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# Life Working in Hong Kong

**Hong Kong is one of the most vibrant and exciting places in Asia. Both charmingly chaotic and yet fantastically well organised, it offers little moments of perfection. From the street cafes to luxury high tea, it attracts a wide range of individuals from all walks of life.**

We hope you find the information below useful in planning your move to Hong Kong. If you have any further queries, then please contact your consultant who will be pleased to help you.

### **Visa**

Your visa is the first step when taking the decision to move to Hong Kong. The process is fairly straightforward. Individuals who possess specialist skills, knowledge or experience of value which are not readily available in Hong Kong, or who are in a position to make a substantial contribution to its economy are welcome to work in Hong Kong. The only prerequisite for an employment visa is to have a sponsor. This can be the person or enterprise that is offering you employment. It normally takes four to six weeks to process an entry-visa application. Please visit [www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/home.htm](http://www.immd.gov.hk/ehhtml/home.htm) for more information.

### **Hong Kong ID**

All Hong Kong residents require an ID card. These cards are vital for opening any bank accounts or accounts with utility companies. It should be carried at all times and every person over the age of 11 must have one. To apply for a Hong Kong ID card, visit <http://www.ogcio.gov.hk/eng/infra/eidcard.htm>.

### **Salaries Tax**

Everyone who works in Hong Kong is charged tax on their total remuneration arising in or derived from Hong Kong. This includes both salary and bonuses.

Salary is received gross and tax is requested on an annual basis. It is normally paid in 2 instalments between January and April. If you spend less than 60 days in Hong Kong in any year, you will be exempt from salaries tax. For more information on the tax system, visit the Inland Revenue Dept at [www.ird.gov.hk](http://www.ird.gov.hk).

Please find the salary tax bands below.

	<b>Net Chargeable Income (HK\$)</b>	<b>Rate</b>	<b>Tax (HK\$)</b>
On the first	40,000	2%	800
On the next	40,000	7%	2,800
	80,000		3,600
On the next	40,000	12%	4,800
	120,000		8,400
Remainder		17%	

### Banking

We strongly recommend that you open a Hong Kong bank account as soon as possible. A bank account is important for receiving your salary and if you want to transfer money abroad.

In order to set up an account, you will need as much ID as possible. Take your passport or Hong Kong ID card a letter from your employer and proof of your residential address. The last two can be difficult if you don't yet have a job or you're flat-sharing and your name isn't on the bills or lease. To overcome this, you may be able to open an account before leaving home through a bank with Hong Kong branches.

Major banks include HSBC, Hang Seng Bank, Standard Chartered Bank and Bank of China

### Healthcare

## Private health insurance is strongly recommended for expatriates that live and work in Hong Kong.

Most employers in the region provide medical benefits for employees but to supplement this you may wish to investigate Private Health insurance schemes.

For those normal day to day complaints, expatriates can seek help from their private medical practitioners. The cost of these may then be fully covered by the employer-provided health plans. However, emigrants should carefully check for job packages offered in Hong Kong since health plans vary tremendously in amounts of coverage and restrictions of doctors, and some other particular concerns. For more serious concerns like child birth and surgeries, some expats make use of public hospitals. Again, the decision normally depends upon what is covered in a particular health plan and where to locate the best specialists (and in fact, these specialists are normally found in public teaching hospitals.

### Accommodation

There is a range of different accommodation to rent and buy across Hong Kong to suit every need. You can find information on properties available in Hong Kong on the following sites:

<http://expatflats.com/>  
<http://www.hkp.com.hk/eng/>  
<http://hongkong-properties.com/>

Residents must pay utility bills including gas, water and electricity as well as management fees. Most properties are rented unfurnished but most furniture can be rented from letting agencies.

Most leases run for 2 years and provide the opportunity to give 2 months notice of your intention to leave after 12 months. 2 months rent is a typical deposit.

For a suitable hotel whilst you search for accommodation, you can visit the Hong Kong Hotel Association at [www.hkha.org/index.asp](http://www.hkha.org/index.asp).

### Transport

Hong Kong has a highly developed and sophisticated transportation network, encompassing both public and private transport. Over 90% of the daily journeys are on public transport, making it the highest in the world.

The Octopus card has been introduced to provide a fast, efficient and convenient fares payment alternative to the traditional banknotes and coins (similar to the Oyster card in London). Available for purchase in every Mass Transit Railway stations, the Octopus card now is the payment method of choice for not only public transport (such as trains, buses, trams,

ferries and minibuses) , but also widely used at parking meters, convenience stores, supermarkets, fast-food restaurants and some vending machines.

Trains run between 0600-0100. An MTR Tourist Ticket, valid for 2 single journeys, is available at a cost of HK\$35. The price includes a map and souvenir ticket. For visitors staying for a week or more it is worth getting an Octopus Card, an electronic ticket from which the cost of the journey is automatically deducted when it is placed on a sensor.

### Driving license

For overseas driving licence holders who wish to drive in Hong Kong, they may do so by applying for a full driving licence by direct issue without test or applying for a temporary driving license.

<http://www.td.gov.hk/>

### Mobile phone

The majority of Hong Kong residents use a mobile phone so it is advisable to obtain a local mobile number as soon as you arrive in the country. The main mobile phone providers are CSL, SmarTone and 3.

### Cost of living in Hong Kong

Item	Cost
Tram Ride (Any distance)	\$2
Typical doctors appt. (Including medications)	\$500
Gym Membership	\$500 - 1000
Unlimited broadband Internet	\$300
Meal for two (Mid priced restaurant)	\$500 - 800
Cinema Ticket (HK Island/TST)	\$60
1 litre milk	\$25