



International
Labour
Organization

Travel Smart – Work Smart

A guide for Nepali migrant workers in Kuwait



Promoting safe migration and protecting migrant workers
ILO Country Office for Nepal



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Are you working or planning to work in Kuwait?



The information in this booklet can help you feel more secure, work safely and profitably. It will also help you to avoid exploitation or abuse.

Always remember, the best person to look after **your** interests is **you!**



So Travel Smart and Work Smart!

Be informed – be aware

Every day many Nepalis – like you – enter Kuwait for work. Most of the newly arrived expatriates join the workforce without experiencing any major problem. But some encounter tough times.

There are ways to avoid these sorts of difficult situations. And if you are being abused, there are people who can help you.



You have rights

Regardless of your legal status, you are entitled to the respect and protection of your human rights and to live free from harassment and exploitation.

This guide will inform you about your rights – and your responsibilities – while you are working in Kuwait. The information can help you protect yourself from people who want to take advantage of your situation as a migrant worker.

Know the following

Kuwait is a small country located in the Persian Gulf. It is a constitutional monarchy. The capital is Kuwait City. Kuwait is an Islamic State, with the majority of its population Muslim. Kuwait also has a large population of foreign workers. The official language is Arabic. Kuwait is one of the world's largest exporters of petroleum products.

*** All migrant workers in Kuwait, including you, are governed by the sponsorship, or kafala, system.** While you are in Kuwait, you are under the complete responsibility of your employer (also known as sponsor, or *kafeel*), both financially and legally. Your employer is responsible for obtaining a residence permit and providing you with an identity card. Thus, your legal status to live and work in the country fully depends on your employer, and you cannot leave or enter the country without the employer's permission. The employer can be either a local citizen or a company.



- * **Workers in the private sectors in Kuwait are governed by the country's Labor Law in the private sector.** If you work in a private company or establishment, you are therefore, entitled to receive the rights guaranteed by the labour law.
- * **However, if you are a domestic worker, working in a private house as a housemaid, gardener or cleaner, you do not fall under the protection of the labour law of Kuwait.** Instead, you are under the complete responsibility of your employer through the *kafala* system.
- * **Some elements of the *kafala* system are being reviewed in Kuwait and might be changed.** You need to keep yourself updated.

Before leaving Nepal

- * **When you leave Nepal for Kuwait, you must have the following documents with you.** You need to produce these documents at the Immigration counter in the international airport in Kathmandu:
 - * passport and visa;
 - * labour permit issued by the Government of Nepal;
 - * contractor job offer letter;
 - * orientation training certificate;
 - * receipt of payment made to the Foreign Employment Welfare Fund in Nepal;
 - * medical examination report; and
 - * insurance certificate of an insurance company in Nepal.
- * **Take a certificate of good conduct issued by the Nepal Police.** You will need it to obtain your residence visa in Kuwait. The certificate must be certified by the Consular Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kathmandu. In Kuwait, the certificate needs to be verified by the Nepali Embassy. If the certificate is fake, you will be unable to receive the visa and might be sent back to Nepal.
- * **Leave a copy of all your documents with your family.** Make sure you make copies of all the documents mentioned above and leave a set with your family in Nepal. Keep a set of the document copies with you as well. If you have a telephone that takes photos, you should take pictures of all your documents in case your paper copies are lost or damaged.



- * **Check your sponsor/employer details.** Check the exact details (name, address, telephone number) of your sponsor/employer (**kafeel**) – whether it is a person or a company. If possible, talk to your employer before leaving Nepal. Also, give your family the name, phone number and address of your employer.
- * **Keep recruitment agency receipts and details.** If you used a recruitment agency, write down its name, address, contact person and number (and give to your family or a friend and keep the information with you). Remember to keep the receipts for all payments made to the agency somewhere safe.
- * **Talk to others before leaving.** Talk to people who are either working in or have worked in Kuwait in the recent past to learn basic information about the living and working conditions.
- * **If you are unsure of the originality of the visa, labour permit or contract and its contents, such as your wages, work duties and conditions and employer, you or your family members can verify the information using the following channels:**
 - * SMS service (in Nepal). Type **pp<space>passport number** and send to **4001**.
 - * You can use the online service by going to the website www.dofe.gov.np. On the right side of the screen, you will find a box to type your passport number. Type your passport number and click on the search button.

With both channels, you will receive a reply with the name of the passport holder, the type of work, the name of the employer/company, the country, the contracted wages in the national currency (dinar), the amount paid as a recruitment fee and the name of the recruiting agency.

- * **Be prepared for the job.** It will also benefit you to enrol in relevant skills training for the work that you will perform in Kuwait prior to leaving Nepal. If you are going for domestic work, it is mandatory for you to participate in the 21-day skill development training.
- * **You need to keep yourself updated regarding any new provisions set by the Government of Nepal for migrating abroad for employment.**

Travelling to Kuwait

- * **You must depart from the Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu.** You may only use another foreign airport to depart for Kuwait with the permission of the Department of Foreign Employment in Kathmandu.
- * **Carrying illegal drugs and narcotic substances can lead to harsh punishment.** Be careful about any packages or gifts given to you by anyone, even family members. Do not carry **bhang** seeds. They are considered as an illegal drug, and possession of them may lead to severe punishment.
- * **If you need to carry medicines, remember to take along the doctor's prescription.**
- * **Do not take any banned items.** Religious literature, alcohol, obscene video cassettes or CDs and other obscene literature are banned in Kuwait. Carrying such material is subject to punishment.
- * **You must be aware of how to make a local telephone call.** If nobody comes to receive you at the airport upon landing in Kuwait, you must call your employer. If your employer does not respond, contact the Nepali Embassy. Have the phone numbers handy. It is advisable to carry some money (preferably in US dollars) while travelling.

Contract

- * **Every Nepali who works in Kuwait must have a contract.** In Nepal, you will be asked to sign a contract or a job offer letter that should contain all the necessary details of the job and provisions for accommodation and benefits. You might be asked to sign the original contract after arriving in Kuwait. When you are asked to sign the contract (either in Nepal or in Kuwait, or both), read it carefully and make sure you understand all the terms mentioned in it before you sign. If you are unable to read or understand the contract, ask someone you trust to help you review the contract. If you are asked to sign a second (the original) contract in Kuwait, verify that the content and terms are the same as in the contract you signed in Nepal or that were mentioned to you in Nepal. If in doubt, seek support from the Nepali Embassy.
- * **Make sure you and your family (or a friend) each keep a copy of the contract.** A contract is important because it is a legal document that states the duties and obligations of both your employer and you as a worker. (Take a photo of it with your telephone if possible.) At the minimum, the contract should include:

- * your name, job qualification, nationality, profession, residence and proof of your identification;
- * name and address of your employer and/ or the employing company;
- * the date you signed the contract;
- * the date from which the contract will be effective;
- * duration of the contract period;
- * your wages – basic wages and allowances and the method and date of payment;
- * nature and type of your work (job responsibilities);
- * working hours and overtime, if any (and how overtime pay is to be calculated);
- * information on the probation period;
- * information on food and accommodation provision;
- * information on medical coverage or insurance;
- * duration of annual leave and entitled holiday or leave days (medical or maternity leave);
- * other benefits, such as airplane tickets (for end of contract or annual leave);
- * end of service benefits; and
- * termination and renewal terms of the contract.



* **An employment contract may be of a limited period or unlimited period.** A limited employment contract (fixed-term contract) may not exceed five years and should be for more than one year. The unlimited contract has a commencement date only. Most Nepali workers have a contract for a limited term, usually two years, although it can be extended.

* **The Government of Nepal does not issue a labour permit for wages that are less than 70 Kuwaiti dinars a month.** Your basic monthly wages in Kuwait should not be less than 70 Kuwaiti dinars, which is about 23,500 Nepali rupees, as per the exchange rate of March 2015.

* **You may be subject to a probationary period if your contract mentions it.** The probationary period should not be more than 100 working days.

* **Your employer must provide you with accommodation that meets your basic needs.** Most employers provide their workers with accommodation facilities for free. Check your contract or inquire with your employer to find out if you are entitled to free accommodation or if you need to pay for it.

*** Your employer must provide you with food or a food allowance.**

Most employers provide their workers with food for free or a food allowance. Check your contract or inquire with your employer to find out if you are entitled to food or if you need to pay for it.



In Kuwait

*** After your arrival in Kuwait, you**

must undergo a medical examination. If you are declared unfit or fail the medical test, you will be sent back to Nepal.

*** Your employer must procure medical insurance for you, valid for the duration of your contract, and provide you with a health card (for use in accessing medical services).**

*** Your employer must provide you with a residence visa after your arrival in Kuwait. A residence visa is also known as residence permit, and it may be a work visa (for the public and private sectors) or a domestic work visa.** You can enter Kuwait with an entry visa, but your employer must obtain the residence visa after you arrive. You can live and work in Kuwait only with a residence visa. You cannot work in Kuwait with any other visa, such as a visit visa or a family/dependant visa. An application for residence permit must be made within two months of your entry in Kuwait. You can only be granted a residence permit or renew it after your employer has obtained insurance for you.



- * **After receiving your residence permit, your employer must obtain a civil ID card for you.** An application for the civil ID must be made within 30 days of receiving the residence permit. The residence permit and civil ID are evidence of your legal status in Kuwait.

* **Your employer cannot make deductions from your wages except if you have a debt you owe the employer or as penalty for not following the rules and regulations of the workplace.** Your employer cannot charge interest on the loan and may only deduct 10 per cent of your wages each month or at any one time for the settlement of the loan. Your employer cannot make any other deduction from your wages, including for the medical insurance fee, insurance premiums and work permit costs.

* **Your employer cannot reduce your wages for the entire contract duration.**






* **You cannot change your employer or work for another employer unless you obtain the permission of your current employer.** You must work for the same employer who signed your contract. You will be an irregular worker as soon as you leave your employer. You will be charged for absconding and fined up to 600 Kuwaiti dinars or sentenced up to six months in prison. If you experience any problems at the hands of the employer, contact the Nepali Embassy, the police or other organizations for support (see the back of this booklet for contact details). You need to keep yourself updated regarding any new updates or provisions.

* **However, after working for a year in Kuwait, you may change your employer if your employer grants you the permission.** After three years, you can change your employer without permission. (This is not applicable for domestic workers – if you are a domestic worker, you cannot change your employer).

* **If you are a domestic worker and run away from your employer, you must inform the Nepali Embassy within three days.** Otherwise, you are not entitled to the provisions of the insurance.

* **You are not allowed to strike or join a trade union in Kuwait.**

* **You should stay in regular contact with your family.** Agree that if they do not hear from you within a certain period of time that they are to seek help. You are free to communicate with your family and friends during your leisure time. You can buy a SIM card once you receive your civil ID card.

-  **Make friends with other Nepali workers.** There are several groups formed by Nepali workers in Kuwait, many of them based on the district of origin or caste group of their members. You can keep in contact with one of the groups and seek their help in case you experience any problems. See the back of this booklet for contact details.
-  **You must return to Nepal at the end of your contract.** If you are dismissed before the end of your contract, you might be sent back to Nepal.
-  **You may be able to renew your contract with the mutual agreement of the employer at the end of its expiry period.** If so, make sure your passport, residence permit, insurance, ID card and other essential documents are renewed and updated.
-  **If you renew your contract, you must also renew the labour permit that is issued by the Government of Nepal.** You also must buy insurance from the insurance company in Nepal when you return to Nepal on leave. Unless you renew your labour permit and insurance, you will not be covered by the compensation scheme of the Foreign Employment Promotion Board and the insurance company in Nepal.
-  **The employer must provide you with round-trip airplane tickets at the beginning of the contract (for going to Kuwait and then returning when the contract expires).** If your contract mentions it, you may also be provided airplane tickets by your employer for your travel during the annual leave.

Your rights as a migrant worker in Kuwait

As a registered migrant, you have the right to complain and seek protection if any of your rights are violated or you have been abused by your employer. If you think you have been cheated, wronged or treated in a way that discriminates against you because you are not a Kuwaiti citizen, your rights may have been abused. See the contact details at the back of the booklet and seek assistance.

Women and men have the right to receive the same wage when the work is the same. The following explains other rights you are entitled to as a migrant worker.

*** You are entitled to and can demand the remuneration and the benefits (accommodation, food, leave, etc.) that are mentioned in your contract.** You also have the right to refuse work that is not in line with the nature of work mentioned in the contract.



*** You have the right to keep your documents.** Keep your passport, contract, civil ID card and other employment documents with you. Do not give your original documents to your employer or recruitment agents, even if they say they are for safekeeping. Your employer may only take them to obtain your residence permit and ID card or to renew them and must return them to you. However, if you are a domestic worker in Kuwait, your employer might keep your documents. Make sure you photocopy all the documents you acquire in Kuwait and send those copies to your family (or a friend) back home. Also keep a copy with you.



*** You have the right to be paid once a month, on a working day, not later than the seventh day of the due date.** You have the right to be paid into your bank account and in the national currency (dinar).



* **You have the right to be paid for work completed even if you are arrested, if you quit your job or if you are dismissed.** Your employer cannot withhold your wages under any circumstances. If you have a problem, contact one of the groups listed at the back of this booklet for assistance.

* **You have the right to freedom of movement. Your employer cannot restrict your movement.** Your employer does not have the right to lock your room. You have the right to lock your room from the inside.



* **You have the right to go out of your workplace during your free time.** Make sure you carry your ID card with you at all times; you might be stopped by the police and asked to show it.

If you are a domestic worker, some of the following rights may not apply to you. You need to negotiate them with your employer. Although the Labor Law does not cover you, you are entitled to unpaid wages protection, for the timely payment of your wages into a bank account, decent food and accommodation and protection against abuse.

* **You have the right to one day off each week.** You can refuse to work on your day off. If you agree to work on your day off, you are entitled to additional overtime pay of at least 50 per cent of your basic wage.



* **You have the right to an interval of at least one hour per day for rest and meals.** This rest time must be offered not more than five hours after you start work. Rest time is not counted as part of the working hours.

* **You have the right to refuse overtime work. A workday is eight hours and a workweek is 48 hours.** If you agree to work more than the normal working hours, your employer is required to pay you overtime (normal working hours' pay plus an additional 25 per cent of the basic wage). Overtime should not exceed two hours per day.

* **You have the right to working days off during official holidays of Kuwait with full pay.** There are 13 official public holidays in Kuwait in a year. If you work on a public holiday, your employer should pay you double the normal hourly rate and give you another day off.

- * **You have the right to 30 days of paid annual leave during each year of service.** In the first year, you are entitled to the leave only after at least nine months of employment. You have the right to be paid for the leave days that you do not take.



- * **You have the right to take medical leave when you are ill.** But you will need a medical certificate from a doctor and you must inform your employer within two days of being absent. You can avail of the discount and privileges of your health card for treatment and medicines at the specified hospitals and clinics. You are provided some treatments free of charge or you may be charged a minimal fee.






- * **You have the right to receive your income during a period of illness.** Based on your medical certificate, you are entitled to a maximum of 15 days of sick leave with full pay, the next 10 days with three-quarters' pay, the subsequent 10 days with half pay, a lingering 10 days with quarter pay and the remaining 30 days without pay.




How to defend your rights In Kuwait

- * **If your employer breaches the terms and conditions of the employment, you can file a complaint with the Labor Department** (within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor). For instance, you can file a complaint if your employer delays payment of your wages, does not pay you, makes wrongful deductions from your wages, makes you work extra hours without pay or does not allow you to take the leave days you are entitled to as per your contract. You can also file a complaint if your employer mistreats you or abuses you physically or sexually. Your complaint must be made within one year from the expiry of the employment contract.
- * **If you are a domestic worker and experience any difficulty, you must seek help from the Nepali Embassy or the police because domestic workers are not protected by the Labor Law.** Thus, the Labor Department does not have the authority to provide its services to domestic workers.
- * **If you think you have been wrongfully dismissed by your employer, you have the right to appeal the termination decision to the Labor Department.** Your employer

can only dismiss you for serious reasons, such as a fault that results in gross loss for your employer, for repeatedly disobeying instructions, other disciplinary issues or being absent from work for more than seven consecutive days without notice.

-  **If you are charged for violating the rules and regulations of your workplace, you are entitled to written notification of that violation and opportunity to defend yourself.** If you experience any difficulty in filing a complaint to the Labor Department, you can seek help from the Nepali Embassy or other organizations in Kuwait. See the back of this booklet for contacts.
-  **In case of a workplace injury or occupation-related illness for which you are not satisfied with the medical report, in particular regarding the period of treatment, the extent of a disability or your ability to resume work, you have the right to object the medical report to the Medical Tribunal at the Ministry of Health within one month of its issue.**
-  **If you experience any problems in Kuwait, you may also seek the help of the police, the Nepali Embassy or one of the organizations listed at the back of this booklet for support.**

In Nepal

-  **Complaints for any other foreign employment-related issues can also be made to the Department of Foreign Employment in Kathmandu.** If you have been deceived by your agent or the recruiting agency (manpower company) in Nepal by sending you to a job that differs from the one mentioned to you or specified in your contract, by different terms and conditions of work other than agreed upon or by not sending you abroad after taking money, you or your family (or a friend) can file a complaint at the Department of Foreign Employment for compensation. Complaints can be filed even if you are abroad. You can call the hotline of the Department of Foreign Employment to register your complaint (see the contact details at the back of this booklet). All complaints need to be made within one year of the incident.
-  **If you are stranded in Kuwait and are unable to return to Nepal, you can seek the help of the Foreign Employment Promotion Board in Kathmandu for rescue and repatriation.** You can call the toll-free number of the Board to request for assistance (see the contact details at the back of this booklet). The Foreign Employment Promotion Board also provides compensation to workers or their family members in case of death or disability during employment abroad. However, the application for compensation must be made within one year of the worker's injury or death.
-  **You or your family can also seek the help of civil society organizations in Nepal for free legal aid and other support, including shelter homes, rescue and repatriation.** See the contact details at the back of this booklet.

Your responsibilities as a migrant worker

- * If you experience problems at work, talk to your family, a friend, your employer or to the recruitment agency first.** If the problem is not resolved, you should contact the Kuwaiti Labor Department, the Nepali Embassy or any organization listed at the back of this booklet for help.
- * If you want to take leave from your job (for personal reason or vacation), make sure you inform your employer beforehand.** Taking an extended leave without telling your employer could be cause for terminating your contract.
- * Take care of your health.** If you are sick and cannot go to work, go for a check-up and take a rest. But remember to inform your employer or supervisor as soon as possible and obtain a medical certificate (report) after the check-up. Many workers die from cardiac arrest due to simultaneous exposure to extreme heat and extreme cold. If you work outdoors, do not turn the air conditioner very high immediately after returning to your room.
- * Take precautions to avoid contacting HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.**
- * Do not consume illegal drugs or alcohol; and do not gamble or engage in political events.** These activities are banned and considered unlawful in Kuwait.
- * You must abide by the rules and regulations of your workplace.** The regulations typically are displayed in a visible area in the workplace.
- * You must make an effort to learn the basic norms and laws of Kuwait, including traffic rules.** For example, you must always use the zebra crossing or the overhead bridge to cross a road.
- * You must respect the culture and religion of Kuwait and never make any negative remarks about the religion.** Muslims fast for a month during Ramadan. During this time, do not eat, drink (even water) or smoke in public during the day.
- * If you learn the language – Arabic – it will benefit you.**
- * You should be respectful to women and never tease them, ogle or stare at them.**
- * You must check the expiry dates of your documents, including passport, residence permit and ID card.** To renew your passport, go to the Nepali Embassy; for other documents, inform your employer well in advance of their expiration date.
- * You can send money to your family through a bank or money-transfer company, such as International Money Transfer (IME), Western Union, Himal Remit and Prabhu Money Transfer.** It is not safe to remit through the hundi system or send money with other persons, unless you can completely trust them.
- * You may also directly deposit your earnings into your or your family's bank account in Nepal.** It will benefit you as savings when you return.

Know your status

Am I a regular migrant worker?

A regular migrant worker in Kuwait requires a passport, residence permit and civil ID card. You can receive these by entering Kuwait through a licensed recruitment agency based in Nepal or even individually by following the necessary procedures. Upon your arrival in Kuwait, the civil ID is evidence of your legal status. If you do not have these documents, the Government will regard you as an irregular worker; it is illegal then for you to work in Kuwait. Seek help from one of the organizations listed at the back of this booklet.



When your contract finishes, if you are dismissed or if you do not obtain a medical certificate upon first entering the country, you might be repatriated back to Nepal.

As a regular migrant worker

*** You have the right to travel anywhere within Kuwait.** However, it is best to inform your employer if you plan to travel.

*** Your employer must arrange health insurance coverage for you with an insurance company to cover workplace injuries and occupation-related illness.**

In case of an accident at work or while travelling to and from work or an occupation-related illness, you are entitled to treatment at the cost of your employer.



*** Workers who suffer from permanent disability or death are liable for compensation from the insurance coverage.** For a disability, the amount of compensation depends on the degree of severity. However, no insurance will be paid in cases in which a worker intentionally injured himself/herself.

*** In case of an injury, the employer must inform the police immediately. You may also report the incident to the police.** The same information also must be reported to the Labor Department and the Public Institution for Social Security of the insurance company.

- * **If you suffer from a work-related injury or occupation-related illness, you have the right to receive your wages for the entire treatment period fixed by the doctor.** After six months, you are entitled to only half the wages until recovery or until a disability is proven.



- * **You or your family is also entitled to compensation of up to 500,000 Nepali rupees from the insurance company in Nepal and up to 150,000 Nepali rupees from the Foreign Employment Promotion Board in Nepal, for disability or death abroad during the contract period.** The amount of compensation for injuries depends on the severity of the disability. Application for compensation must be made within one year of the incident. No compensation will be paid if the application is filed after one year.

If you are stopped or arrested by the police

- * **If you are stopped by a police officer for a random check, give your name, address and other details asked for and show your ID card, if asked.**
- * **Do not allow the police officer to put his/her hands into your pockets or bags.** If asked to search your possessions, voluntarily take out your belongings yourself one by one in front of the officer, stating the name of each item as it is removed. When your pockets and bags are empty, turn them inside out.
- * **Only a female officer can do a body search on a female.** It must be carried out with decency. The officer is not allowed to touch your private parts.
- * **The police can arrest you on suspicion of committing a crime (such as theft, murder or selling drugs), for breaking the immigration rules (overstaying, staying without regular status) or for not being in possession of your ID card.** You can be arrested for other activities that are considered illegal and punishable as per Islamic (Sharia) law, including public intoxication or other alcohol-related offences, homosexuality, intimacy in public between a man and a woman or any attempt to convert a person's religion.
- * **Ask why you are being arrested, but do not resist. If you are arrested, you have the right to contact the Nepali Embassy for support.** You can also contact your employer, a relative, a friend, a lawyer or other individuals or organizations for support.
- * **Try to avoid admitting to anything or signing any documents that you do not understand.** Take time to understand the charges and punishments.

If you are taken to a court

- * **Ask for your court case number and a copy of your charge sheet if you are arrested without a warrant.**
- * **You have the right to a fair trial.** If you are accused of an offence, you have the right to defend yourself. You have the right to be represented by legal counsel. Ask for a lawyer or assistance from the Nepali Embassy. Legal proceedings in Kuwait are conducted in Arabic. Ask for an interpreter.
- * **Take time to understand the charges and the punishment/penalty for the charge.**
- * **Do not plead guilty if you do not understand the charges.** If you want to plead guilty, you have the right to mitigate for a minimum sentence and NO whipping.

Know your rights after arrest and during detention

- * **If you are detained or arrested, you will be questioned and asked to give a statement.** Note the name and the rank of the police officer questioning you if you decide to give a statement.
- * **You have the right to remain silent, until the arrival of your lawyer.**
- * **You are not obliged to provide a statement to the police, especially without any legal counsel with you.**
- * **You are only obliged to give your full name, age, address and occupation.**
- * **Information that you give to the police can be used as evidence against you in court if you are charged.**
- * **You have the right to contact your family, a friend, a lawyer or the Nepali Embassy or Consulate.**

Special notes for female migrants

- * You are entitled to the same wage as male migrants performing the same job.
- * Women cannot be employed from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m., except if you work in a health institution or if you are a domestic worker.
- * Women in domestic work are particularly vulnerable to abuse. Make sure you have the contact number of the Nepali Embassy and that you immediately request support in case of a problem.
- * In case you experience a problem that forces you to leave your employer, you can temporarily remain in the shelter home run by the Nepali Embassy in Kuwait while waiting to return to Nepal. Make sure you contact the Embassy within three days of leaving your employer.



As of April 2015, the Government of Nepal has introduced a guideline for domestic workers that allows women above 25 years of age to migrate to Kuwait and other GCC countries as domestic workers through government enlisted recruitment agencies. At the time of printing this booklet, this directive was just introduced and expected to come into effect in a few months. You need to keep yourself updated. Do not travel illegally without the labour permit issued by the Government and other necessary documents.

- * If you left Nepal without the Government-issued labour permit, contact the Nepali Embassy for support and advice.

Special notes for young migrants

- * Children younger than 15, including migrants, are not allowed to work in Kuwait. If you are underage and on your own (unaccompanied, or not with a family member) seek help. Do not lie about your age if the authorities ask you (and do not falsify your age in any document).



- * The Government of Nepal does not allow individuals younger than 18 to travel abroad for work. If you left Nepal by lying about your age or used somebody else's passport, it is illegal for you to work in Kuwait. The Government of Nepal also considers you an irregular worker. Contact the Nepali Embassy for support and advice.

Domestic workers' rights

A Department for Domestic Labor was established under the Ministry of Interior and is tasked with supervising agencies that recruit domestic workers.

There should be a tripartite or trilateral contract for the recruitment and employment of domestic workers that involves the sponsor, the recruiting agent and the worker. This contract should be certified by the Nepali Embassy.

Licensed agents and their employees are forbidden to charge a domestic worker any fees in return for employment or recruitment, be it directly or indirectly.

The contract must specify

- ✳ the minimum wage, which is set by the Government;
- ✳ provision for adequate living facilities, food, clothing, medical care in public hospitals and compensation for work-related injuries;
- ✳ that the worker will not be employed by a third party or another sponsor;
- ✳ that sponsors are forbidden to confiscate a worker's passport;
- ✳ that the worker is entitled to an airplane ticket to her/his country of origin for a two-month paid vacation after two years of service;
- ✳ an eight-hour workday and one rest day per week; and
- ✳ the monetary compensation for any overtime the employer requires.

Temporary shelter for domestic workers

A temporary shelter is designated for foreign domestic workers, especially female maids, who have a pending dispute with their employer. The Ministry of Interior, through the Department for Domestic Labor, supervises the location in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor.

By law, it is forbidden to shelter, house or employ any foreigner who is illegally residing in the country.

Ways to be safe

- * **Be careful of anyone who befriends you with promises of an easy job with good pay** – they could be lying to you.
- * **Be careful of anyone who offers to help you find other work or offers you a better job** – they might be earning a commission to recruit you and this could mean that your best interests are not their top priority.
- * **Be careful of anyone who demands to keep your passport or identification documents** – this leaves you vulnerable because you need these documents to move around. Never leave your passport with a broker or an employer – your passport is your personal possession and you have the right to hold it yourself.
- * **Do not trust strangers! Even friendly ones** – male or female. However, do try to make some friends among other Nepali migrant workers.
- * **Learn your way around.** Find the location of the nearest religious centres as well as police stations, hospitals and help centres. These places can offer you sanctuary if you are in trouble.
- * **Do not trust a broker who tells you he/she can register you with the authorities or get you a work permit.** If you are already legally registered with your employer and hold a valid work permit with that employer, it is your employer's responsibility to help you renew it.



Getting help

Phoning home. If you are living in Kuwait and want to phone home in Nepal, first dial 00977 or +977, then your local area code and phone number.

To dial a mobile number dial 00977 and the 10 digit mobile number.

Everyone is entitled to receive help, regardless of their situation!

If you do not understand anything in this booklet or if you need help but are afraid to approach authorities, you may contact one of the organizations listed here for assistance without fear of arrest or deportation.



In Kuwait

Organization	Contact address
Embassy of Nepal	Villa No. 514, Street No. 13 Block No. 8, Jabriya, Kuwait Tel: 00965-2-532-1603, 00965-2-532-1604 Email: info@nepembku.org, Website: www.kuwait.mofa.gov.np Consular hours: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Emergency phone number of Police	112
Ambulance	112
Labor Departments	
Kuwait City	2-240-6139
Hawalli	2-266-0228
Farwaniya	2-434-3871
Jahra	2-458-0055
Ahmadi	2-398-2178
Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor	Murqab Ministries Complex, Block 6, Murqab, DC Tel: 00965-2-248-0000, Ext: 4850 Website: www.mosal.gov.kw
Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) Kuwait	Tel: 00965-6-606-8925 Website: www.nrna.org.np
Kuwait Trade Union Federation (KTUF)	Salmiya – Block 11 (MaidanHawally) Abdullah Al-Faraj Street P.O. Box 5185 Tel: 00965-2-563-6389, 00965-2-56-16745 Email: ktuf@hotmail.com, Website: www.ktuf.org
Kuwaiti Association of the Basic Evaluators for Human Rights (KABEHR)	Tel: 00965-2-532-1377, 00965-9-768-7715 Email: info@humanrights.org.kw, humanrights-kw@hotmail.com
Kuwait Red Crescent Society	P.O. Box 1359, Safat 13014 Kuwait Tel: 00965-2-481-8084, 00965-2-481-8085

Government agencies in Nepal

Organization	Contact address
Department of Foreign Employment	Tinkune, Kathmandu, Nepal Hotline: 00977-01-411-2350 Tel: 00977-1-446-1299, Email: info@dofe.gov.np, Website: www.dofe.gov.np
Foreign Employment Promotion Board	Anamnagar, Kathmandu, Nepal Toll-free No.: 166001-50005 Tel: 00977-1-410-2607, 00977-1-410-2711 Email: info@fepb.gov.np, Website: www.fepb.gov.np
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Singh Durbar, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: 00977-1-420-0182, 00977-1-420-0183 Email: adm@mofa.gov.np, Website: www.mofagov.np
National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) – Nepal	Harihar Bhawan, Pulchowk , P.O. Box 9182 Lalitpur, Nepal, Tel: 00977-1-501-0015 E-mail: itu@nhrcnepal.org, complaints@nhrcnepal.org, nhrc@nhrcnepal.org, Website: www.nhrcnepal.org

Civil society organizations (NGOs) in Nepal

Organization	Contact address
POURAKHI Nepal	House No: 26, MakhamaliMarg, P.O. Box 7647 Dharapati, Maharajgunj, Kathmandu, Nepal Hotline: 984-913-5206, Tel: 00977-1-437-0697, 00977-1-437-4136, 00977-1-208-1644 Email: pourakhi@mail.com.np, Website: www.pourakhi.org.np
Pravasi Nepali Coordination Committee (PNCC)	P.O. Box 20218, Janpath Marga, Anamnagar, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: 00977-1- 477-0775, 00977-1-477-1124 Email: info@pncc.org.np, Website: www.pncc.org.np
Asian Human Rights and Culture Development Forum / Migrants' Centre	P.O. Box 24605, Samakhusi, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: 00977-1-442-8044, Email: info@ahrcdf.org.np, ahrcdf@gmail.com Website: www.ahrcdf.org.np
People Forum for Human Rights	P.O. Box 25001, Kalikasthan, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: 00977-1-442-3973, Email: forum2060@yahoo.com Website: www.humanrightsnepal.org.np
Women's Rehabilitation Center (WOREC Nepal)	P.O. Box 13233, Balkumari, Lalitpur, Nepal Tel: 00977-1-500-6373, 00977-1-500-6374 Email: ics@worecnepal.org, Website: www.worecnepal.org
Maiti Nepal	83-Maiti Marg, Pingalsthan, P.O. Box 9599 Gaushala, Kathmandu, Nepal, Toll-free No.: 166-0019-9999, Tel: 00977-1-449-2904, Email: info@maitinepal.org, Website: www.maitinepal.org
General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT)	Migrant Workers Committee, Manmohan Labor Building , P.O. Box 10652, Putalisadak, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel: 00977-1-416-8000, Email: dfa@gefont.org,office@gefont.org, migrant@gefont.org, nisha@gefont.org, samar@gefont.org Website: www.gefont.org
Nepal Association of Foreign Employment Agencies (NAFEA)	Tej Bhawan, Lazimpat, P.O. Box 9376 Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel: 00977-1-442-6720 Email: info@nafea.org.np, Website: www.nafea.org.np

International organizations in Nepal

Organization	Contact address
International Organization for Migration	768/12 Thirbam Sadak, P.O. Box 25503 Baluwatar-5, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel: 00977-1-442-6250 Email: iomnepal@iom.int, Website: nepal.iom.int
UN Women Nepal	201/42 Ramshahpath, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: 00977-1-425-5110, 00977-1-425-4899 Email: registry.nepal@unwomen.org, Website: www.un.org.np
Amnesty International Nepal	Amnesty Marga, Basanta Nagar, P.O. Box 135 Balaju, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel: 00977-1-4364706, 00977-1-436-5431 Email: info@amnestynepal.org, Website: www.amnestynepal.org
International Labour Organization	Dhobighat – Nayabato, P.O. Box 8971, Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel: 00977-1-555-5777, 00977-1-555-0691 Email: kathmandu@ilo.org, Website: www.ilo.org/kathmandu

You have rights – and responsibilities!

Knowing these can help you avoid abuse and
Make the most of your time in Kuwait.

Be aware!

This booklet gives you advice on how to live and work safely
in Kuwait and what to do if you need help.

Travel Smart – Work Smart!



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International
Labour
Organization

Promoting safe migration and protecting migrant workers