

# THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF PLACEMENT AGENCIES IN ENSURING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF PROSPECTIVE INDONESIAN MIGRANT WORKERS: A CASE STUDY IN SRAGEN REGENCY

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## Abstract

Migrant workers from Sragen Regency are at a relatively high level of vulnerability to various health problems, whether physical, mental or reproductive, and face a range of risks related to occupational safety. These risks include workplace accidents, acts of violence, exploitative practices, and limited access to health services in the destination country. This vulnerability often arises during the pre-placement stage, particularly if placement agencies fail to conduct adequate health checks, provide sufficient orientation, and disseminate adequate information. The normative legal approach provides a framework for researchers to examine applicable legal provisions, including Law No. 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers and its implementing regulations governing the responsibilities and obligations of placement agencies. The results of the study show that the responsibilities of placement agencies in ensuring the health and safety of prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers in Sragen Regency are clearly regulated in Law Number 18 of 2017. However, at the implementation level, the fulfilment of these responsibilities has not been fully optimal, as there are still placement agencies that only fulfil their administrative obligations without comprehensive supervision of the quality of health and safety checks. This study also identified a number of obstacles faced by placement agencies in carrying out these responsibilities, including limited coordination with health care facilities, low levels of understanding among some prospective Indonesian migrant workers regarding the importance of health and safety aspects, and the pressure of placement targets, which resulted in limited time available for briefing activities.

**Keywords:** Sragen Regency, Responsibility, Health and Safety, Indonesian migrant workers, International Law.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The mobility of workers from Indonesia to destination countries is a structural phenomenon shaped by economic, social and public policy factors. The dependence of many families on remittances sent by Indonesian migrant workers makes overseas employment a significant factor in supporting the economy of households and their regions of origin. However, the placement process, which is not accompanied by adequate supervision, has the potential to place prospective Indonesian migrant workers in situations that are vulnerable to occupational health and safety risks (International Organization of Migration, 2025). Migrant workers are highly vulnerable to a range of health issues, including physical, mental and reproductive health, and

face various occupational safety risks, such as accidents, violence, exploitation and limited access to health services in their destination countries. This vulnerability often arises during the pre-placement phase if placement agencies do not carry out adequate health screening, training, and information provision. International studies show that there is an urgent need for comprehensive and sustainable health interventions throughout all stages of the migration cycle (Oliva et.al, 2022).

Legally, the state has established a framework for the protection of Indonesian migrant workers, but the effectiveness of its implementation is highly dependent on the role of the implementers, including placement agencies that have a strategic position in the process. Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 18 of 2017 comprehensively regulates the rights, forms of protection, and obligations of the parties involved in the placement of Indonesian migrant workers, so that placement agencies do not merely function as intermediaries for business activities, but also as actors responsible for ensuring the health and safety of prospective Indonesian migrant workers. Within the normative legal framework, placement agencies are expressly positioned as key actors responsible for implementing preventive protection measures at the pre-placement stage. These responsibilities include conducting comprehensive health examinations, ensuring that prospective migrant workers receive adequate occupational safety and health training, and providing clear and accurate information regarding working conditions and risks in the destination country. Such obligations are intended to minimize potential harm before workers are deployed and to ensure that only individuals who meet health and safety standards are placed (Annisa et al., 2024).

The responsibilities of placement agencies continue throughout the placement and post-placement phases, including facilitating access to emergency health services, establishing reporting mechanisms for workplace accidents or violence, and coordinating with Indonesian diplomatic missions abroad. The failure to perform these functions adequately may result in delayed assistance and severe, potentially fatal consequences for migrant workers facing emergency situations. These multidimensional responsibilities underscore the need for stronger oversight, capacity building, and accountability mechanisms for placement agencies. Evaluating agency performance should therefore move beyond formal administrative indicators toward outcome-based measures, such as reductions in workplace accidents, improved access to health services, and migrant workers' satisfaction with protection mechanisms. Strengthening these aspects is essential to ensure that the legal framework translates into effective, real-world protection for Indonesian migrant workers (Anggriani et al., 2025).

Thus, these provisions emphasise the legal and ethical responsibilities inherent in placement agencies. The Lancet Public Health compiled global evidence showing that mortality rates among migrant workers are higher than those among local workers, and identified various social determinants that exacerbate occupational safety

conditions. These findings emphasise the importance of the responsibility of Indonesian Migrant Worker Placement Companies (P3MI) in mitigating risks from the outset, through the implementation of health screening, the provision of education on occupational safety and health, and the provision of adequate referral mechanisms for services (Karen et.al, 2024).

In the realm of social protection, policy debates highlight the adequacy of social security schemes, such as Work Accident Insurance (JKK) and Death Insurance (JKM), for Indonesian migrant workers. Policy media analysis (Fanggidae and Prasetya, 2023) states that the forms of protection currently available are still very limited, so placement actors are required to be proactive in facilitating prospective Indonesian migrant workers to obtain effective protection, especially against cross-border occupational safety and health risks. In addition, there are still regulatory gaps regarding health insurance for Indonesian migrant workers abroad, which limits their access to health services in the event of a work accident or occupational illness. This situation requires Indonesian migrant worker placement companies to strengthen contractual arrangements with employers to ensure adequate health protection in the destination country.

The obligations of placement agencies are not limited to fulfilling administrative aspects alone, but also include pre-placement services, such as providing cultural orientation, occupational safety training, and education on workers' rights and obligations. Comprehensive training serves as a key preventive measure in reducing the risk of workplace accidents, misunderstandings of contract terms, and exposure to hazardous work practices in foreign work environments. Thus, the quality of pre-placement programmes is an important indicator in assessing the level of responsibility of placement agencies (Suryani, 2020).

From a public health perspective, interventions at the pre-placement stage have an important preventive function in preventing the transmission of infectious diseases across countries, detecting chronic conditions that require ongoing treatment, and assessing the mental readiness of prospective Indonesian migrant workers to cope with the pressures and stresses of migration. The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the weaknesses of cross-border health mechanisms when the placement process is not accompanied by health checks and strong inter-agency coordination. The lessons learned from the pandemic further emphasise the urgency of establishing clear and integrated pre-placement health standards (International Organization of Migration, 2020).

The role of placement agents also covers the placement and post-placement stages, including ensuring access to emergency health services, mechanisms for reporting cases of violence or workplace accidents, and coordination with representatives of the Republic of Indonesia abroad, such as the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia (KBRI) or the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia (KJRI). Placement agencies that function optimally implement emergency contact

procedures and ensure effective communication between migrant workers, their families, and relevant authorities. Furthermore, the effectiveness of placement agents in the placement and post-placement phases is closely related to the availability of institutional capacity and standardized operational procedures. Adequate human resources, clear standard operating procedures for emergency response, and reliable communication systems are essential to ensure that migrant workers can promptly access assistance when facing health emergencies, workplace accidents, or situations of violence (Kunarti et al., 2023). Without such institutional preparedness, legal guarantees of protection risk remaining merely normative in nature.

A regulatory approach needs to be synergised with efforts to strengthen the capacity of placement agencies on an ongoing basis. Improving the education and literacy of prospective Indonesian migrant workers regarding health risks, the use of health services in the destination country, and incident reporting procedures are essential components that cannot be ignored by placement agencies. Effective information delivery interventions must be designed to be communicative, contextual, and presented in language that is easily understood by prospective workers (Wahyudi et.al, 2024).

This situation further emphasises the importance of strengthening the role of placement agencies. Assessments of the effectiveness of agencies in ensuring health and safety should not only be based on administrative input indicators, but should also include outcome-based indicators, such as the incidence of health problems or accidents after placement, the level of access to health services, and worker satisfaction. An outcome-oriented monitoring and evaluation approach enables evidence-based policy formulation to promote continuous improvement. Thus, the urgency of reviewing and formulating policies regarding the responsibility of placement agencies in ensuring the health and safety of prospective Indonesian migrant workers is very clear, which can be analysed from various dimensions, ranging from legal and administrative aspects to public health, ethical, and diplomatic perspectives (Suhartini et al., 2023).

This study aims to comprehensively examine and analyse the responsibilities of placement agencies in ensuring the health and safety of prospective Indonesian migrant workers based on the provisions of Law No. 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, particularly in the context of its implementation in Sragen Regency, as well as to identify and explain the various obstacles faced by placement agencies in carrying out these responsibilities related to the health and safety of prospective Indonesian migrant workers in the region, and to examine alternative solutions that can be taken to overcome these obstacles. This study does not solely focus on assessing formal compliance, but also analyses the effectiveness of placement agencies in protecting the lives, health and dignity of Indonesian migrant workers as an issue that requires synergy between the regulatory

framework, supervisory mechanisms and the commitment of actors at all stages of the placement chain.

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## 2. METHODOLOGY

This study applies a normative juridical method, which is an approach oriented towards the assessment of positive legal norms governing the protection of prospective Indonesian migrant workers (PMI). This approach emphasises analysis of legislation, legal principles, and relevant doctrines, particularly those relating to the responsibility of placement agencies in ensuring the health and safety (Pasaribu and Sembiring, 2024) of prospective PMI. Using this method, the researcher conducted an in-depth review of Law No. 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers and its implementing regulations, as well as the principles of labour law and human rights that form the basis for the protection of migrant workers. The aim is to evaluate the extent to which the existing legal framework is capable of providing protection, as well as to assess the position and responsibilities of placement agencies within the legal system for the protection of migrant workers.

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## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The main legal basis governing the responsibilities of placement agencies is contained in Law No. 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers. Article 36 explicitly stipulates the obligation of Indonesian Migrant Worker Placement Companies (P3MI) to provide services that include, among other things, orientation, training, and occupational health and safety checks for prospective Indonesian migrant workers. These regulations are further reinforced by the Minister of Manpower Regulation, which sets technical standards for placement services, including regulations on the physical and mental health aspects of prospective workers. The effectiveness of the implementation of placement agencies' responsibilities is greatly influenced by the existence of adequate monitoring and law enforcement mechanisms. At the regional level, the Sragen Regency Manpower and Transmigration Office (Disnakertrans) plays a strategic role in providing guidance and supervision of the operations of licensed Indonesian Migrant Worker Placement Companies (P3MI) in its area. However, limited resources and weak inter-agency coordination often hinder efforts to ensure comprehensive compliance (Nurchayati, 2019).

### **3.1 The Responsibility of Placement Agencies in Ensuring the Health and Safety of Prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers in Sragen Regency**

One of the main responsibilities of placement agencies is to conduct physical and psychological examinations of prospective workers prior to departure, to ensure that they meet the required health standards so as not to pose a risk to themselves or their work environment in the destination country. These health examinations are also

part of the administrative requirements in the placement agreement, which stipulates that the physical and mental condition of prospective Indonesian migrant workers must be declared fit for work based on valid and accountable examination results (Sinuraya, 2022). This effort is intended to minimise the potential risk of illness and work accidents that may occur during the execution of work abroad.

In addition to conducting medical examinations, placement agencies are obliged to provide initial information and education to prospective Indonesian migrant workers regarding potential job risks, workers' rights, working conditions in the destination country, and safety procedures that must be understood prior to placement. In terms of training, Law No. 18 of 2017 mandates the provision of vocational training and pre-placement preparation covering health, occupational safety, and skills acquisition tailored to the labour market needs of the destination country (Rahayuningsih, 2024).

The implementation of placement agencies' responsibilities in ensuring the health of Indonesian Migrant Worker Candidates (CPMI) needs to be supported by close cooperation with relevant government agencies, such as the Ministry of Manpower and the Indonesian Migrant Worker Protection Agency (BP2MI), which have authority over training supervision, licensing, and the implementation of occupational safety standards. At the regional level, including in Sragen Regency, coordination with local manpower offices is an important factor in ensuring that placement agencies comply with applicable national standards while also being able to provide services that are in line with local needs and characteristics (Iwayama, 2022).

**Table 1. The Agencies of Migrant Worker in Sragen Regency**

Name of Agencies	Socialization of Protection Workers	Information Access	Legality and Insurance	Complaints and Support
PT. Dian Yoga Perdana	Yes	Accessible	Yes	Available
PT. Graha Cipta	Yes	Accessible	Yes	Available
PT. Prima Duta Sejati	Yes	Accessible	Yes	Available
PT. Sanjaya Thanry Bahtera	Yes	Accessible	Yes	Available

Source: Processed by Auhor (2025)

Various studies in a number of regions show that although a strong regulatory framework has been formulated, its implementation in the field still faces various obstacles, particularly in enforcing the right to health, providing occupational safety education, and fulfilling social security for Indonesian migrant workers. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen the role of the Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency (BP2MI) and local government agencies. The responsibilities of placement agencies

as stipulated in Law No. 18 of 2017 include ensuring adequate health conditions, providing skills training and information on occupational safety, facilitating access to social security, and cooperating with relevant agencies, all of which are aimed at minimising the health and safety risks of prospective Indonesian migrant workers.

### 3.2 The Responsibility of Placement Agencies in Ensuring the Health and Safety of Prospective Indonesian Migrant Workers in Sragen Regency

A significant obstacle is the limited availability of referral health facilities in the region. Not all health facilities in Sragen Regency have the infrastructure and medical personnel that meet the standards for conducting special health examinations for Indonesian Migrant Worker Candidates. From the perspective of prospective workers, low levels of legal and health awareness are also a hindering factor, as many CPMI still do not understand the urgency of health and safety checks as part of protecting their rights before working abroad. In addition, the pressure of placement targets set by the destination country also affects the performance of placement agencies in optimally carrying out their responsibilities (Troitsky, 2023).

**Table 2. The Obstacle of Agencies of Migrant Worker in Sragen Regency**

Name of Agencies	Migrant Workers Awareness	Regulation	Facility	Target	Migrant Economy
PT. Dian Yoga Perdana	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PT. Graha Cipta	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PT. Prima Duta Sejati	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PT. Sanjaya Thanry Bahtera	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Processed by Auhor (2025)

Administrative obstacles also arise as a result of protracted bureaucratic procedures and a lack of integration between placement agencies, health care facilities, and relevant government agencies. This situation has implications for delays in fulfilling the health requirements of Indonesian Migrant Worker Candidates (CPMI). In addition, the discovery of discrepancies in CPMI data between placement agencies and government information systems reflects obstacles in the process of monitoring the health and safety conditions of prospective workers (Widowati et al., 2025).

Optimising the information system for the placement of Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) is a strategic step to overcome data inconsistencies and strengthen the monitoring of Indonesian Migrant Worker Candidates (CPMI) from the pre-placement stage. Efforts to raise awareness among CPMI also require the implementation of ongoing education programmes in the fields of law and health, involving local government, placement agencies and the community. In addition, the Sragen Regency Government can establish a regular coordination forum between placement agencies

and relevant agencies to address CPMI health and safety issues quickly and in an integrated manner. Furthermore, the application of administrative sanctions and revocation of licences for placement agencies that violate health and safety regulations must be enforced strictly as a form of preventive legal protection (Gibran & Khusairy, 2023).

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#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of a study on the responsibilities of placement agencies in ensuring the health and safety of Indonesian Migrant Worker Candidates, it can be concluded that Law Number 18 of 2017 concerning the Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers has clearly and comprehensively regulated the obligations of placement agencies (P3MI). The scope of these responsibilities includes conducting health and psychological examinations, providing pre-placement briefings and training, providing accurate and transparent information about job risks, facilitating social security participation, and ensuring compliance with safety standards prior to departure. Regarding the obstacles faced and alternative solutions that can be implemented by placement agencies, this study shows that the main obstacles include placement agencies' limited understanding of applicable regulations, weak supervision by relevant agencies, limited availability of health facilities that meet standards, low level of legal and health awareness among Indonesian migrant workers, and suboptimal coordination between sectors. These conditions have implications for the failure to optimally guarantee the health and safety of prospective workers from the pre-placement stage.

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