

Government welcomes passage of Employment (Amendment) Bill 2025

The Government welcomed the passage of the Employment (Amendment) Bill 2025 (the Bill) by the Legislative Council today (June 18) to revise the "continuous contract" requirement under the Employment Ordinance (EO) (Cap. 57), making it easier for employees to enjoy comprehensive employment rights.

The Bill revises the working hours threshold of the "continuous contract" requirement, which includes lowering the weekly working hours threshold from 18 hours to 17 hours; and providing an alternative of using the aggregate working hours in a specified four-week period as a counting unit in which a week with less than 17 working hours will still be regarded as a continuous employment period if the sum of the working hours of that week and those of the three weeks immediately preceding it reaches 68 hours.

A Government spokesman said, "Since the implementation of the EO, the working hours threshold of the 'continuous contract' requirement has been maintained at 18 hours per week. This amendment exercise lowers the working hours threshold of the 'continuous contract' requirement and introduces flexibility in the calculation of working hours, reducing the circumstances of disrupting the continuity of an employee's employment because the working hours of a week occasionally fall below the threshold.

"After the amendments, other provisions of the EO will continue to operate as they currently do, and existing eligibility criteria for employees to enjoy various statutory benefits will remain unchanged. Employees who have met the current 'continuous contract' requirement will not be affected," the spokesman added.

The Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 2025 will be gazetted on June 27, 2025. The revised "continuous contract" requirement will be effective from January 18, 2026, onwards. In the meantime, the Government will publicise and brief the public on the Amendment Ordinance through various channels, presenting it in layman's terms to enhance employers' and employees' understanding.