

# Service Report 2019

## Statistics on MFMW case support, shelter, and other emergency services

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The Mission For Migrant Workers (MFMW or Mission) of St. John's Cathedral is a leading and trusted service provider and partner of Asian migrants and a committed advocate in building a caring and inclusive Hong Kong society. Our core services include information and guidance, case support, shelter provision, and other rescue and emergency assistance to distressed migrant domestic workers.

Through these services, St. John's Cathedral and our local and overseas church partners seek to impart to migrant domestic workers Christ' love. We aim for them to realise that they are rightfully part of Hong Kong society: As our people, not aliens, or strangers.

Our Service Report 2019 encapsulates our effort in assisting migrants any time, anywhere. This also includes insight into reasons migrant domestic workers seek help and assistance.

We are also dedicating a page for our breakthrough program Happy Homes which aims to promote harmony in Hong Kong households. Happy workers and household members create happy and harmonious homes. More happy homes mean a happier Hong Kong indeed.

We hope to raise awareness of and enact changes in policy and perception to MDWs' plight.

## Service Summary

Assisted a total of **5,023** migrants who needed rights-based information, case support, and other critical services. Among them:



**983**

service users were assisted on their cases and monetary claims and coordination with public lawyers, police, and other relevant government agencies and Consulates.



Addressed

**2,196**

rights-based inquiries at our walk-in centres and outreach activities in Central, Causeway Bay, Tsim Sha Tsui, Mei Foo, Lok Fu, Mong Kok, as well as in Tsing Yi, Yuen Long, Tuen Mun, and Sha Tin in the New Territories.



Answered

**941**

critical inquiries by telephone, messaging apps, email, and social media. This encompasses all calls received at our walk-in centres and messages through our official email, website, and social media accounts.



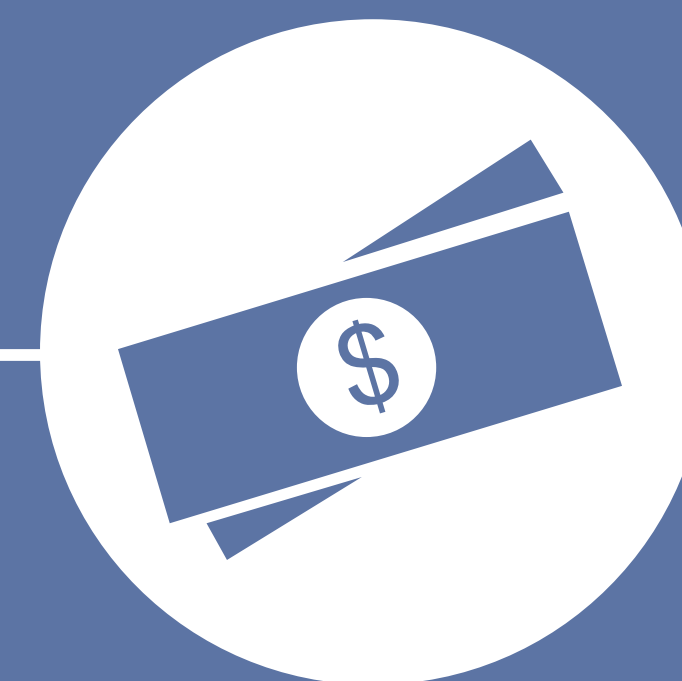
We also recorded all inquiries received by our staff and regular volunteers

**after office hours**

through their own phones and messaging apps. Our emergency response service recorded

**903**

after-office inquiries and even rescues.



Helped our service users recover

**HK\$ 2,312,850.33**

of monetary claims and entitlements.



Provided shelter to

**704**

distressed women migrants where they were given food and a place to sleep during the duration of their case



**Bethune House**

remains our main shelter partner. We also refer to other shelters managed by the Diocesan Pastoral Center for Filipinos, New Beginnings Christian Fellowship, Jesus Is Lord, El Shaddai, Istiqomah and the Islamic Union. Many of them are connected as partners under the Coalition of Service Providers for Ethnic Minorities (CSPeM) which we established in 2009.



Participated in by

**17**

local households in Happy Homes colouring competition in 2019.



Our distinct Employer Awareness Program in 2019 had no less than

**8**

employers who approached our centre or accessed our dedicated hotline, by email, or social media.



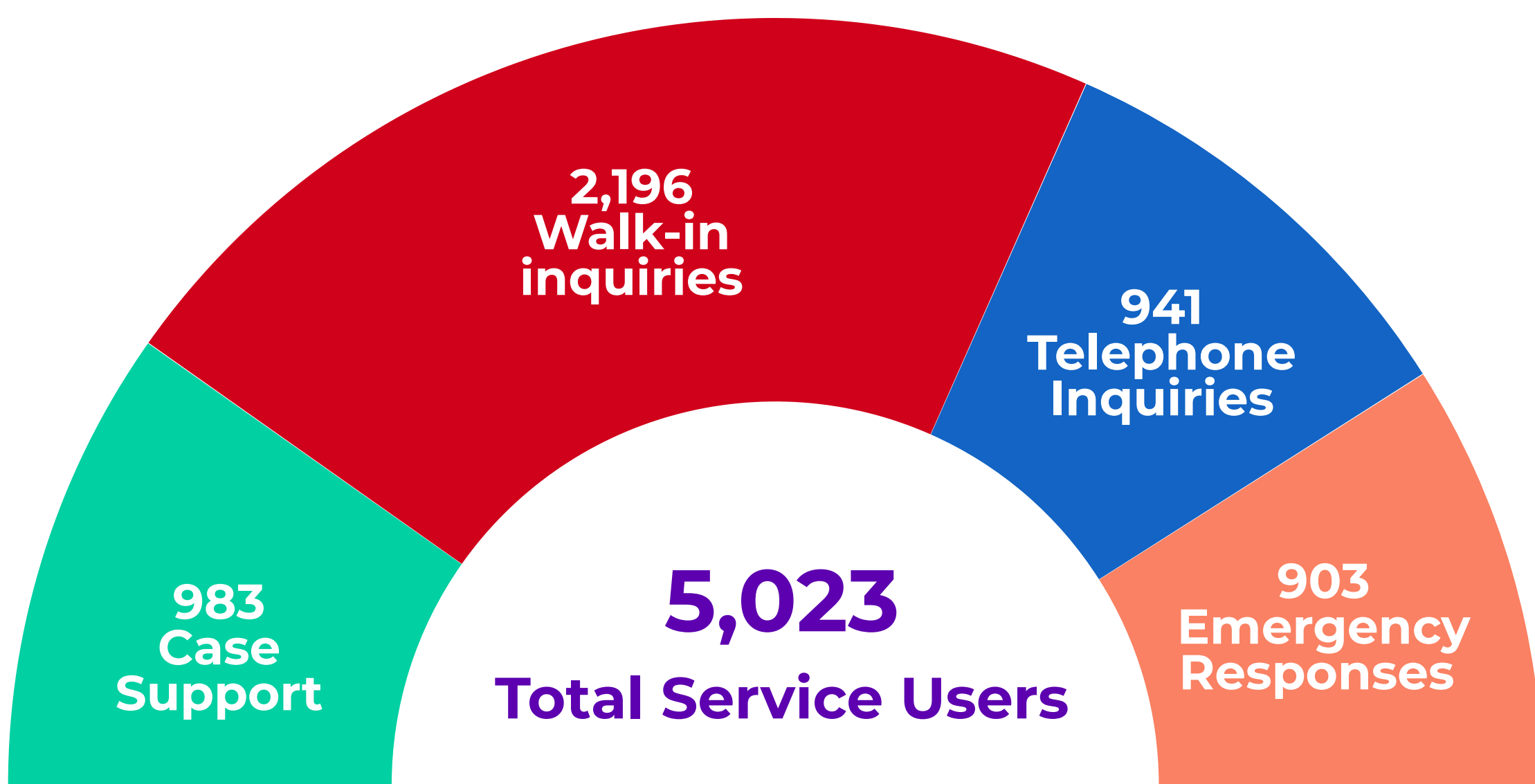
Offered  
**66** Life and Work Skills seminars and training classes which benefitted  
**2,091** participants. Classes include First Aid provided by the Hong Kong Red Cross, Care for the Elderly and Children as well as Stress Management by the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council, basic computer literacy with employees from Bank of America Merrill Lynch, financial literacy by Enrich, home safety, child care, art for relaxation, and our staple Know Your Rights and Responsibilities course.

Visited and comforted  
**91** migrants in hospitals and prisons. Funeral and memorial services were also held.

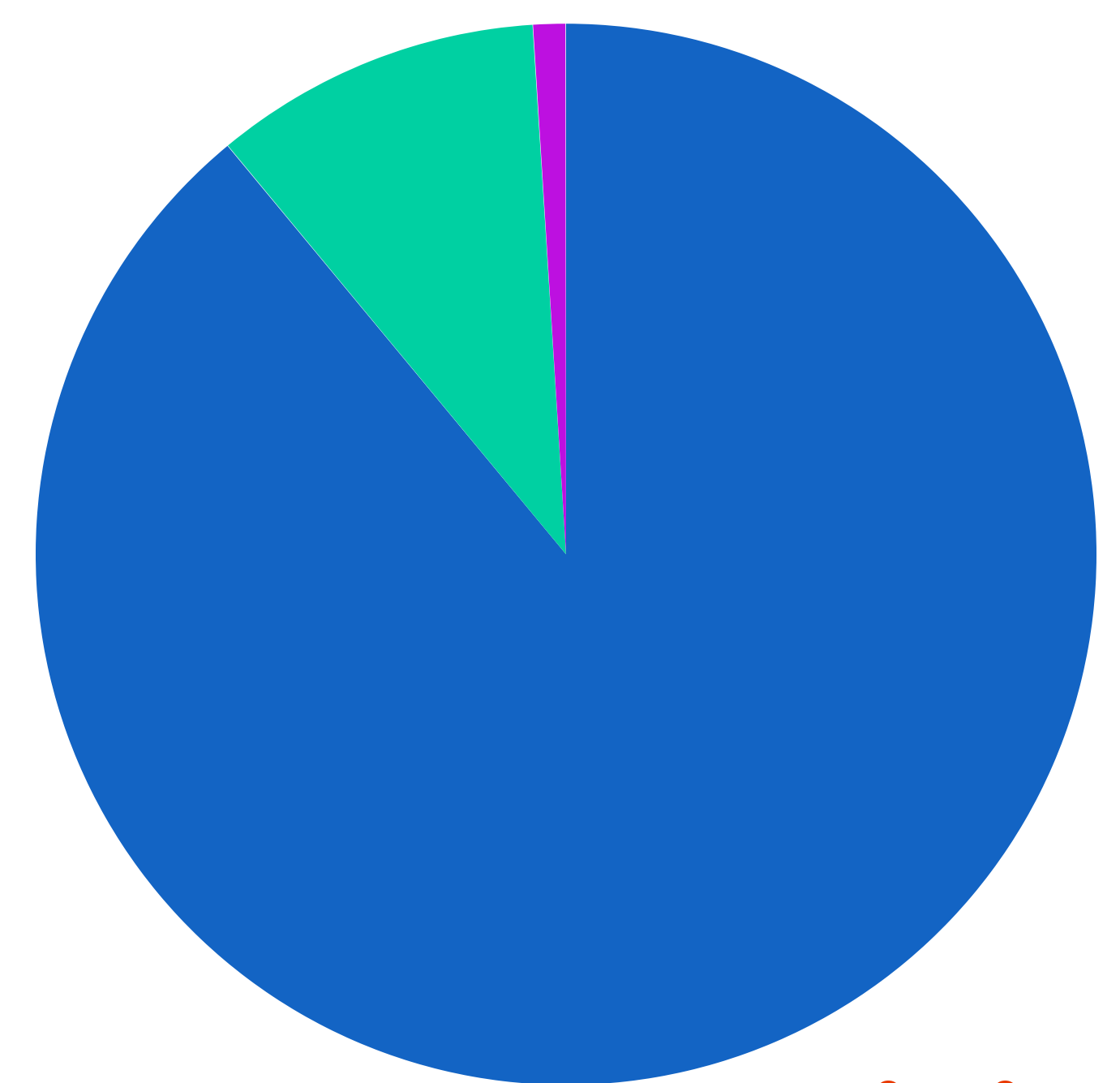
Published  
**7,500** copies of Migrant Focus newsletter and other informational materials on rights and welfare of migrant domestic workers.

Cared for  
**6,011** migrant domestic workers at two big Give Care to Our Caregivers (GCC) events and many smaller scale mobile care centres offering **FREE** leisure and learning services like health check-ups, massages, dental services, nutrition and diet, occupational therapy, tai-chi, yoga, chiropractor services in partnership with local service providers, professionals, and volunteers.

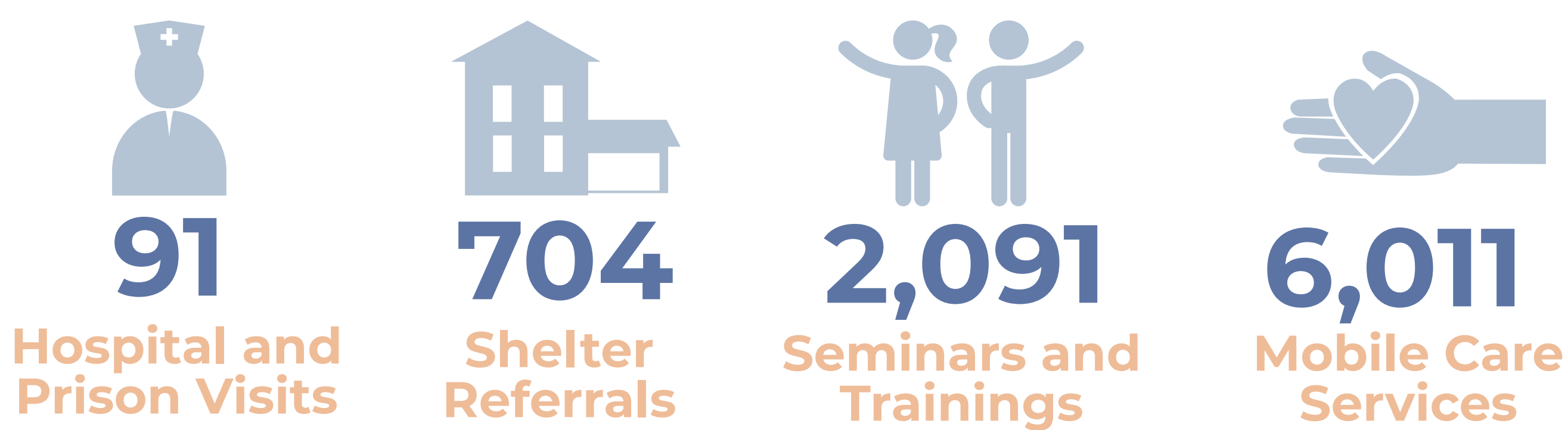
# Service User Overview



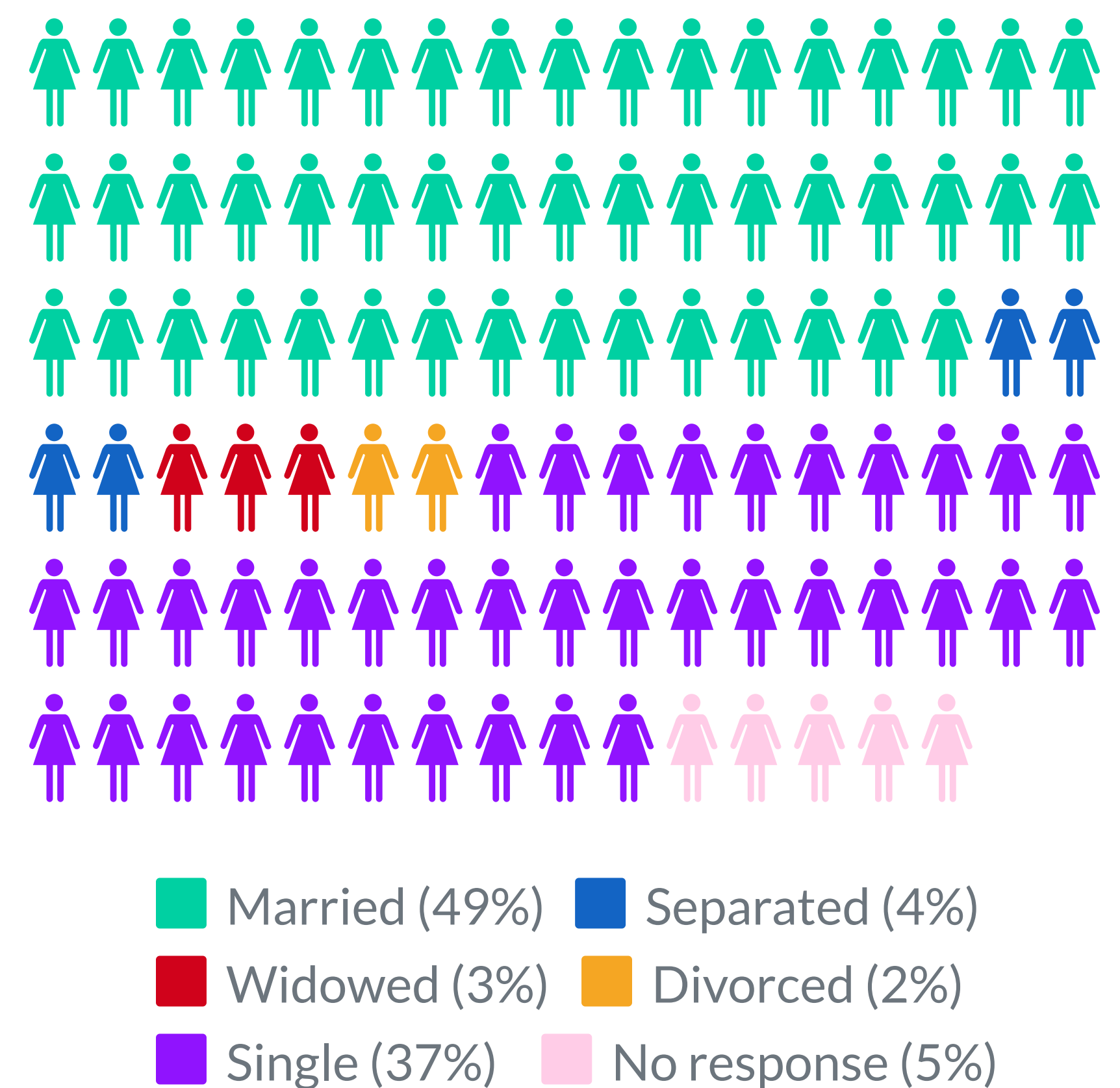
Case support (19.57%) | Walk-in Inquiries (43.72%) | Telephone Inquiries (18.73%) | Emergency responses (17.98%)



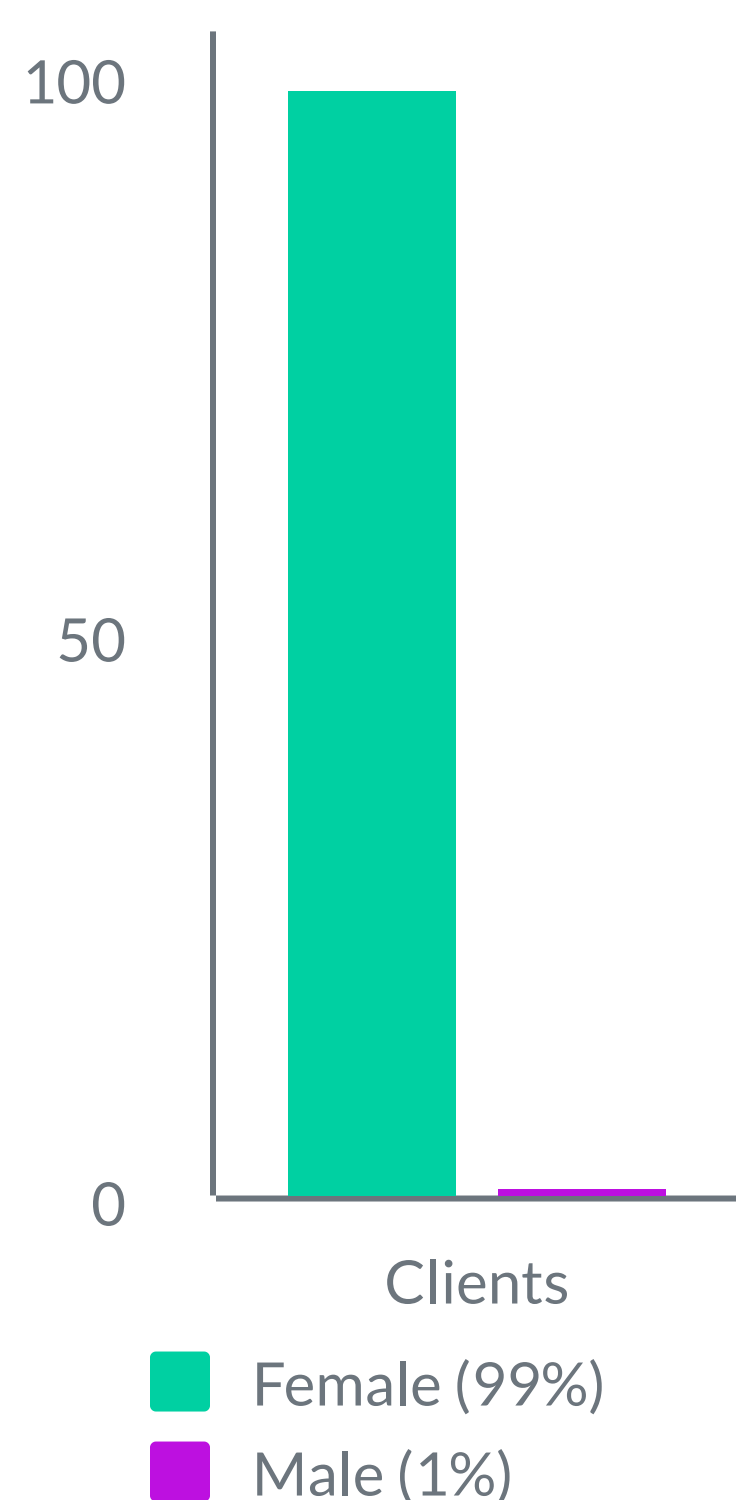
**Country of Origin**  
Filipinos (89%) | Indonesians (10%) | Other South & SE Asians (1%)



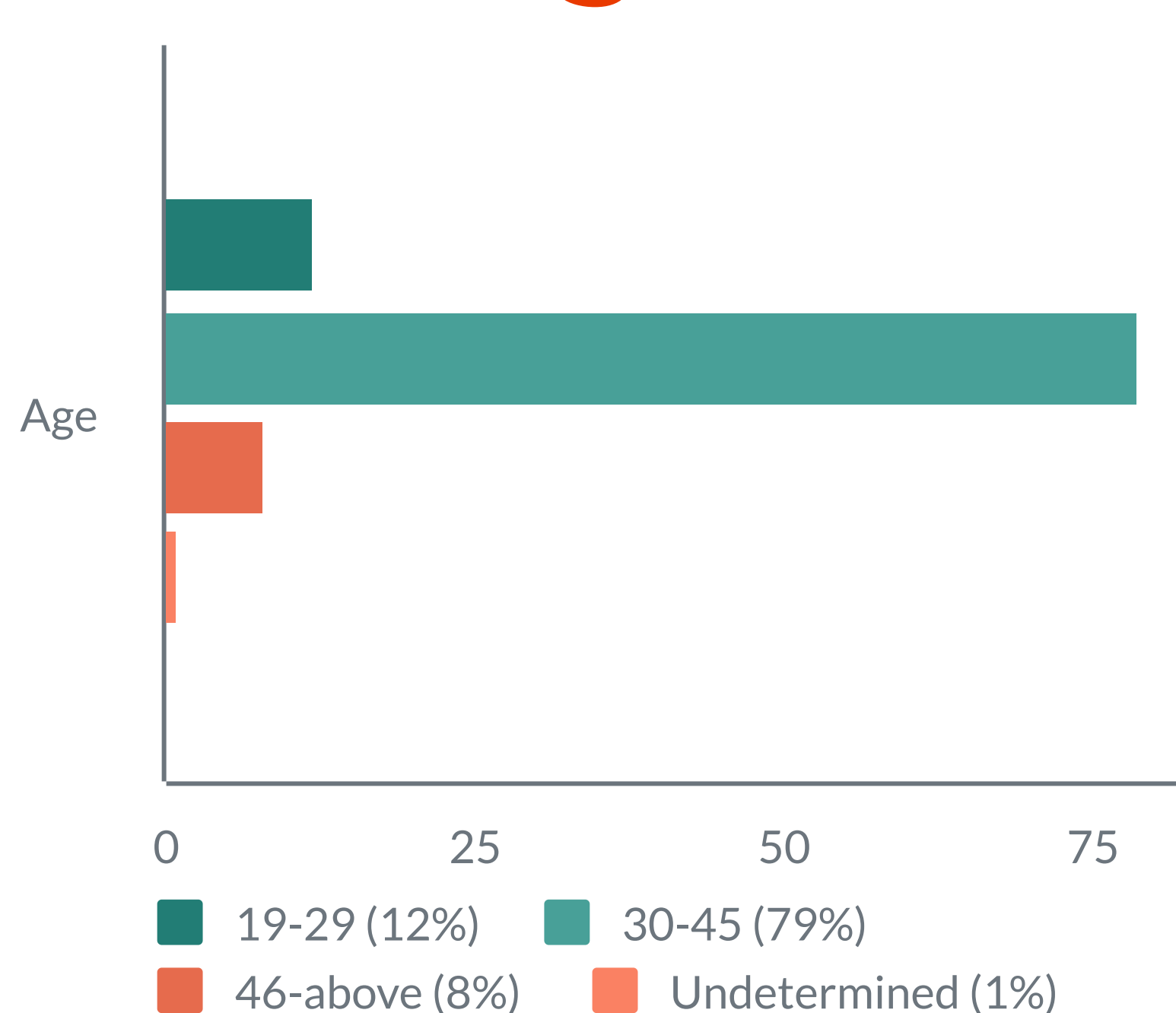
## Civil Status



## Sex



## Age

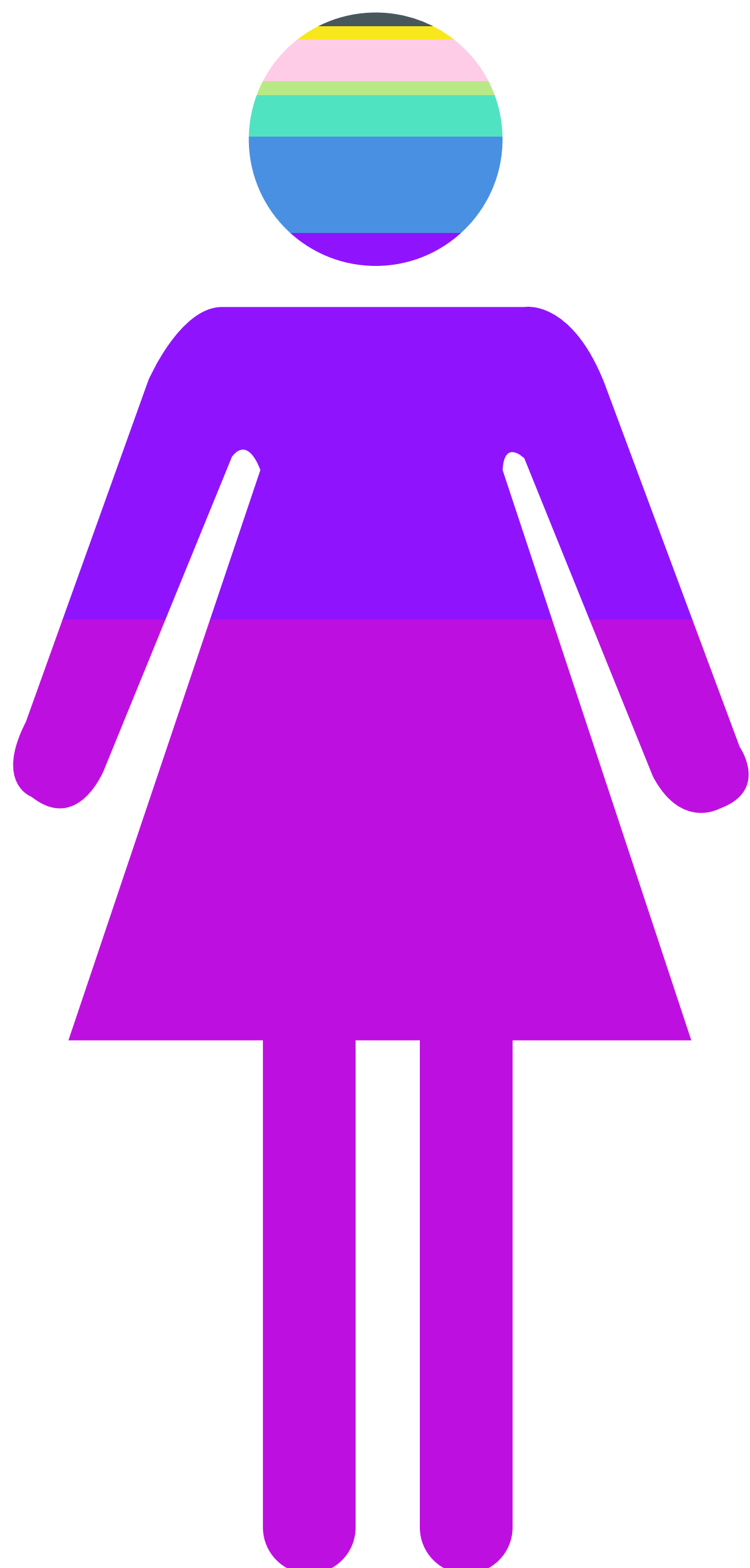




# WHY DO MIGRANTS SEEK HELP?

Our service users usually report more than one problem when they approach us for help. For example, someone whose contract got terminated may also complain about illegal collection of agency fees as well as maltreatment. The percentages presented here are based on incidence reports from the total number of cases.

## Type of Case



- Labour (69%)
- Agency-related (28%)
- Police (7%)
- Immigration (3%)
- Family (1%)
- Personal Loan (3%)
- Health (1%)
- Other (1%)

Labour-related problems still remain the top cases we handled last year, an increase of 9% compared to 2018. These include violations of the employment contract, contract terminations, and unpaid wages and benefits under the Employment Ordinance. We help them claim back these entitlements by providing information and guidance, shelter, and supporting their conciliation process or cases filed at the Labour Department.

Labour Cases are **#1**

It is important to note that 80% of service users who have reported issues with employment agencies have been overcharged. This means that the service users were charged over 10% when they applied in Hong Kong. Also, due to the social unrest in Hong Kong last year, more opted to go home immediately to their countries than prolong their stay with a case because of much pressure from their families.

**80%** Overcharging

Malpractices of recruitment agencies either in Hong Kong or back in their home countries remain prevalent. The most extensive issues are illegal collection of fees, overcharging, fraudulent loans, confiscation of passports and contracts, and made to work in China. In many cases, these malpractices result in serious debt bondage of migrant workers. We help them by taking steps to recover illegally-charged fees, waive fraudulent loans, report illegal activities to relevant Hong Kong and home country authorities, and protect service users from harassment by erring recruitment agencies and financing companies.

## Positive Outcomes: Settlements and Claims

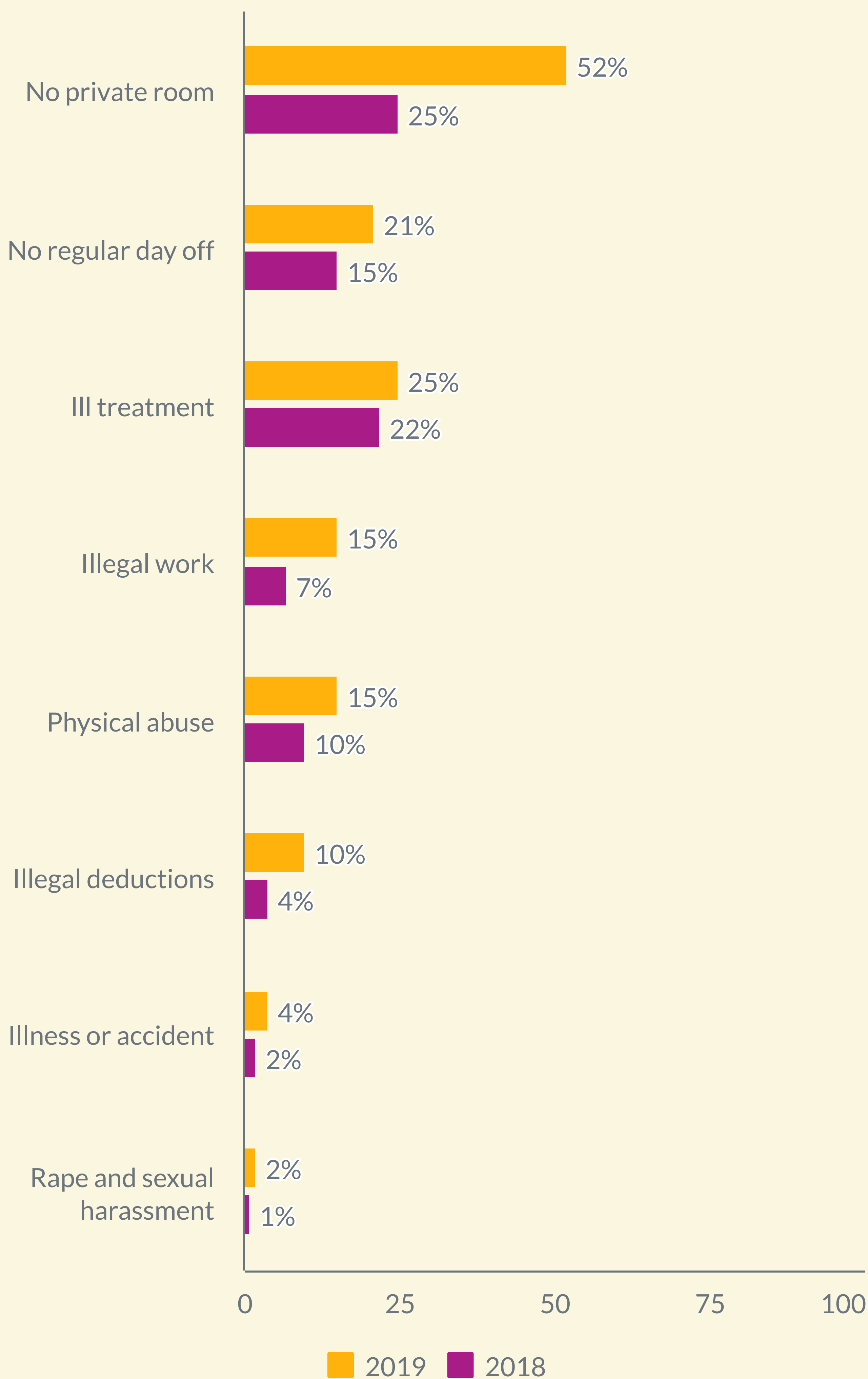
Total amount recovered by our service users in 2019:

**HK \$ 2,312,850.33**

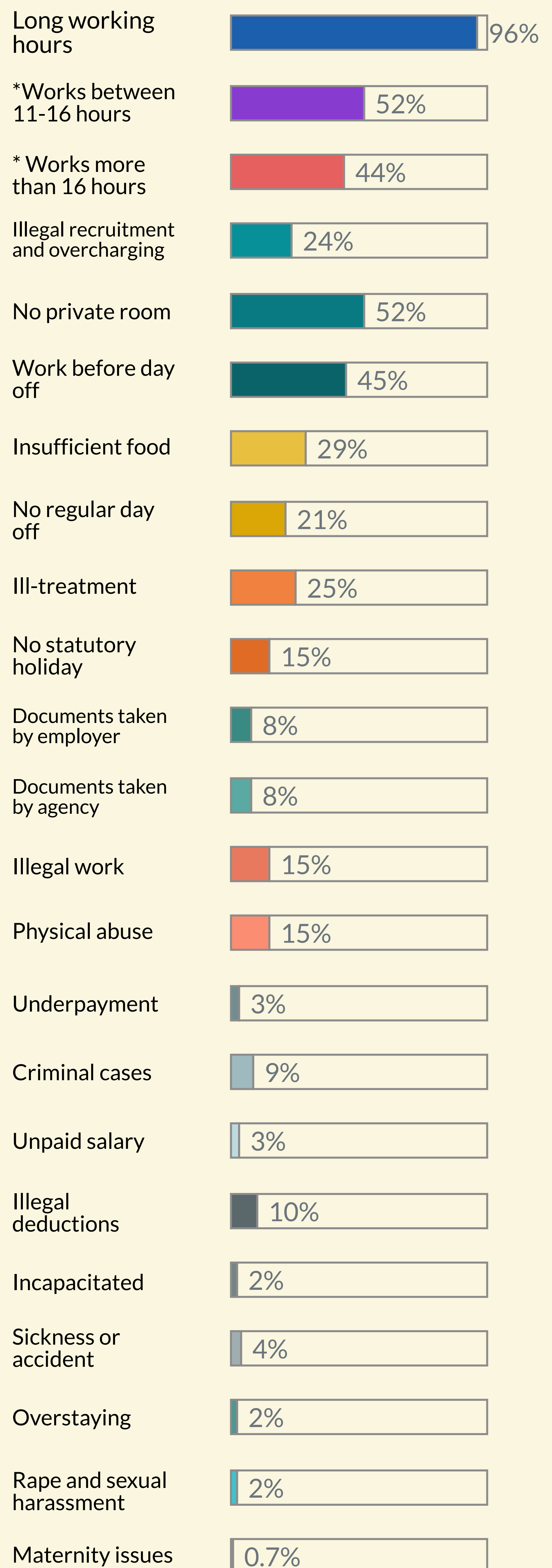
This is HK\$308,256.85 more than the amount recovered in 2018.

# CONDITIONS OF WORK

From self-reporting done by our service users, we have discovered that there is a general increase compared to 2018 data. Some percentage points have even doubled. Here are some major issues we have observed:



## Types of Complaints



# Case Studies

Below are some studies of outstanding cases gathered by the Mission.



Asaroh is an Indonesian migrant worker who first worked in Hong Kong as a domestic worker through an agent in Central Java and a principal agent in Hong Kong. All personal documents such as passport and work contract were confiscated by the agent upon arrival in Hong Kong.

Asaroh's work was to take care of the grandma, take her for tea, and for a walk in the garden. In addition, Asaroh also has to do all the household chores such as sweeping, wiping, mopping, marketing, cleaning the house, and cooking for lunch.

One morning, upon returning from the market, Asaroh experienced sexual harassment by the employer's husband touching her private parts. At that time, the female employer was on a vacation overseas and the grandma was drinking tea outside the house. The only other person at home was the employer's daughter (12 years old), who was sleeping. Asaroh asked for help from a migrant workers organization. The organization referred her to the Mission For Migrant Workers.

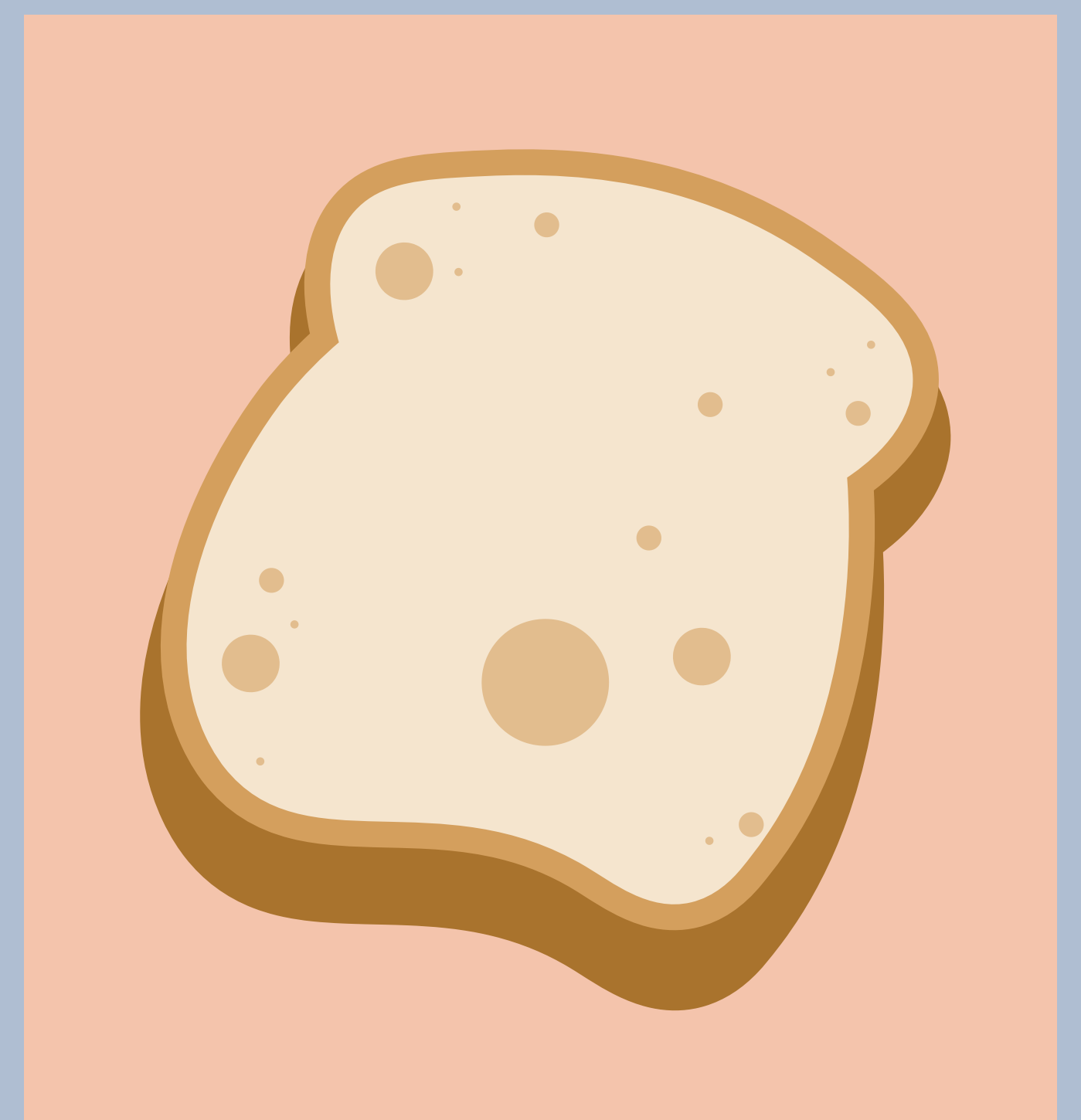
Asaroh, with the Mission's help, powered through several litigations before the male employer was jailed for 6 weeks. The long wait for court proceedings, coupled with the condition of HK last year during the protests made her family in Indonesia worry and forced her to go home. A case at the Equal Opportunities Commission under the Anti-Sex Discrimination Ordinance is being investigated.

Mara is a Filipino domestic worker in her 40s. She was referred to the Mission For Migrant Workers because she needed shelter.

One morning, her ward asked her to cook breakfast instead of eating the food bought by her employers. Mara was then physically assaulted by her employer because of this. This ended in Mara having bruises, lacerations, and swollen body parts.

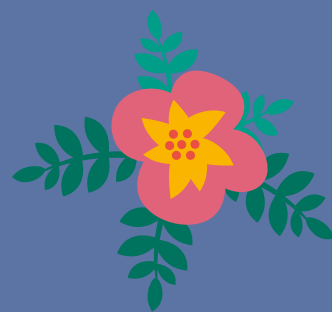
Mara reported her case to the police, but she was paid no mind. Compassionate domestic workers gave her MTR fare so she could go to the Philippine Consulate. There, her statement was taken after which she was referred to the Mission for shelter.

The Mission assisted Mara with her claims, as well as to retrieve her belongings. In the end, her employer sent an apology letter. She also received HKD72,250.64 in total from the labour and police cases, some subsistence allowance from her insurance policy, as well as some cash for her airline ticket.



# Happy Homes

*Harmony in the Household is Possible*



We believe that relationships inside households can be improved and conflicts between employers and their domestic workers reduced. Harmony in households can lead to a mutual gain for both.

Our *Happy Homes* project, since 2017, continues to bridge migrant workers and the rest of Hong Kong society.

In the Happy Homes HK Facebook page, we published *more than 1 story per month* in 2019. These stories of harmonious living were meant to inspire and draw positive lessons for households who have domestic workers in them.

In 2019, two recognition days were held. *7 families* were awarded the Happy Homes Seal of Approval.

The Happy Homes Colouring Competition was also held. There were two categories: for children who are aged 4 to 7 years old, and children who are 8 to 12 years old. A total of *17 households* were active in this event.

Our *Employer Awareness Program* that was started in November 2016, had *8 employers* who wanted to learn more about the benefits and responsibilities of their domestic workers. These employers approached us through our landline, email, and social media accounts.

*Learn more, See More:* [www.facebook.com/HappyHomesHK/](http://www.facebook.com/HappyHomesHK/)

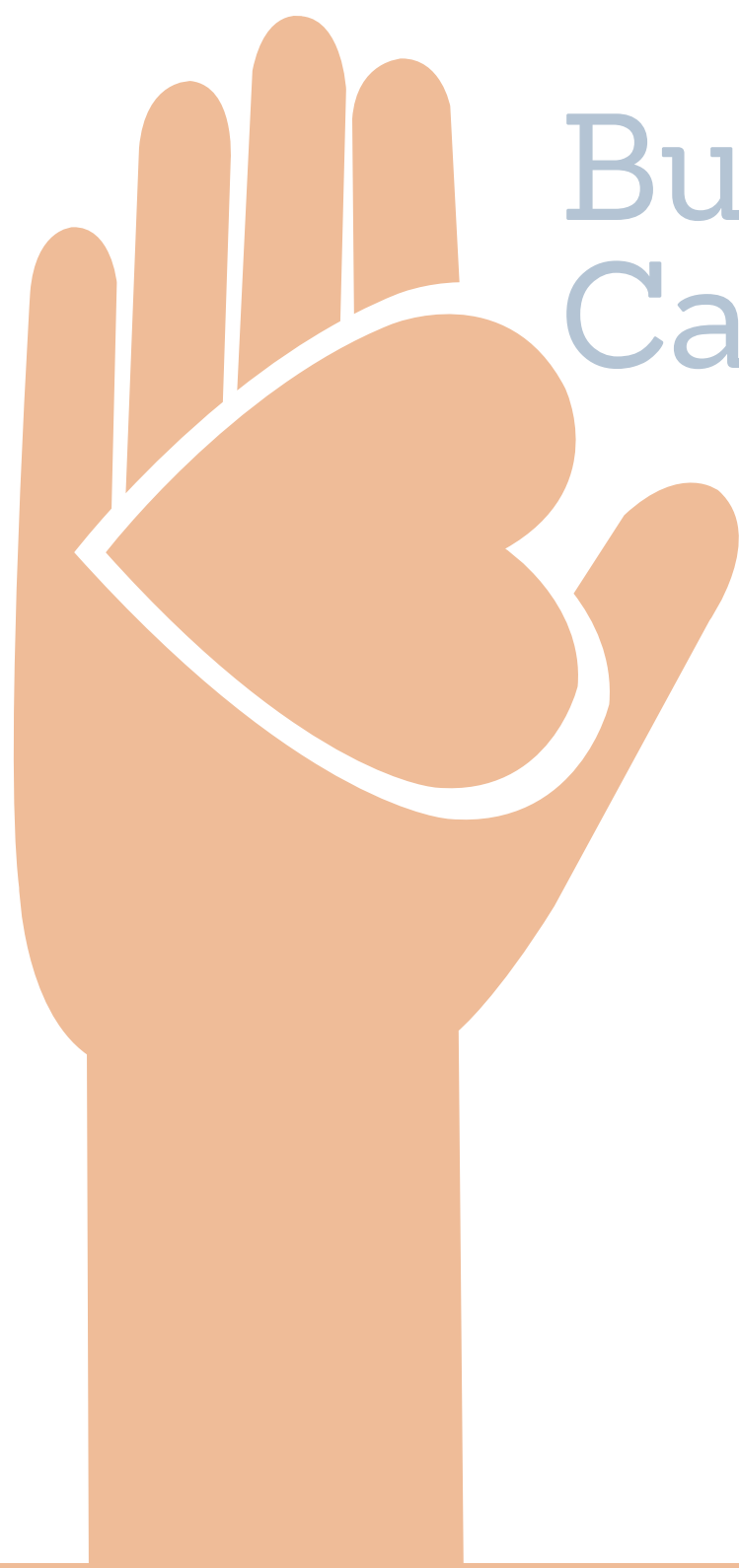
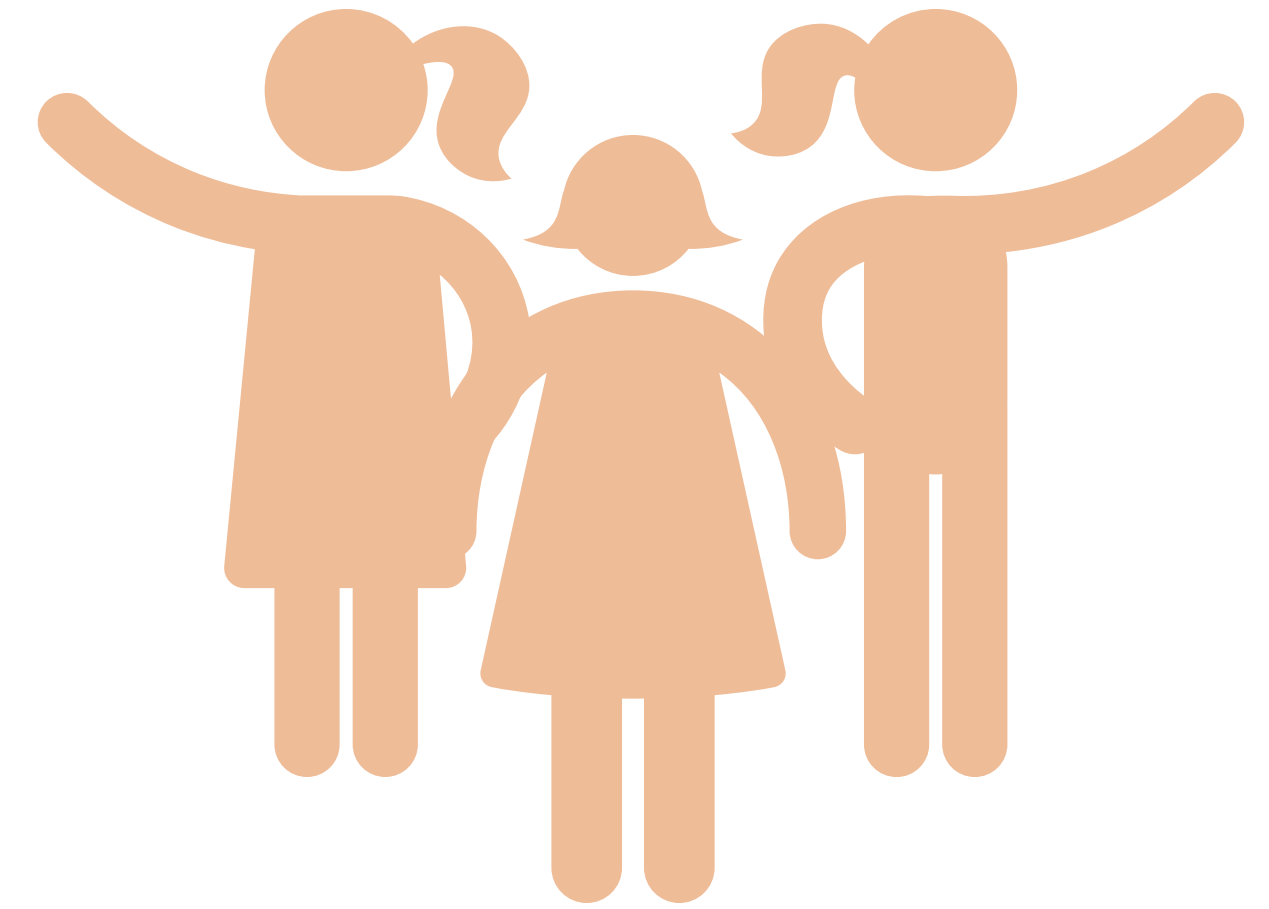


*A happy worker is a productive worker. Happy domestic workers and happy employers lead to harmonious and happy homes. Hong Kong is happy if there are more happy homes.*

# Mission For Migrant Workers

## Serving Migrants Anytime, Anywhere

MFMW believes that migrant workers are integral to Hong Kong society and yet are one of the most vulnerable groups here. Thus, they deserve care, respect and the protection of their rights. Every day, we serve migrants in distress, empower their communities, promote harmony in households and work for a more multicultural and inclusive society because without these, marginalization and exclusion in Hong Kong will persist.



## Building Happy Homes, Fostering a Caring and Inclusive Hong Kong

We also believe that households that hire migrant domestic workers expect that a harmonious and productive relationship is established for everyone's benefit. We work to ensure that both domestic workers and employers are adequately informed about labour laws and are culturally sensitized to promote better understanding, mutual trust, positive attitudes and respect of rights.

## Support Our Work

### Volunteer:

If you share our belief, then come serve with us. Offer your expertise, skills, and time to support migrants.

Show what Hong Kong should be. Give care to Hong Kong's caregivers. Bring us one step closer to a more caring, multicultural and inclusive Hong Kong.

### Donate:

With the lack of public funding and programs to support migrant welfare in Hong Kong, we rely on churches, donor foundations, and kind-hearted individuals to sustain our services to migrant workers. We appeal to your generosity and charity. Each dollar you give can already go a long way to deliver needed assistance. A HK\$200 donation can sustain our services or provide food for a client in a shelter for a week.

Donations over HK\$ 100 are tax-deductable.

- Deposit to the following account and send the receipt with your email address to us as a record:  
Account No. 210-116448-883  
Bank Name: Hang Seng Bank Bank  
Code: 024
- Donate by Cheque: Write the cheque payable to "MFMW Limited" and your email address at the back of the cheque. Please send to the following address:  
MFMW  
St. John's Cathedral, 4-8 Garden Road, Central, HKSAR
- Donate by Paypal by visiting [www.migrants.net](http://www.migrants.net) and click "To Donate Via Paypal"