

# International Labor Rights Forum

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## RESOURCES ON LABOR RIGHTS IN CHINA

### Recent Changes to China's Labor Laws

In an effort to stabilize industrial relations, the Chinese government enacted several pieces of landmark legislation in 2008 that strengthened workplace protections and increased access to the legal system. A new Labor Contract Law went into effect on January 1, 2008, mandating contracts for all employees, while reinforcing existing rules on work hours, wages, social benefits, and bargaining. The Employment Promotion Law, which went into effect on the same day, expanded anti-discrimination provisions from the Labor Law of 1994, for the first time granting migrant workers a right of action if they are discriminated against based on their residency status. On May 1, 2008, the Law on Labor Dispute Mediation and Arbitration went into effect, facilitating quicker, cheaper and easier access for workers to mediation and arbitration. Finally, the Draft Regulations on the Growth and Development of Harmonious Labor Relations in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone promise a more pro-active role for the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU).

Translations of the regulations can be found below. However, be warned: these are not, for the most part, "official" translations. Consult the Chinese-language versions of the laws for the exact, legally binding wording of complex passages.

Labor Contract Law

[http://www.bjreview.com.cn/document/txt/2007-10/16/content\\_80896.htm](http://www.bjreview.com.cn/document/txt/2007-10/16/content_80896.htm)

Employment Promotion Law

<http://big5.chinalawinfo.com/eng.chinalawinfo.com/law/display.asp?id=6382&keyword=>

Law on Labor Dispute Mediation and Arbitration

<http://tradeinservices.mofcom.gov.cn/en/b/2007-12-29/27880.shtml>

### Minimum Wage Standards in Major Chinese Industrial Cities As of September 5, 2008

Beijing: 800 RMB per month

Chongqing: 680 RMB per month

Dalian: 700 RMB per month

Guangzhou: 860 RMB per month

Qingdao: 610 RMB per month

Shanghai: 960 RMB per month

Shenzhen, Inner Zone: 1,000 RMB per month

Shenzhen, Outer Zone: 900 RMB per month

Tianjin: 820 RMB per month

Xiamen: 700-750 RMB per month (depending on district)

Note: these are the minimum monthly wages *before* overtime, which is calculated at 1.5x the regular wage on weekdays, 2x on weekends or days-off, and 3x on national holidays.

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## Useful English-Language Websites

Asia Monitor Resource Centre  
<http://www.amrc.org.hk/>

China CSR  
<http://www.chinacsr.com/en/>

China Labor News Translations  
<http://www.clntranslations.org/>

China Labour Bulletin  
<http://www.china-labour.org.hk/en/>

China Labor Watch  
<http://www.chinalaborwatch.org>

All China Federation of Trade Unions  
<http://www.acftu.org>

Global Labor Strategies  
<http://www.laborstrategies.blogs.com/>

## Books on Labor Rights in China

Anita Chan, *China's Workers Under Assault: The Exploitation of Labor in a Globalizing Economy*, M.E. Sharpe, 2001.

Alexandra Harney, *The China Price: The True Cost of Chinese Competitive Advantage*, The Penguin Press, 2008.

Ching Kwan Lee, *Against the Law: Labor Protests in China's Rustbelt and Sunbelt*, University of California Press, 2007.

Elizabeth Perry, *Shanghai on Strike: The Politics of Chinese Labor*, Stanford University Press, 1993.

**For information on ILRF's work in China, please visit:**

<http://www.laborrights.org/creating-a-sweatfree-world/rule-of-law/china-program>