

Download Shanghai Daily App:



Shanghai: Light Rain with Thunder, 28 °C - 36 °C/82.4 °F - 96.8 °F

## [Home](#) > New rules for labor tiffs

Source: | NEWSPAPER EDITION

2010-7-22 01:30

---

South China's Guangdong Province yesterday reviewed a draft of the country's first law to set rules for labor disputes and wage negotiations amid efforts to ease labor tensions after a string of strikes and worker suicides.

One of the major purposes of the revised draft Regulation on the Democratic Management of Enterprises in Guangdong is to establish a legally binding mechanism for negotiating wages.

According to the draft law, unions should organize wage negotiations between elected worker representatives and the employer when more than one-fifth of the workers demand a pay raise.

If the employer refuses to hold or join a wage negotiation, the workers would be entitled to stop working and the employer should not fire them for doing so, the draft reads.

Workers who have previously gone on strike said this regulation was "particularly important."

"Currently, we are not protected by laws like this. Companies often fire striking workers without giving any compensation. In the future, our rights will be better protected," said a worker who declined to give his name.

The regulation will be the most comprehensive labor law in China if it is adopted, said Liu Mu, head of the labor law department of the standing committee of Guangdong's legislative body.

"It will establish a mechanism so workers can legally voice demands for pay raises for the first time in China," Liu said.

Some employers also welcomed the draft law. Entrepreneurs in Guangdong said a legal wage negotiation mechanism could help avoid disruptions of company operations and violent confrontations.

"What companies worry about most is work stoppages without prior notice. A standard and legal mechanism can minimize the loss for both companies and the workers," said Cheng Fengyuan, chairman of Guangdong's Taiwan Businessmen Association.

Guangdong first considered the regulation about a year ago but stopped reviewing it amid the global economic crisis for fear of increasing the burden on companies.

A spate of strikes and worker suicides in Guangdong prompted the authorities to relaunch the review of the regulation, said Ou Guangyuan, a local lawmaker.

Guangdong has 30 million migrant workers, most of them employed by overseas-funded labor-intensive manufacturers. Experts say low pay and poor working conditions have been the main cause of the labor strife that has been haunting the area.

"It has become an urgent and imperative mission for Guangdong and China as a whole to promulgate laws to

ensure that the income of workers increases at a stable and reasonable rate," said He Gaochao, a Zhongshan University scholar.

[Back to top](#) | [Full edition](#)

[Home](#) | [Metro](#) | [National](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Sports](#) | [World](#) | [Business](#) | [District](#) | [Supplement](#) | [Feature](#) | [Odd](#)  
| [Hangzhou](#) | [Qingdao](#) | [Sunday](#) | [Chengdu](#)

Copyright © 2001-2013 Shanghai Daily Publishing House. All rights reserved.