

Helen Liao

Partner | Employment and Pensions | Hong Kong

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Helen Liao is a partner in the Employment & Immigration practice with over 15 years of experience. As a dual-qualified lawyer in both mainland China and Hong Kong, Helen has solid experience in handling cross-border employment arrangements, income tax compliance solutions, immigration and complex multi-jurisdictional labour issues arising from global talent mobility and commercial transactions including mergers and acquisitions, outsourcing situations and other re-organisations.

She advises both Chinese-funded enterprises and multinational companies across a wide range of industries in mainland China and Hong Kong, including life science, medical, pharmaceuticals, tourism, aviation, telecommunications, media, cultural publishing, retail, construction, fashion, luxury goods, as well as asset management, banking, securities, insurance and other financial services.

Prior to joining the firm, Helen had worked at a top-tier PRC law firm in mainland China and the Chinese offices of a reputable international law firm for nearly 10 years. Helen is recognised by World Bank as an “expert” on China employment law for her regular contributions to the IFC-World Bank’s global “Doing Business” project. She also delivers public seminars in Mandarin, Cantonese and English to various HR management organisations and key MNC clients in respect of recent developments in the China and Hong Kong employment law practice.

Highlights

Helen regularly advises Chinese & multinational employers throughout the entire process of employment from recruitment to termination, which consists of following:

- Draft & review offer letters;
- Draft & review employment contracts and restrictive covenants;
- Draft & review employment-related handbooks;
- Draft & review corporate policies including workplace safety, anti-discrimination, holiday & leave entitlements, staff integration and employee transfer;
- Draft employees’ benefit and incentive plans;
- Advise in the negotiation process of termination of senior executive’s employment;
- Provide legal advices, practical plans and guides on cross-border employment, and
- Advise cases associated with sexual harassment, data privacy, anti-corruption internal investigation and whistle-blower protection;
- Assist clients in dealing with the unannounced inspections conducted by the Labour Department, Immigration Department and Revenue Department, as well as the labour dispute resolution with employees;
- Application of work visas & permits; and
- Other matters related to employment & immigration.

More about Helen Liao



Principal Areas

- Employment and Pensions
 - Cross-Border Employment
 - Employee Benefits
 - Pensions
 - Senior Executives
 - Immigration Law
- Litigation and Dispute Resolution
 - Employment Disputes

Languages

- English
- Cantonese
- Mandarin
- Hakka

Jurisdictions

- China
- Hong Kong

Accolades

- Recognised as “Next Generation Partner” by Legal 500 China 2023
- Won “Labour and Employment Lawyer of the Year” at China Law & Practice Awards 2022
- Recommended Lawyer for Labour and Employment: Foreign Firms (China) in Legal 500 Asia Pacific (2021-2022)
- China University of Political Science and Law’s Outstanding Alumni Award (2020)

Appointments/Memberships

- Member of the Employment Law Committee of The Law Society of Hong Kong
- Member of the Subcommittee on Practice in Service Centres, at Home, in Domestic Premises or by Virtual Offices of The Law Society of Hong Kong
- Chairman, Employment Law Committee, Hong Kong and Mainland Legal Profession Association.
- Deputy Secretary-General, Legal Profession advancement Association Limited.
- Invited arbitrator of Beihai International Arbitration Court.
- Member of the Labour Law Branch of Labour and Social Security Law Society in Beijing.
- Member of the Law Society of Hong Kong.
- Member of Shenzhen Lawyers Association.

Education

LL.M, University of Bristol

LL.B, China University of Political Science and Law

Publications

- Legal update – “Human Resources & Compliance in New Era of China Civil Code and Judicial Interpretations” (Jan, 2021);
- Legal update – “The Impact of ‘EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment’ on Employment in China” (Jan, 2021);
- Legal update – “China’s tax authorities to collect social insurance: Managing labour cost and compliance” (Nov, 2020);
- Legal update – “Proposed amendment of working hour system in Shenzhen” (Nov, 2020);
- Co-author of “Doing business in China”, published in CCH (2012-2013);
- Co-author of “Employment and Benefit Toolkit”, published in Practical Law under Thomson Reuters Legal Media Group (2015-2017).

Recent Activities

Speaking engagement and events

- “Cross-border Employment under Pandemic” (Mandarin, December 2020);
- “Tax Authorities Collecting Social Insurance: Risks, Trend and Measures” (Cantonese, December 2020);
- “The Impact of Civil Code of PRC on Human Resources Management and the Relevant Measures” (Cantonese, December 2020);
- “3 steps in Human Resources Management – Common Legal Risks under the employment in Hong Kong”, invited by ICBCI, Hong Kong (Mandarin, November 2020);
- “Talent, Employment & Income Tax in the Greater Bay Area”, hosted by European Committee, The Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce (English, October 2020);
- “New Preferential Policies for Hong Kong Residents Working and Living in Great Bay Area”, hosted by Legal Profession advancement Association Limited (Cantonese, September 2020);
- “Interpretation of the ‘Announcement on Individual Income Tax Policy in relation to Overseas Income’, hosted by China Huarong International Holdings Limited & its subsidiaries in mainland China (Mandarin, July 2020); and
- “Variables and Invariables: Cross-border Employment Arrangements in the Greater Bay Area during the Economic Restart after the Epidemic”, hosted by The Third China Labour Law Lawyers Professional Development Conference (Mandarin, June 2020).