



The Domestic Workers Bill: A Policy Shift for Domestic Workers in Nigeria

Introduction

The Domestic Workers Bill recently passed its second reading in the National Assembly, marking a significant step toward strengthening labour protections and promoting social inclusion in Nigeria. Once enacted, the Bill will establish a formal legal framework for the regulation of domestic work—advancing national labour reforms and aligning Nigeria’s labour standards with international human rights obligations.

What the Bill Proposes

The Bill seeks to legally recognize domestic work and extend essential labour protection to domestic workers. It establishes clear standards for employment, mandates formal contracts, and integrates domestic workers into national systems for social security and legal protection.

Key Provisions Include:

- Minimum wage guarantees and regulated working hours



- Entitlement to rest periods, annual leave, and sick leave
- Access to health insurance and social security schemes
- Protection against abuse, harassment, and unjust dismissal

Implications for Stakeholders

1. Strengthening Workers' Rights: If enacted, the Bill would provide legal recognition and basic rights to domestic workers, potentially reducing exploitation and promoting greater equity in labour practices. It would also support Nigeria's efforts to align with international labour standards, including the ILO Domestic Workers Convention (C189).

2. Promoting Social and Economic Inclusion: By proposing the formalization of domestic work, the Bill could enable domestic workers to access social protections and employment benefits, contributing to broader goals of poverty reduction and inclusion in national economic systems.

3. Advancing Labour Market Reform: The framework outlined in the Bill could encourage employers to formalize domestic work arrangements, improving transparency and offering

legal clarity. This would be a step toward reducing informality in Nigeria's labour market and strengthening employer accountability.

4. Supporting Collective Bargaining: The Bill includes provisions that could empower domestic workers to organize and engage in collective bargaining. This would enhance their capacity to advocate for fair wages, improved working conditions, and stronger workplace protections within the scope of existing national labour frameworks.

Looking Ahead

As the Domestic Workers Bill continues to move through the legislative process, it signals a potential shift in how domestic work is regulated and protected in Nigeria. If enacted, the Bill could formalize labour relationships in the domestic sector and promote greater fairness, dignity, and inclusion. Employers of domestic workers—both households and businesses—should consider reviewing their current practices in anticipation of future compliance requirements.

For legal guidance on the Domestic Workers Bill, its implications for employers and regulators, or any policy-related enquiries, contact us at info@scp-law.com or visit www.scp-law.com.