

Employment agency convicted of overcharging foreign domestic helper

A licensee of an employment agency (EA) was convicted of overcharging a foreign domestic helper (FDH) and fined \$6,000 at the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today (August 4).

In April 2019, the Employment Agencies Administration (EAA) of the Labour Department (LD) received a complaint from an FDH against Manco Employment Agency, located in Mong Kok, for charging her an excessive commission. As the investigation revealed sufficient evidence that the licensee of the EA concerned had overcharged the FDH, the LD decided to take out prosecution against the licensee.

Under the Employment Ordinance, an EA licensee or his/her associate, or a person purporting to act in such capacities, is not allowed to collect from a job seeker any fees or charges other than the prescribed commission, which is an amount not exceeding 10 per cent of the first month's salary of the job seeker upon successful placement.

The LD reminds EAs to operate in full compliance with the law as well as the Code of Practice for EAs at all times. Failure to do so may lead to prosecution and/or revocation of licence. The Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 2018, which came into force on February 9, 2018, raised the maximum penalty for unlicensed operation of an EA and overcharging of job-seekers' commissions to a fine of \$350,000 and imprisonment for three years.

For enquiries or complaints about unlicensed operation or overcharging of commissions by EAs, please call the EAA of the LD at 2115 3667 or visit its office at Unit 906, 9/F, One Mong Kok Road Commercial Centre, 1 Mong Kok Road, Kowloon.