

# GUIDE ON HOME LEAVE

Home/vacation leave is a requirement by the Hong Kong Immigration Department for domestic helpers to return to his/her place of origin for at least 7 days for every employment contract. It applies to all domestic workers whose visa is processed in Hong Kong whether it's change of employer or contract renewal.

## Home Leave Options:

- 1. Immediate Home Leave:** If the employer/helper chooses immediate home/vacation leave, the immigration will issue a temporary new visa and the helper has to leave HK in 7 days. Your helper will be automatically granted with a full 2-year visa upon her return.
- 2. Deferred Home Leave:** If you and your helper choose deferred home/vacation leave, the Immigration will first issue a one-year visa to make sure the helper exits Hong Kong within one year. Then, upon completion of the home/vacation leave, your helper will be automatically granted the remaining full visa.

## EMPLOYERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- Employers are to bear the cost of the COVID-19 test and the cost of food and accommodation while the domestic helper they hired are in the 7-day quarantine returning to Hong Kong.
- While travel restrictions continue to be in place, many employers and domestic helpers may choose to defer home/vacation leave. If you foresee that the home/vacation leave is unlikely to happen before the current contract ends, make sure to keep open communication and a written record of the mutual agreement for future reference.
- Remember to check the visa expiry date and you may need to apply for visa extension due to defer home leave again.
- We recommend employers have a written and signed receipt and record of the home leave arrangement.

## SALARY & EXPENSES

### Salary arrangement:

- If your helper is taking home leave, this can be in the form of paid or unpaid leave. This would be decided at the time of signing the contract. If you are renewing the contract with a domestic helper, it is required to indicate whether the home leave will be paid or unpaid on the contract. If home leave will be paid, make it clear to your worker on the salary arrangement and how the salary payments will be made.
- When it comes to whether the employer needs to pay the worker during the hotel quarantine period, there is no black-and-white answer and it is advised that employers and domestic helpers have open communication and come to a mutual agreement whether the quarantine period will be paid or unpaid.
- Make sure to keep record of the payment and leave balance.

### Food & Travel Allowance:

- HK\$100 per day

## FLIGHTS & BOARDING REQUIREMENTS

### Flights:

- If your worker is on the 1st contract with you,
  - Your worker's previous employer is responsible for her ticket back to the home country and you, as the new employer, is responsible for her flight from her home country back to Hong Kong
- If you have renewed contract with your worker,
  - You will be responsible for the round tickets for your workers' home leave, one from the home country to Hong Kong and one from Hong Kong to the home country.
- The employer is responsible for two flight tickets in each employment contract, one from the home country to Hong Kong and one from Hong Kong to the home country.

### Boarding requirements:

- A landing slip issued by the Hong Kong Immigration is a valid visa to meet the boarding requirements. Make sure your helper makes it clear to the ground staff upon check-in. Refer to this [link](#) for more information.

## OEC & INSURANCE

### OEC:

- The OEC is an exit clearance document issued by the Philippines Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) for domestic workers to exit the Philippines and work abroad. If your worker is travelling back to the Philippines, he/she would need to obtain an OEC by themselves so he/she could exit the Philippines and return to Hong Kong. The final approval and requirements lie with the authorities and we advise employers to check the latest situation before their workers' departure.
- Read more about applying for OEC [here](#).

### Travel Insurance:

- Check if your domestic helper insurance cover includes travel coverage. It is recommended that you purchase travel insurance for your domestic helper.

## QUARANTINE & TRAVEL

### Quarantine:

- Employers can book from a list of designated quarantine hotels for their domestic helpers [here](#). After the 7 or 14 day quarantine period, workers are to undergo a 7 day self-monitoring period. During this period, the employer may arrange their helper to stay at licensed hotels or guesthouses instead of their home ([see here](#)).

### Travel:

- **COVID Pre-departure tests:** find out where to get pre-departure tests in [Hong Kong](#) and in the [Philippines](#).
- **Vaccination records:** make sure your helper is fully vaccinated as per the Hong Kong and Philippines governments requirements
- **Travel requirements into Hong Kong:** read more [here](#)
- **Travel requirements into the Philippines:** read more [here](#)
- **Passport:** make sure your helper has a valid passport for travel

## EMERGENCIES

- If your helper tests positive for COVID in the Philippines, he/she will need to isolate 7-21 days depending on the severity of their case. We advise you to refer to the relevant government authority on the latest updates.
- Unfortunately, if your helper cannot make it back for the booked departure date, you will need to rearrange the hotel, flights and the various other entry requirements into Hong Kong. Make sure you do this as soon as possible as hotel bookings are in high demand.
- Contact your agency to update them on the situation.
- Read [more](#) on what to do if your helper tests positive.

## COMMUNICATION

- Make sure you and your helper check-in with each other and define communication expectations as your helper may not have good internet access or be responsive while she's on leave and in case of any emergencies.
- **Duration:** have in writing how long your domestic helper will be away. Check if there will be anything which may cause delays or extensions.