

NEWS ADVISORY
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Immigration consultants, travel agencies offering overseas jobs are illegal recruiters -- POEA

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration yesterday warned job applicants anew about the illegal practice of some immigration consultants and travel agencies luring clients to avail of their services by promising overseas employment.

Administrator Hans Leo J. Cacdac said that under Republic Act No. 8042 as amended by Republic Act No. 10022, offering overseas employment in the guise of visa assistance without the necessary license or authority from the POEA constitutes illegal recruitment.

POEA Memorandum Circular No. 10, Series of 2003 regulates the participation of foreign and local immigration consultancy agencies in the recruitment and placement of overseas Filipino workers. Immigration consultants are required to obtain a license from the POEA before they may engage in recruitment and placement activities, regardless of the visa under which deployment shall be made eventually.

Cacdac said job seekers need not risk their hard-earned money by engaging the services of an immigration consultant that charges thousands of dollars for supposed working visas in countries such as the United States of America, United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada.

“By having an agent, they would be paying for information and counsel that are free and readily available in the said countries' respective websites. Also, the documents required by the immigration offices of these countries could only be produced by the applicant and not by the consultant,” Cacdac said.

For information on working or migration to Canada, USA, Australia, and UK, Administrator Cacdac has listed the following websites : www.cic.gc.ca/english/index-can.asp; www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/; www.immi.gov.au/skilled/; and www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/working/.

Cacdac said travel agencies are also not allowed to engage in the recruitment and placement of Filipino workers. Some travel agencies include in their tour packages “the opportunity to hunt for jobs” in the course of their travel abroad. Others are more blatant, directly offering “overseas jobs” to clients.

Cacdac said travel and immigration consultancy agencies, if found illegally recruiting overseas Filipino workers, would be closed down and the owners prosecuted.

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