

Employment agency convicted of overcharging foreign domestic helper

A licensee of an employment agency (EA) was convicted and fined \$8,000 at West Kowloon Magistrates' Courts today (July 25) for overcharging a foreign domestic helper (FDH).

In March 2017, the Employment Agencies Administration (EAA) of the Labour Department (LD) received a complaint by a FDH against My Friends Service Limited (My Friend) (located in Tsuen Wan) for overcharging her an excessive amount of commission. With the FDH concerned agreeing to assist in the investigation which revealed sufficient evidence, LD took out prosecution against the agency.

According to the law, EAs are not allowed to collect from job seekers any fees or charges other than the prescribed commission, which is set at no more than 10 per cent of the latter's first month's salary upon successful placement.

My Friend is the third EA being convicted of overcharging this year. Two other EAs named Quality Consultants Agency (located in Tsim Sha Tsui) and Familia Employment Agency (located in Tai Po) were convicted of overcharging FDHs an excessive amount of commission.

LD reminds EAs to operate in full compliance with the law as well as the Code of Practice for Employment Agencies at all times. Failure to do so may lead to prosecution and possible revocation of licences. The Employment (Amendment) Ordinance 2018 enacted on February 9 this year has also raised the penalty for the offence of overcharging job-seekers to a maximum fine of \$350,000 and imprisonment of 3 years.

For enquiries or complaints about unlicensed operation, on overcharging job seekers' commission by EAs or concerning the Code, 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.