

الإسلام



ON-BOARDING GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

NOVEMBER 2022 EDITION



Introduction

This guidebook aims to inform employers about safe practices in using the website and to help them onboard their domestic workers when they first arrive at their new home by providing a clear guide.

We also hope to encourage communication between employers and their employees to achieve a harmonious relationship.

About Us



HelperChoice provides an online platform that aims to improve foreign domestic workers' living and working conditions, enable millions of migrant domestic workers to have access to the job market for free and foster the disappearance of unethical recruitment agencies.

Find a helper now: <https://www.helperchoice.com/>



*Signed,
HelperChoice team*

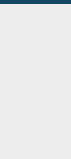


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Money issues

How to ensure that you have the best experience in the website?

Here are some safe practices you should do to have the best hiring experience in the HelperChoice website:



Do NOT send any money to applicants for any reason. If you encounter an applicant asking for money, please reach out or report to our team.



DO Report any suspicious profiles to our team so we can remove them.



Make your job ad description as detailed as possible by adding the following information:

- your family background
- your expected duties
- your specific requirements
- bonuses or benefits you provide if any

This will make your ad more appealing to the applicants.



Contact us at contact@helperchoice.com or send us an email to loreli@helperchoice.com and ahmed@helperchoice.com so we can call you



What is Musaned?



Launched in 2015, Musaned program is an initiative by the Ministry of human resource and social development.

The platform provides an online recruitment service. Upon approval of the visa, employers can log in to the online portal or launch the Musaned app in order to contract with the service provider.

The platform has all the accredited agencies listed with it and they can go and search for the one suitable for them. Then, complete the contractual process with that agency online without meeting the agent in person.

The platform is available in English or Arabic. There are several tools that both employers and domestic workers may find useful:

- A list of licensed recruitment agencies
- Locations of government offices and their services
- Query on the status of the visa application
- Eligibility check for a domestic work visa
- FAQs on applying for a work visa, rights and law on domestic labour

Visit the website here: <https://www.musaned.com.sa/home>



Musaned's Maarofa Service

Maarofa service enables you to find a domestic worker on your own and our of your own selection.



HelperChoice recommends the use of the Maarofa service because of it offers lower price for employers, it's a quick and easy process this enables you to recruit a domestic worker that you have pre-selected and found in the website that perfectly matches your needs.

How does it work?

Phase 1: Find a domestic worker that matches your needs.

- You can subscribe to our premium service to find domestic worker applicants based on your preferences. Our dedicated matching consultant will help you find the best match for your family.
- Once you've selected a worker, ask for the worker's valid passport to avail of the Maarofa service.

Phase 2: Use the Maarofa service in Musaned

- Choose the type of recruitment stripo
- Select Visa
Select the visa you want to use for contracting from the list of your issued visa.
- Request a Maroofa Contract
Fill out the worker's information and choose the recruitment office.
- Payment
Pay the recruitment amount to complete the contracting process.



Musaned's Maarofa Service

How much does it cost to recruit domestic workers?

As of November 2022, the following are the updated recruitment costs for domestic workers:

Musaned (Vat exclusive)



SR17,288 - Philippines



SR9,500 — Uganda



SR10,870 — Kenya



SR13,000 — Bangladesh



SR10,000 — Thailand

Maarofa VAT Inclusive

SAR 10,075 vat inclusive



Is a contract necessary?

Now that you have found an ideal candidate, you need to prepare a contract that is based on your agreed upon working conditions with the domestic worker and abides by the prevailing laws.



The “core elements” of this contract include, but are not limited to:

- type of work the migrant domestic worker is contracted to perform
- the wages, the rights and duties of the parties, duration of the probation period, and the duration and termination of the contract.

Note: Minimum wage for Filipino domestic workers is USD 400/SAR 1,500

This standard contract is available on the **Musaned** website. For other contracts visit <https://www.musaned.com.sa/electronic-forms-en.html>. The contracting process between the employer and the recruiting offices can be managed through the **E-Tawasut System** hosted by www.musaned.com.

Reasonable job scope

It is important to understand the following conditions for a reasonable job scope to avoid any disputes with your domestic worker. According to the laws in Saudi Arabia:

- An employer must not assign work other than what has been agreed upon.
- If the employer is forced by necessity to assign work other than what was agreed upon, then the work assigned cannot differ substantially from the original work.
- The employer cannot assign work that can risk the worker’s health and safety.
- The employer cannot lease the worker nor allow the worker to be self-employed (www.musaned.com.sa/en).

How to prepare your employee's room and what should you provide?

In order to help your domestic worker settle into work life easier, you must ensure that her accommodation is ready before she arrives. Offer a proper living quarter so that she/he can gain enough rest after a long day working.

Domestic worker accommodation requirement

If you decide to make the leap and hire a domestic worker, keep in mind that your domestic worker must enjoy adequate living conditions – decent, comfortable with adequate privacy for the worker – no matter how limited the living space is.

The basic requirements for a decent accommodation are a bed, adequate bedding, storage space, access to water, electricity and a bathroom.



Do's

- Provide the worker with basic amenities

An employer should at least provide a mattress, pillow, blanket, storage space, bathroom amenities and toiletries, and of course a comfy bed. Some furniture stores offer clever storage solutions in the form of storage space and compartments integrated at the bottom of custom-made beds to maximize space use.

- Ensure privacy and safety

if you are providing a worker's quarters (separate bedroom and washroom adjoining or outside your residence) make sure that it is sanitary and the door can be locked. If you will provide her a shared accommodation, facilitate privacy to her space by using a curtain or partition.

- Sufficient ventilation

Most domestic workers' rooms have no windows – this can be problematic. There are multiple solutions to make up for the lack of proper natural ventilation and ensure that the temperature is suitable. For a room without a window, you may prepare a folding screen for privacy and place an exhaust fan in front of the room for better ventilation.

- Wi-Fi access

Your domestic worker is away from home and will appreciate chatting with her families and friends after a long day of work. Don't forget to share the household's Wi-Fi with her! Ground rules for usage while on duty can be discussed in your house rules.

- Set boundaries

Do this from the beginning of employment. For example, teach her and your family members the etiquettes of entering each other's private space.



Don'ts

- Let your worker sleep in the living room

Some employers ask their workers to sleep on a sofa in the living room. This is not advised as the worker does not have enough privacy. Ideally, you should not let them sleep in common areas. You can let your domestic worker share a room with your kid. If you have no choice, you might want to partition the living room by using folding screens or thick curtains or even blinds as temporary room dividers.

- Let your worker share a room with an adult or teenager of the opposite sex

This is against legal domestic worker accommodation requirements.

- Install video cameras at the worker's sleeping or changing area

Although the law does not prohibit employers from installing video cameras at home, you should inform your domestic worker of the devices and where they are placed, even by a written record to avoid any disputes. Also, you must not install video cameras in areas that will compromise his/her privacy or modesty, e.g. where he/she sleeps, change clothes, or the bathroom area.

Online privacy



Can your helper share pictures of your family members on social media?

Sometimes, domestic workers would like to share their life and post some photos on social media that may include your family members. You should inform your worker whether you would like to or not be posted on social media platforms.

Is your domestic helper aware of the risks of sharing personal photos online?

Also, you can discuss online privacy and teach her how to manage and protect his/her privacy in a better way, i.e teach them to turn on “only friends function” for shared posts and photos, or pay attention to love/ investment scams. Remember, his/ her social media accounts are also parts of his/her personal life, you cannot invade their privacy.

Should you be friend with your domestic helper on Facebook or other social media platforms?

You and your domestic helper live together but keep in mind that you have an employer-employee relationship. Would you be friend on Facebook with your boss or employees at work? The answer is probably no, but every household is different, in the end, it is up to you and your own relationship with your helper, especially if you consider her as a family member.

Work conditions and rest days

Although there is no regulation on working hours, we suggest you provide the domestic worker with adequate rest such as breaks during working hours. Being well rested will help her to stay physically healthy and value the work she performs for you

Reasonable Working Hours

The domestic labor law does not specify maximum working hours for domestic workers. You can set daily and weekly working hours for the helper and ensure that the working hours are agreed upon in the contract of employment - recommendations is to have at least 9 hours of rest per day.

In order to foster a healthy work environment in your home you should also ensure that the worker does not work for over 4 - 5 continuous hours without a break, and has sufficient rest periods during the work day and nightly for meals, rest and prayers.

Rest day arrangements

Employers have a lot of concerns about what their domestic worker is doing on his/her rest days. You can communicate with him/her in advance on her rest day plans if you are worried. Yet, remember that she is a grown-up and has his/her freedom in activities.



“Commitment to abide by the rights of domestic workers”

The domestic worker shall have a **day off every week**, as agreed upon by the parties in the contract. If she works on her day off, she is entitled to remuneration or to have a replacement in lieu.

If the migrant domestic worker wishes to run errands on her day off, communicate your expectations and set clear boundaries. It is also imperative that you educate her about cultural and legal norms in the country. Open communication is key!

End of Service benefit

Unfortunately, domestic workers are not entitled to public holidays in Saudi Arabia.

They are, however entitled to an "end-of-service benefit" if they completed four consecutive years of service with one employer which is equivalent to a one-month salary.

Also, domestic workers who finish their 2-year contracts are entitled to one (1) month paid vacation leave with a round trip economy ticket as they agree on the contract renewal.



House rules

Domestic workers are a blessing to many families, but managing them can be challenging. Drafting house rules for domestic workers and specific worker guidelines will create some much-wanted peace.



Every household has its rhythms and habits. A new domestic worker joining your family may have difficulty with the house rules used in your family. Even if he/she has a lot of experience, he/she will need time to learn your way of doing things. In this case, instead of adding a house rule, you can set aside some time to train her. Do this in an open way and not by intimidating him/her. He/She is probably trying very hard to do his/her job well. Give him/her time to get better and think about ways to train her if he/she has difficulty doing something the way you expect him/her to do it. **We recommend employers to take a day or a few days off when your new worker arrives to show him/her everything, even details so he/she knows the expectations.**

- **General points of house rules for domestic workers**

It is good for the domestic worker to know your expectations, but be flexible with the nitty-gritty details because no one can do it exactly as you do. It's better to make sure your worker is comfortable with your house rules before hiring him/her. You can make the basic house rules for domestic workers as detailed and specific as possible, but try and keep it as simple as possible so your domestic worker doesn't get confused.

- **Key items in house rules**

Include not only the number and nature of tasks you expect him/her to do but also rules such as mobile phone usage, safety-related matters, borrowing money, hygiene and so on. This may seem tedious, but the more you discuss on the first day, the more likely it is that you will avoid problems afterwards.

Tasks

- Keep all the receipts

The domestic worker should keep all the receipts for grocery shopping, or even track all the expenses in a notebook. You may want him/her to keep all the grocery shopping money in a dedicated bag. You should also clearly indicate the amount and state any limitations or preferences on money usage. Also, you can put some credits on your domestic worker's taxi/uber app for emergencies.



- Be clear on your preference

Your worker doesn't know exactly what you expect unless you tell him/her. Let your worker know your preference such as which brands you prefer. Also, you should be specific on the arrangement or request of your daily routine. For example, clothes should be separated by colour or fabric; which items can be hand-washed only; which items the domestic worker needs to iron; how to handle baby clothing. If he/she is not sure, he/she can take pictures of your preferred brands, or you can show him/her where she can find those brands in the supermarket on the first week of the working days. He/She may never have heard of them. Take the time to show him/her and don't assume he/she will instantly know what your family likes.

- Create a work schedule for your domestic worker

Work out what needs cleaning and set a schedule to make sure your domestic worker knows when he/she should clean what parts of the flat. Setting a schedule is a major part of ensuring that you are both on the same page regarding cleaning expectations.



Home security

Let your domestic worker understand clearly how he/she should handle his/her key and when he/she should lock the door. If the domestic worker leaves the house to buy some food, should he/she close all the windows or leave them open? Be specific as much as you can to avoid any miscommunication.

Mobile phone usage

Include a section on the usage of the mobile phone and the internet, but be reasonable. Let your domestic worker know at what times he/she can check it e.g. during his/her break and at what times she cannot, e.g. when he/she is attending to the children, cooking or doing housework.



Review the house rules regularly

After your domestic worker starts working for a while, you may spot what he/she should improve. Regular feedback on his/her work performance is important to remind your worker of your expectation and keep his/her work up to your standard. You can set up a weekly or monthly meeting where you both review his/her performance and add new house rules if you feel the need.

Think of it as an employer/employee relationship, this meeting is the perfect time to catch up on the kids, raise any issue that happened during the week, and plan the next one.



How to add new house rules

During your weekly meetings, you can go over the current list of house rules and add new ones if needed. Find a quiet moment where you both feel comfortable and free to discuss your concerns. Find good examples as to why you are changing rules, instead of saying “from now on, it will be like this.” You don’t need to make a new rule for everything that could overwhelm him/her. Instead, you will have to decide whether or not it is necessary to introduce a new rule or to just tell her verbally what to do.

Food

Food is, surprisingly, one of the most common sources of conflicts and frustrations in the employer / domestic worker relationship.

Under the employment law, You should provide your worker with decent, suitable portions and nutritious food. Some workers have different food choices based on their religion, culture, or even due to diet-related issues. And the same happens for families! It is good to bring up the topic of food and dietary restrictions during the interview process, so you know you are both comfortable with it.

- Due to cultural and or religious differences, some workers may prefer to cook their food separately. If this is the case, it is recommended to give her the raw ingredients, or give her a food allowance.
- During the interview or hiring process, it is best to be know about staples in the worker's diet. A domestic worker who is used to eating rice or three meals a day may not be able to stay healthy with two meals a day, or a bread-based diet. If your family routinely eats fast food or skips meals, then do ensure that she has a regular supply of ingredients to cook for herself.
- Sharing family meals with her is reasonable provided that she is comfortable with the cuisine and has enough to consume.

It is important to remember that sufficient food and a nutritious diet is vital to ensure the health and wellbeing of the worker that will result to good performance.



Salary payment, bonus, Bank, loans and borrowing money



Domestic workers are usually the major financial support of their families. Since workers find it difficult to get a loan from local banks. They usually borrow loans from finance companies or with their agencies.

You should encourage your worker to discuss with you first if he/she has financial difficulties due to family emergencies (or other reasons) to avoid he/her getting loans from loan sharks. You should also educate your domestic worker about potential consequences if he/she cannot pay off the loans, or send him/her to a financial education class.

A Filipina domestic worker is entitled to a minimum USD 400 or SAR 1500 wage monthly as decided on Philippines' and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's bilateral agreements.

The salary must be transferred to a bank account, the opening of which the employer must facilitate. The employer must pay the salary at the end of every Hijri month, unless otherwise agreed upon to be given on a different date by both parties in writing.

Aside from their basic salary, receiving incentives in the form of presents during special occasions, bonuses due to good performance or yearly increments will significantly help increase the worker's performance. This are options employers can consider for their domestic workers

Employers are also reminded that recruitment agency charges cannot be deducted from the wages.

Loan sharks

Since employees need to provide residential addresses for loans, there may be unauthorised people visiting your home to collect debts. It is common especially for workers who are about to leave, they may borrow a large sum of money before returning to their own country. If you feel harassed, you can call the police for help.



We recommend you to preventively raise the money issues and loan topics with her/him at the beginning of the contract, so they know they can come to you and openly communicate before taking loans from loan sharks!

Other Provisions

- The domestic worker's passport and work permit (iqama) shall remain in her possession and must not be kept by the employer. Doing so is against the law.
- The domestic worker must work solely for the employer and his immediate household.
- The passbook or deposit slip or wage receipt shall be given to the domestic worker and remain in her custody. The employer must facilitate the remittance of salary to her family through the proper channels.
- You must pay for the transportation costs of the domestic worker from her home country to Saudi Arabia and ensure that she is repatriated in time.
- For acceptable medical reasons, the domestic worker shall be allowed to rest and continue to receive his/her regular salary while the medical expenses will be shouldered by the employer. Paid sick leave is equivalent to 30 days and supported by a medical certificate.
- You shall pay the cost of the DSW's residence permit (iqama), exit/re-entry visa, and final exit visa, including the renewals and penalties resulting from delays



Where to find help

In case of disputes, it is recommended to first coordinate with your recruitment agency who also has the direct contact with your helper.

In other cases, below are some Philippines' agencies that you may get in touch with.

- POLO Riyadh Hotline - 0545917834
- POLO Eastern - 0501269742
- POLO Central - 0507537997
- Philippine Consulate General Jeddah- 0555219613, 0555219614 Email : pc.jeddah@gmail.com
- Philippine Overseas Labor Office - 056981972 Email: polojeddah2018@gmail.com / owwa_jeddah@yahoo.com *(For Labor-related matters, including Unpaid Salaries, Unfavorable Working Conditions, Contract Substitution and Violations, Employer-related concerns)*
- Assistance-to-Nations Section PCG - 055 521 9613 / ans@pcgjeddah.org (For Police/criminal cases, Detention, Legal Assistance, Shipment or Burial of remains, Medical Assistance for Undocumented OFWs, Other Assistance for undocumented OFWs.)



Disclaimer

The latest news is subject to change in government announcements. The information provided is a guide for domestic workers and we do not assume any responsibility or accept liability for any inaccuracies or outdated information. Employers should check the government official website and contact the relevant embassy for the latest updates.