

## Employment Letter

Under section 5 of the Domestic Workers Act 2019, every employment or appointment of a domestic worker shall be subject to issuance of letter of employment in the prescribed Form showing the terms and conditions of his employment including, nature of work and amount of wages.

The employer shall send a copy of the letter of employment issued under subsection to the Inspector having jurisdiction in the area. The employer may keep a copy of identification documents of a domestic worker during the course of employment.

## Registration

Under section 20, every domestic worker, in order to benefit from the Domestic Workers' Welfare Fund, shall make an application for registration. Every such domestic worker shall be provided a security number and identity card, which shall be renewable after completion of every three years.

Under section 21 every employer shall make an application for registration. Every such employer shall be provided with a registration number, which shall be renewable after every three years.

## Domestic Workers' Welfare Fund

Under section 22, to provide social protection, safety and welfare measures to domestic workers, the Government may establish a fund called "Domestic Workers Welfare Fund". Contribution shall be payable every month to the Fund (a) by employer in respect of every domestic worker at the rate of 5% of minimum wages; and (b) by registered domestic worker at the rate of 1% of minimum wages.

## The Project

In collaboration with Norwegian Human Rights Fund (NHRF) WISE has launched a one-year project for protection and promotion of the rights of the Domestic Workers, aiming at:

- ◆ Advocacy for the early formulation of rules of business to implement the law
- ◆ Create awareness among domestic workers about their legal rights.
- ◆ Registration of the domestic workers with Punjab Employees Social Security Institution (PESSI).

## WISE Introduction

Women in Struggle for Empowerment (WISE) is a women-led registered organization located in Punjab. Its leadership comprises women rights activists, with background of active struggle for women empowerment in Pakistan.

WISE thematic areas comprise women human, political and labor rights. Our projects are located in vulnerable and marginalized communities with focus on women folk. Since its inception 8 years ago, WISE has achieved significant milestones through its set objectives of awareness raising, capacity building, advocacy & campaigning for improved governance structures, sensitization and supporting government bodies and departments through escalating the implementation of women human rights in Pakistan.



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# Respect and Rights of Domestic Workers

(THE PUNJAB DOMESTIC WORKERS ACT 2019)



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Domestic workers ease the burden of individual house holds by undertaking household chores in return for remuneration. The tasks include the care of children and the elderly, cooking, driving, cleaning, grocery shopping, running errands and taking care of household pets, particularly in urban areas. However, despite the benefits this work brings to individual house holds, domestic worker are often not recognized as workers by society. Contrary to the other forms of modern slavery, the domestic bondage is invisible, but equally worst.

**In June 2011, the ILO Convention C189 "Decent Work for Domestic Workers" was introduced. It was a huge and historic achievement for the domestic workers.**

The rights of domestic workers in Pakistan have long been neglected. They have been deprived of their fundamental rights and are exploited by their employers/owners. The barely minimum wages don't commensurate with their work output. The physical, mental and emotional wellbeing of such workers also lack adequate attention. In many cases, they are subjected to discrimination, beating, sexual harassment and abuse at the hands of owners.

According to a survey report there are about 675,000 domestic workers in Punjab with majority of them as women and children. Being poor, many of them get advance payment from owners and thus fall in vicious circle of bondage. Realizing the prevailing situation of the domestic workers, the govt. of Punjab introduced a new law in January 2019 "The Punjab Domestic Workers Act".

**The law intends to help enforce the rights of the domestic workers. It prohibits "No child under the age of 15 years shall be allowed to work in house hold in any capacity."**



## Rights of the Domestic Workers

- ◆ Fair and minimum wage set by the govt. Decent working conditions.
- ◆ Occupational health and safety measures.
- ◆ Right to vaccination against such diseases.
- ◆ Shall not work under the bonded labor system or forced or partly forced labor.
- ◆ No extra work may be assigned to the domestic worker without his free will.
- ◆ Weekly day off, sick leave & paid annual leaves.
- ◆ Six-week maternity leave in case of pregnancy.
- ◆ Protection from physical and sexual abuse.
- ◆ To be addressed as "worker", not "servant".
- ◆ Right to sick leave, Medical Care during illness.
- ◆ Right to get registered and Social Security Card.
- ◆ Right to Social Protection and Welfare measures by the govt.
- ◆ No domestic worker shall be required to work for more than eight hours in a day.
- ◆ No domestic worker shall be discriminated in recruitment, continuance of employment, deciding wages, benefits and other rights on grounds of religion, race, caste, creed, sex, ethnic background, and place of birth/ residence, domicile, migration or any other reason.