

Hong Kong allows domestic helper wages to rise for first time since 2019



HONG KONG has raised the minimum wage for domestic helpers for the first time since before the pandemic, with Filipinos in domestic service there estimated to receive extra pay equivalent to P750 per month, the Department of Migrant Workers (DMW) said.

In a statement late on Wednesday, Migrant Workers Secretary Susan V. Ople said: "The increase in pay comes after a wage freeze in HK due to the coronavirus pandemic... At a time of rising prices due to a stronger US dollar, this new mini-

mum wage hike is a boon to our domestic workers in HK."

There were 181,171 overseas Filipino workers in Hong Kong as of August, 333,000 of which are domestic workers, according to the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Hong Kong.

Last week, the Hong Kong government announced a new minimum wage for foreign domestic workers of 4,730 Hong Kong dollars, up 100 Hong Kong dollars from the last minimum wage set in September 2019.

With the new minimum wage taking effect on Oct. 1, monthly pay for Filipino domestic workers will be equivalent to P35,475.

Taiwan remains the highest-paying destination for domestic workers in the region with monthly salaries equivalent to about P37,200, the DMW noted.

Globally, only about 6% of domestic workers have access to comprehensive protections including medical care, sickness, and unemployment benefits, the International Labor Organization said in June, citing a study it conducted this year.

The Philippines is the only country in Asia and the Pacific that ratified the Domestic Workers Convention in 2011, it noted.

In 2013, the Philippines passed the Domestic Worker's Act, which set a minimum wage, benefits, and improved terms of employment for domestic workers.

A survey conducted in 2019 by the Department of Labor and Employment and the Philippine Statistics Authority indicated that 83% of the 1.4 million domestic workers in the Philippines are not covered by social security benefits. — **John Victor D. Ordoñez**

OPINION

Long-time worker leaves difficult tasks to colleagues

Mark, a long-time employee who has been a hard worker, has taken to refusing to do the difficult part of his job, which he passes on to younger colleagues, who are revolting at this treatment. He has become bossy even though he and his colleagues are assigned the same tasks. How do we resolve this issue? — Yellow Ribbon.

If you were the boss of that department, you would have no choice but to act immediately. But what exactly are the issues? Listen to the complaints of Mark's younger colleagues and find out how to make things easy for everyone. You don't have to ask for the complaints in writing. What's important is your understanding of what's going on. Do try to act in a way that gives off the impression that you're taking their complaints seriously.

IN THE WORKPLACE
REY ELBO

ELBONOMICS: First, improve the work process to get the best possible result.

It takes a lot of active listening to determine the context and nature of the issue. It happened not too long ago, and Mark was not known for being "bossy" and adopting the attitude that he must be spared from the hard part of the job. What made him change? Because we can't speculate, we need to understand the situation from his point of view.

If you don't listen to Mark and favor the younger colleagues, then you're not being objective. Therefore, set a meeting right away with Mark and try to understand everything. Then, take it from there.

OPTIONS

If you're a regular follower of this column, you may have already figured out that I'm always in favor of a win-win solution. These are not easy to find, but make finding one a priority to avoid disaster. Explore the following options and weigh all possibilities and anticipate possible consequences.

One, identify all issues raised by the complainants. You must zero in on the main issue or issues and judge for yourself whether they're worth taking up with Mark. If you understand the issues well, you can decide whether those issues are minor or not. At the same time, never belittle any issues, because you may have no idea how important even little things can be to some workers.

Two, analyze and review the "difficult part" of the job. Find out how you can make it easy for everyone. Ask Mark and colleagues to study the workflow and propose a less burdensome way of doing things. You may need an internal kaizen facilitator or external problem-solving expert to succeed in this.

Arrange for all key department workers and their managers to attend a kaizen workshop so that finding solutions becomes a company-wide approach, rather than a limited exercise in resolving the issues Mark has with his colleagues.

Three, adopt a "sandwich" strategy with Mark. Start off by bringing up some neutral issues, followed by statements about what you like about him and his accomplishments. As soon as you have Mark's attention, slowly explain what you've heard about his relationship with other workers.

Don't accuse him of anything but explain what you understood of the issue from other workers.

Four, encourage Mark to resolve the issue with his colleagues. This is to emphasize the point that you don't want the issue to be resolved by you making a decision, because you don't want to be accused of favoring one over the other. In the same vein, go back to Mark's colleagues and advise them to reconcile with him, at all costs.

Five, monitor any improvement in the relationship. Give all parties the chance to resolve their differences among themselves. If nothing happens, arrange a meeting. Challenge all parties to come up with a mutually acceptable solution.

Last, make a decision if necessary. The options may include transferring Mark to another work unit or geographical area. If this is your only option, allow Mark to choose his new work assignment and make it easy for him to transition to his new job.

BAD SYSTEM

More often than not, organizations are always confronted with poor policies and procedures that have created undue conflict. American management guru W. Edwards Deming (1900-1993) said it best: "A bad system will beat a good person every time."

This happens when people act in conflict with one another without looking at the root cause of the conflict. If you, Mark and his colleagues can't turn a bad system into something good, or make a difficult system easy, then everyone will always be focusing on how they stand relative to others instead of the disadvantages of the system.

Workers and managers are happiest and most productive when they enjoy performing tasks because things have been made easy for them. It's not an issue of laziness but common sense, borne out of a desire to make everyone productive. Why require people to work in difficult circumstances when you can simplify their jobs?

Chat your workplace questions with Rey Elbo on Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter, e-mail elbonomics@gmail.com or go to <https://reyelbo.com>





Power Maintenance Updates by MERALCO ADVISORY

The following are scheduled power interruptions necessary for the regular maintenance and upgrade of our power distribution facilities, to ensure the delivery of safe and reliable electricity to your areas. Rest assured that Meralco is doing everything to quickly restore your electricity according to schedule.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2022	WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12-13, 2022
<p>LAGUNA (STA. CRUZ)</p> <p>BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM AND THEN BETWEEN 6:00AM AND 6:30AM – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS STA. CRUZ 34WF AND 35WF</p> <p>Portion of P. Guevarra Ave. from Meralco – Sta. Cruz substation in Bgy. Pagsawitan to and including Bgys. Santisima Cruz, Calios, Sto. Angel Central, Sto. Angel Norte, San Pablo Sur, Sto. Angel Sur and Town Proper.</p> <p>Portion of Quezon Blvd. and Sta. Cruz – Calumpang Road from Sta. Cruz Town Proper to Sta. Cruz – Pila National Highway including Bgys. Bagumbayan, Bubukal, Calios, Labuin, Malinao, Oogong, Patimbao, San Jose, San Juan, Sto. Angel Central and Sto. Angel Sur.</p> <p>REASON: Maintenance work inside Meralco – Sta. Cruz substation.</p>	<p>MUNTINLUPA CITY (SUCAT) AND PARAÑAQUE CITY (SAN ANTONIO AND BF HOMES)</p> <p>BETWEEN 11:00PM AND 11:30PM (WED., 10/12/22) AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM (THU., 10/13/22) – PORTIONS OF CIRCUIT GARDNER 43GG</p> <p>Portion of South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) East Service Road from East Bay Residences Subdivision Entrance to Meralco Road including Upper Sucat Neighborhood Association, MacroAsia SATS Food Industries Corp. (MSFI), Robinsons Warehouse, East Bay Residences, Tribeca Private Residences, Kao Chi Shuleak Development Corp., Powercity Corp. and United Power Systems Philippines in Bgy. Sucat, Muntinlupa City.</p> <p>Portion of South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) West Service Road from Parañaque – Sucat Road (Dr. A. Santos Ave.) in Bgy. San Antonio, Parañaque City to near President Villas Subdivision Entrance including Puroks 2 & 3 and Water Fun Compound in Bgy. Sucat, Muntinlupa City; and Joseph Estrada Compound in Bgy. BF Homes, Parañaque City.</p> <p>REASON: Maintenance of facilities along South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) in Bgy. Sucat, Muntinlupa City.</p>
SUNDAY TO MONDAY, OCTOBER 9-10, 2022	TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2022
<p>MANILA (TONDO)</p> <p>BETWEEN 11:30PM (SUN., 10/09/22) AND 4:30AM (MON., 10/10/22) – PORTION OF CIRCUIT NORTH PORT 44H –47H</p> <p>Portion of New Antipolo St. from Meralco – North Port substation along Ma. Guijon St. to Solis St.</p> <p>REASON: Relocation of facilities affected by North – South Commuter Railway (NSCR) Project along New Antipolo St. in Tondo, Manila.</p>	<p>PARAÑAQUE CITY (VITALEZ) AND PASAY CITY</p> <p>BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 2:00PM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT PARAÑAQUE 48ZJ</p> <p>Portion of Baltao Road and Urma Drive from Chapel Road in Sun Valley Subd., Pasay City to and including Airport Village, Jet Lane Village, Airline Village and Vitalez Compound in Bgy. Vitalez, Parañaque City.</p> <p>Along Mendoza St. from Vitalez Compound Road to and including Gat Mendoza Subd. in Bgy. Vitalez, Parañaque City.</p> <p>Along Sun Valley Drive from Baltao Road to and including Sun Valley Subd. and Aeroville Subd. in Pasay City.</p> <p>REASON: Upgrading of facilities along Urma Drive in Airport Village, Bgy. Vitalez, Parañaque City.</p>
<p>LAGUNA (MAJAYJAY AND LUISIANA)</p> <p>BETWEEN 9:30AM AND 10:00AM AND THEN BETWEEN 3:00PM AND 3:30PM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT TAYABAS 48ZY</p> <p>Portion of Majayjay – Luisiana Road from Majayjay – Lucban Road in Bgy. Bakia, Majayjay to and including portion of Bgys. Delta Paz, Luisiana Town Proper, San Antonio, San Buenaventura, San Diego, San Isidro, San Jose, San Juan, San Luis, San Pablo, San Pedro, San Rafael, San Roque, San Salvador, Sto. Domingo and Sto. Tomas in Luisiana; Bgys. Bakia and Botocan in Majayjay.</p> <p>BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 3:00PM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT TAYABAS 48ZY</p> <p>Portion of Majayjay – Lucban Road from near Bitayo Multi-Purpose Hall to San Isidro Labrador Chapel including portion of Bgys. Bakia, Bitayo, Burgos, Gagatol, Pit, Rizal and Taytay in Majayjay.</p> <p>REASON: Replacement of poles affected by DPWH road widening project along Majayjay – Lucban Road in Bgys. Bakia and Pit in Majayjay, Laguna.</p>	<p>CAVITE (CAVITE CITY)</p> <p>BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 3:00PM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT ROSARIO 43RS</p> <p>Portion of P. Gomez St. from Plaza Soledad St. to near Gen. Trias St. in Bgy. Kangkong A.</p> <p>REASON: Installation of facilities and line reconductoring work along P. Gomez St. in Bgy. Kangkong A, Cavite City, Cavite.</p>
TUESDAY TO WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11-12, 2022	
<p>BULACAN (ANGAT; DOÑA REMEDIOS TRINIDAD; SAN ILDEFONSO; AND SAN RAFAEL)</p> <p>BETWEEN 10:00PM AND 11:00PM (TUE., 10/11/22) AND THEN BETWEEN 6:00AM AND 7:00AM (WED., 10/12/22) – THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT ANGAT 33YT</p> <p>Portion of Matias A. Fernando Ave. from Meralco – Angat substation to M. Valle Road including Banaban, Baybay, Binagbag, Laog, Marungko, San Roque, Sta. Cruz, Sta. Lucia, Sto. Cristo and Sulucan in Angat.</p> <p>Portion of M. Valle Road from Bgy. Bayabas to and including Bgys. Camachile and Pulong Sampalok in Doña Remedios Trinidad.</p> <p>Portion of M. Valle Road from Bgys. Casalcat and Sta. Catalina Bata in San Ildefonso to and including Bgys. Pulo, Sapang Pahalang and Tukod in San Rafael.</p> <p>REASON: Maintenance and testing work inside Meralco – Angat substation.</p>	
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2022	
<p>QUEZON CITY (TANDANG SORA)</p> <p>BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 9:20AM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BALINTAWAK 57E</p> <p>Portion of Gen. M. Hizon St. from Banlat Road to and including Gen. Fullon and Gen. Torres Sts.; and EJAP Townhomes in Galler Heights Subd.</p> <p>BETWEEN 9:30AM AND 9:50AM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BALINTAWAK 57E</p> <p>The whole of Torres Subd.</p> <p>BETWEEN 10:10AM AND 10:30AM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BALINTAWAK 57E</p> <p>Portion of Sunshine St. from Banlat Road to and including Rema Village.</p> <p>BETWEEN 10:40AM AND 11:00AM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BALINTAWAK 57E</p> <p>The whole of San Pedro Compound Phases 2 & 3.</p> <p>BETWEEN 11:10AM AND 11:30AM – PORTION OF CIRCUIT BALINTAWAK 57E</p> <p>Portion of M. Aquino St. from Banlat Road to and including Bantay Ng Kalayaan Compound and Figueroa Compound.</p> <p>REASON: Line reconstruction work along Banlat Road in Bgy. Tandang Sora, Quezon City.</p>	

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