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Check

Decent Work Check China is a product of WageIndicator.org and
www.wageindicator.cn



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"/>

* On question 7, only 3 or 4 working weeks is equivalent to 1 "YES".





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- | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 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.

China scored 42 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.

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01/13 Work & Wages

Regulations on work and wages:

Labour Law, 1994

Minimum Wage

Minimum wage is defined as the minimum labour remuneration paid by the employer required by law on the condition that the labourers have provided normal labour during the legal working hours or working hours agreed by the labour contract. Minimum wage will not include payment owed on account of overtime, special allowances paid by reason of a particular work environment or condition (e.g. shift duties, working in mines, working at high altitudes, etc), statutory employee welfare benefits, travel-related expenses, or protective clothing or equipment.

In accordance with the Labour Law, the state has to implement a system of guaranteed minimum wage. Minimum wage can be fixed by provincial, regional or municipal governments and is reported to the State Council for record. Labour Law requires that wages paid to the laborers by employing units should not be less than the local standards on minimum wages.

Minimum wages in China are determined region wise (for 31 provinces) and the highest monthly minimum wage is in the Shanghai region while the lowest minimum wage is in the Anhui region. Minimum wages in different regions are determined and adjusted with reference to the following factors: (i) living expense; (ii) the average wage level in the society; (iii) labour productivity; (iv) employment situation; and (v) different levels of economic development between regions.

Source: §48-49 of the Labour Law 1994; § 3, 12 of the Regulations on Minimum Wages

The current minimum wage rates can be found in Minimum Wage Section.

Regular Pay

The wage payment interval may be fixed in an employment contract however it can't exceed one month. Wages are to be paid monthly in cash for standard workers and on fortnight basis for part-time workers. Wages can't be deducted or delayed without proper justification.

An employing unit should timely pay the full amount of salary to a worker according to the specification of the labour contract or relevant State regulations. Part-time workers are paid by the hour of work within 15 days after the work is completed.

Source: §50 of the Labour Law 1994; §30 & 72 of the Labour Contract Law 2007; §5 of the Regulations on Minimum Wages

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02/13 Compensation

Regulations on compensation:

Labour Law, 1994

Overtime Compensation

In accordance with the Labour Law, normal working hours are 8 hours a day and 44 hours a week on the average. In case of piecework, employing unit rationally fixes quotas of work and standards of piecework remuneration in accordance with the normal working hours.

The employing unit may extend working hours due to production or business needs after due consultation with workers and trade union. The extended working hours (overtime) is usually limited to 1 hour per day but it may be up to 3 hours in certain circumstances. However, total overtime hours in a month must not exceed 36 hours (around 9 hours in a week). The overtime limit is not applicable in the event of natural disaster; accidents; if the life and health of labourers or the safety of property is in danger; in need of urgent dealing; breakdown of production equipment, transportation lines or public facilities, production and public interests are affected; repair that must be done without any delay; or other circumstances stipulated by laws, administrative rules and regulations.

The compensation for overtime work is at least 150% of the normal hourly wage rate.

Source: §36, 37, 41-44 of the Labour Law 1994

Night Work Compensation

There is no clear provision in the labour law on premium pay for night workers however Doing Business report indicates that night workers are paid 139% of the usual hourly wage rate.

Compensatory Holidays / Rest Days

In extraordinary circumstances, workers may perform work on weekly rest days and public holidays. Instead of getting higher wages for working on weekly rest day, workers get a compensatory day off in lieu of the rest day during the following week. However, if it is not possible to give compensatory day-off, workers may be paid at the premium rate of at least 200% of the normal hourly wage rate for working on a weekly set day. There is no provision for compensatory holiday for workers working on a public holiday.

Source: §44 of the Labour Law 1994

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Weekend / Public Holiday Work Compensation

Workers may be required to work on weekly rest days and public holidays. In such circumstances when employees have to work on official holidays, they are entitled to receive wages at a premium rate of 300% of the normal hourly wage rate. Premium pay of 300% of the normal hourly wage rate is paid for working on weekly rest day only in case when it is not possible to give a compensatory day-off.

Source: §44 of the Labour Law 1994

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03/13 Annual Leave & Holidays

Regulations on annual leave and holidays:

Labour Law, 1994

Paid Vacation / Annual Leave

According to the labour law, the State should practice a system of annual vacation with pay. This system is outlined in Regulations on Paid Annual Leave of Employees. The length of a annual leave depends on his/her cumulative working time—not just the length of service with the current employer. Length of annual of annual leave (5-15 days) depends on the cumulative length of service as follows:

-5 days of paid annual leave for workers who have worked for cumulative 1-10 years;

-10 days of paid annual leave for workers who have worked for cumulative 10-20 years; and -15 days of paid annual leave for workers who have worked for cumulative more than 20 years.

The employer, on workers consent, determines the dates of annual leave according to the actual production and work situation. Annual leave may be taken at once, or in parts, or may be accrued for next year. In case the employer is unable to provide annual leave, the worker is entitled 300% of the daily wage in lieu of compensation for each day of the annual leave due and not taken.

Any dispute over annual leave is handled in accordance with the related laws and administrative regulations.

Source: § 45 of the Labour Law 1994; §3-8 of Regulations on Paid Annual Leave of Employees

Pay on Public Holidays

Workers are entitled to paid holidays during Festival holidays. These are usually 11 in number.

Public holidays are regulated under the Measures on Annual Holidays for Public Festivals and Memorial Days. These include Gregorian New Year (01 January), Chinese New Year or Spring Festival (1-3 of the first month of Lunar calendar), International Labour Day (01 May), National Day (1-3 October), Mid-autumn day, Dragon boating day and Tomb Sweeping Day.

Date for the Chinese festivals is determined by Chinese lunar calendar.

Source: §40 of Labour Law 1994, Measures on Annual Holidays for Public Festivals and Memorial Days

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Weekly Rest Days

Workers are entitled to at least 24 consecutive hours (1 day) of rest per week after at most 6 continuous working days. The weekly rest period is reckoned as a paid time.

The State Council Regulations on the Hours of Work of Employees however prescribe 2 days off per week for state organs and institutions. Weekly rest days are usually Saturday and Sunday.

Source: §38 of Labour Law 1994; State Council Regulations on the Hours of Work of Employees

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04/13 Employment Security

Regulations on employment security:

Employment Contract Law, 2007

Written Employment Particulars

Individual employment contract may be concluded for definite period (fixed term), indefinite period (non-fixed term) and project based labour contract based on the completion of a specific amount of work. In order to establish a labour relationship, a written contract has to be signed between the worker and employer. It must be concluded within a month of commencement of employment. If employer fails to provide the employment contract within a month, the worker is entitled to double salary starting from the second month of employment until a contract is concluded or on the one year anniversary of the commencement of employment. If an employer fails to conclude a written labor contract with an employee after a year of employment, the employment contract is considered to be an open term contract. The employment contract can be oral but only in case of part-time employment.

The written employment contract must include provisions detailing the following items: name, registered address and legal representative or person in charge of the employing entity; name, home address, and resident identity card number (or other valid identity document number) of the employee; term of the employment contract; job description and place of work; working hours, rest, and leave; remuneration; social insurance; and work protection, work conditions and protection against occupational hazards. An employer and worker may also agree to provisions regarding a probationary period, a training and service period, confidentiality and non-compete obligations, and supplementary benefits.

If a written labour contract is not entered into, the remuneration for the worker would be in accordance with the provisions of collective labour contract. And if the collective contract is not available, worker would be paid equal pay for equal work. A labour contract has clauses on particulars of employer & employee, term (duration) of the labor contract, job description, remuneration, etc.

Source: §10-17 of Employment Contract Law

Fixed Term Contracts

Chinese labour Law allows hiring fixed term contract workers for tasks of permanent nature. A fixed term contract is a labour contract whose termination date is agreed upon by the employer and the worker. Law does not prescribe maximum duration of a single fixed term contract however after 10 years of continuous service or 2 renewals of fixed term contracts, the contract is considered non-fixed term contract.

Source: § 13 & 14 of Employment Contract Law

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Probation Period

Employment Contract Law specifies that the probation period must be determined in the employment contract but it may not exceed 3 months. Length of probationary period depends upon the term/duration of a contract. Probationary period is:

- one month for an employment contract ranging between 3 months to 1 year;
 - 2 months for an employment contract ranging between 1 year to 3 years; and
 - 6 months for an employment contract of duration more than 3 years or indefinite/non-fixed term contracts
- Probation periods are not allowed for project-based contracts or if the term of a contract is less than three months. It also requires that a worker may not be appointed under probation twice with the same employer.

Source: § 19-21 of Employment Contract Law

Notice Requirement

The Employment Contract Law requires written termination notice before terminating services of a worker. An employment contract terminates if its terms expires; the worker has started receiving basic old age insurance pension in accordance with the law; the laborer dies, or is declared dead or missing by a People's Court; the Unit is declared bankrupt according to law; the Unit has its business license revoked, is ordered to close down or decides to dissolve ahead of schedule; or other circumstances, specified in laws or administrative laws and regulations, arise.

A fixed term contract terminates at the end of its term or by cancellation by either of the parties or in the case where the laborer does not agree to renew the contract even if the Unit proposes to renew the labor contract.

Either party can terminate an indefinite term employment contract by serving a notice or paying in lieu thereof. According to the Chapter 4 of the Employment Contract Law, either party may terminate the employment contract after giving 30 days written notice. The valid grounds for dismissal include worker's conduct, worker's capacity (incompetence and inability to work due to some injury) and economic reasons. During a probation period, the notice period is three days. An employee may resign without advance notice if the employer fails to timely pay wages or commits a breach of obligations.

An employer may pay one month's wage in lieu of notice. It is obligatory for an employer to notify the relevant trade union in advance if employer plans to unilaterally terminate employee contracts. Workers employed on a part time basis may be terminated at any time without cause.

In case of wrongful termination, the dispute arises and party has to apply for mediation. If a party is not willing to follow through with mediation, the other party may apply for arbitration. Parties disagreeing with arbitration awards are permitted to bring actions in district courts.

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Statutory remedies for wrongful termination are payment of back wages, penalties, and reinstatement or twice statutory severance pay.

Source: §36-50 of Employment Contract Law

Severance Pay

The Employment Contract Law provides severance pay to the workers on termination of employment contract but not in cases where the employer has grounds for the summary dismissal of the worker. Severance pay may also need to be paid at the end of a fixed term contract, unless the worker is given the opportunity to renew the contract and refuses. Workforce reductions by mass layoffs also require severance pay.

Amount of Economic Compensation/Severance Pay is based on the number of years a laborer has worked in a unit. It is equivalent to one month's wages for every year of service. If a worker has worked in a unit for more than 6 months but less than 1 year, he will get severance pay for one year. On the other hand, if a worker has worked for less than 6 months, he will get half-month's wage as severance pay.

Source: § 46-47 of Employment Contract Law

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

Labour Law, 1994

Paternity Leave

There is no national labour regulation requiring employers to provide paternity leave. Availability of paternity leave varies across jurisdictions and is typically premised on obtaining One Child Card. Fathers, with One Child Card, can take 10-30 days of paternity leave.

The amount of time that a male employee can take as paternity leave largely depends on where the individual is registered for social security. In general, China's statutory paternity leave does not exceed two weeks (14 days). For example, in Shanghai, a male employee is only entitled to a three-day paternity leave in the case of late childbirth. While in Shenzhen, a male employee can enjoy a 10-day paternity leave if his wife is 23 or older.

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:

Labour Law, 1994

Free Medical Care

Medical Benefits are provided under a national maternity insurance fund. A Basic Medical Insurance Fund has also been established which covers only the urban workers. These Funds can be used for maternity allowance and medical fees. The maternal and child health law requires that the State should provide access to medical and health care services to mothers and infants. These services should also be available to child-bearing, pregnant and lying-in (post-natal) women.

Source: National Maternity Insurance Fund

No Harmful Work

Labour Law, 1994 prohibits employment of pregnant workers or those nursing their children (of less than one year of age) to work with Grade III physical labour intensity as stipulated by the State. Overtime and night shifts are also prohibited to pregnant workers (with seven months of pregnancy) and women workers breast-feeding their children (under the age of 1 year). In case, these women workers are unable to do their original work, lighter or other work should be assigned to them according to the medical certification.

Source: §61 & 63 of Labour Law 1994

Maternity Leave

Female employees are entitled to 98 days of maternity leave including 15 days of prenatal leave. Maternity leave may be extended by fifteen days under special circumstances such as dystocia/difficult birth, multiple births (15 days leave for each additional infant) and miscarriage that occurred in the first 4 months of pregnancy. This leave is 42 days if miscarriage occurred after the first 4 months.

In addition, a Chinese female employee who gives birth to her first child at age 24 or older is regarded as a case of 'late childbirth,' and thereby will be entitled to an additional 'late maternity leave' of roughly 30 days (this may vary widely by location, e.g., 45 days in Dalian).

Sources: Regulations on Labour Protection for Female Workers and Employees 1988; Regulations on Special Labour Protection for Female Employees 2012

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Income

According to Labour Law, 1994, female workers are entitled to maternity leave with full pay. Generally, a registered female employee is paid by the Social Security Bureau.

Source: § 62 of the Labour Law 1994

Protection from Dismissals

Protection from dismissals during pregnancy and maternity leave is guaranteed under Labour Code.

A women worker can't be dismissed during the period of her pregnancy, child-birth and breast-feeding periods.

If a worker gets pregnant during the term of her fixed-term contract, and the contract ends during the pregnancy, the contract is automatically extended (through a renewed end date or a second contract) until the end of the breast-feeding period.

Source: §29 of the Labour Law 1994; §42 (4) of the Employment Contract Law

Right to Return to Same Position

There is no express provision on the right to return to same position however it is implied under section 29 of Labour Law that a women worker can't be dismissed during the term of her maternity leave.

Source: §29 of the Labour Law 1994

Breastfeeding

In accordance with article 9 of Regulations on Special Labour Protection for Female Employees, 2012, female workers are entitled to two paid nursing breaks, each of 30-minute duration, for new mothers to breastfeed their child(ren) until a child is twelve (12) months old. The breast-feeding/nursing breaks are in addition to the normal breaks an employee receives during the working day. Additional 30-minute break is provided for each additional infant to be nursed.

If quite many females are employed in a unit, clinics for female employees, rest-rooms for pregnant workers, nursing rooms, nurseries and kindergartens have to be established.

Source: §9 & 11 of Regulations on Special Labour Protection for Female Employees 2012

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07/13 Health & Safety

Regulations on health and safety:

Labour Law, 1994

Work Safety Law of the People's Republic of China, 2002 amended in 2009

Employer Cares

Employers are required to establish and strengthen the system for occupational safety and health, strictly implement the rules and standards of the State on occupational safety and health, educate labourers on occupational safety and health, prevent accidents in the process of work, and reduce occupational hazards. Employers are required to ensure worker safety by establishing a sound work safety responsibility system and improving working conditions.

It is obligatory for an employer to create a sound work safety responsibility system of the business entity; organize the formulation of rules and operating procedures for work safety of the business entity; ensuring effective input for work safety of the business entity; overseeing and inspecting work safety of the business entity to eliminate work safety risks in a timely manner; organizing the preparation and implementation of the emergency rescue plans for work safety accidents; and reporting work safety accidents in a timely and truthful manner.

The establishments producing, marketing or storing hazardous substances must establish a work safety management body or have full-time work safety management personnel. Other establishments must also hire work safety personnel, full time or a part time, depending on the number of workers.

The employers must study and understand the safety technical features of any new technique, technology, material or equipment, adopt effective safety protection measures and provide special education and training to the workers on work safety.

It is the duty of the employer to set conspicuous signs on business premises and relevant facilities and equipment with greater risk factors. Safety equipment must be designed, manufactured, installed, used, tested, maintained, renovated and retired in accordance with national or industry standards. Routine maintenance and regular testing of equipments is also mandatory. Techniques and equipments that seriously threaten work safety must be eliminated.

Workers must also abide by the Health and safety regulations at workplace. They have the right to refuse such work that is unsafe and contrary to the health and safety regulations.

Source: §52-56 Labour Law 1994; §17-31 of the Work Safety Law of the People's Republic of China, 2002 amended in 2009

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Free Protection

Employers are required to provide their workers with labor protection products (protective clothing/gear) meeting the national or industry standards and supervise and educate their employees on wearing or using such products in accordance with the rules of use. These products are free of cost for the workers and employers have to arrange funds for these protection products. An employer may be fined for not providing labour protection products meeting national or industry standards.

Source: §37, 39 & 83 of the Work Safety Law of the People's Republic of China 2002 amended in 2009

Training

Employers must ensure that their workers have necessary work safety knowledge, are familiar with the relevant work safety rules and operating procedures and possess safe operation skills for their respective posts by providing them education and training in the work safety.. If a worker fails to pass the qualifications test after getting this training, he/she won't be assigned to work. Before using new machines, technology and techniques, employers provide special education & training on work safety to their workers.

Workers must receive education and training on work safety, possess work safety knowledge necessary for their jobs, improve their work safety skills, and enhance their capabilities of preventing accidents and handling emergencies. An employer may be fined for not conducting necessary education and training on health and safety at work for its workers.

Source: §21-23, 50 & 82 of the Work Safety Law of the People's Republic of China 2002 amended in 2009

Labour Inspection System

Ministry of Labour's circular (1994) provides for a vibrant labour inspection system however it is not in line with the requirements of ILO Convention 081.

The administrative departments of labour under the People's governments at or above the county level, in accordance with the law, supervise and inspect the implementation of laws, rules and regulations on labour by the employing unit, and have the power to stop any acts that run counter to laws, rules and regulations on labour and order the rectification thereof.

The inspectors from the administrative departments of labour have the right to enter into the employing units to make investigations about the implementation of laws, rules and regulations on labour, consult the necessary data and interview anyone. The labour inspectors can make correction on the spot or may require correction within a specified time limit of violations of law on work safety discovered in the inspection; and for acts subject to administrative punishment in accordance with law, making decisions to impose administrative punishment in accordance with the Law and other relevant laws and administrative regulations.

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The inspector may order immediate elimination of accident risks discovered in the inspection; ordering evacuation of workers from dangerous areas and ordering suspension of production or business or suspension of use if safety cannot be guaranteed before or during the elimination of major accident risks and allowing resumption of production or business or use upon examination after elimination of major accident risks. The inspector may also seize or impound facilities, equipment and devices which do not meet the national or industry standards for work safety protection as determined based on evidence, and making a decision on the handling of the case within 15 days in accordance with law.

The inspectors must produce their papers while performing public duties, enforce laws impartially, and abide by the relevant regulations. They must keep a written record of an inspection, including the time, place and contents of the inspection, the problems discovered in the inspection and the handling of such problems, which are signed by the inspectors and the persons in charge of the inspected entity. If the persons in charge of the inspected entity refuse to sign, the inspectors record it and report it to the departments responsible for work safety supervision and administration.

The employer and its associates must cooperate with the inspector, conduct joint inspection if possible and take timely action if any safety problem comes up.

Source: §85-86 of the Labour Law 1994; §56-60 of the Work Safety Law of the People's Republic of China 2002 amended in 2009

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08/13 Sick Leave & Employment Injury Benefits

Regulations on sick leave & employment injury benefits:

Labour Law, 1994

Social Insurance Law of the People's Republic of China, 2010

Income

Regulations on Medical Treatment partially regulate leave for non-work-related illness or injury. The duration of an employer-approved medical treatment period/paid sick leave ranges from 3 to 24 months, depending on the worker's total years of work experience and his/her length of service with the current employer.

The specific provisions for paid sick leave are as follows:

(1) If the length of actual total service is less than 10 years:

- (i) 3 months of medical treatment/paid sick leave for those who have worked for less than 5 years;
- (ii) 6 months for those worked for 5 years or more

(2) If the length of actual service is 10 years or more:

- (i) 6 months of medical treatment for those with less than 5 years of service;
- (ii) 9 months for those with more than 5 years but less than 10 years of service;
- (iii) 12 months for those with more than 10 years but less than 15 years of service;
- (iv) 18 months for those with more than 15 years but less than 20 years of service; and
- (v) 24 months for those with 20 years or longer years of service

Sickness benefit ranges from 60% to 100% of the insured worker's last monthly wage up to six months each year. After the first 6 months, sickness benefit is 40-60% of an insured worker's last monthly wage until the worker recovers or is assessed with a permanent disability.

Source: Regulations on Medical Treatment 1995

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Medical Care

Insured workers receive medical benefits at an accredited hospital or clinic on a fee-for-service basis. Medical benefits for dependents are not provided.

Job Security

Employment of a worker is secure during the paid sick leave. A sick worker may be fired only if he/she is unable to take up his original work or the new work arranged by the employer after the completion of his medical treatment for illness or non-occupational injury.

Source: §26 of Labour Law 1994

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.

In the case of permanent incapacity/disability, benefit is awarded according to 10 different degrees of assessed disability. For the total permanent disability (1-4 degrees), a lump-sum of 27 months of insured workers' previous wage plus a monthly pension of 90% of previous average wage (1st degree), 25 months of wage plus 85% monthly pension (2nd degree), 23 months of wage plus 80% monthly pension (3rd degree), 21 months of wage plus 75% monthly pension (4th degree) is paid. In case of moderate permanent disability (degrees 5–6), a lump sum of 18 months of wages (5th degree) or 16 months of wages (6th degree) is paid. If the employer cannot offer the insured an appropriate job, a monthly benefit of 70% (5th degree) or 60% (6th degree) of the insured's wage before the disability began is paid. On the other hand, for the minor permanent disability (7-10 degrees), a lump sum of 13 months of wages (7th degree), 11 months of wages (8th degree), nine months of wages (9th degree), 7 months of wages (10th degree) is paid as permanent disability benefit. In the case of temporary disability, 100% of an insured worker's monthly salary is paid for 12 months. This can be extended to a maximum of 24 months in special cases.

In the case of fatal injury, dependents (widow/widower, children, parents, grandparents/children, brothers and sisters) receive survivors' pension. 40% of the deceased worker's last monthly wage is paid to the widow(er) while 30% is paid to each additional dependent. Law also provides for death allowance (a lump sum of 20 times the national urban per capita disposable income) and funeral grant (a lump-sum of six months of local average wage). Total survivors' benefits can't exceed a deceased worker's last monthly wage.

Source: Social Insurance Law of the People's Republic of China 2010

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09/13 Social Security

Regulations on social security:

Social Insurance Law of the People's Republic of China, 2010

Pension Rights

Social Insurance Law provides for both full and early pension. For full pension, a worker must have attained 60 years of age (same for professional women, age 55 for non-professional salaried women), or age 50 (other categories of women) with at least 15 years of contributions. For early pension, a worker must have attained age of 50 years (45 years for women) with at least 10 years of contributions and assessed with total disability. For workers employed in arduous or unhealthy work, a worker must have attained age 55 (men) or age 45 (women) with at least 15 years of coverage for full pension and eight to 10 years of continuous coverage for early pension.

Full pension is the average local wage in the previous year plus the average individual monthly wage used to calculate contributions, divided by two. The amount is then multiplied by 1% for each year of contributions. Early pension is based on the average local wage in the previous year, the average individual monthly wage used to calculate contributions, and the number of years of contributions. The minimum pension is 40-60% of the average local wage.

Source: Social Insurance Law of the People's Republic of China 2010

Dependents' / Survivors' Benefit

Social Insurance Law provides for survivor Pension (these include dependents including widow, widower, children and parents). Survivors' benefits is payable as the lump sum of 6 to 12 months of the deceased worker's last monthly wage according to the number of surviving dependents.

Funeral grant is paid as a lump sum of two months of the average local wage in the previous year. When an immediate family member who was dependent on the insured worker dies, 33% to 50% of the monthly average local or enterprise wage in the previous year is paid, depending on the age of the deceased.

Source: Social Insurance Law of the People's Republic of China 2010

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Unemployment Benefits

In accordance with the Social Insurance Law, workers are entitled to unemployment benefits depending upon the length of coverage/contributions paid by the worker and employer provided that the worker has at least one year of covered employment. The benefit is paid for up to one year with less than five years of coverage, for up to 1.5 years (18 months) with at least five but less than 10 years of coverage, and up to two years with 10 or more years of coverage. Workers should apply for this benefit within 60 days of unemployment. The unemployment benefit is lower than the local minimum wage.

Source: Social Insurance Law of the People's Republic of China 2010

Invalidity Benefits

The Social Insurance Law provides for invalidity benefit in the case of non-occupational accident/injury/disease resulting into permanent invalidity. To be eligible for invalidity benefit, a worker must be assessed with a total incapacity for work and not eligible for an early old-age pension. The minimum invalidity pension is set by the provincial and local governments according to the local standard of living. At least 40% of the insured worker's monthly wage is paid as invalidity pension.

Source: Social Insurance Law of the People's Republic of China 2010

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10/13 Fair Treatment

Regulations on fair treatment:

Constitution of the People's Republic of China, 1982
Labour Law, 1994

Equal Pay

The constitution of the People's Republic of China recognizes the principle of equal pay for equal amount of work. Labour Law, 1994 also requires employers to follow the equal pay for equal work principle.

The Protection of Rights & Interests of Women Law amended in 2005 requires that equal pay for equal work has to be applied to men and women alike. Women have to enjoy equal rights in receiving welfare benefits.

Source: § 48 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China 1982, § 46 of Labour Law 1994, § 24 of the Protection of Rights & Interests of Women Law amended in 2005

Sexual Harassment

The Protection of Rights & Interests of Women Law amended in 2005 prohibits sexual harassment and the victim is entitled to complain to her employer and the relevant government bodies as well as bringing a civil suit in a court of law against the perpetrator. Special Provisions on Labor Protection for Female Employees, 2012 require employers to prevent and stop sexual harassment of female employees.

Sources: §40 of the Protection of Rights & Interests of Women Law amended in 2005; § 11 of the Labor Protection for Female Employees 2012

Non-Discrimination

In accordance with the Chinese Constitution, all Chinese citizens are equal before law. Discrimination is prohibited on the grounds of ethnic community, race, sex, religious belief as well as disability. Prohibited grounds for dismissing workers are: marital status; pregnancy; maternity leave; temporary work injury or illness; race; sex; religion; nationality/national origin; age; trade union membership and activities; disabilities; ethnic origin.

Labour law also prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of ethnic group, race, sex, or religious belief. Women enjoy equal rights with men with regard to work and social security.

Source: §33 of the Constitution of the People's Republic of China 1982; §12 of the Labour Law 1994 §22 of Protection of Rights & Interests of Women Law amended in 2005

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Equal Choice of Profession

Women cannot work in the same industries as men as it is prohibited to arrange female workers to engage in work down the pit of mines, or work with Grade IV physical labour intensity as stipulated by the State, or other work that female workers should avoid. Similar provisions are made part of the Special Provisions on Labor Protection for Female Employees, 2012.

Sources: §59 of the Labour Law 1994; Special Provisions on Labor Protection for Female Employees 2012

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11/13 Minors & Youth**Regulations on minors and youth:**

Constitution of the People's Republic of China, 1982
Labour Law, 1994

Minimum Age for Employment

Minimum age for employment is 16 years and no employing unit is allowed to hire worker workers under the age of 16 years.

Institutions that recruit minors under the age of 16 must go through the formalities of examination and approval in accordance with the relevant provisions of the State and guarantee their right to compulsory education. These include institution of literature and art, physical culture, and special arts and crafts. On illegal hiring of minors under the age of 16, the administrative department of labour orders to make corrections and imposes a fine thereon. If the circumstances are serious, the administrative department for industry and commerce shall revoke its business license.

Source: §15 & 94 of the Labour Law 1994

Minimum Age for Hazardous Work

Minimum Age for Hazardous Work is set as 18 years and juvenile workers (between the age of 16 to 18 years) may not be engaged to work in the mines, work with Grade IV physical labour intensity, poisonous & harmful work and any other work that they should avoid.

The employer must provide regular physical examination to juvenile workers.

Source: § 64-65 of the Labour Law 1994

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12/13 Forced Labour

Regulations on forced labour:

Constitution of the People's Republic of China, 1982
Labour Law, 1994

Prohibition on Forced and Compulsory Labor

Forced Labour is prohibited under the Labour Law and Employment Contract Law. If an employing unit compels workers to do work by means of violence, intimidation or illegal restriction of personal freedom; or humiliate, impose corporal punishment upon, beat, illegally search, or detain labourers; or cause serious physical or mental injury to laborers due to poor quality working conditions or a seriously polluted working environment, the responsible persons in the employment unit can be punished by the public security organ with a detention of 15 days or less, or a fine, or a warning; and where the case constitutes a crime, persons who are held responsible are investigated for criminal responsibility according to law.

Source: §96 of the Labour Law 1994; §88 of the Employment Contract Law

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: § 36-50 of Employment Contract Law

Inhumane Working Conditions

Working time may be extended beyond normal working hours of forty four hours per week and eight hours a day. Total hours of work inclusive of overtime must not exceed 9-11 hours per day for workers hired in work of intermittent nature. However, overtime hours must not exceed 36 hours per month.

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

Source: §36, 37, 41-44 of the Labour Law 1994

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13/13 Trade Unions

Regulations on trade unions:

Constitution of the People's Republic of China, 1982
Labour Law, 1994

Freedom to Join and Form a Union

Constitution and Labour Law provide for freedom of association. Trade Union Law 1992 and Labour law 1994 allow workers to join and form unions regardless of their nationalities, races, sexes, occupations, religious beliefs or education, and no organization or individual may hinder them from doing so or restrict them.

Trade unions are mass organizations of the working class formed by the workers and staff members on a voluntary basis. These unions represent the interests of the workers and staff members and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of the workers and staff members according to law.

Only one "workers' organisation" is recognised in law, the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU). According to the Trade Union Law, the establishment of any trade union organisation, whether local, national or industrial, submits to the trade union organisation at the next higher level for approval. Trade union organisations at a higher level exercise leadership over those at lower level. The 2008 Labour Contract Law (LCL) along with several regional directives further facilitate the control of higher level All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) branches and officials over grassroots unions and worker representatives not yet in a union.

Employees may take part in the "democratic management" of trade unions and trade unions may negotiate with employers regarding the protection of rights and interests, such as the wages and benefits.

Source: §7 & 88 of the Labour Law 1994, Trade Union Law 1992

Freedom of Collective Bargaining

Chinese labor laws do not contain the term the "collective bargaining." However, it does include "collective negotiation" and "collective contract". In accordance with Labor Law 1994 and Trade Union Law 1992, a trade union may represent workers in signing a collective contract with the enterprise on matters relating to labour remuneration, working hours, rest and vacations, occupational safety and health, insurance and welfare.

The collective contract is submitted to the congress of the staff and workers or to all the staff and workers for discussion and adoption. It is then concluded by the trade union, in an enterprise where the trade union has not yet been set up, such contract is concluded by the representatives elected by the staff and workers

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with the enterprise. Collective contract is submitted to the administrative department of labour. The collective contract becomes effective automatically if no objections have been raised by the administrative department of labour within 15 days from the date of receipt of the text of the contract.

A collective contract concluded in accordance with the law is binding on both the enterprise and all of its staff and workers. Provisions in CBA must not contradict with the provisions of the law or public order or the public morals. In case, provision in individual labour contract contradicts with the collective agreement, the provision with better benefit is applied exclusively.

Source: §33-35 of the Labour Law 1994; §20 of the Trade Union Law 1992

Right to Strike

Right to strike is not provided under the law.

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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)

China has not ratified the Conventions 95, 117 & 131.

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)

China has not ratified the Conventions 01 & 171.

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.

China has ratified the Conventions 14 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

China 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)

China 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.

China has not ratified both Conventions 103 & 183.

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)

China has ratified the Convention 155 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

China 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).

China has not ratified the Convention 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.

China 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)

China 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.

China has not 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)

China has not 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 Germany. 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.

WageIndicator.org and Iftikhar Ahmad

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