

Awareness Guide for Female Domestic Workers in Lebanon

What Should I Know?

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What Should I know upon my Arrival?

General Blood Test

- The employer will ask me to take a general blood test including HIV and Tuberculosis.
- If the results come out positive then I should leave the country and return to my native country at the expense of the agency.

In Case of Pregnancy Before or Soon after my Arrival

- I am requested by the health insurance company to take a pregnancy test.
- If I am pregnant, the Lebanese Ministry of Labor requests that I leave the country and return to my native country at the expense of the agency.

If I Do not Get Along with my Employer

- I should inform the agency within the first three months of my employment (probation period).
- The agency should provide me with a new employer.
- If the agency does not take any action, I should inform the embassy of my country.
- I should never run away, as I could be trafficked or arrested by the police.

What Should I know about Work and Residence Permits?

- The Lebanese Ministry of Labor sets the basic rights and duties for the worker and the employer.
- The employer, through the notary public office (*kateb al-'adel*), must issue a contract in my native language as required by the Lebanese contract law.

- The duration of the contract is 3 years, to be renewed year by year.
- The employer must obtain for me a work and a residence permit at his/her own full expense.
- I must never leave the house of the employer without having the original copies of both the work permit and residence permit, otherwise I risk being arrested by the police.
- The employer must keep a photocopy of both documents and safeguard the originals upon my return from the outing.

What Should I know About My Work Conditions? Working Hours

The unified standard contract for domestic workers in Lebanon stipulates that I have the right to:

- Work at an average of 10 inconsecutive hours a day at the most.
- Rest for at least 8 continuous hours at night.
- A weekly rest of not less than 24 consecutive hours.
- Discuss with the employer and agree on the timing and conditions of this rest.

Accommodation and Other Benefits

I am entitled to:

- A Clean, safe, and healthy space.
- A bed with a mattress, a blanket, sheets, towels, and other hygiene necessities.
- Appropriate clothing for the season and a place to put my belongings.
- Regular and sufficient food every day.
- Make one phone call per month at the expense of the employer.

- I should pay with my own money for any additional calls.
- Receive telephone calls and correspondence from my family.

Payments and Salary

I should:

- Receive by the end of each working month a full monthly wage as indicated in the contract.
- Receive the wage in cash or ask my employer to transfer it to a bank account in my native country.
- Ask for a written receipt to be signed by both my employer and me.
- Inform the agency or the embassy if my employer withholds my wage.

In Case of Sickness My employer should provide for:

- Medical care and doctor's visits as needed.
- An insurance policy from a recognized insurance company in Lebanon in accordance with the conditions prescribed by the Lebanese Ministry of Labor.

The insurance policy should cover hospitalization and repatriation in the event of death. Dental and eye care are not covered by this insurance.

When Can my Employer Terminate my Contract?

If I commit:

- A deliberate mistake, neglect, assault or threat, or cause any damage to the interests of my employer, or a member of his/her family.
- An act that is punishable by Lebanese laws.

In these cases, I am obliged to leave Lebanon and pay the cost of my return ticket home.

When Can I Terminate the Contract?

- If my employer does not honor the contract and fails to pay my monthly salary for a period of three consecutive months.
- If my employer or a family member of his/hers or any resident in his/her house beats, assaults, sexually abuses or harasses me. Evidence of violence perpetrated on me should be recorded through medical reports given by a forensic physician and investigation records provided by the Judicial Police or the Ministry of Labor.

- If I am asked to perform other jobs and duties than what I have been initially hired to do (for example, work outside the house or perform duties other than domestic work).

In such cases the employer is obliged to cover the cost of the return ticket home at his/her own expense.

What Should I know If I Am Arrested Or Detained?

If I am Arrested by the Police

I have the right to:

- Contact a person to let him/her know of the situation (Embassy, a friend, any family member, or any of the emergency numbers provided in this guide).
- Not to be subjected to any kind of physical or verbal abuse.
- Not to remain arrested for more than 48 hours.

If I am Detained in any Prison

I have the right to:

- A clean, safe, and healthy space.
- A bed with a mattress, a blanket, sheets, towels, and other hygienic necessities.
- Appropriate clothing.
- Sufficient food.
- Medical treatment in case of sickness.
- Ask the director of the prison to secure a permission to contact a family member, or the embassy, or any of the emergency numbers provided in this guide to ask for legal assistance.

Emergency Numbers and Hotlines

Organizations:	Name	Phone number
	Caritas	01-50 25 50 ext. 117 or 118 03-09 25 38
	KAFA	01-39 22 20 03-01 80 19
	Restart	01-38 53 58
Embassies:	Country	Phone number
	Philippines	01-21 20 02 01-21 20 03
	Sri Lanka	05-95 47 63 05-95 47 66 05-92 47 65 05-92 46 02
	Nepal	01-38 66 90 01-39 60 02
	Ethiopia	01-38 87 86 01-38 89 23