

Definitions of recruitment fees and related costs by initiatives in relation to the adopted ILO definition of recruitment fees and related costs

With support from the following ILO initiative:



This table is intended to provide an overview of current definitions of recruitment fees and related costs by selected industry initiatives (as well as US FAR) compared to the ILO definition of recruitment fees and related costs and to act as a supporting resource to those looking to adopt, adapt or implement a definition on recruitment fees and costs.




Please note this table is not intended to be exhaustive but is comprised of definitions of which we were already aware and can be expanded accordingly. In addition, it is made up of publicly available information. Users should always refer to the original text of the definitions as some text here is shortened due to space restrictions and for ease of viewing.

In addition, the definition of recruitment fees and related costs should always be read in conjunction with the ILO Guiding Principles and Operational Guidelines for Fair Recruitment. For the full publication, please refer to this [resource](#).

All organizations are invited to contact us at fl-businessnetwork@ilo.org should updates be required.

Overview

Select an organization/initiative to see its full profile

-  Initiative policy is mostly aligned with the ILO definition
-  Initiative policy is partially aligned with the ILO Definition with some aspects requiring further adjustment OR has no publicly available policy on this aspect.
-  Initiative has no policy on this aspect of recruitment fees and related costs.

	Categorization	II. Scope of Definition	IIA. Recruitment Fees	IIB. Related Costs	IIC. Illegitimate, unreasonable and undisclosed costs
Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking	Multi-Stakeholder Initiative				
AMFORI	Multi-Stakeholder Initiative				
Consumer Goods Forum (Priority Industry Principles)	Industry coalition				
Institute for Human Rights and Business/ Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment	Multi-Stakeholder Initiative				
IRIS / IOM	Industry standard				
Responsible Business Alliance (RBA)	Industry coalition				
Responsible Recruitment Toolkit (RRT) (also used by Association of Labour Providers)	Industry standard				
Roundtable On Sustainable Palm Oil	Industry standard				
US Federal Acquisition Regulation	Government				
Verité Fair Hiring Toolkit	Non-Profit Organization				







Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking

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II. Scope of Definition			IIA. Recruitment Fees				
<p>The terms 'recruitment fees' or 'related costs' refer to any fees or costs incurred in the recruitment process in order for workers to secure employment or placement, regardless of the manner, timing or location of their imposition or collection.</p>	<p>Recruitment fees or related costs should not be collected from workers by an employer, their subsidiaries, labour recruiters or other third parties providing related services [...]</p>	<p>Fees or related costs should not be collected directly or indirectly, such as through deductions from wages and benefits.</p>	<p>Payments for recruitment services offered by labour recruiters, whether public or private, in matching offers of and applications for employment</p>	<p>Payments made in the case of recruitment of workers with a view to employing them to perform work for a third party</p>	<p>Payments made in the case of direct recruitment by the employer</p>	<p>Payments required to recover recruitment fees from workers</p>	<p>These fees may be one-time or recurring and cover recruiting, referral and placement services which could include advertising, disseminating information, arranging interviews, submitting documents for government clearances, confirming credentials [...]</p>
<p>Recruitment fees include any and all fees, charges, costs, assessments or other financial obligations associated with the recruiting process regardless of the manner or timing of their imposition or collection, including fees, charges, costs, assessments or other financial obligations assessed against workers in sending, receiving or transit countries</p>	<p>Recruitment fees should not be collected from an employer or a third party including but not limited to agents, recruiters, staffing firms (including private employment and placement firms), subsidiaries/affiliates of the employer and any agent or employee of such entities.</p>	<p>Any fee, charge, or cost may be a recruitment fee regardless of whether it is deducted from wages, paid back in wage or benefit concessions, paid back as a kickback, bribe or tribute, remitted in connection with recruitment, or collected by an employer or a third party</p>	<p>✓ Covered</p>	<p>✓ Covered</p>	<p>✓ Covered</p>	<p>✓ Covered</p>	<p>✓ Covered</p>




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IIB. Related Costs					
Related costs are expenses integral to recruitment and placement within or across national borders taking into account that the widest set of related costs are incurred for international recruitment [...]	The competent authority has flexibility to determine exceptions to their applicability [...] considered subject to the condition that they are in the interest of workers concerned; limited to certain categories of workers and specified [...]	Medical costs (including medical examinations, tests or vaccinations)	Insurance costs (including costs to insure the lives, health and safety of workers, including enrolment in migrant welfare funds)	Costs for skills and qualification tests (including costs to verify workers' language proficiency and level of skills and qualifications, as well as for location-specific credentialing, certification or licensing)	Costs for training and orientation (including expenses for required trainings, including on-site job orientation and pre-departure or post-arrival orientation of newly recruited workers)
 Covered	 Not mentioned	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered

Alliance to End Slavery and Trafficking






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Equipment costs (including costs for tools, uniforms, safety gear, and other equipment needed to perform assigned work safely and effectively)	Travel and lodging costs (including expenses incurred for travel, lodging and subsistence within or across national borders in the recruitment process, including for training, interviews, consular appointments, relocation, and return or repatriation)	Administrative costs (including application and service fees that are required for the sole purpose of fulfilling the recruitment process. These could include fees for representation and services aimed at preparing, obtaining or legalizing workers' [...])	Other related costs as a condition of recruitment could also be prohibited	<p>Extra contractual, undisclosed, inflated or illicit costs are never legitimate [...]</p> <p>Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bribes • tributes • extortion • kick-back payments • bonds • illicit cost recovery fees • collaterals required by any actor in the recruitment chain
 Not mentioned	 Covered	 Covered	Contract breach fees; legal fees; security deposits and bonds	Bribes, tips or tributes, inclusion of collateral requirements, such as land deeds


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<p>Any costs related to the placement of job-seekers</p>	<p> Partially defined</p>	<p>Fees can take the form of undocumented cash payments, wage deductions, reduction of benefit concessions, kickbacks, bribes, loans with high interest rates or free labour</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p> Covered - "Workers don't get deductions from their wages to compensate recruitment costs"</p>	<p> Partially covered</p>

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<p> Not separately defined</p>	<p>Services offered by the producer (e.g. transportation or food) may be charged to the worker provided there are at local market rates or lower and their uptake is voluntary</p>	<p> Partially covered - in the context of onboarding of workers</p>	<p> Not mentioned</p>	<p> Partially covered - no overall category</p>	<p> Partially covered - in the context of onboarding of workers</p>

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 Covered	 Partially covered - transportation to and from destination country	 Covered	-	 Covered






Consumer Goods Forum (Priority Industry Principles)

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<p>Recruitment fees include any and all fees, charges, costs, assessments or other financial obligations associated with the recruiting process and transit of workers</p>	<p> Partially defined -> addresses mostly recruitment agencies</p>	<p>Fees and costs related to recruitment must not be charged directly or indirectly, e.g. through wage deductions, optional chargeable services integral to the recruitment process, service charges for which there is no real choice</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p> Not mentioned</p>	<p> Indirectly covered</p>	<p> Covered</p>





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<p>Payment of recruitment fees can be hidden as deductions from wages or collected by forcing workers to buy services at inflated rates. Even optional chargeable services should be considered a recruitment fee if they are integral to the process of obtaining work, for example: providing information, advice and guidance on job vacancies; interview and assessment fees; completing, translating or sending documents to the employer. Fees can also include service charges for which there is no real choice, and that may be overpriced or fraudulent. Recruitment agents may even act as moneylenders.</p>	<p> Not separately defined</p>	<p> Not mentioned</p>	<p> Partially covered - in the context of onboarding of workers</p>	<p> Not mentioned</p>	<p> Partially covered - no overall category</p>

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 Indirectly covered	 Not mentioned	 Indirectly covered	 Indirectly covered	-	 Not separately defined

Organization

Institute for Human Rights and Business/ Leadership Group for Responsible Recruitment






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Any fees for applications, recommendations, recruitment, hiring, placement and administrative, overhead, and processing fees of any kind	No fees to any party, including agent, sub-agent, intermediary or employer	Migrant workers should not pay recruitment and service fees and costs at any stage of the recruitment process, during or after employment	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	 Not mentioned

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 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered

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<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>

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Responsible Business Alliance (RBA)

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<p>Workers shall not be required to pay employers' or agents' recruitment fees or other related fees for their employment. If any such fees are found to have been paid by workers, such fees shall be repaid to the worker.</p>	<p>Overarching Principle on fees is "Workers shall not be required to pay fees for their employment." Fees are paid by the employer or the labour recruiters.</p>	<p>In RBA Code of Conduct, under Section A1: "Freely Chosen Employment", it's indicated that workers shall not be required to pay employers' or agents' recruitment fees or other related fees for their employment. If any such fees are found to have been paid by workers, such fees shall be repaid to the worker.</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p>The following recruitment and service fees are not to be paid by any worker including temporary, migrant, student, contract, direct employees, and any other type of worker</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p>Workers shall not be required to pay employers' or agents' recruitment fees or other related fees for their employment. If any such fees are found to have been paid by workers, such fees shall be repaid to the worker.</p>

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<p>Application, recommendation, recruiting, hiring, placement, and processing fees, of any kind or at any stage, including agent, sub-agent, intermediary, or employer operating, administrative and overhead costs associated with the recruitment, selection, hiring, and placement of those workers.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>	<p>Following costs can be paid by the worker if noted in their contract and a receipt is provided; services must be provided without mark-up: basic expense item to prepare for interview, such as CV copies, photos, copies of existing documents and certificates, incidentals; Costs to meet minimum qualifications for the job such as degree or certification, passport replacement cost due to employee loss or fault. For replacing visas/permits this also includes photo(s), providing/photocopying any documents, etc.; Dormitory and meals (must be fair market value and meet international health & safety standards); Costs for any legally-allowable levies may be charged but must be deducted in a pro-rata manner. At the end of employment, apart from situations where there is dismissal for gross misconduct, workers shall not be charged any remaining balance due on any levies; additionally, costs for transportation and lodging before a job has been made may be charged to the worker</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>	<p>In most countries, the law states the requirement of the employer to contribute a portion of worker's wages to national or private insurance schemes. These generally consist of retirement, unemployment, accident, medical and possibly others. These needs to be communicated to workers and reflected on worker wage receipts.</p>

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 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	-	 Partially covered under business integrity - not recruitment specific

Organization

Responsible Recruitment Toolkit (RRT) (also used by Association of Labour Providers)






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II. Scope of Definition			IIA. Recruitment Fees			
The terms 'recruitment fees' or 'related costs' refer to any fees or costs incurred in the recruitment process in order for workers to secure employment or placement, regardless of the manner, timing or location of their imposition or collection.	Recruitment fees or related costs should not be collected from workers by an employer, their subsidiaries, labour recruiters or other third parties providing related services [...]	Fees or related costs should not be collected directly or indirectly, such as through deductions from wages and benefits.	Payments for recruitment services offered by labour recruiters, whether public or private, in matching offers of and applications for employment	Payments made in the case of recruitment of workers with a view to employing them to perform work for a third party	Payments made in the case of direct recruitment by the employer	Payments required to recover recruitment fees from workers
ILO GP/OG Definition used	Costs and fees might be charged by direct employers, labour users or labour providers in the sending or receiving country, or by informal brokers and middlemen who may or may not be known to the labour providers/labour users/direct employers. Any fee may be a recruitment fee regardless of whether the payment is collected by an employer or a third party, including, but not limited to: labour providers providing recruitment and/or employment services; subsidiaries/affiliates of the employer; any agent or employee of such entities; and subcontractors, sub-agents and brokers at all tiers	Any fee, charge, or cost, may be a recruitment fee regardless of whether the payment is in property or money, deducted from wages, paid back in wage or benefit concessions, paid back as a kickback, bribe, in-kind payment, free labour, tip, or tribute, remitted in connection with recruitment	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered	 Covered

Organization

Responsible Recruitment Toolkit (RRT) (also used by Association of Labour Providers)

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IIA. Recruitment Fees	IIB. Related Costs				
<p>These fees may be one-time or recurring and cover recruiting, referral and placement services which could include advertising, disseminating information, arranging interviews, submitting documents for government clearances, confirming credentials [...]</p>	<p>Related costs are expenses integral to recruitment and placement within or across national borders taking into account that the widest set of related costs are incurred for international recruitment [...]</p>	<p>The competent authority has flexibility to determine exceptions to their applicability [...] considered subject to the condition that they are in the interest of workers concerned; limited to certain categories of workers and specified [...]</p>	<p>Medical costs (including medical examinations, tests or vaccinations)</p>	<p>Insurance costs (including costs to insure the lives, health and safety of workers, including enrolment in migrant welfare funds)</p>	<p>Costs for skills and qualification tests (including costs to verify workers' language proficiency and level of skills and qualifications, as well as for location-specific credentialing, certification or licensing)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Not separately defined</p>	<p>Following costs can be paid by the worker if noted in their contract, a receipt or record of payment is provided, they reflect fair market value and conform to local legal requirements: Job qualifications to enter the job market; transportation and associated costs to and from the interview; documentation and transit costs before the employment offer has been made; documentation replacement when employee is at fault; accommodation and meals during employment; transportation to and from workplace; early return without providing full notice period and without good cause</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Partially covered -> in context of voluntary insurance coverage</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Covered</p>

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IIB. Related Costs					IIC. Illegitimate, unreasonable and undisclosed costs
Costs for training and orientation (including expenses for required trainings, including on-site job orientation and pre-departure or post-arrival orientation of newly recruited workers)	Equipment costs (including costs for tools, uniforms, safety gear, and other equipment needed to perform assigned work safely and effectively)	Travel and lodging costs (including expenses incurred for travel, lodging and subsistence within or across national borders in the recruitment process, including for training, interviews, consular appointments, relocation, and return or repatriation)	Administrative costs (including application and service fees that are required for the sole purpose of fulfilling the recruitment process. These could include fees for representation and services aimed at preparing, obtaining or legalizing workers' [...])	Other related costs as a condition of recruitment could also be prohibited	Extra contractual, undisclosed, inflated or illicit costs are never legitimate [...] Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bribes • tributes • extortion • kick-back payments • bonds • illicit cost recovery fees • collaterals required by any actor in the recruitment chain
 Covered	 Covered	 Partially covered -> no explicit mentioning of coverage of travel costs in country of origin except to port of departure and interview with labour user.	 Covered	-	 Covered







Roundtable On Sustainable Palm Oil

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II. Scope of Definition			IIA. Recruitment Fees			
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<p>All expenses related to travel and recruitment should be paid by the employer</p>	<p> Partially defined</p>	<p>Prohibit the charging of recruitment fees to any worker</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p> Partially defined -> covers agent service fees</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p>Covered - Unethical conduct includes: charging fees to workers, recovering cost of recruitment and transportation against workers'</p>






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<p> Not separately defined</p>	<p> Not separately defined</p>	<p> Not mentioned</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p> Not mentioned</p>	<p> Covered</p>

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 Covered	 Not mentioned	 Partially covered - transportation to and from destination country	 Covered	-	 Partially covered - receiving gifts and commissions from labour intermediaries or suppliers

US Federal Acquisition Regulation

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<p>Government solicitations and contracts shall prohibit contractors, contractor employees, subcontractors, subcontractor employees, and their agents from charging employees or potential employees recruitment fees</p>	<p>A recruitment fee is a recruitment fee regardless of whether the payment is collected by an employer or a third party, whether licensed or unlicensed (including agents, labour brokers, recruiters, staffing firms, subsidiaries, any agent or employee of such entities and subcontractors at all tiers</p>	<p>A recruitment fee is a recruitment fee regardless of whether the payment is paid in property or money; deducted from wages; paid back in wage or benefit concessions; paid back as kickback, bribe, in-kind payment, free labour, tip, or tribute</p>	<p>✓ Covered</p>	<p>✓ Covered</p>	<p>✓ Covered</p>	<p>✓ Covered</p>






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 Covered	 Covered	 Partially covered - transportation to country of destination and from airport to worksite	 Covered	-	 Not mentioned

Verité Fair Hiring Toolkit

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<p> Partially defined -> The company has a written policy declaring that workers shall not pay any amount to secure a job in their facility.</p>	<p> Partially defined -> No fee or cost for recruitment should be charged to workers, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part. Establish and follow the principle of "employer pays," and accept the cost of recruitment as a business cost</p>	<p> Covered</p>	<p> Implicitly covered</p>	<p> Not mentioned</p>	<p> Implicitly covered</p>	<p> Partially defined -> Jobseekers, applicants or workers are not required to participate in any form of forced or mandatory savings in order to recoup costs associated with recruitment or other services.</p>

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 Not mentioned	 Not mentioned	 Covered	 Partially covered - processing fees, identity cards	-	 Not mentioned