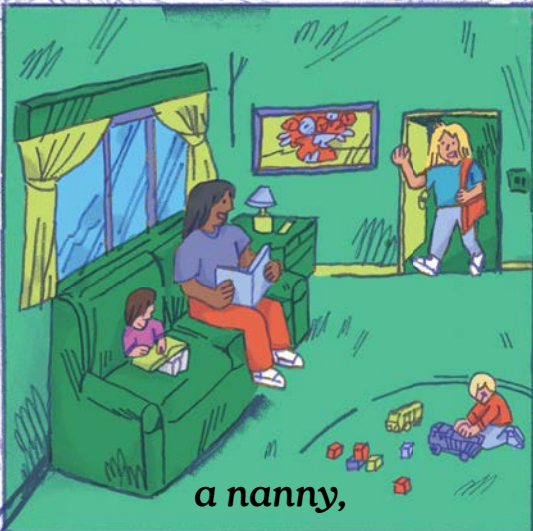


FAIR CARE

**Domestic work
makes all work possible.**

Do you receive
support from...



If so, you're an employer!

It's an employer's
responsibility to make
sure domestic workers
are treated fairly.

**This guide
explains how to
be a fair employer.**



**MAKING
POLICY
PUBLIC**

People who do domestic work are workers.



The people who receive their services are employers.



If someone comes to your house to do domestic work...



You're an employer.

“Wait, I’m an employer?”



Our cleaner is a contract worker, she only comes once a month.

I pay under the table, so it's not legal work.

Our nanny, Ada, is like family to us.

We hire from an agency, wouldn't they be the employer?

I hire a home attendant that's paid through Medicaid. Doesn't that make me the consumer?

It doesn't matter how often the domestic worker comes to your home, how they are paid (by you, an agency, or the state), or how close they feel to your family. If you receive their services, **it's your responsibility to create a fair working environment in your home.**

Until recently, domestic workers haven't had legal rights or protections.

How did we get here?

Domestic workers were written out of labor and civil rights laws in the U.S.

Domestic workers were left out of landmark laws that provided rights and protections for most workers — like a national minimum wage, the 40 hour work week, overtime pay, and protections against discrimination. Today, domestic workers organize and fight for rights and protections on the city, state, and federal level.



Paid sick days help stop the spread of illnesses.



There are different laws depending on where you live.

In 2010, after decades of organizing, domestic workers won the first bill of rights in New York State. Since then, several more states and cities have passed laws providing rights and protections. Employers mobilized to help pass this legislation because they also benefit when care jobs are good jobs. Regardless of where you live, you can create a fair job in your home.

Unfair treatment of domestic workers stems from slavery and sexism.

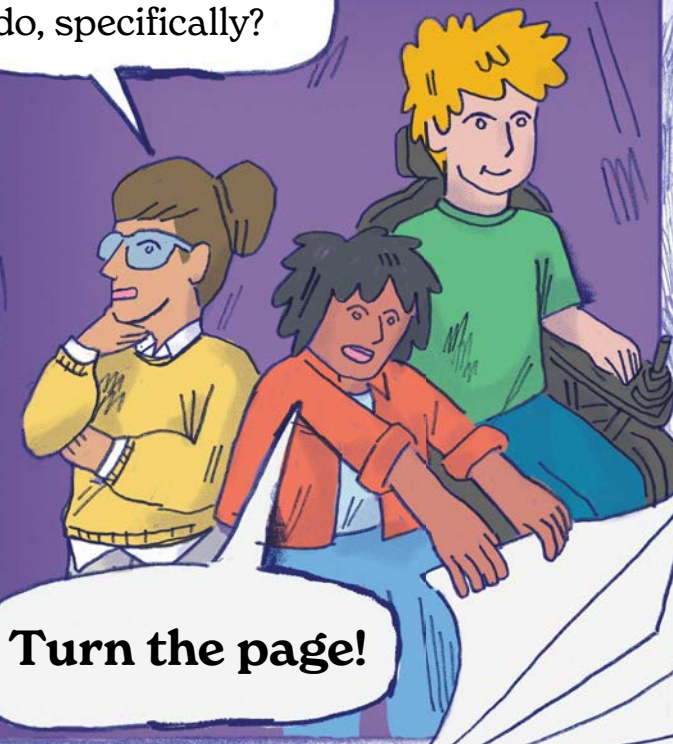
When these laws were written, domestic work was mostly done by descendants of enslaved people and women. Today, most domestic work is done by women of color and immigrants. You can help end this legacy of racism and sexism by creating a fair job in your home.



Do what you can with what you have.

Hiring someone privately and fairly takes money, time, and effort. While some of us can afford to make the jobs in our home the gold standard, others have to make compromises. No matter your income, you can take steps to make your home a fair workplace. Focus on the things you can do, not the things you can't.

OK, so what do I have to do, specifically?



Turn the page!

Fair Care is a Win-Win

Everyone wants a fair job: to be paid fairly, to have time off to take care of ourselves and our loved ones, and to be treated with dignity and respect. Domestic workers are no different! **Being a fair employer will lead to a better working relationship, higher quality of care, and less turnover.**

Paid Time Off (PTO)

Vacation: 2 weeks a year for full-time employees, or 1 hour for every 20 hours worked for part-time employees

Sick Days: At least 5 days a year for full-time employees, or 1 hour for every 30 hours worked for part-time employees

Rest breaks: 10 minutes for every 4 hours worked (always paid)

Meal breaks: 30 minutes for every 5 hours worked (paid if the worker can't leave)

Holidays: 9 government holidays or alternate agreed-upon days. If they work a holiday, pay 1.5x the rate

Fair Pay

Pay a living wage

- Use a living wage calculator to figure out the living wage in your area, for example: livingwage.mit.edu

Pay on time for all hours worked

Pay for overtime at 1.5x the rate after 8 hours/day or 40 hours/week

Increase pay when responsibilities change

Once a year...

- Provide a cost of living pay raise
- Offer a bonus

Clear Communication

Outline job responsibilities and create a written work agreement

Schedule regular check-ins during paid working time

Hold annual evaluations and update the work agreement to reflect any changes



Learn more at domesticemployers.org/resources-and-faqs/

This guide is geared toward employers who hire privately. If you hire a home care worker through a Medicaid-funded program, you don't control wages and benefits — the state does. However, you can practice clear communication. For more info about hiring through Medicaid, visit your state's home healthcare agency website.



Put Fair Care into Practice

Whether you employ a home care attendant, a nanny, or a housecleaner, the principles of fair employment are the same. Follow along to see how these employers use fair practices at every stage of the hiring and employment process.

Home Care Attendant



Carlos and Julia's mother, Rosalie, has dementia. She gets support from a home care attendant, Gloria, 40 hours/week. As their mother's condition gets worse, Carlos and Julia think about how to provide more support.

Nanny



Sam and Evan are new parents, baby Max is six months old. Until now they had help from family, friends, and flexible work schedules. As they get ready to go back to work, they decide to hire a nanny.

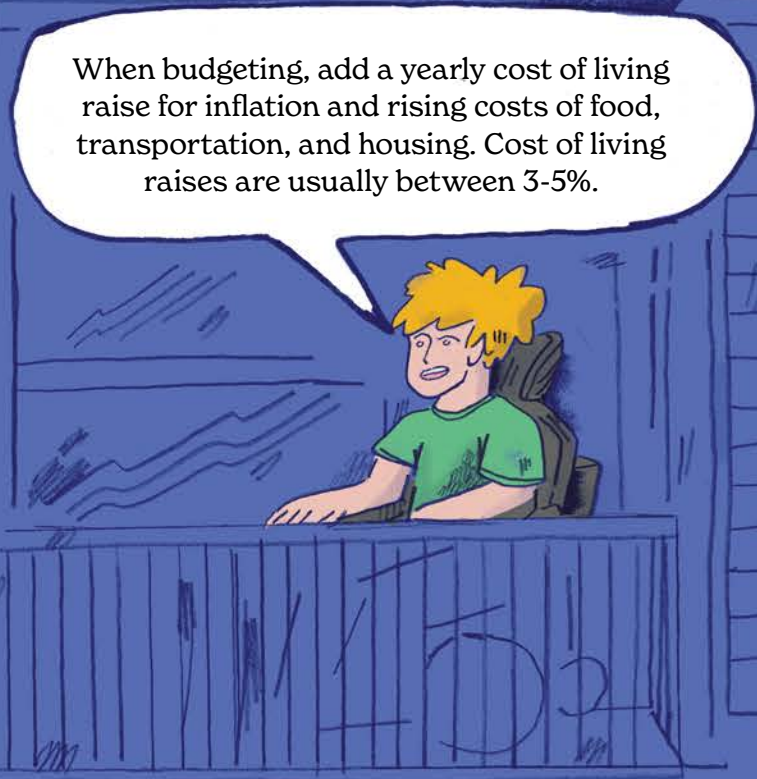
Housecleaner



Carmen and Tony work full-time and live together in NYC. They have demanding jobs, active social lives, and often fight about cleaning. To ease the situation, they decide to hire a housecleaner.

Review Your Budget and Hire Accordingly

Providing fair pay often requires careful planning, budgeting, and adjusting expectations. Fair pay is essential for a respectful and long-lasting relationship.



When budgeting, add a yearly cost of living raise for inflation and rising costs of food, transportation, and housing. Cost of living raises are usually between 3-5%.

Adjust Your Expectations

Tony and Carmen find a middle ground.

I checked the living wage calculator and we can only afford to pay six hours a month.



So that's one visit every other week.

It will, and if we decide weekly is a priority later on, we can cut back on something else. I love knowing we're paying fairly.

Weekly would be ideal, but this will still be a gamechanger.

Find Creative Solutions

Julia, Carlos, and Rosalie figure out how to afford the care they need.



We know we need more care, but it's expensive. Medicare doesn't cover home care costs.

Mom, I know you weren't planning to use your savings this way, but I don't know what we'd do without it.

That's OK.

We all love Gloria, but she's already working 40 hours/week. If she works more, we'd have to pay her overtime, which we can't afford.

I think it's time to hire a second person. It would also give us more coverage if Gloria has to take a sick day.

Get Your Needs Met AND Pay a Living Wage

Sam and Evan adjust their budget to pay a living wage.



If we eat out one less night a week, and we skip our trip this winter, we can afford to hire a nanny and pay a living wage for 40 hours/week.

Really? I love our winter trip! My co-worker pays their nanny minimum wage and says she's fine with it.

I'd rather pay more and feel good about it. We also don't want the nanny we hire to leave for a better paying job.

Good point, that would be really hard.

Plan the Job before Hiring

When hiring, set the employment relationship up for success by planning out the job. Take time to reflect on the tasks you need support with and write them down. This will help you set clear expectations and build a trusting relationship.



Write a Job Description

This is what you'll post if you advertise the job. It summarizes the tasks you need support with, how much you can pay, and the benefits you will provide. To get started, write down everything you need support with, then prioritize.

Sam and Evan draft a job description for a nanny for Max.

We should decide what's "Non-Negotiable" and what's "Nice to Have."



Non-Negotiable	Nice to Have
<p>Available weekdays and some weekends Available weekdays 10am-6pm</p>	<p>Availability some weekends for extra hours</p>
<p>Drive Max to doctor's appointments Must have: car → (can use our car if they don't have one) Must have: driver's license</p>	<p>Their own car</p>
<p>Must be from Latin America [Can't say this, it's discrimination!] →</p>	<p>Would be nice if they speak Spanish and are open to speaking Spanish with Max</p>
<p>Naptime (light cleaning while Max is asleep)</p> <p>Preparing and warming bottles</p> <p>Comfortability around dogs</p>	<p>Openness to sleep training</p> <p>Light cleaning</p> <p>Willingness to walk dog</p>

Write a Task List

A task list breaks down the job into specific actions. It also sets consistent schedules and provides guidance on medical needs and equipment. To get started, write down all the individual steps within each task and how long each task will take. Then organize the tasks into a daily schedule.

Julia and Gloria map out Rosalie's evening schedule in preparation for a new hire.

Let's go through my mom's evening routine step-by-step.



Download and Modify a Sample Work Agreement

A work agreement is key to establishing clear communication. You don't need to start from scratch; there are many samples you can download and modify. Plan on reviewing and adapting the work agreement in collaboration with the person you hire.

In some cities and states, having a work agreement is the law. Visit your local Department of Labor (DOL) website to understand the legal requirements where you live.

Offer the most generous pay and benefits you can with the resources you have.

If you're hiring from an agency, ask to see the work agreement they use with their employees, and what pay and benefits they receive.

Download a sample Work Agreement from domesticemployers.org

Work Agreement for a Housecleaner

Personal Information:
Names, contact information, and time frame for the working relationship.

Pay
Hourly rate: _____
Overtime pay: _____

Cancellation Policy: _____

Paid Time Off
Vacation: _____
Sick time: _____
Rest Breaks: _____
Meal Breaks: _____
Holidays: _____

Clear Communication Practices
Monthly Check-Ins: _____

Review the Work Agreement with the Worker

For a work agreement to be useful, everyone needs to agree on the terms. When you review the agreement together, try to create a collaborative conversation so the person you're hiring feels comfortable asking questions and giving feedback. Translate all documents into their primary language, and edit the agreement until everyone agrees with it.

The person you're hiring might prefer not to have a work agreement. Respect their preference and use tools like a job description, task lists, and regular check-ins to keep a good line of communication.



Review Pay, PTO, and Clear Communication Practices

Make space to review the terms and benefits of the job. Talk through how you would navigate different situations, and how and when you'll communicate.

Carmen adapts the work agreement to align with their new house cleaner, Clara's, standard practice.

How does this cancellation policy compare with your other clients?

Here, I can show you. The agreement I have with your downstairs neighbor has a 48 hour cancellation policy.

What happens if we wake up feeling sick on the day you're scheduled to come in?

In that case, you would cancel and still pay me because I set aside that time for you.



Review the Job Description and Task List

Talk through the job details to create a shared understanding of responsibilities. This is a conversation, so make space for questions, opinions, and preferences.

Julia, Gloria, and the new hire, Jasmin, review and adjust the task list.

Does anything stand out from the task list?

Where it says — "Help with cleaning from time to time" — can you clarify what that means?

That's referring to any cleaning I may not finish during my shift. But you're right, it's unclear. We should make it more specific.



It's Never Too Late to Create a Work Agreement

If you've already been working with someone but don't have a work agreement, you can introduce one. Bring it up at your next scheduled check-in (see pg 14).

Sam and Evan have been working with their Nanny, Ada, for a few months without a work agreement.

We appreciate your flexibility as we get used to working together and being new parents. We know it's been a bit of a learning curve for all of us.

We truly couldn't do this without you. To help us all stay accountable, we'd like to create a work agreement.

I agree that would be really helpful. Do you have one we can review together?



Hold Regular, Scheduled Check-ins

Set a time for weekly or monthly check-ins, not just when you're having issues. The check-ins should be paid, and should not happen while the employee is working. Discuss how things are going and emerging needs. Initiate the conversation, listen actively, and agree on next steps.

Be mindful of the power you hold. Just because someone's not complaining doesn't mean everything's OK.



Initiate Difficult Conversations

Carlos, Julia, and Jasmin meet for their weekly check-in.

Listen, I know it's been difficult lately. Gloria told me my Mom's been saying a lot of unkind things to you.

Thank you for bringing this up. As Rosalie's condition gets worse, what she says can be upsetting.



We know this isn't easy and can't imagine doing this without you. What needs to change?

I'm OK in the moment, but I think an additional break or two would help me reset. I have ideas about how we can add more breaks to my schedule.

Update the Work Agreement as Needs Change

As new needs come up, check in to see if the worker is open to new tasks or new responsibilities. If they're not, find alternative solutions.

Increase Pay for Added Children

Sam, Evan, and Ada update the work agreement.

A new baby? Congratulations!

Thank you! We hope you'll stay with us. And of course we'll increase your rate.

To start that conversation, we'd like to review our work agreement together and update it with everything that will need to change. Then we'll have it translated so you can take it home to review it more carefully.



Increase Pay for Added Tasks

Carmen and Clara update the work agreement.

Everything looks great, Clara, but I noticed you haven't been cleaning the baseboards.

The baseboards aren't part of my task list in the work agreement.

Oh! We'll have to add that in. Well, hold on. I should ask, does that work for you?

I'm happy to add that to the plan, but as it's more work, we need to adjust the rate.



Care is a Collective Need

To access a library of fair employment resources, and get involved in campaigns that bring dignity and fairness to domestic workers, visit: domesticemployers.org



MAKING POLICY PUBLIC is a series of collaborations between community advocates, visual designers, and the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) to create visual resources that explain policies affecting social justice.

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CUP is a nonprofit organization that uses the power of design and art to increase meaningful civic engagement in partnership with marginalized communities.

welcometocup.org



HAND IN HAND
THE DOMESTIC
EMPLOYERS NETWORK

Hand in Hand is a national organization of domestic employers of nannies, housecleaners, and home attendants working for dignified and respectful working conditions that benefit the employer and worker alike.

domesticemployers.org

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