

Woman convicted of overcharging foreign domestic helper

A woman purporting to act as a licensee of an employment agency (EA) or his/her associate was convicted of overcharging a foreign domestic helper (FDH) and fined \$3,600 at the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts today (July 3).

In April 2019, the Employment Agencies Administration (EAA) of the Labour Department (LD) received a complaint from an FDH against Best Ka Hei Employment Agency, located in Kowloon City, for charging her an excessive commission. As the investigation revealed sufficient evidence that an associate of the licensee and another female purporting to act as the licensee or his/her associate of the EA concerned had overcharged the FDH, the LD decided to take out prosecution against both persons. The associate of the licensee of the EA was earlier convicted of overcharging the FDH and fined \$3,000 at the Kowloon City Magistrates' Courts. Today, the female purporting to act as the licensee or his/her associate of the EA was also convicted of overcharging the FDH.

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 and the Code of Practice for Employment Agencies at all times. Failure to do so may lead to prosecution and/or revocation of licence. The Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 2018, effective since February 9, 2018, has raised the maximum penalty for overcharging job seekers to a fine of \$350,000 and imprisonment for three years.

For enquiries or complaints about unlicensed operations or overcharging 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.