

Hiring Household *Help*

A cook, a maid, a driver, a nanny: part-time help is normal, affordable and often the difference between surviving India and loving it. How to find trustworthy people, verify them properly, agree fair terms, and be the employer people want to work for.

1st

rule: police-verify everyone

1 day

paid weekly day off, the norm

IN SHORT

- The short answer: hire through people you trust, police-verify everyone before day one, agree the terms out loud (better: on one page), pay fairly and on time, and treat the relationship with the respect it deserves.
- Police-verify every staff member before they start.
- Keep a copy of their Aadhaar, a photograph and one reference.

This is the question every family asks in the settling-in call, and the one no relocation pack ever answers properly: **how do I actually hire a cook, a maid or a driver, and do it right?** The short answer: hire through people you trust, **police-verify everyone before day one**, agree the terms out loud (better: on one page), pay fairly and on time, and treat the relationship with the respect it deserves. This guide walks through each step, with the going rates and the etiquette nobody writes down.

THE ONE NON-NEGOTIABLE

Police-verify every staff member before they start. It is expected, often required by your city or society, and good employers do it as a matter of course, not suspicion. It is done through your state police portal (Karnataka's Seva Sindhu, for example, charges roughly ₹375 for an antecedents check, about ₹750 with address verification; other states have their own portals and fees). Keep a copy of their Aadhaar, a photograph and one reference. Your consultant will run this with you.

THE GOING RATES • TYPICAL 2026 METRO RANGES

Part-time maid	₹2,000 to 5,000 per task per month (cleaning, dishes, laundry each count as a task)
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Cook	₹6,000 to 15,000 per month, depending on meals per day and days per week
Full-time maid	₹15,000 to 25,000 per month
Driver	₹18,000 to 30,000 per month, city traffic is a skill, pay for it
Everyone	One paid day off a week + a Diwali bonus of about one month's pay, strongly expected

Ranges reflect what IKAN sees in metro settling-in work in 2026; expat-dense neighbourhoods run higher, smaller cities lower. Your consultant will calibrate for your area.

01 STEP ONE · FINDING PEOPLE

Hire through trust, then verify

1 Start with the people who know

Neighbours, your society manager and the family you are replacing are the best sources; good staff travel by word of mouth. Registered agencies and vetted apps are the fallback, and agencies can replace someone who does not work out.

2 Interview like it matters, because it does

Ask about current and past households, why they are looking, and what duties they will and will not do. For a cook: taste a meal, and be honest about your cuisine. For a driver: licence in hand, years on these roads, and a short test drive with you in the car.

3 Agree a paid trial week

Both sides learn more in five days than in five interviews. Pay for the trial at the agreed rate whatever you decide; it is fair, and it is the reputation you want in the building.

02 STEP TWO · BEFORE DAY ONE

Verify, register, photograph

1 Police verification, always

Through your state's portal or the local police station. Your society may require the receipt before issuing gate access. This protects your family and, honestly, protects good staff too: it is the paperwork that proves they are who they say.

2 Register with your society

Most gated communities keep a staff register with photo and ID, and issue a gate pass or app entry (MyGate and similar). Your society manager does this in minutes.

3 Keep a one-page file per person

Aadhaar copy, photo, phone number, one reference with a phone number, agreed duties and pay. You will never need it, until the day you really do.

4 For drivers, two extras

Check the licence class and validity. A standard Indian car policy already covers anyone driving with your permission on a valid licence, but your liability to a paid driver needs a small add-on (IMT 28), so tell your insurer you employ one.

03 STEP THREE · THE AGREEMENT

Agree the terms on one page

1 Write the simple things down

Duties, days and hours, monthly pay and pay date, the weekly day off, and notice on both sides. A one-page note in English and your staff member's language prevents almost every future argument. Your consultant has a template.

2 Pay monthly, by UPI where possible

A visible, dated trail is better for both sides than loose cash. Salary on the same date every month is the single most valued thing an employer does.

3 Leave and holidays

One paid day off a week is the norm, plus the big festival days. Agree in advance how home-village visits work (typically unpaid beyond the annual allowance, but flexible employers are remembered).

4 The Diwali bonus

About one month's pay, given before the festival. It is not a tip; it is the thirteenth month, and it is strongly expected. Budget for it from day one.

5 Advances, with a ledger

Staff may occasionally ask for a salary advance for a family event. Giving it is normal and kind; the rule is simply to write it down and agree the repayment before the money moves.

04 THE PART NOBODY WRITES DOWN

Etiquette and the good-employer rules

1 Names and dignity first

Learn names, use them, and introduce staff to your family properly. Tea or a meal on long days is the norm in warm households, and a chair at the table during festivals is remembered for years.

2 Be clear, not casual, about the house rules

Which rooms, which cupboards, what happens when something breaks (answer: they tell you, and nothing bad happens for honesty). Clarity is kindness; vagueness breeds anxiety on both sides.

3 Keep valuables boring

Lock away cash, jewellery and passports as a habit, not a statement. Good practice removes the possibility of suspicion falling on innocent people, which protects your staff as much as you.

4 Raise pay before it is asked

A yearly increase, even a modest one, keeps a good person for your whole assignment. Replacing a great cook costs more than a raise ever will.

05 IF IT IS NOT WORKING

Part fairly, part early

1 Name the problem early and privately

Most issues are expectations, not character, and most are fixable in one honest conversation.

2 If it ends, end it properly

Give the agreed notice or pay in lieu, settle every earned rupee including the proportional bonus, and never withhold pay as leverage. If you hired through an agency, ask for a replacement.

3 When your assignment ends

Give staff the longest notice you can, a written reference with your phone number, and an introduction to the next family if you can arrange one. A fair final settlement (and the goodbye bonus generous employers give) is how expat households keep their good name, family after family.

What IKAN does for you

- ✓ We **source candidates through our trusted network** in your neighbourhood, and sit in on interviews when you want us there
 - ✓ We **run the police verification and society registration** with you, portal, fees and follow-up
 - ✓ We give you the **one-page terms template** and calibrate fair pay for your exact area
 - ✓ If something goes wrong, we **mediate and re-source**, you are never handling a staffing problem alone in a new country
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Hiring done right · one-screen check

- ☐ **Found through trust:** neighbours, society, agency, or the previous family
 - ☐ **Police verification receipt** in hand before day one
 - ☐ **Society register + gate pass** done, one-page file kept
 - ☐ **Terms on one page:** duties, pay, day off, notice, bonus
 - ☐ **Salary by UPI on a fixed date**, Diwali bonus budgeted
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Done right, the people who help run your home become part of how India starts to feel like home. Hire with care, verify without apology, and be the household people are proud to work for.

YOUR IKAN RELOCATIONS TEAM

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Where expertise meets empathy, supporting your move to India, every step of the way. Pay ranges and portal fees reflect 2026 metro practice and vary by city and neighbourhood; your consultant confirms current local norms. This guide is web-first; it prints cleanly from this page and joins the downloadable pack at its next rebuild.