

Information for persons coming to the UK as an overseas domestic worker.

You have applied for a visa to come to the UK as an Overseas Domestic Worker. This allows you to work in the private home of a visitor to the UK or in the private home of a diplomat who is posted to the UK.

The UK has laws which may differ from the country you live in now. Your employer must follow UK law when you are working for them in the UK.

You and your employer must have agreed what work you will do in the UK. You must have agreed your pay and working hours. You will have also agreed your role and duties, which could include looking after children, cooking or cleaning.

You must have both signed a document showing what you have agreed. This must be submitted with your visa application and your employer should have given you a copy to keep.

You will get your passport back when your visa application is decided. You should keep your passport with you when you go to the UK. Your employer is not allowed to take it from you in the UK. It contains your visa and is your identification. If your employer does prevent you from having access to your passport while you are in the UK, you can report this to the police.

When you arrive in the UK

When you get to the UK you will see a Border Force Officer. The officer will check the visa in your passport and might ask you about your reasons for coming to the UK and how long you will stay. If the Officer is satisfied that there have been no changes in your circumstances or your reason for coming to the UK since you obtained your visa, you will be allowed to enter the UK.

Your stay in the UK

You will be coming to the UK, either to work in the home of a visitor to the UK or in the home of a diplomat.

- if your employer is visiting the UK, you must travel with them, their husband, wife or child.
- you are permitted to take new employment with a different employer once you are in the UK but you can only work as a domestic worker in a private household and you cannot stay more than six months

- you will not need permission from UK Visas and Immigration to change employer
- if you are working in the home of a diplomat in the UK, you must travel with or join them there. Your visa will initially be for 24 months but you may apply to stay longer, if your employer is still in the UK and you are still working for them
- you are allowed to change employer once you are in the UK but you can only work for someone as a domestic worker in their private household.
- you will not need permission to change employment and you can stay until the end of your visa. If your new employer is not a diplomat you will not be able to stay longer in this category

Further information is available on the Gov.uk website at <https://www.gov.uk/domestic-workers-in-a-private-household-visa>.

Your employment rights in the UK

Like any other worker in the UK, you will have employment rights while you are working in the UK. This is very important because the rules could be different to the country you live in now.

The UK has a National Minimum Wage and by law your employer must pay you at least the minimum.

- the amount changes every year and you can check on the internet at <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates> the only deductions that your employer may make from your salary (other than tax and National Insurance as appropriate) are for accommodation where your employer provides this to you
- the maximum your employer can take from your salary is currently £7:00per day or £49.00 a week. You must still be left with at least the National Minimum Wage after any such deductions have been made
- you must be given regular payslips that show any deductions for tax and National Insurance, if you are required to pay it
- if your employer does not pay you the National Minimum Wage, they will be breaking the law. You can report them if they do not agree to increase your pay
- the UK's Immigration Rules require that your employer must confirm in writing that they will not seek to claim any exemption from paying the National Minimum Wage

Under UK law, you have entitlements to time off while you are working in the UK.

- you must be given an uninterrupted 20 minute rest break if you work more than 6 hours in a day
- you must be given 11 hours of rest between working days
- you must be given at least one full day off each week, or two full days every two weeks
- you must be given at least 5.6 weeks' paid holiday per year (pro-rated as appropriate)
- more information about these rights can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/rest-breaks-work> and <https://www.gov.uk/holiday-entitlement-rights>

You should be given your own private room which includes a bed and a door you can lock from the inside. You should not be made to sleep on the floor, in a room which is not a bedroom, or sleep in the same room as their children.

If you need more information, advice, or help if you are in difficulty

Do not be afraid to ask for help in the UK. Everyone in the UK has the right to be treated respectfully. Violence towards anyone is illegal and if you think you have been the victim of a crime you can go to your local police station or in an emergency call 999.

There are organisations in the UK who you can speak to in confidence and who will try to talk to you in a language you can understand. They do not work for any government or police and will not tell your employer what you say. It does not matter which country you are from or what religion you are.

These organisations include:

Kalayaan
St Francis Centre
13 Hippodrome Place
London, W11 4SF
Call 0207 243 2942

If you are using an international mobile phone 0044 207 243 2942

The Salvation Army
0300 3038151 open all day and night
If you are using an international mobile phone 0044 300 3038151

The Modern Slavery Helpline
Call 0800 0121 700
If you are using an international mobile phone 0044 800 0121 700

The UK does not tolerate the abuse and exploitation of those who come here to work. The UK has laws which help people who may be the victims of slavery or human trafficking. This is called NRM or National Referral Mechanism. If you give your permission, NRM will look at your case. If there are reasonable grounds to believe you are a victim of trafficking you can stay in the UK and carry on working as a domestic worker. You do not have to work if you are not able and you can ask for help which includes accommodation.

If you are subsequently found to have been the victim of slavery or human trafficking, you will be able to apply extend your stay in UK as a domestic work for a period of two years.

If you want to leave and go home

If you want to leave your job and go home you can contact your country's Embassy or High Commission in the UK.

Alternatively, you can contact the Home Office Voluntary returns service on 0300 004 0202 (or 0044 300 004 0202). They are open Monday to Friday, between the hours of 9am to 5.30pm.

More information about the Home Office Voluntary returns service can be found at www.gov.uk/return-home-voluntarily

You can get help to pay for your flights if you wish to go home.