my family rules and opinions regarding supporting child education.
- My domestic worker understands what developmental milestones are and how to support my baby's development.

## Get in Touch with Uplifters



Taking care of baby is a broad subject so Uplifters has designed a baby care online course, tailor-made for parents employing domestic workers. It's the only course to employ a dual-approach: you and your domestic worker both have access to the same content.



Uplifter's Baby Care  
Online Course

You can find extra information on the points above, as well as much more! Gain access to a specialised handout, discussion questions and quizzes to help your domestic worker better understand and employ key directives. The course videos have been translated into Tagalog and Bahasa Indonesia. [Learn more.](#)

We wish you all the best in this unique relationship with your domestic worker, who will help you through the beautiful and challenging times of having a baby and raising a child. Above all, it's important to remember that **support is key, and communication is essential**. Focus on building trust with each other. Start from a place of mutual respect, share and find solutions together to build a strong and constructive relationship.

Feel free to get in touch should you have any comments or questions. Join the Uplifters Facebook group for employers of foreign domestic workers!

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Email](#)

[Facebook Group for Employers: Support for Employers of Domestic Workers.](#)



## FOCUSING ON YOU: POSITIVE PREGNANCY

by [Holly Wong, Birth Bright](#)

Your body goes through significant and exciting transformations throughout the pregnancy journey. These may result in physical discomfort and emotional shifts. Yoga can help expectant mamas find relief and build self-awareness to prepare the body and mind for childbirth. It's also great at relieving stress, so you feel more relaxed and confident about your pregnancy and birth.

Here, we share a few first-trimester-safe poses from my full [article in Sassy Mama](#), '7 Safe Prenatal Yoga Poses for the First Trimester'.

*Note:* This article contains information and instruction about Yoga and Health. The information shared here is intended for educational purposes only, and should not be substituted for medical advice from a doctor or healthcare provider.

For this, you will need:

- A yoga mat or a non-slippery surface
- One or two yoga blocks
- A yoga bolster (Optional)

- A yoga strap (easily substituted with a belt or long towel).



**Child's Pose:** This is a resting pose that allows you to lengthen the spine and stretch the back muscles. It's a deeply restorative pose that helps alleviate stress and anxiety.

1. Start on your hands and knees. With the knees wide and big toes together, bring your hips back towards your heels. Stretch your arms out in front of you and rest your forehead on the mat. Alternatively, for a more supported version, rest your chest and face on a bolster (turn your head to one side and repeat for the other side).
2. I would recommend staying for at least five breaths, but you're welcome to stay as long as you feel comfortable.



**Cat/ Cow Pose:** When it comes to prenatal yoga poses, many mamas in their first trimester find cat/ cow the most comfortable. They are my go-to poses for stretching the spine and relieving pressure on the lower back. They are also useful for loosening up muscles around the pelvis.

1. Come down onto your hands and knees. Inhale, lengthen and arch the spine into cow pose, looking forwards.
2. Exhale, round the spine into cat pose, looking towards the belly.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2, as you move with the breath for as long as you are comfortable.
4. Feel free to circle the hips and shoulders as you move through your cat/cows.



**Puppy Pose:** This is a great prenatal yoga alternative to the full downward dog pose, particularly for women who are feeling nauseous (when it doesn't feel right to practise inverted poses with the head below the heart). You will still benefit from the spinal lengthening and shoulder opening without lifting the knees and hips up to a full downward dog.

1. From all fours, keeping the hips on top of the knees, walk your hands forward until your arms are extended straight out towards the front of the mat.
2. Spread your fingers, press the mat away with the hands, and reach the sitting bones back to lengthen the spine.
3. If it feels good, lower your forehead down to the mat or onto a block.

Pregnancy is a time to respect and honour your amazing body, despite what you may be feeling. Allow your intuition to guide and inform you through your yoga practice.

(Continue with the full article: [article in Sassy Mama](#), '7 Safe Prenatal Yoga Poses For The First Trimester.')

Another resource is Yoga Nidra, designed especially for pregnancy. Yoga Nidra, or Yogic Sleep, is a meditation practice that uses body sensory awareness to move your attention inwards and ultimately bring you to a deeply restful state. It helps you release tension and achieve deep relaxation for the body and mind. Find the free Yogic Nidra recording available on [Insight Timer](#).



**Yoga Nidra  
by Holly Wong**



Holly Wong Yoga

## Get in Touch with Holly!

Holly is a Yoga Instructor based in Hong Kong. Her main goal is to provide education and resources to promote positive pregnancy and childbirth. Her yoga classes or active birth workshops help expectant mothers feel empowered and confident about their pregnancy and birth. Teacher training is also available.

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