

CAMPAIGN FOR THE RIGHT TO CHANGE EMPLOYER



Problems with the Employment Permit System

Migrant workers in the employment permit system know that not having the freedom to change employer is wrong and unjust. They know what it is like to feel powerless and at the mercy of employers who take advantage of them. They know what is like to be threatened by employers who tell them that they will not renew their permit and have them deported if they complain. If they lose their job, they know how difficult it is to find another employer who will apply for an employment permit with the long delays and high fees. They know the stress and fear of becoming undocumented.



Grant Employment Permit Holders the Right to Change Employer.

MRCI believes that there is a better and fairer way for the 25,000 migrant workers still in the employment permit system in Ireland. MRCI is asking that the employment permit system be changed so that employment permits are granted to workers based on their job category with the right to freely change employer. If and when workers decided to change employer or if made redundant, they would simply need to register the change of employer with the Employment Permits Section. There would no longer be a need to make a brand new employment permit application with its long delays and high fees.

TAKE ACTION!

MRCI is campaigning to get the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation, Batt O’Keeffe, TD, to give migrant workers in the employment permit system the right to change employer. We need to tell him and other political representatives (TDs) just how important the right to change employer is for migrant workers.

1. **Write a letter to Minister O’Keeffe.**

Urge him to grant the right to change employers. See sample 90-second letter for ideas.

Batt O’Keeffe, TD
Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Innovation
23 Kildare Street, Dublin 2
T: (01) 631 2172

2. **Visit and write to your local TDs.**

Explain to them first hand the benefits of granting employment permit holders the right to change employer and ask them to speak with Minister O’Keeffe on your behalf. You can find your local TDs at www.kildarestreet.com/tds/ or contact us at the MRCI if you need assistance.

3. **Join in MRCI campaign actions.**

Contact the MRCI and join our information and action list to keep informed of upcoming actions and progress in the campaign. Email us at info@mrci.ie or call 01-8897570 or check our website at www.mrci.ie for all the materials you need.

4. **Organise others.**

Give this leaflet to other potential supporters and get others involved.

Working together we can win!

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI)

55 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1

T: (01) 8897570

E: info@mrci.ie

F: (01) 889 7579

W: www.mrci.ie

MEETING YOUR LOCAL ELECTED T.D. (REPRESENTATIVE)

1. Find out when you can meet the TD in your area

Contact your TD and find out when they have their local constituency clinic. A constituency clinic is an opportunity for members of the public to meet with their TDs without appointment. Clinics are often held in TDs constituency offices or other public venues at set times. If the TD does not have a clinic then make an appointment meet with them directly. You can find out who your local TDs are and their contact details at: www.kildarestreet.com/tds/

2. Organise others and plan the meeting

Bring fellow migrant workers, supporters, or family members who live in the area to visit the TD with you and prepare who will say what before you meet the TD. Meet together before the visit to practice what you will say.

3. During the meeting

- Have one person as spokesperson to introduce the others. Make sure you tell them where you work, and any associations you belong to in the area.
- Make your points personal and speak from your own experience. How has not having the right to change employer affected you?
- Be firm and polite.
- Get a commitment! Don't leave without asking them to contact the Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Innovation, Batt O'Keefe, TD. Ask the TD when you can expect a response from them.

4. After the visit

- Write a letter or e-mail to thank the TD and remind them of their commitment.
- Call to let the MRCI know what happened!

SAMPLE 90-SECOND LETTER TO MINISTER BATT O'KEEFFE

Batt O'Keefe, TD
Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Innovation
23 Kildare Street, Dublin 2

(Date)

Dear Minister O'Keefe,

I am writing to ask you to grant migrant workers in the employment permit system the right to change employer in their job category.

I understand the difficulties of not having the right to freely change employer. *(Explain difficulties you or others have experienced not having the right to change employer)*

Not having the right to change employer is unfair and leads to exploitation. It makes it extremely difficult to leave a bad situation and to find a new employer willing to go through the long delays and high fees of a new employment permit application.

Employment permit holders deserve the basic right to change employer. It would provide a real and fair chance to move from bad situations and to get back into work. It is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

(Your name)
(Your address)