

For Job Seekers

Introduction

The Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged (EPEM) aims at encouraging employers to engage unemployed elderly or middle-aged job seekers in full-time or part-time long-term job vacancies and to provide on-the-job training (OJT), through the provision of training allowance to employers. This will enable job seekers to adapt to new work environment and acquire essential job-specific skills with a view to securing stable employment.

Eligibility

- Aged 40 or above at the time of employment
- Have an unemployment period of not less than 1 month within 1 year prior to the commencement date of employment

Application Method

No prior registration under EPEM is required. After job seekers have secured full-time or part-time employment from long-term job vacancies registered at the Labour Department (LD), job seekers can submit the completed 'Preliminary Application Form' through the employer to LD within the 1st month of employment and complete other application procedures.

On-the-job Training

Under EPEM, employer has to provide OJT to the placed job seeker during the approved period, and assigns an experienced staff as mentor. The provision of OJT is to enable newly hired employee to adapt to new work environment and acquire essential job-specific skills. In general, OJT lasts for 6 months for employees aged 60 or above and 3 months for employees aged 40 to 59. The OJT period may be extended upon approval by LD to a maximum of 12 months and 6 months respectively for deserving cases in which employers have to provide detailed information for vetting. Training plan can be formulated by employer based on the company's business nature, job seeker's qualifications and requirements of the job, etc.

Upon completion of OJT by eligible employees under EPEM, employers engaging unemployed elderly job seekers aged 60 or above may apply for an OJT allowance of up to \$5,000 per month per employee; while employers engaging unemployed job seekers aged 40 to 59 may apply for an OJT allowance of up to \$4,000 per month per employee.

Retention Allowance

LD launched a pilot scheme on 1 September 2020 to encourage the elderly under EPEM to undergo and complete OJT through the provision of a retention allowance, thereby stabilising employment. The pilot scheme will run for three years. Each eligible employee can receive retention allowance for a maximum period of 12 months (i.e. up to \$12,000) under the pilot scheme.

Amount of Retention Allowance

Type of Post	Period for Retention Allowance	Amount of Retention Allowance
Full-time OJT	Up to 12 OJT months (subject to the length of the OJT period)	Stayed in the job for 3 months: \$3,000 For completion of each subsequent month: \$1,000/ month
Part-time OJT	Up to 12 OJT months (subject to the length of the OJT period)	Stayed in the job for 3 months: \$1,500 For completion of each subsequent month: \$500/ month

Eligibility

- **Aged 60 or above at the time of employment**
- Secure employment from long-term job vacancies registered at LD, and join EPEM through the employer to undergo OJT of 6 to 12 months
- The above employees are eligible for retention allowance if they have stayed in their jobs for 3 months or above.



Successful Cases

Case 1:

"I was over 60 years old when my former employing company shut down. I was mentally prepared that I might have to change working field or even retire." Ms. LU had been engaged in clerical work for over 20 years. She re-entered the job market because her former employer ceased operation. Later she was hired as an Account Clerk by an advertising design company through the Labour Department. However, she encountered many difficulties at the beginning. "I had never worked in the advertising industry before. Most of my colleagues are far younger than me, and they usually communicate by English emails. I couldn't even handle daily bookkeeping or file documents at first!" Luckily, with the help of friendly colleagues and valuable guidance from her mentor, it did not take long for Ms. LU to settle in her new position, and the employer even allowed her to send out internal emails in Chinese.

The employer appreciated Ms. LU's work attitude. Mr. PANG, the Director of the company, said "Although Ms. LU has reached retirement age and she is not familiar with the operation of advertising, she is still very energetic and willing to learn. She is a role model for younger colleagues." He considered the training allowance offered by the Labour Department could provide extra resources for company to cope with the training expenditure of new staff, and the valuable experience of elderly and middle-aged persons were particularly useful in handling the changing environment of SMEs. With appropriate training, the elderly and middle-aged could also be successful in a new career.



Case 2:

"I have been working in tourism for over 30 years, and I still enjoy being part of this industry." In his 60s, Mr. NG has been worried that it would be difficult for him to find a job again. Fortunately, he was employed as a Customer Service Representative by a ferry company through the Labour Department, and it helped him regain self-confidence. Mr. NG expressed "Although most of my colleagues, including my supervisor, are much younger than me, they are very accommodating to older new recruits, and hence I was accepted by them quickly." The employer also provided comprehensive on-the-job training on first aid, company operations, customer service and work skills, etc. It facilitated Mr. NG to get hold of the relevant professional knowledge and techniques for providing quality services to customers.

Mr. NG's positive work attitude was also acknowledged by his employer. Mr. HO, the General Manager of the company, said "Mr. NG is serious about his work. He always proactively introduces Hong Kong attractions to visitors. In fact, elderly and middle-aged persons possess many exemplary qualities, such as consistency, maturity and sense of responsibilities. They can also share their valuable experience with the younger generation." Mr. HO opined that employing the elderly and middle-aged was a wise choice, "Mature persons prefer stable employment, which help alleviate staff turnover and enhance team collaboration and sense of belonging."



Employment Services and Information to Elderly and Middle-aged Job Seekers

EPEM dedicated webpages

Allow job seekers to browse full-time and part-time job vacancies direct in the "Latest Vacancy Information" webpage from the EPEM dedicated webpages (www.jobs.gov.hk/info/epem).

Job folders on EPEM vacancy orders

Display full-time and part-time job vacancies that employers welcome applications from elderly and middle-aged job seekers. Job seekers may apply for jobs through referrals by our Job Centres, the Telephone Employment Service Hotline (☎2969 0888), or direct approach to employers where applicable.

Employment Services

Our Job Centres provide different employment services to meet the needs of job seekers. Job seekers are welcome to visit any one of them to obtain employment service and information.

If you wish to know more about EPEM, please contact us:

- EPEM hotline: **2150 6398**
- Our Job Centres and enquiry telephone numbers:

Hong Kong East Job Centre	2591 1318
Hong Kong West Job Centre	2552 0131
North Point Job Centre	2114 6868
Kowloon East Job Centre	2338 9787
Kowloon West Job Centre	2150 6397
Kwun Tong Job Centre	2342 0486
Shatin Job Centre	2158 5553
Tai Po Job Centre	2654 1429
Sheung Shui Job Centre	3692 4532
Tsuen Wan Job Centre	2417 6197
Tuen Mun Job Centre	2463 9967
Tung Chung Job Centre	3428 2943
Yuen Long Job Centre	3692 5750

Interactive Employment Service Website

<http://www.jobs.gov.hk>



EPEM-9/2020

Employment Programme for the Elderly and Middle-aged

- Encourage the employment of an elderly or middle-aged job seeker in a full-time or part-time long-term job vacancy
- With on-the-job training, acquire essential job-specific skills

With effect from 1 September 2020, the eligible elderly aged 60 or above under the programme could apply for **retention allowance** of up to \$1,000 per month!



Aged 40 to 59



Aged 60 or above

 On-the-job Training Period

| 3 - 6 months | 6 - 12 months



Enquiry Hotline ☎ 2150 6398

Interactive Employment Service Website

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