

Lawyer advises workers on limited contract drawbacks

Agreement over two years is not recommended

- By Dina Aboul Hosn, Staff Reporter
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Dubai: An Emirati lawyer specialised in labour cases advised workers not to sign a limited period contract for a period exceeding two years, as the new amendments to the labour law will not apply to them in this case.

Advocate Mohammad Ebrahim Al Shaiba of Al Bahar Advocates and Legal Consultants told Gulf News that the law is in the workers' favour as it gives them much more freedom in deciding where to work and for how long, provided a worker has an unlimited contract with his employer.

"The Ministry of Labour came across many cases where workers were arbitrarily dismissed or were frequently trying to change employers because they were not being treated well," Al Shaiba said.

Employers tried to apply pressure to workers because an employee could not change sponsors without a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from their employer, who would sometimes force workers to forfeit their rights in exchange for the NOC, Al Shaiba said.

Now workers do not need an NOC or the approval of their former employers to change jobs after they complete two years of service and resign, he added.

"If a worker is happy in his company, he will continue to work and if not, the new legislations make it easier for him to change. This will make employers treat their employees fairly and will reduce pressure on employees, especially at this time when some companies are not doing very well," Al Shaiba said.

The lawyer summed up the new changes from the worker's perspective as facilitating ease of movement, saving time and allowing the worker to decide how long he wants to work for a company without pressures.

"There will be no visa cancellation or a six-month ban, but a swift and direct move from one company to another," he said.

However, Al Shaiba warned workers against accepting to sign a limited period contract for a period exceeding two years, because in this case, the new law will not apply to

them. "It is in the worker's best interest to test his employer for the first two years before they decide to commit for a longer period than that stipulated by the ministry," he said.

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