

**Coalition for Change: Caregivers and Temporary Foreign Workers
Justice for Migrant Workers
Workers' Action Centre**

Bill 210 provides protections for caregivers today but must be extended to cover all workers

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TORONTO – Bill 210 “Employment Protection for Foreign Nationals Act (Live-in Caregivers and Others)” comes into effect today. Under Bill 210, live-in caregivers will be provided with protections against exorbitant fees and unscrupulous recruiters. However, tens of thousands of other temporary foreign workers and permanent residents also need protection from recruitment and other fees charged to workers for employment in Ontario.

The Coalition for Change, a coalition of community groups, labour unions, temporary foreign workers and advocates, celebrates this first step for caregivers, but urges the provincial government to use the regulatory power granted in Bill 210 to expand protection for all workers who face exploitation from unscrupulous recruiters and exorbitant fees.

Under Bill 210, agencies are prevented from seizing workers’ passports and identity documents and employers are prohibited from charging caregivers for the costs of recruitment. These changes will bring caregivers some of the protections that other Ontario workers have.

However, workers who are being brought to Ontario under the temporary foreign worker program to work in agriculture, restaurants, hospitality and other sectors also face huge fees to get jobs that often pay below minimum standards.

“We are hearing horror stories from other temporary foreign workers who are being coerced to pay \$10,000 or \$15,000 to work in Ontario,” says Chris Ramsaroop, of Justice for Migrant Workers. “These workers’ passports and health cards are often held by both employers and recruiters, making it very difficult to speak out about abuses on the job.”

“This first step to protect caregivers must be extended to include other temporary foreign workers who also face fees, passport seizures and costs of recruitment,” says Deena Ladd, of the Workers’ Action Centre. “Bill 210 gives the government the power to extend regulations to ensure that no workers -- temporary foreign workers or resident workers – face recruitment fees. We need a legislative framework that protects all workers.”

Protections for caregivers and temporary foreign workers are necessary because of the federal Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) that ties workers to one employer and denies permanent residency status and benefits that other workers have. The federal TFWP creates the conditions that give rise to the vulnerability and exploitation of caregivers and temp foreign workers and must be completely overhauled. Several provinces have introduced legislation to prohibit fees for all temporary foreign workers.