



Ministry of Justice

Press Release

정의와
상식의 법치

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MOJ to Enhance Protection of Human Rights for Foreign Seasonal Workers

- Preventive measurements against human rights violations including arrangement of communication assistance, assessment of human rights violations and abolishment of security deposit system -

- ☐ The Ministry of Justice (MOJ) is implementing the following measures to strengthen protection of human rights for foreign seasonal workers in an effort to address the concerns over human rights violations in the process of expanding the nation's Seasonal Worker Program (SWP).

[Details of the Measures]

○ Arrangement of communication assistance

- In order to prevent and minimize the causes of human rights violations such as conflicts and misunderstandings from cultural differences and verbal abuses due to language barriers in the workers' early days in Korea, "language and communication helpers" such as marriage migrants will be placed to help with language and communication issues.

* When signing an MOU with foreign municipal governments, clauses requiring the placement of language helpers who are able to communicate in Korean (e.g., international students who have studied in Korea or individuals with NIIED TOPIK, Test of Proficiency in Korean, Level 3 or higher) will be stipulated in the MOU, and benefits regarding permission to stay will be granted in case marriage migrants are arranged under the agreements between relevant local governments

○ Assessment of human rights violations intensified using index indicators

- “The index on identification of human rights violations against foreign seasonal workers” (see Attachment 2) has been established to reinforce the verification process of human rights violations in three steps*: Questionnaires prior to visa issuance, employment and departure

* ① Select 10% of the invited workers during visa interviews for sample surveys, ② Conduct mandatory surveys for seasonal workers in local governments with more than 20% rate of job abandonment, and ③ Survey all seasonal workers prior to departure; if a local government (including the employer) is found to have infringed on human rights, it will be restricted from hiring foreign workers or the remedy procedures will be carried out for foreign seasonal worker(s)

○ **Abolishment of the security deposit system**

- Foreign seasonal workers have been required to pay a “security deposit” to overseas local governments to prevent job abandonment besides the basic fees which incur during the recruitment process. However, such deposit system will be abolished as it has received criticism over potential human rights violations and an authorized agency dedicated to recruiting foreign seasonal workers will be publicly selected and operated during the first half of next year aiming to eradicate corruption involving third-party brokerages.

○ **Implementation of customized education to prevent human rights violations**

- The MOJ’s Early Adaptation Program* currently in place will be updated to meet the needs of seasonal workers and will be included in the human rights violation prevention education (2-3 hours) run by local governments for such workers after their arrival in Korea.

* An educational program on necessary information and basic laws of the ROK offered in 13 languages for three hours for foreign nationals entering the country for the first time (marriage migrants, foreign national Koreans with Work and Visit, foreign artists and entertainers, international students, etc.) to help them adjust to life in Korea

- ☐ With this improved measure, the Ministry of Justice will remain vigilant in efforts to monitor human rights infringements on seasonal workers and establish fair and transparent procedures to safeguard workers' human rights as well as help them adjust to Korean society, thereby creating a favorable work environment that can benefit both foreign seasonal workers and farmers and fishers in the Republic of Korea.