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Check

Decent Work Check Sri Lanka is a product of WageIndicator.org and
www.salary.lk



National Regulation exists



National Regulation does not exist

01/13 Work & Wages

	NR	Yes	No
1. I earn at least the minimum wage announced by the Government		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I get my pay on a regular basis. (daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

02/13 Compensation

3. Whenever I work overtime, I always get compensation <i>(Overtime rate is fixed at a higher rate)</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Whenever I work at night, I get higher compensation for night work		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I get compensatory holiday when I have to work on a public holiday or weekly rest day		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Whenever I work on a weekly rest day or public holiday, I get due compensation for it		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

03/13 Annual Leave & Holidays

7. How many weeks of paid annual leave are you entitled to?*		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4+
8. I get paid during public (national and religious) holidays		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I get a weekly rest period of at least one day (i.e. 24 hours) in a week		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

04/13 Employment Security





10. I was provided a written statement of particulars at the start of my employment		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. My employer does not hire workers on fixed terms contracts for tasks of permanent nature <i>Please tick "NO" if your employer hires contract workers for permanent tasks</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. My probation period is only 06 months		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. My employer gives due notice before terminating my employment contract (or pays in lieu of notice)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. My employer offers severance pay in case of termination of employment <i>Severance pay is provided under the law. It is dependent on wages of an employee and length of service</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

05/13 Family Responsibilities





15. My employer provides paid paternity leave <i>This leave is for new fathers/partners and is given at the time of child birth</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. My employer provides (paid or unpaid) parental leave <i>This leave is provided once maternity and paternity leaves have been exhausted. Can be taken by either parent or both the parents consecutively.</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. My work schedule is flexible enough to combine work with family responsibilities <i>Through part-time work or other flex time options</i>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

06/13 Maternity & Work





18. I get free ante and post natal medical care		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. During pregnancy, I am exempted from nightshifts (night work) or hazardous work		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. My maternity leave lasts at least 14 weeks		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 21. | During my maternity leave, I get at least 2/3rd of my former salary |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 22. | I am protected from dismissal during the period of pregnancy
<i>Workers can still be dismissed for reasons not related to pregnancy like conduct or capacity</i> |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23. | I have the right to get same/similar job when I return from maternity leave |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24. | My employer allows nursing breaks, during working hours, to feed my child |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |





07/13 Health & Safety

- | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 25. | My employer makes sure my workplace is safe and healthy |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26. | My employer provides protective equipment, including protective clothing, free of cost |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27. | My employer provides adequate health and safety training and ensures that workers know the health hazards and different emergency exits in the case of an accident |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28. | My workplace is visited by the labour inspector at least once a year to check compliance of labour laws at my workplace |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |









08/13 Sick Leave & Employment Injury Benefits

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 29. | My employer provides paid sick leave and I get at least 45% of my wage during the first 6 months of illness |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. | I have access to free medical care during my sickness and work injury |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31. | My employment is secure during the first 6 months of my illness |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 32. | I get adequate compensation in the case of an occupational accident/work injury or occupational disease |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |













09/13 Social Security

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 33. | I am entitled to a pension when I turn 60 |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 34. | When I, as a worker, die, my next of kin/survivors get some benefit |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35. | I get unemployment benefit in case I lose my job |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 36. | I have access to invalidity benefit in case I am unable to earn due to a nonoccupational sickness, injury or accident |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



10/13 Fair Treatment

- | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 37. | My employer ensure equal pay for equal/similar work (work of equal value) without any discrimination |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 38. | My employer take strict action against sexual harassment at workplace |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 39. | I am treated equally in employment opportunities (appointment, promotion, training and transfer) without discrimination on the basis of:* |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Sex/Gender |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Race |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Colour |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Religion |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Political Opinion |  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |




* For a composite positive score on question 39, you must have answered "yes" to at least 9 of the choices.

	Nationality/Place of Birth		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Social Origin/Caste		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Family responsibilities/family status		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Age		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disability/HIV-AIDS		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Trade union membership and related activities		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Language		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Sexual Orientation (homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual orientation)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Marital Status		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Physical Appearance		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Pregnancy/Maternity		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40	I, as a woman, can work in the same industries as men and have the freedom to choose my profession		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





11/13 Minors & Youth

41.	In my workplace, children under 15 are forbidden		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42.	In my workplace, children under 18 are forbidden for hazardous work		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12/13 Forced Labour

43.	I have the right to terminate employment at will or after serving a notice		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44.	My employer keeps my workplace free of forced or bonded labour		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45.	My total hours of work, inclusive of overtime, do not exceed 56 hours per week		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13/13 Trade Union Rights

46.	I have a labour union at my workplace		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47.	I have the right to join a union at my workplace		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48.	My employer allows collective bargaining at my workplace		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49.	I can defend, with my colleagues, our social and economic interests through "strike" without any fear of discrimination		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Results

Your personal score tells how much your employer lives up to national legal standards regarding work. To calculate your DecentWorkCheck, you must accumulate 1 point for each YES answer marked. Then compare it with the values in Table below:



is your amount of "YES" accumulated.

Sri Lanka scored 36 times "YES" on 49 questions related to International Labour Standards

If your score is between 1 - 18

This score is unbelievable! Does your employer know we live in the 21st century? Ask for your rights. If there is a union active in your company or branch of industry, join it and appeal for help.

If your score is between 19 - 38

As you can see, there is ample room for improvement. But please don't tackle all these issues at once. Start where it hurts most. In the meantime, notify your union or WageIndicator about your situation, so they may help to improve it. When sending an email to us, please be specific about your complaint and if possible name your employer as well. Also, try and find out if your company officially adheres to a code known as Corporate Social Responsibility. If they do, they should live up to at least ILO standards. If they don't adhere to such a code yet, they should. Many companies do by now. You may bring this up.

If your score is between 39 - 49

You're pretty much out of the danger zone. Your employer adheres to most of the existing labour laws and regulations. But there is always room for improvement. So next time you talk to management about your work conditions, prepare well and consult this DecentWorkCheck as a checklist.

Regulations on work and wages:

Wages Boards Ordinance, Ordinance No. 27, 1941

Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act, 1954

Minimum Wage

There is no single minimum wage in Sri Lanka. Minimum wages are determined by sector specific tripartite boards for more than 40 trades in Sri Lanka. Minimum wage may be determined on hourly, daily, weekly or monthly basis by Wage Boards constituted under the Wage Boards Ordinance. Employers are required to pay the minimum wage determined by a trade specific Wage Board.

There are no specific criteria for determining the minimum wage rate. It is adjusted according to the variation in cost of living index applicable to workers in that trade.

Minimum wage rates vary in accordance with the occupation, sector, region and the category of workers. Increase in minimum wage rate is mutually decided by the Government, trade union representatives and employers.

Source: §21-22 of the Wage Boards Ordinance

For updated minimum wage rates, kindly refer to the section on minimum wages

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Regular Pay

In accordance with the Wage Boards Ordinance, wage includes any remuneration due in respect of overtime work or of any holiday. Both the Wage Boards Ordinance and the Shop & Office Act have provisions related to the payment of wages.

A Wage Board may fix a wage period for a specific trade and specify the days at the end of which the wages must be paid to the workers. If a worker is not covered under the Wage Board decision, an employer may fix the wage period. However, in either case, wage period cannot exceed one month. The Wage Board Ordinance and the Shop & Office Act require payment of wages at the following intervals:

- within 3 days of the end of wage period if the period does not exceed 1 week;
- within 5 days of the end of wage period if the period does not exceed 2 weeks; and
- within 10 days of the end of wage period if the period exceeds 2 weeks (but is less than one month)

In certain unavoidable circumstances, when the employer is unable to pay remuneration to the worker within specified time period, the employer must retain the remuneration and pay it at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Wages Boards Ordinance and the Shop & Office Act specifically require the employer not to make any deduction other than those authorized by the law. Deductions imposed by Statute are those relating to the collection of income tax at source, Employees' Provident Fund deductions and deductions on account of payments to approved provident funds, etc. If an employer makes unlawful deductions, there is a risk of prosecution.

The employer is authorized to deduct certain amounts from the employee's salary in case of misbehavior. The employee in turn is called to maintain a certain standard to avoid such fines. One can interpret such standards as the actual responsibility that the law calls the employee to fulfil. Examples are: absence from work without a reasonable excuse, late attendance at work without a reasonable excuse, willful failure on the part of the employee to comply with any lawful order given to him in relation to his work and intoxication during working hours. However, such fines cannot amount to more than 5% of the total salary due for the period to which they refer to, while the approval of the Commissioner is needed if the amount is higher.

Source: §2, 5 & 23 of the Wage Boards Ordinance

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02/13 Compensation**Regulations on compensation:**

Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act, 1954

Overtime Compensation

In accordance with the Shop and Office Employees Act, normal working hours are 8 hours per day and 45 hours per week. The Factories Ordinance states that the normal working hours must not exceed 09 hours per day, exclusive of intervals allowed for meals and rest. The normal working hours limit does not apply to any person who holds an executive or managerial position in a public institution and who is in receipt of a consolidated salary the initial of the scale of which is not less than Rs. 6, 720 per annum.

If a worker works beyond the stipulated working hours, he/she is entitled to an overtime pay that is 150% (1.5 of X) of the rate of his ordinary pay. The overtime hours in a week cannot exceed 12 hours.

Source: Regulation 3, 6 & 7 of the Shop and Office Employees Act of 1954; §67 of the Factories Ordinance

Night Work Compensation

There is no premium payment for night work.

Compensatory Holidays / Rest Days

No provision could be identified in laws to require an employer to provide compensatory rest day to those workers working on weekly rest day. However, if a worker works on a public holiday, he/she has to be allowed a holiday with full pay on or before the 31st of December.

Source: §7 of Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954

Weekend / Public Holiday Work Compensation

Employees may be required to work on weekend and public holidays. If workers have to work on a public holiday, they are entitled to 200% of the normal rate of wages. No premium is provided for working on weekly rest days.

Source: §7 of Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954

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03/13 Annual Leave & Holidays**Regulations on annual leave and holidays:**

Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act, 1954

Paid Vacation / Annual Leave

An employee is entitled to take annual leave when the next calendar year starts. The duration of that first annual leave period is determined according to the date/month on which the employment commenced. From the second year onward, an employee is entitled to 14 days of paid annual leave, after completion of 12 months of continuous service. For the first year, an employee would have following annual leave, depending upon the time of commencement of his employment:

- 14 days if the employment commences on or after the first day of January but before the first day of April;
- 10 days if the employment commences on or after the first day of April but before the first day of July;
- 7 days if the employment commences on or after the first day of July but before the first day of October;
- and
- 4 days if the employment commences on or after the first day of October.

A worker is required to take his annual leave within twelve months of its entitlement. Annual leave schedule is determined by the mutual agreement between the employer and the employee. It may be split however its minimum duration cannot be less than 07 days.

Employers are not allowed to compel workers to work during annual leave.

If the employment contract expires before a worker could acquire the right to annual leave, the employee is entitled to the annual leave earned by him or her in respect of the previous year plus the days earned during the year of termination.

Source: §6 of the Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act, 1954

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Pay on Public Holidays

Workers are entitled to paid Festival (public and religious) holidays. Festival holidays are announced by Sri Lankan Government at the start of calendar year (usually 16 in number). The public holidays are regulated under the Holidays Act (No. 29 of 1971). The Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act, 1954 also provides for Full Moon Poya Day and 8 other public holidays. If a public holiday falls on weekly rest day, no additional holiday is granted.

Public Holidays includes Thai Pongal day; National day (Feb 4); Day prior to Sinhala and Tamil New Year; The Sinhala and Tamil New Year day; May day (May 01); Vesak Full Moon Poya Day (May 03); The day after the Full Moon day, in the Sinhala month of Vesak (May 04); Poson Full Moon Poya Day (June 02); Adhi-Esala Full Moon Poya Day (July 01); Id-ul-Fitr (July 18); Binara Full Moon Poya Day (August 29); Vap Full Moon Poya Day (October 27); Deepavali Festival Day (November 10); Ill Full Moon Poya Day (November 25); Milda-un-Nabi (December 24); Unduwap Full Moon Poya Day (December 24); Christmas day (December 25)

Source: §7 of the Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act, 1954; Holidays Act (No. 29 of 1971)

Weekly Rest Days

Workers are entitled to at least one and a half day of rest per week at the worker's full rate of remuneration. However, the entitlement of full remuneration is not applicable to workers who have worked for less than 28 hours, exclusive of overtime work.

Weekly rest day is not specified in the Act. The rest day can be postponed and taken in 5-weekly blocks, provided that the Commissioner is satisfied that such postponement is necessary by reason of the nature of the business or for unforeseen circumstances.

Source: §5 of Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954

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04/13 Employment Security

Regulations on employment security:

Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954
Industrial Disputes Act, 1950
Payment of Gratuity Act, 1983

Written Employment Particulars

The Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954 requires the employer to furnish the particulars of a worker's employment on the commencement of his/her work.

The written employment contract must include the following particulars: the name of the employee and designation and nature of the appointment; the date on which the appointment takes effect; the grade to which the person is appointed; basic remuneration and the scale of remuneration; whether the remuneration is paid weekly, fortnightly or monthly; cost of living allowance, if any, and other allowances if any; the period of probation or trial, if any, and the conditions governing such period of probation or trial along with the circumstances under which the appointment may be terminated during such probation or trial; conditions governing the employment along with the circumstances and conditions under which the employment can be terminated; normal hours of work; number of weekly holidays, and annual holidays; overtime rate payable; provision of medical aid, if any, by the employer; the provision of and the conditions governing any provident fund, pension scheme or gratuity scheme applicable to the employment; and prospects of promotion.

The contract is written in a language that is completely understandable by the worker and it is duly signed by the employer. The employer must retain a copy of this contract. In absence of written employment contract, the terms and conditions of employment would need to be ascertained from the oral agreement; the common law; any applicable statutory provisions; customs or usage and practices in the workplace; and any Collective Agreement or decisions of Labour Tribunals.

There is no provision on internship contracts in the labour legislation. This entails, amongst other, that for an internship payment of an allowance during the period is optional, not mandatory.

Source: §17 & Regulation 15 of the Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act, 1954

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Fixed Term Contracts

Sri Lankan labour Law allows hiring fixed term contract workers for tasks of permanent nature. (EWI) There is no provision on fixed term contracts in the labour laws. The Law does talk about temporary employees and specifies that these are employed "temporarily by an employer to perform work of a temporary nature on not more than one hundred and eighty days in any year in the aggregate.

Source: §54 of the Employees' Councils Act, No.32 Of 1979

Probation Period

There is no clear provision in labour laws on the duration of probation period in Sri Lanka. Generally, probation period is six months. The Shop and Office Employees Act requires the employer to clearly mention the period of probation, conditions governing such probation and circumstances under which the employment contract may be terminated during probation.

Employment of Trainees (Private sector) Act No. 8 of 1978 provides that employers and workers may enter a contract of training for up to maximum one year. At the end of the training period, unless for disciplinary reasons or for failure to attain satisfactory competencies in the vocation chosen, the Employer should provide employment to the trainee or in the alternative find him a suitable employment.

Source: Regulation 15(g) of the Shop and Office Employees (Regulation of Employment and Remuneration) Act, 1954; Employment of Trainees (Private sector) Act No. 8 of 1978

Notice Requirement

The contract of employment can be terminated by the employer on disciplinary grounds; or non-disciplinary grounds; or death or operation of law, (this category would include termination of the contract of employment due to factors such as frustration of contract and impossibility of performance); or an act of the employee which may arise in a variety of circumstances such as resignation, vacation of post or abandonment of employment. In case of fixed term contract, it would terminate by reaching the term of fixed period, as specified under the contract.

In accordance with the terms of TEWA, the employer is required to inform the employees of the reasons for dismissal except for disciplinary dismissal) However, any dismissal of a worker covered by the Termination of Employment of Workman Act (TEWA) which is not a disciplinary dismissal cannot take place without the prior written consent of the workman or the prior written approval of the Commissioner of Labour. However, cases where written approval is not required, include voluntary resignations by employees; retirements on the date clearly specified in the letter of appointment; retirements according to a provision of a collective agreement; termination by reaching the end of the fixed term; termination by operation of law.

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The law requires termination notice before terminating services of an employee. However, the law does not deal with individual dismissals rather it talks only about retrenchment (collective dismissals). Workers may be retrenched only after giving at least one month's notice. A worker is eligible for this one month notice only after one year of service. A worker with less than one year of service is not entitled to any notice.

Source: §31 of the Industrial Dispute Act, 1950

Severance Pay

Workers who have completed five years of service with an employer employing fifteen or more workmen, are entitled to gratuity at following rates in the event of termination (whether by the employer or workman, or on retirement or by the death of the workman, or by operation of law, or otherwise) of the services:

1. Half a month's wages or salary for each completed year of service for monthly rated workmen; and
2. 14 days salary for each year of completed service for other workmen.

This amount is payable in every circumstances whatever the reason for termination may be, (resignation, dismissal, retirement, death of the worker, by operation of law, or otherwise), and may only be withheld in certain narrowly defined instances.

Source: §5 & 6 of Payment of Gratuity Act

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05/13 Family Responsibilities**Regulations on family responsibilities:**

Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954

Paternity Leave

There is no provision for paternity leave in the labour & employment laws of Sri Lanka.

Parental Leave

There is no provision in the law on paid or unpaid parental leave

Flexible Work Option for Parents / Work-Life Balance

No provisions could be located in the law supporting work-life balance for parents or workers with family responsibilities.

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06/13 **Maternity & Work****Regulations on maternity and work:**

The Health Services Act, 2000
Maternity Benefits Ordinance, 1939
Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954

Free Medical Care

Under the Health Services Act of 2000, maternity homes are established. Family Health Bureau, established under the Ministry of Health in Sri Lanka is responsible for provision of comprehensive ante-natal and post-natal care. The medical care is available to all free of charge.

Source: Health Services Act, 2000

No Harmful Work

Pregnant workers (covered under the Maternity Benefits Ordinance, 1939 or the Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954) must not be employed in any such work that may be injurious to her or her child's health during the three months before the expected date of confinement. Similar prohibitions are enacted for employment in injurious work in three month after child birth.

Source: §10(B) of the Maternity Benefits Ordinance, 1939; §18(D) of the Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954

Maternity Leave

The duration of maternity leave is 12 weeks (84 days) excluding weekly holidays, Poya days and statutory holidays. Out of these 12 weeks, 02 weeks maternity leave is before confinement (including the day of her confinement) and 10 weeks following the day of confinement.

In accordance with the Maternity Benefits Ordinance, 12 weeks, inclusive of all non working days, maternity leave is allowed. For the third and subsequent confinement, duration of maternity leave is 42 days excluding weekly holidays, Poya days and statutory holidays. Under the Maternity Benefits Ordinance, 6 weeks, inclusive of all non working days, maternity leave is allowed.

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Maternity leave is granted to a female worker upon providing a notice to her employer mentioning that her date of delivery is within a month or 14 days (in case of shop and office worker). After confinement, she must inform the employer, within a week, about her date of delivery for the purpose of ascertaining the number of days she is permitted to absent herself from the employment. She should also, specify the number of children she has.

There is no provision in law regarding extension of maternity leave in case of complications or sickness due to confinement or in case of multiple births.

Source: §02 of the Maternity Benefits Ordinance, 1939; §18(B) of the Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954

Income

Maternity Leave under the Shop and Office Employees Act is fully paid leave while under the Maternity Benefits Ordinance, 6/7th (86%) of a worker's wages are paid for the period.

Maternity benefits are provided to a woman who has worked at least one hundred and fifty days within the period of one year, under the employer from whom she claims such benefit, immediately preceding the date of the notice that women may give to the employer before confinement.

Source: §18(C) of the Shop and Office Employees Act; §3-5 of the Maternity Benefits Ordinance

Protection from Dismissals

In accordance with the Maternity Benefits Ordinance and the Shop and Office Employees Act, it is illegal for an employer to dismiss a female employee due to her pregnancy or any other reason connected with her pregnancy in all aspects of employment. So it could be ascertained that the employment of a worker is secure during pregnancy and maternity leave.

Source: §10 of Maternity Benefits Ordinance; §18(E) of Shop and Office Employees Act

Right to Return to Same Position

In accordance with the Maternity Benefits Ordinance and Shop and Office Employees Act, a woman cannot be served a notice of dismissal during her maternity leave. It gives workers the right to return to job, however, not necessarily to same position.

Source: §10 of the Maternity Benefits Ordinance; §18(E) of Shop and Office Employees Act

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Breastfeeding/ Nursing Breaks

Nursing breaks are not provided under the Shops and Office Employees Act. However, Maternity Benefits Ordinance provides for two paid breaks, each of at least 30-minute duration during nine hours of working day, till the child is one year old.

Employer should provide nursing facilities to the workers for nursing their children. The duration of each nursing break is 30 minutes if a creche or other suitable place is provided by the employer; otherwise it would not be less than one hour.

Nursing breaks are provided in addition to the meal or rest break provided and they are regarded as time worked.

Source: §12(B) of the Maternity Benefits Ordinance

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07/13 Health & Safety

Regulations on health and safety:

Factories Ordinance, 1942

Employer Cares

In accordance with the Factories Ordinance, it is obligatory for the employer to ensure health, safety and welfare of persons at workplace.

The establishment should be monitored to check the quality of the premises; cleanliness; overcrowding; maintain reasonable temperature; ventilation; lighting; drainage of floors and sanitary convenience.

Safety of the worker must be ensured by installing and maintaining the machinery, mechanisms, transmission apparatus, tools, equipment and machines in best possible safety conditions. Tools, equipment, machines, or products used must be organized properly guaranteeing the safety of workers.

Safety conditions of an establishment should also be monitored regarding risks of falling; moving heavy objects; protection from dangerous machines and apparatus; preventive measures to be taken for work in confined areas or for work done in an isolated environment; risks of liquids spilling and fire prevention.

Factories Ordinance further contain provisions which specifically call for the employers to put in place all practicable measures to protect the persons employed against inhalation of the dust, fume or other impurity. Moreover, specific conditions for the usage of internal combustions engines are dictated such as the need to conduct the exhaust of gases from the engine into the open air; and to partition the rooms so that any injurious fumes from are not shifted to other persons other than those attending to the engine.

Source: §6-60 of the Factories Ordinance, 1942

Free Protection

Different provisions under the Factories Ordinance, 1942 require the employer to provide free protective equipment (breathing apparatus, eye protection glasses, exhaust appliances) to the worker whose work involves exposure to wet or injurious substances.

Source: §32, 51, 53 & 58 of the Factories Ordinance, 1942

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Training

The Factories Ordinance requires that no young worker (under the age of 18 years) is allowed to work on a machine unless he has been fully instructed about the dangers involved in operating the machine, has received sufficient training in that regard and is working under supervision of an experienced and knowledgeable worker.

Source: §26 of the Factories Ordinance, 1942

Labour Inspection System

Labour Inspection system seems quite in line with the provisions of C081 as Sri Lanka became the first South Asian country to launch the Labour Inspection System Application. The system allows the Labour Ministry to better coordinate its labour administration institutions in country's 56 labour department offices. The Industrial Safety Division works under the Department of Labour to ensure safety, health and welfare of workers at the workplace by registering factories and conducting routine inspections. Labour Inspection system is provided under various sections of Factories Ordinance.

The inspector has the power to enter the work premises; take samples for investigation; carry out investigations on accidents or dangerous occurrences; and issue improvement or prohibition notices until elimination of risk or its reduction to a suitable level.

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08/13 Sick Leave & Employment Injury Benefits**Regulations on sick leave & Employment Injury Benefits:**

Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954

Workmen's Compensation Ordinance, 1934

Income

In accordance with the Shop and Office Act, every worker certified by a medical practitioner is entitled to a paid sick leave (sickness benefit) for a period of 07 days (in a 12 month period) for private business, ill-health or any other reasonable cause. These are generally known as casual leave. Casual leave is normally availed from one-half day to one or more days at a time. This does not include a case of prolonged ill health.

The Employment of Trainees (Private Sector) Act contains specific provision for medical leave due to ill health. A trainee is entitled to seven days of sick leave with full allowances payable to him, for a period, or aggregate of periods, if the application for leave is supported by a medical certificate issued by a registered medical practitioner.

Source: §6(3 & 4) of the Shop and Office Employees Act; §6 of the Employment of Trainees (Private Sector) Act

Medical Care

Medical benefits are available for all citizens free of charge.

Source: ISSA Country Profile

Job Security

Employment of a worker is secure during the period of his/her sick leave of 07 days.

Source: §6(5) of the Shop and Office Employees Act

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Disability / Work Injury Benefit

Work injuries are divided into four categories: (i) permanent total incapacity (ii) permanent partial incapacity (iii) temporary incapacity and (iv) fatal injury leading to death of a worker. The compensation to the injury depends on a worker's wages. Work injury benefits are provided to the worker with at least 06 months of employment and the minimum qualifying period for a temporary disability is 03 days.

In the case of permanent total incapacity/disability, amount of compensation is paid as a lump sum according to the wage category of a worker. The minimum permanent disability benefit is 196,083.80 rupees while the maximum disability benefit is 550,000 rupees.

In the case of permanent partial disability, amount of compensation depends on the assessed degree of disability. In the case of temporary disability, 50% of the wages are paid for up to five years. After six months, benefit can be paid as lump sum. Minimum temporary disablement benefit is Rs. 1,320 while the maximum benefit is Rs. 5,500.

In the case of fatal injury, dependents (widow, children, widowed mother) receive survivors' benefit as a lump sum amount in accordance with the wage class/category of a worker. The minimum survivors' benefit is Rs. 196,083.80 while the maximum survivors' benefit is Rs. 550,000.

The funeral cost is deducted from the survivors' benefit and is paid to the person who incurred such expenses. It can't be greater than:

- i. Rs. 10,000 if the compensation does not exceed Rs. 200,000;
- ii. Rs. 15,000 if the compensation does not exceed Rs. 300,000
- iii. Rs. 20,000 if the compensation does not exceed Rs. 500,000

Source: §6, 12, Part III& Schedule IV of Workmen's Compensation Ordinance, 1934; ISSA Country Profile for Sri Lanka 2014

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09/13 Social Security

Regulations on social security:

Employees' Provident Fund Act, 1958

Employees' Trust Fund Act, 1980

Pension Rights

Insured workers are eligible for old age benefit (pension) when they reach the age of 55 years (50 years for women workers), or when they retire from the covered employment and join public service, on the marriage of an employed women, on emigrating from Sri Lanka permanently, on permanent disability or on the closure of a workplace by government orders. The required contribution by dividend is at least 10 years.

The amount of old-age benefit is a lump sum of employee and employer contributions plus interest. Dividend benefit is 1,000 rupees per year.

Source: §23 of Employees' Provident Fund Act, 1958

Dependents' / Survivors' Benefit

The laws provide survivor benefit to nominee or legal heirs if the fund member dies before retirement. The benefit is paid to one or more eligible survivors as a lump sum of the total employee and employer contributions plus interest.

Source: §25 of the Employees' Trust Fund Act, 1980

Unemployment Benefits

No provision in law for unemployment insurance and benefits.

Invalidity Benefits

The Employees' Trust Fund Act, 1980 provides for invalidity benefit in the case of non-occupational accident/injury/disease resulting into permanent invalidity. The benefit is paid as a lump sum of the total employee and employer contributions plus interest. The worker must be assessed with a permanent and total incapacity for work.

Source: §24 of the Employees' Trust Fund Act, 1980

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10/13 Fair Treatment

Regulations on fair treatment:

The Constitution of Sri Lanka 1978, amended up to 2010
Factories Ordinance, 1942
Penal Code, 1885

Equal Pay

In accordance with the Constitution of Sri Lanka, all persons are equal before the law and entitled to equal protections of the law. It also prohibits discrimination on the ground of sex besides many other grounds. However, neither in Constitution nor in Labour Laws, we find a provision requiring equal pay for work of equal value.

Source: §12 of the Constitution of Sri Lanka 1978

Sexual Harassment

In accordance with the Sri Lankan Penal Code, unwelcome sexual advances by a person of authority in a working place are considered sexual harassment. The perpetrator of harassment may be punished either with imprisonment up to a term of five years, or with fine, or both. He/she may also be ordered by the court to pay an amount, as determined by the court, to the victim of harassment for injuries.

Source: §345 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka, 1885

Non-Discrimination

In accordance with the Constitution, there cannot be any discrimination on the grounds of race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion, place of birth or any one of such grounds. There is no special provision in constitution or labour laws to prevent discrimination in employment related matters. Laws also prohibit discrimination against disabled persons in matters of employment as well as workers involved in union activities.

Source: §12 of the Constitution of Sri Lanka 1978

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Equal Choice of Profession

In accordance with the Sri Lankan Constitution, Every citizen is entitled to the freedom to engage by himself or in association with others in any lawful occupation, profession, trade, business or enterprise. However, certain labour law prohibit employment of women in the same industries as men (especially mining sector).

Source: §14(1)(g) of the Constitution of Sri Lanka 1978; §02 of the Employment of Females in Mines Ordinance, 1937; §86 of Factories Ordinance

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11/13 Minors & Youth

Regulations on minors and youth:

Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children' Act, 1956

Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954

Hazardous Occupations Regulations, 2010

Minimum Age for Employment

In accordance with provisions of Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children' Act, a child is a person under the age of 14 years.

The Act prohibits employment of children except in those circumstances provided under the Act. Section 10 of Shop and Office Employees Act also prohibits employment of children under the age of 14 years.

According to the Factories Ordinance, normal working hours for workers between 16-18 years should not be more than 12 hours per day. They are not allowed to work between 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. The maximum number of working hours, including overtime, is 60 hours per week.

The Mines and Minerals Law no. 4 of 1973 prohibits young person less than 16 years of age from working underground in any mine. Young workers between 16 to 18 years of age are permitted to work in a mine if they meet the conditions of fitness and criteria listed in the Hazardous Occupations Regulations 2010 issued by the Ministry of Labor.

The Shop & Office Employees Act prohibits the employment of children under the age of 14 years in a shop or office. The Act further states that male children, between the ages of 14 and 18 years, cannot be employed before 6 a.m. or after 6 p.m. except in certain specified types of employment.

The penalty for violation of the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children' (EWYP&C) Act depends on the offence committed. The fines imposed range from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000 and imprisonment of at least 12 months or both fine and imprisonment in certain circumstances.

Source: §13 of the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children' Act, 1956; §10 of the Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954; §67(b) of the Factories Ordinance; §56 of the Mines and Minerals Law no. 4 of 1973

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Minimum Age for Hazardous Work

Employment of young persons under the age of 18 years is prohibited. Government has also issued a list of hazardous occupations/activities where employment of young person is prohibited. Employment of young person is also prohibited at night. The Government has a hazardous work activities list that includes the 51 occupations and/or working conditions in which employing children under the age of 18 years is prohibited. These include slaughtering of animals; manufacture or use of pesticides; production, transport or sale of alcohol; work in liquor bar or casino; manufacturing, transport or sale of explosives; fishing in deep waters; mining or underground work; transportation of passengers or heavy goods; diving; and working at night between 08 p.m. and 06 a.m.

Source: §20(A) of the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children' Act, 1956; §10(2) of the Shop and Office Employees Act, 1954; Hazardous Occupations Regulations, 2010

Regulations on forced labour:

The Constitution of Sri Lanka 1978, amended up to 2010
Penal Code, 1885

Prohibition on Forced and Compulsory Labor

Forced or compulsory labour is prohibited in the Constitution. The Penal Code also prohibits forced or compulsory labour and considers it a punishable offense.

A person who contravenes the provisions of this section commits an offence and shall, on conviction be liable to imprisonment of not more than 20 years or a fine. However, if a child is involved in forced labour, the perpetrator is liable to either imprisonment of a term not exceeding 30 years and a fine.

Source: §11 of the Constitution of Sri Lanka 1978; §358 of the Penal Code, 1885

Freedom to Change Jobs and Right to Quit

Workers have the right to change jobs after serving due notice on their employer. For more information on this, please refer to the section on employment security.

Source: §31 of the Industrial Dispute Act, 1950

Inhumane Working Conditions

Working time may be extended beyond normal working hours of forty five hours per week and eight hours a day. The Factories Ordinance states that the normal working hours must not exceed 09 hours per day, inclusive of intervals allowed for meals and rest.

For more information on this, please refer to the section on compensation.

Source: Regulation 6 & 7 of The Shop and Office Employees Act of 1954

Regulations on trade unions:

The Constitution of Sri Lanka 1978, amended up to 2010

Trade Union Ordinance, 1935

Industrial Disputes Act, 1950

Freedom to Join and Form a Union

The Constitution provides for Freedom of Association and allows workers to form and join Trade Unions. The Trade Unions Ordinance defines trade union as any association or combination of workmen or employers, whether temporary or permanent, having among its objects one or more of the following objects :-

- (a) the regulation of relations between workmen and employers, or between workmen and workmen or between employers and employers; or
- (b) the imposing of restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business ; or
- (c) the representation of either workmen or employers in trade disputes ; or
- (d) the promotion or organization of financing of strikes or lock-outs in any trade or industry or the provision of pay or other benefits for its members during a strike or lock-out and includes any federation of two or more trade unions.

A trade union must get registered within three months of commencement, however extension up to six months can be granted. The prescribed application form, signed by at least seven persons, is submitted to the registrar along with a copy of the rules of the trade union and a statement of the following particulars, namely: the names, occupations and addresses of the members making the application; the name of the trade union and the address of its head office; and the titles, names, ages, addresses and occupations of the officers of the trade union.

If the objects, rules and constitution of the union do not conflict with any of such provisions, the Registrar issues the certificate of registration the union. The union can be prosecuted for non-compliance with the requirements.

The Industrial Disputes Act considers it an unfair labour practice if workers are coerced/forced by the employer to join or refrain from joining a union as a condition of employment. Similarly, an employer cannot discriminate against a worker in any aspect of employment due to the worker's participation in trade union activities. A person above the age of 21 but under the age of 16 years may become a union member.

In Sri Lanka, there are 2,074 registered trade unions, of which 54.5 per cent are in the public sector, 27.5 per cent in public corporations and 18 per cent in the private sector. The number of members covered by the trade unions amount to 9.5 per cent of the total workforce of Sri Lanka. While several unions are affiliated to the Global Union Federations (GUFs), there are four unions that are affiliated to the International Confederation of Trade Unions (ICTU). The ICTU members being: Ceylon Workers Congress (CWC), Sri Lanka

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Nidahas Sevaka Sangamaya (SLNSS), National Trade Union Federation (NTUF) and the National Workers Congress (NWC). Below their reference:

1. Ceylon Workers Congress
Add: 72, Anada Coomaraswamy Mawatha, Colombo 07
TP: 94 011-2574528, 011-2574524
E-mail: cwconline@sltnet.lk
2. National Trade Union Federation
No. 60, Bandaranayakepura,
Sri Jayawardenapura Mawatha Welikada, Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka

Freedom of Collective Bargaining

Industrial Disputes Act provides for collective bargaining. However, the requirement that a union must represent at least 40% of workers at a given workplace seems quite restrictive.

Industrial Disputes Act defines collective agreement as an agreement relating to the terms and condition of employment of workmen in any industry. Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) usually provides better benefits to the worker than those provided in the law. If a CBA has provisions which are less favourable than those provided under the law, it cannot be enforced.

The CBA is effective on the date it gets published. It binds the parties, trade unions, employers and workmen referred in the agreement.

A CBA may be concluded for definite or indefinite time period. A CBA of indefinite term may be cancelled by giving a written cancellation notice in the prescribed form sent to the Commissioner and to every other party, trade union and employer.

A CBA must be in writing and signed by either the parties or their representatives.

Source: §5-10 & 32(A)(g) of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1950

Right to Strike

Sri Lankan law does not explicitly recognize the right to strike however since the Trade Union Ordinance defines what the strike action involves and also prohibits the strike in essential services (, it can be implicitly assumed that strike action in enterprises other than essential services is legal and allowed by law if an employer is informed at least 21 days prior to the commencement of the strike in a prescribed manner and form. Compulsory recourse to arbitration and long list of so-called essential services actually restrict the right to strike.

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The Trade Unions Ordinance and the Industrial Dispute Act defines strike as the cessation of work by a body of persons employed in any trade or industry acting in combination, or a concerted refusal, or a refusal under a common understanding of any number of persons who are, or have been so employed, to continue to work or to accept employment.

Industrial Dispute is any dispute or difference between employers and workmen or between workmen and workmen connected with the employment or non-employment, or the terms of employment, or with the conditions of labour, of any person.

Source: §32, 48 of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1950; §67 of the Factories Ordinance; §02 of the Trade Union Ordinance, 1935

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01/13 Work & Wages

ILO Conventions on Work and Wages

Minimum wage: Convention 131 (1970)

Regular pay & wage protection: Conventions 95 (1949) and 117(1962)

Sri Lanka has ratified the Conventions 95 & 131 only.

Minimum wage

The minimum wage must cover the living expenses of the employee and his/her family members. Moreover it must relate reasonably to the general level of wages earned and the living standard of other social groups.

Regular Pay

Wages must be paid regularly on a daily, weekly, fortnightly or monthly basis.

02/13 Compensation

ILO Conventions on Compensation

Compensation overtime: Convention 01 (1919); Night work: Convention 171 (1990)

Sri Lanka has not ratified the Convention 01 only.

Overtime Compensation

Working overtime is to be avoided. Whenever it is unavoidable, extra compensation is at stake - minimally the basic hourly wage plus all additional benefits you are entitled to. In accordance with ILO Convention 1, overtime pay rate should not be less than one and a quarter times (125%) the regular rate.

Night Work Compensation

Night work means all work which is performed during a period of not less than seven (07) consecutive hours, including the interval from midnight to 5 a.m. A night worker is a worker whose work requires performance of a substantial number of hours of night work which exceeds a specified limit (at least 3 hours). Convention 171 requires that night workers be compensated with reduced working time or higher pay or similar benefits. Similar provisions are found in the Night Work Recommendation No. 178 of 1990.

Compensatory Holidays/Rest Days

If you have to work on a national/religious holiday or a weekly rest day, you should be entitled to compensation. Not necessarily in the same week, provided that the right to a paid compensation is not.

Weekend/Public Holiday work Compensation

If you have to work during the weekend, you should thereby acquire the right to a rest period of 24 uninterrupted hours instead. Not necessarily in the weekend, but at least in the course of the following week. Similarly, if you have to work on a public holiday, you must be given a compensatory holiday. A higher rate of pay for working on a public holiday or a weekly rest day does not take your right to a holiday/ rest.

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03/13 Annual Leave & Holidays

ILO Conventions on weekly rest days and paid annual leave

Convention 132 (1970) on Holidays with Pay Convention

Conventions 14 (1921), 47 (1935) and 106 (1957) for weekly rest days. In addition, for several industries, different Conventions apply.

Sri Lanka has ratified the Convention 106 only.

Paid Vacation/Annual Leave

An employee is entitled to at least 21 consecutive paid annual leave. National and religious holidays are not included. Collective agreements must provide at least one day of annual leave on full remuneration for every 17 days on which the employee worked or was entitled to be paid.

Pay on Public Holidays

You should be entitled to paid leave during national and officially recognized public holidays.

Weekly Rest Day

Workers should enjoy a rest period of at least twenty-four consecutive hours in every 7 day period, i.e., a week

04/13 Employment Security

ILO Conventions on employment termination

Convention 158 (1982) on employment termination

Sri Lanka has not ratified the Convention 158.

The questions under this section measure the security or even flexibility or precariousness of an employment relationship. Although these are not clearly mentioned in a single convention (severance pay and notice requirement are provided in the Termination of Employment Convention No. 158) however, the best practices in the field require that employees be provided with a written contract of employment; workers on fixed term contracts should not be hired for tasks of permanent nature; a reasonable probation period (ideally lower than or equal to 6 months) may be followed to assess the suitability of an employee; a period of notice must be specified in an employment contract before severing the employment relationship; and workers be paid severance allowance on termination of employment relationship.

Written Employment Particulars

A contract of employment may be oral or written however workers should be provided with a written statement of employment at the start of their employment.

Fixed Term Contracts

Fixed Term Contract workers must not be hired for permanent tasks as it leads to precarious employment.

Probation Period

A reasonable probation period must be provided to a worker to learn new skills. A newly hired employee may be fired during probation period without any negative consequences.

Notice Requirement

A reasonable notice period, depending on the length of service of an employee, may be required before an employer may sever the employment relationship.

Severance Pay

Employers may be required to pay a severance allowance on termination of employment (due to redundancy or any other reason except for lack of capacity or misconduct).

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05/13 Family Responsibilities

ILO Conventions on family responsibilities

Convention 156: Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (1981)

Recommendation 165: Workers with Family Responsibilities (1981)

Sri Lanka has not ratified the Conventions 156 & 165.

Paternity Leave

This is for the new fathers around the time of child birth and is usually of shorter duration.

Parental Leave

The accompanying recommendation (No. 165) to ILO Convention on Family Responsibilities provides for parental leave as an option available to either parent to take long leave of absence (paid or unpaid) without resigning from work. Parental leave is usually taken once the maternity and paternity leave have been exhausted. For working parents, laws may define the portion of parental leave that has to be compulsorily taken by fathers or mothers.

Flexible Work Option for Parents / Work-Life Balance

Recommendation 165 asks for looking into measures for improving general working conditions through flexible work arrangements.

06/13 Maternity and Work

ILO Conventions on maternity and work

An earlier Convention (103 from 1952) prescribed at least 12 weeks maternity leave, 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after. However, a later convention (No. 183 from year 2000) requires that maternity leave be at least 14 weeks of which a period of six weeks compulsory leave should be after childbirth.

Sri Lanka has ratified Convention 103 only.

Free medical care

During pregnancy and maternity leave, you should be entitled to medical and midwife care without any additional cost.

No harmful work

During pregnancy and while breastfeeding, you should be exempt from work that might bring harm to you or your baby.

Maternity leave

Your maternity leave should last at least 14 weeks.

Income

During maternity leave, your income should amount to at least two thirds of your preceding salary.

Protection from Dismissals

During pregnancy and maternity leave, you should be protected from dismissal or any other discriminatory treatment.

Right to return to same position

Workers have the right to return to same or equivalent position after availing maternity leave.

Breastfeeding/Nursing Breaks

After child birth and your rejoining your organization, you must be allowed paid nursing breaks for breastfeeding your child.

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07/13 Health & Safety

ILO Conventions on Health and Safety

Most ILO OSH Conventions deal with very specific Occupational Safety hazards, such as asbestos and chemicals.

Convention 155 (1981) is the relevant general convention here. Labour Inspection Convention: 81 (1947)

Sri Lanka has ratified the Convention 81 only.

Employer cares

Your employer, in all fairness, should make sure that the work process is safe.

Free protection

Your employer should provide protective clothing and other necessary safety precautions for free.

Training

In order to ensure workplace safety and health, a central, independent and efficient labour inspection system should be present.

Labour Inspection System

You and your colleagues should receive training in all work related safety and health aspects and you should have been shown the emergency exits.

08/13 Sick Leave & Employment Injury Benefits

ILO Conventions on Sickness and Employment Injury

Convention 102 (1952), Conventions 121 (1964) and 130 (1969) concerning Social Security, Employment Injury Benefits and Medical Care and Sickness Benefits

Sri Lanka has not ratified the Conventions 102, 121 & 130.

Income/Paid Sick Leave

Your rights to work and income should be protected when illness strikes. The national labour law may provide that sickness benefit may not be paid during the first 3 days of your absence. Minimally you should be entitled to an income during first 6 months of illness. This income should be at least 45 per cent of the minimum wage. (Countries are free to opt for a system which guarantees 60 per cent of the last wages during the first 6 months of illness or even during the first year). You should be entitled to paid sick leave.

Medical Care

During illness, you should be entitled to medical care without any additional cost. Employees and their family members should have access to the necessary minimal medical care at an affordable cost.

Job security

During the first 6 months of your illness, you should not be fired.

Disability/Work Injury Benefit

Whenever you are disabled due to an occupational disease or accident, you ought to receive a higher benefit. In the case of temporary or total incapacity/disability, a worker may at least be provided 50% of his average wage while in the case of fatal injury, the survivors may be provided with 40% of the deceased worker's average wage in periodical payments.

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09/13 Social Security**ILO Conventions on Social Security**

Social Security (minimum standards): Convention 102 (1952). For several benefits somewhat higher standards have been set in subsequent Conventions

Employment Injury Benefits: Conventions 121 (1964),

Invalidity, Old age and survivors' benefits: Convention 128(1967)

Medical Care and Sickness Benefits: Convention 130 (1969)

Unemployment Benefits: Convention 168 (1988).

Sri Lanka has not ratified the Conventions 102, 121, 128, 130 & 168.

Pension Rights

In the normal circumstances, the pensionable age may not be set higher than 65 years of age. If retirement age is fixed above 65 years, it should give "due regard to the working ability of elderly persons" and "demographic, economic and social criteria, which shall be demonstrated statistically". Pension can be set as a percentage of the minimum wage or a percentage of the earned wage.

Dependent's/Survivors' Benefit

When the breadwinner has died, the spouse and children are entitled to a benefit, expressed as a percentage of the minimum wage, or a percentage of the earned wage. This must at least be 40% of the reference wage.

Unemployment Benefit

For a limited period of time, the unemployed has a right to unemployment benefit set as a percentage of the minimum wage or a percentage of the earned wage.

Invalidity Benefits

Invalidity benefit is provided when a protected person is unable to engage in a gainful employment, before standard retirement age, due to a non-occupational chronic condition resulting in disease, injury or disability. Invalidity Benefit must at least be 40% of the reference wage.

10/13 Fair Treatment**ILO Conventions on Fair Treatment**

Convention 111 (1958) lists the discrimination grounds which are forbidden.

Convention 100 (1952) is about Equal Remuneration for Work of Equal Value.

Sri Lanka has ratified both Conventions 100 & 111.

Equal Pay

At workplaces equal pay for men and women for work of equal value is a must, regardless of marital status. Pay inequality based on race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction/place of birth or social origin is also forbidden. A transparent remuneration system and the clear matching of pay and position should be in place and to help prevent wage discrimination.

Sexual Harassment

Not clearly provided in ILO Conventions. However, sexual intimidation/harassment is gender discrimination.

Non-Discrimination

Your employer can't discriminate against you on in any aspect of employment (appointment, promotion, training and transfer) on the basis of union membership or participation in union activities, filing of a complaint against an employer, race, colour, sex, marital status, family responsibilities, pregnancy, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, temporary absence due to illness, age, trade union membership, disability/HIV-AIDS, or absence from work during maternity leave. (Conventions 111, 156, 158, 159 and 183)

Equal Choice of Profession

People have the right to work and there can't be occupational segregation on the basis of gender.

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11/13 Minors & Youth

ILO Conventions on Minors & Youth

Minimum Age: Convention 138 (1973)

Worst Forms of Child labour: Convention 182 (1999)

Sri Lanka has ratified both Conventions 138 & 182.

Minimum Age for Employment

At workplaces, children may not be forced to perform work that could harm their health and hampers their physical and mental development.

All children should be able to attend school. Once this is safeguarded, there is no objection against children performing light jobs between the ages of 12 and 14. The general minimum age is 15 years however developing countries may set this at 14 years. The minimum age for hazardous work, work that is likely to jeopardize the health, safety or morals of young persons, is 18 years. It can also be set at a lower level of 16 years under certain circumstances

Minimum Age for Hazardous Work

Children should not be employed in a work that is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children. It is considered one of the worst forms of child labour. The minimum age for such hazardous work is 18 years.

12/13 Forced Labour

ILO Conventions on Forced/Bonded labour

Forced labour: Conventions 29 (1930)

Abolition of Forced labour: Conventions 105 (1957)

Forced labour is the work one has to perform under threat of punishment: forfeit of wages, dismissal, harassment or violence, even corporal punishment. Forced labour means violation of human rights.

Sri Lanka has ratified both Conventions 29 & 105.

Prohibition on Forced and Compulsory labour

Except for certain exceptions, forced or compulsory labour (exacted under the threat of punishment and for which you may not have offered voluntarily) is prohibited.

Freedom to change jobs and Right to quit

Employers have to allow you to look for work elsewhere. If you do, you should not be shortened on wages or threatened with dismissal. (In the reverse cases, international law considers this as forced labour).

Inhumane Working Conditions

If the total working hours, inclusive of overtime exceed 56 hours per week, the worker is considered to be working under inhumane working conditions.

13/13 Trade Union

ILO Conventions on Trade Union Rights

Freedom of association and protection of the right to organize: Convention 87 (1948)

Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining: Convention 98 (1949)

Sri Lanka has ratified both Conventions 87 & 98.

Freedom to join and form a union

Freedom of association means freedom to join a trade union. This is part of the fundamental human rights. Employees may not be put at a disadvantage when they are active in the trade union outside working hours. The list of exclusions for sectors of economic activity and workers in an organization should be short.

Freedom of Collective Bargaining

Trade unions are entitled to negotiate with employers on term of employment without hindrance. The freedom of a trade union to negotiate with employers to try and conclude collective agreements is protected. (The ILO has a special procedure for handling complaints from unions about violation of this principle).

Right to Strike

Workers have the right to strike in order to defend their social and economic interests. It is incidental and corollary to the right to organize provided in ILO convention 87.

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About Decent Work and Decent Work Check

Compare your own situation with the international labour standards and how they are applied in Sri Lanka. At the end of the checklist you will see how things stand for you. You may be better off than what the international standards prescribe, but you should not be worse off. Behind every answer, you can find a short explanation of what your rights are; nationally and internationally. So you see right away if you can improve your situation.

The Decent Work Check makes the pretty abstract Conventions and legal texts tangible. Because, in the end, you want to know what your rights on the job mean in practice, what you may claim and what protection you are entitled to in case something unexpectedly does go wrong. The Decent Work Check employs double comparison system. It first compares national laws with international labour standards and gives a score to the national situation (happy or sad face). It allows workers to compare their real situation with national regulations in the country. Workers then compare their own score both at national and international levels. The Decent Work Check is based on de jure labour provisions, as found in the labour legislation. The real practice is informed by the employees themselves. This Check is different from other indices like World Bank's Doing Business Indicators or even ISSA's Social Security Programs throughout the World as it is not only descriptive in nature (bereft of any subjective opinions) but also that it covers a lot of different variables. The Revised Decent Work Check is also designed while taking into account upcoming Decent Work Indicators. While Decent Work Indicators focus more on statistics, our priority is informing workers about their rights through this Decent Work Check. Decent Work Check is useful both for employees and employers. It gives them knowledge, which is the first step towards any improvement. It informs employees of their rights at the workplace while simultaneously enlightening employers about their obligations. Decent Work Check is also useful for researchers, labour rights organizations conducting surveys on the situation of rights at work and general public wanting to know more about the world of work.

WageIndicator teams, around the world, have found out that workers, small employers and labour inspectors don't even know the labour law.

When you are informed - being a workers, self-employed, employee, employer, policy maker, labour inspector - there is a greater possibility that you ask for your rights (as a worker), you comply with rules (as an employer) and you strive to enforce these (as a labour inspector). As soon as you complete the DecentWorkCheck, you see which issues need improvement in your work life.

This is exactly the strategy chosen in the debates in many WageIndicator countries. In the debates with roughly 20-30 people around the table from all sides, the decent Work Check has soon the effect of a mini social dialogue. The people who run the dialogue are equally well informed.

The international labour standards are laid down in ILO-Conventions. ILO is the specialised body of the United Nations working on labour issues and was founded in 1919. In the ILO, negotiations are always going on between governments of the member states, national trade unions and employers associations regarding work related issues like rights at work and social protection. These negotiations may take years, but eventually lead to so called Conventions or Recommendations. In Conventions, minimum standards are laid down. Conventions are not the law, but the intention is that member states subscribe to the standard in question. The proper way to do that is to have these Conventions ratified by parliament and then make national laws (Some countries may follow the system of self-executing treaties). National law can be enforced. ILO-Conventions are usually accompanied by Recommendations on how to implement the standards.

Since 1999, the ILO works according to the so called Decent Work Agenda. In the meantime, the Decent Work Agenda has been widely accepted as an important strategy to fight poverty and foster development. The Agenda has been incorporated in the Millennium Development Goals of the United Nations. In short, the idea behind Decent Work is first of all an income which allows the working individual a good life. Moreover, at work, everybody has an equal chance to develop themselves; working conditions are safe; there is no instance of child and forced/bonded labour; and discrimination does not occur. Trade unions are allowed a real say in work related matters and the state has created a social safety net for all especially for the sick, weak, elderly and expecting women.

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