

DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

monthly newsletter of the Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights

February 1991

WATCH OUT FOR ILLEGAL AGENCY FEES

Under the regulations of the Employment Agencies Act, it is illegal for Class D employment agencies that do placement for domestic workers, to charge more than 10 per cent of her salary for four months of work.

The 10 per cent fee is only payable out of salary actually received from the job. It is illegal for Ontario employment agencies to charge a domestic worker any other fee, including any "registration fee" or other fee payable before the domestic worker actually starts working in the job.

All employment agencies which seek employment for domestics in Ontario are required to be licensed under the Act and to comply with its regulations.

This information was relayed to INTERCEDE by Ian Anderson, a lawyer in private practice, who recently defended a new immigrant couple who had signed a contract with a Class B employment agency to pay a registration fee of \$500 plus five per cent of their one year's salary.

A Judge of the Ontario Court of Justice declared the contract illegal and made a very stiff cost

award against both the agency and the man acting for it.

Ian says that it is possible for a domestic worker who may have paid an excessive amount in an agreement with an employment agency, to recover her entire expenses because such agreement can be considered illegal and the Employment Agencies Act precisely is intended to protect workers against these abuses.

INTERCEDE Coordinator Fely Villasin indicated that domestic workers from the Philippines were commonly victimized by employment agencies that recruit them for Canada or elsewhere.

While the lawful limit that agencies can charge is 5000 in Philippine pesos, the majority charge more than that, making sure that they do not issue receipts.

Some domestic workers reported being charged excessive fees, from US \$740 to US \$1000 (this is equivalent to 22,000 to 30,000 pesos at the current \$1 = P30 rate).

Oftentimes these agencies do not refund any money even if no placement is found.

INTERCEDE monthly meeting will be on Sunday, February 3, 1991, from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil Street.

DORIS ANDERSON, writer/advocate for women's rights will share her thoughts on issues important to the women of Canada today. Ann Rowan, of the Toronto Disarmament Network, and Aida Graff, of the Arab-Canadian Women's Network, will discuss the war now raging in the Middle East.

There will be CLASP Legal Clinic but no INTERCEDE counselling. Applicants and those who want to renew their membership must come at 2 p.m. We will not accept applications for membership or renewals by mail.

¿ I HAVE A QUESTION ?

For my upgrading, do I have to take short-term courses only? Can I take courses like Hotel Management, Bachelor of Arts or Secretarial?

Answer: We usually advice people to do their upgrading along the line of their previous work or studies. You may, of course, choose to pursue another line of interest or according to what jobs are in demand. You will have to take into consideration the time and expenses available to you. Otherwise, there is no express limitation on taking part-time, long- or short-term courses. You may want to discuss your career plans with INTERCEDE volunteer counsellors and make an appointment.

Is volunteer work a must for me to be a landed immigrant and get an open permit after two years?

Answer: Immigration looks at the volunteer work you do when assessing your "integration into the community". But there are other ways they can assess this, such as your other activities in the community, membership in organizations or clubs. "Integration" is only one of several criteria that a domestic worker in the Foreign Domestic Movement program is assessed for landing. These criteria include language, skills upgrading, financial security, experience, social adaptation, and dependents.

I have six children, but when I applied into the FDM I just declared two of them. Should I tell the Immigration officer when I go through my assessment that I have more than two children?

Answer: We believe that the FDM should not discriminate against applicants who have any number of dependents. For this reason we would discourage anyone to advise applicants to lie about their real family status and dependents in their application. In your case, we would advise that you write a letter to Immigration immediately to correct the information about your dependents so that you can avoid future problems about sponsoring all your children when you are processed for immigrant status. In your letter remember to put your date of birth or Immigration File Number if you know it.

If I move to Ottawa, will I still get INTERCEDE's newsletter?

Answer: We ask everyone to send us a correction of their address as soon as possible so they will not miss an issue. All who have valid membership for the year meaning they have renewed their membership for 1991 receive the newsletter. All subscriptions are for only the year in which they were paid. If you are a subscriber and you have not renewed for 1991, you must renew your subscription by sending the form below and a cheque for \$5 if you are a domestic worker, or \$10 if you are not.

We wish to thank the Employment and Immigration, Canada (Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program); Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Women's Program); Ontario Ministry of Citizenship; Ontario Women's Directorate; the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (Community and Social Services); and the City of Toronto, Grant Reveiw Board for their continuing support.

NEW SUBSCRIPTION: CHANGE OF ADDRESS: RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION:

MAIL TO: INTERCEDE, 489 College St., Suite 402, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1A5

Please send DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS to:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

CITY/PROVINCE:

POSTAL CODE: TELEPHONE:

SUBSCRIPTION IS FOR 1991 ONLY.

Intercede Members:	FREE	Non-member Domestic	\$ 5.00
Non-Profit Organizations	FREE	Others	\$10.00

DENTAL CARE INFORMATION

In the course of INTERCEDE's focus workshops on domestic workers' needs, majority of participants expressed their inability to have affordable dental care.

Karen Serwonka, who is preparing the Needs report, found the time to gather some useful information. She suggests that domestic workers can make appointments and go to:

**1. GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE,
Casa Loma Campus
School of Dental Hygiene & Technicians
175 Kendal Avenue**

In their dental clinics, X-rays, cleanings and fillings are done by students free of charge. Treatment normally takes 3 to 4 visits to complete most work. Clinics are held at varying times, usually between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Call 944-4547 for:

- a. Clinics for fillings will run Mondays and Tuesdays until the end of February.
- b. Dental Hygiene Clinics for cleanings will run Monday through Friday until the end of May. If you will have trouble explaining your medical history in English, you should bring a friend who speaks English well to interpret for you.

Call 944-4548 for:

Denture Therapy Clinics held Monday through Friday, 9 a.m to 3 p.m. until the end of May. The cost for an upper or lower full plate is \$100 each (\$200 for both full plates). Partial plates are \$150 each. They also repair dentures here; the cost is \$15 per unit. Relining of dentures is \$30 per unit.

**2. REGENT PARK COMMUNITY HEALTH
CENTRE DENTAL CLINIC
19 Belshaw Place**

Depending on your income/financial situation, you may be eligible for dental services at reduced fees. The first examination with Dr. Fanian is free. Appointments can be made with Dr. Fanian Mondays and Thursdays. Dr. Zacharian sees patients Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays and there is a consultation fee for the first

examination. Your income/financial situation will be considered and you will be given an estimate for the cost of treatment before any treatment is given by either dentist. Call **364-2261** for an appointment.

**3. UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO FACULTY
OF DENTISTRY DENTAL CLINIC
101 Elm Street**

This clinic offers a full range of dental services that any private dentist's office would offer such as cleaning, fillings, extractions, root canals, bridge work, orthodontal work. All is done by students under the supervision of a dentist. The costs are about half of what you would pay at a private dentist's office.

At the first appointment you are screened for health problems or diseases. If your medical or dental health is very poor, you may not be accepted for treatment. If you pass, x-rays are taken and a diagnostic appointment is arranged. At this stage, they will tell you what work you will need to have done and you will be assigned to a student.

The Clinic is open during the school year, from September to June. The average treatment is one academic year. The appointments are about 3 hours each once a week. Emergency treatment is available but you will have to specify that you need this.

Open Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (no evening or weekend). Call for an appointment tel. **979-4335**.

**4. EMERGENCY DENTAL SERVICES
1650 Yonge St. (3 blocks north of St. Clair Ave.)
485-7121**

Open seven days a week including holidays from 9 a.m. to midnight. All services are at full cost.

Most hospitals will do emergency dental treatment at a cost. Often, however, they may just try to manage the pain by giving you antibiotics and pain killers and recommend that you see your dentist the following day.

Karen thanks Dr. Bruce Schaefer from the Department of Public Health (Dental Services) for his assistance in providing this information.

ORIENTATION FOR NEWLY-ARRIVED DOMESTIC WORKERS ON ONTARIO LABOUR LAWS

SUNDAY, MARCH 17, 1991 10 A.M. - 4 P.M.

Cecil Community Centre 58 Cecil Street (near Spadina)

Register on February 3 during the Monthly Meeting

Or call: 324-8751

This workshop is sponsored by the Ministry of Labour and the Ontario Women's Directorate in cooperation with INTERCEDE

Career/Job Search Counselling

for domestic workers in the FDM and on open permit available Saturday mornings by appointment, tel. 324-8751

Ask for a telephone interview if this is more convenient.

If you need to talk to someone...

*about something personal . . .
or if you need emotional support . . .*

CALL for an appointment,

TEL. 324-8751

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Canada Immigration Centre	973-4444
Educ & Skills Training Ctr, Labour Council	971-5893
Employment Standards Enforcement	326-7160
Immigrant Women's Health Centre	367-1388
Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre	656-8933
OHIP Toronto	482-1111
Scarborough	1-800-263-3814
Mississauga	275-2730
Ontario Human Rights Commission	326-9511
Revenue Canada (Taxation)	869-1500
Toronto Rape Crisis Centre (24-hour line)	597-8808
Unemployment Insurance	730-1211
Workers' Compensation	927-9555
EMERGENCY HOUSING	
Nellie's Hostel	461-1084
Evangeline's	762-9636

LEGAL SERVICES

Parkdale Community Legal Services	531-2411
CLASP (Osgoode Law School) Legal Clinic	736-5029
Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Serv.	363-0304
Metro Tor. Chinese & SE Asian Legal Clinic	971-9674
Toronto Workers' Health & Safety Legal Clinic	971-8832

INTERCEDE SERVICE UNIT

Place: 489 College St., Suite 402, Toronto, Ontario
Time: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Telephone: (416) 324-8751

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FIRST CLASS