

# Guidebook on Living and Working

~For foreign nationals who start living in Japan~



Immigration Services Agency

## Introduction

The number of foreign nationals staying in Japan reached a record high of approximately 2.73 million (as of the end of December 2018), and in April 2019, acceptance of foreign workers with new residence status begins. It is moreover expected that foreign nationals residing in Japan will continue to increase in the years to come.

In order to realize a society in which Japanese and foreign nationals can live in Japan safely, it is important for foreign nationals to be able to accurately and quickly obtain information on Japanese rules and customs.

In the “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals”, which was accepted in December 2018 by the “Conference of Relevant Cabinet Ministers on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals”, creation of a “Guidebook on Living and Working” was included as a cross-governmental endeavor for the purpose of providing foreign nationals with basic information necessary for living and working securely and safely in Japan.

At this time, relevant Ministries and Agencies cooperated to provide basic general information in the form of a "Guidebook on Living and Working" targeted mainly at foreign nationals who are starting life here.

We hope that you find the information contained in this guidebook useful to help you start your life in Japan.

April 2019

Immigration Services Agency

The following ministries and agencies have contributed to the writing and proofreading of each chapter in this guidebook.

### List of Ministries and Agencies

Cabinet Secretariat

Cabinet Office

National Police Agency

Financial Services Agency

Consumer Affairs Agency

Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

Ministry of Justice

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Finance

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology

Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism

Ministry of the Environment

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**1 Issue of Residence Card, and Notification of address, etc.****1-1 Issue of residence card**

A Residence Card is issued when you receive a landing permit to Japan. A Residence Card is granted to mid-to-long-term residents.

A Residence Card is issued when you are granted with a new landing permit, or receive a permit to change residence status, or extend your period of stay.

**one point**

A mid-to-long-term resident is:

A person to whom any of the following does not apply.

- The period of status of residence is determined to be less than "3 months."
- The status of residence is determined as "Temporary Visitor"
- The status of residence is determined as "diplomatic status" or "official status"
- Staff members of the Japanese office of the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association (Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan, etc.), or Permanent General Mission of Palestine in Japan who have "Designated Activities" status, and their families
- A special permanent resident
- Does not have a residence status

**1-2 Notification of address and place of residence**

Mid-to-long-term residents are required to file a notification of address and place of residence at the city office of the municipality where they reside upon submitting their Residence Card within 14 days after they have settled in a residence at a new address.

Those whose Residence Cards are determined to be issued at a later date must present their passport to the municipality, and file a notification of address and place of residence. A Residence Card will be sent by mail later.

**one point**

Residence Cards to be issued at a later date

Residence Cards are issued when new landing permits are given at Narita Airport, Haneda Airport, Chubu Airport, Kansai Airport, New Chitose Airport, Hiroshima Airport and Fukuoka Airport. When you receive a new landing permit at an airport other than the above, a Residence Card will not be issued on the spot, but sent by mail to your place of residence after you file a notification of address and place of residence.

## 2 Procedures relating to status of residence

If you wish to remain in Japan beyond the residence period currently authorized, or if you wish to change your purpose of residence, you are required to carry out procedures at a regional office of Immigration and Residence Control.

### 2-1 Changing the status of residence

If you want to change the purpose of residence currently authorized, you have to apply for permission to change the status of residence.

Documents required for the application

- Passport
- Residence Card \*If you have been issued with one already
- A photo of the applicant facing forward (4 cm long x 3 cm wide. Taken no earlier than three months before submission. Not required for those under 16 years old)
- An application form for permission to change residence status  
\* Reference [www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/16-2-1.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/16-2-1.html)
- Documents that clarify your planned activity  
\* See: [www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/ZAIRYU\\_HENKO/zairyu\\_henko10.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/ZAIRYU_HENKO/zairyu_henko10.html)

### 2-2 Extension of the period of stay

If you wish to remain in Japan longer than the residential period currently authorized, you must apply for permission to extend your residential period before the end of the residential period currently authorized.

\* Documents required for the application

- Passport
- Residence Card \* If you have been issued with one already
- A photo of the applicant facing forward (4 cm long x 3 cm wide. Taken no earlier than three months before submission. Not required for those under 16 years old)
- An application form for permission to extend the period of stay  
\*See [www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/16-3-1.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/16-3-1.html)
- Documents to prove your planned activity  
See: [www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/ZAIRYU\\_HENKO/zairyu\\_koshin10\\_01.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/ZAIRYU_HENKO/zairyu_koshin10_01.html)

Reference: "Guidelines on permission to change residence status and extend the period of stay"  
( [www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri07\\_00058.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri07_00058.html) )

## 2-3 Acquisition of residence status (birth, etc.)

If a child is born as a foreign national in Japan, and if she/he is going to stay for a period longer than 60 days after birth, she/he needs to apply for permission to acquire residence status within 30 days from the date of birth.

\* Documents required for the application

- Passport \* If it has been issued already
- A photo of the applicant facing forward (4 cm long x 3 cm wide. Taken no earlier than three months before submission. Not required for those under 16 years old)
- An application form for permission to acquire residence status  
\* See [www.moj.go.jp/content/000099650.pdf](http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000099650.pdf)
- A document that certifies birth, such as a “Shusshou Todoke Kisai Jiko Shomeisho” certificate (Certificate of entry items in birth notification)
- Documents that clarify the details of planned activity  
\* See [www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/ZAIRYU\\_HENKO/zairyu\\_henko10.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/ZAIRYU_HENKO/zairyu_henko10.html)
- Copy of a residence certificate, or a certificate of entry items in a residence certificate

## 2-4 Permission to engage in an activity other than those permitted by the status of residence previously granted

If you wish to engage in an activity other than that your current residence status permits and earn income or receive compensation, you have to obtain “Permit to engage in activity other than that permitted under the residence status previously granted” (Shikaku-gai Katudo Kyoka).

\* Documents required for the application

- Passport
- Residence Card \*If you have been issued with one already
- An application form for “Permission to engage in activity other than that permitted under the residence status previously granted” (Shikaku-gai Katudo Kyoka)  
\* See [www.moj.go.jp/content/000099659.pdf](http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000099659.pdf)
- Documents to certify the activity by which you intend to earn income or receive compensation  
See [www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/16-8.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/16-8.html)

## 2-5 Permission for permanent residence

Those who wish to reside permanently in Japan have to apply for a permanent residence permit. If the permanent residence permit is granted, you can engage in any activity in Japan and stay in Japan for as long as you like without any restriction, and you do not have to take procedures for extension of residential period or changing the residence status.

\* Documents required for the application

- Passport
- Residence Card
- A photo of the applicant facing forward (4 cm long x 3 cm wide. Taken no earlier than three months before submission. Not required for those under 16 years old)
- An application form for Permanent Residence Permission  
\* See: [www.moj.go.jp/content/000099653.pdf](http://www.moj.go.jp/content/000099653.pdf)
- Other necessary documents  
\* See: [www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/16-4.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/ONLINE/IMMIGRATION/16-4.html)

## 2-6 Points-based preferential treatment for highly-skilled foreign professionals

With a focus on highly skilled and talented foreign nationals who are expected to contribute to the growth of the Japanese economy, etc., this system grants preferential treatment with respect to immigration control to foreign nationals who acquire a total of 70 points or more, by recognizing them as "highly skilled foreign professionals". Each item, such as "educational background", "work experience," "age" and etc., is allocated specific points depending on the characteristics of the activity of the foreign professional.

### Details of the preferential treatment

See: [www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact\\_3/preferential/index.html](http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_3/preferential/index.html)

#### 1 Permission to engage in multiple activities as a resident

A foreign national is allowed to engage in activities covered by two or more residence statuses. For example, you can engage in research activities at a university, operating related business at the same time.

#### 2 Grant of "five years" residential period

A foreign national is uniformly granted the longest legal residential period of five years.

\* It can be extended.

#### 3 Reduction in the period that a foreign national must live in Japan before he is granted permanent resident status

If a foreign national has engaged in activities as a highly skilled foreign professional for three years without break (or one year if recognized as advanced (at least 80 points)), the period required to live in Japan before being granted permanent resident status is reduced.

\* Reference "Guidelines on Permanent Residence Permit"

[www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan\\_nyukan50.html](http://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan_nyukan50.html)

## 3 Re-entry Permission

If a foreign national legally residing in Japan wishes to temporarily leave Japan and re-enter Japan later on, he/she can exit and re-enter Japan while holding his/her currently authorized residential status and residential period by obtaining a re-entry permit in advance at the nearest regional office of Immigration and Residence Control. (5 years maximum. In cases where the residential period expires in less than 5 years, until the day it expires).

In addition, if mid-to-long-term residents in possession of valid passports and valid resident cards wish to re-enter Japan in no more than one year after the day of their departure (or if the residential period expires in less than one year, by the day the residential period expires), they do not, in principle, have to obtain a re-entry permit. (This is called a special re-entry permit).

## 4 Notifications that Mid-to-long-term residents must file

When mid-to-long-term residents having the following status of residence change their organization of affiliation, they must report the change to a local regional office of Immigration and Residence Control.

1

Professor, Highly Skilled Professional (i) (c) or Highly Skilled Professional (ii) (limited to cases of engaging in the activities listed in (ii) (c)), Business Manager, Legal/Accounting Services, Medical Services, Instructor, Intra-company Transferee, Technical Intern Training, Student or Trainee

- ◆ Change in the name or location of the organization in Japan at which the activities are being carried out
  - ◆ Dissolution of the organization
  - ◆ When leaving or being transferred from the organization
- } Notify within 14 days

See: [https://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri10\\_00014.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri10_00014.html)

2

Highly Skilled Professional (i) (a), Highly Skilled Professional (i) (b), Highly Skilled Professional (ii) (limited to cases of engaging in the activities in (ii) (a) or (b)), Researcher, Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/ International Services, Care Giver, Entertainer (limited to cases of engaging in the activities based on a contract with a public or private organization in Japan), Skilled Labor, Designated Skilled Labor

- ✓ Change in the name or location of the organization with which he has a contract
  - ✓ Dissolution of the organization
  - ✓ Termination of the contract with the organization or conclusion of a new contract
- } Notify within 14 days

See: [https://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri10\\_00015.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri10_00015.html)

3

Dependent, Spouse or Child of Japanese National, or Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident (limited to persons with the status of the spouse)

Death of or divorce from the spouse  $\Longrightarrow$  Notify within 14 days

See: [https://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri10\\_00016.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyuukokukanri10_00016.html)

\* Electronic notification is possible for these notifications.  
<https://www.immi-moj.go.jp/i-ens/index.html>

## 5 Procedures for Deportation

When a foreign national remained in Japan beyond his designated period of stay even by one day, he is regarded as an illegal overstayer and subject to the Procedures for Deportation. In addition, in a case a foreign national, without obtaining a permit to engage in an activity other than those permitted under the residence status previously granted, has engaged in an activity which is outside the scope of activities permitted by his residence status and earned income or received compensation, or otherwise received a certain criminal punishment, he is subject to the Procedures for Deportation even if he may not be an illegal overstayer.

If you are deported from Japan, you can not enter Japan for a period of five or ten years.

Also, if you are deported after receiving a certain criminal punishment, as a rule, you will never be able to enter Japan again.

### 5-1 Departure Order System

Under this system, an illegal overstayer, if all of the following requirements are met, is allowed to leave Japan through the following simple procedures without being placed in custody.

When an overstayer leaves Japan under the Departure Order System, he cannot enter Japan in principle for one year.

Requirements to be applicable for the Departure Order System:

- He/she must voluntarily appear at a regional office of Immigration and Residence Control with intention to leave Japan
- He/she is not subject to deportation for any cause other than overstaying the authorized period of stay
- He/she has not been punished by imprisonment with or without work for certain crimes such as theft
- He has never been deported or departed Japan by a departure order in the past.
- It seems certain that he will leave Japan immediately

### 5-2 Special Permission to Stay in Japan

Even when deportation procedures are taken, Special Permission to Stay in Japan may be granted by the Minister of Justice in consideration of the duration for which the foreign national has lived in Japan, his family situation, etc.

## 6 Procedures for Refugee Status Recognition

As a member of the Refugee Convention (the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol on the Status of Refugees), Japan recognizes refugee status and takes various protection measures for refugees based on these conventions.

The term "Refugee" refers to those to whom Article 1 of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or Article 1 of the Protocol on the Status of Refugees applies. A refugee is generally defined as follows:

A Refugee is:

A person who, owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.

### 6-1 Application for recognition of refugee status

A foreign national residing in Japan can apply for Recognition of Refugee Status. It is a system for those who have fled their home countries as described above (see “Definition of a Refugee”), and seek protection from Japan. A foreign national, when he/she is recognized as a refugee by the Minister of Justice, is issued with a Certificate of Refugee Recognition, and is granted with a residence status of “Long-Term Resident” unless he otherwise falls under certain exclusionary criteria.

A foreign national who has been recognized as a refugee, based on his application, will receive a refugee travel document as a travel document in place of a passport.

In addition, a foreign national recognized as a refugee and his family can benefit from the “Settlement support program,” which includes Japanese language education, guidance for living in Japan, job placement, etc..

### 6-2 Request for administrative review

A foreign national who has not been recognized as a refugee and is dissatisfied with the decision can request an administrative review by the Minister of Justice.

The Minister of Justice, when he makes decisions on the request, is expected to hear the opinions of the Refugee Examination Counselors who have knowledge of laws and international affairs.

## 1 Basic Resident Registration System

A Basic Resident Register constitutes the basis of paperwork on a resident, and is organized from the residence certificate which includes the full name, date of birth, gender, address, etc.

It is used to issue copies of a residence certificate, etc., to certify the resident status of the resident.

Foreign Nationals are also subject to the Basic Resident Registration system, and if you fall under any of the following categories, you must file a notification of address.

\* Persons for whom residence certificates are created

- Mid-to-long-term residents (those who have a Residence Card)
- Special permanent residents
- Persons who have been granted permission for temporary refuge or provisional stay
- Persons who may continue to stay in Japan temporarily due to a birth, or to loss of Japanese nationality

## 2 Notification of Address

### 2-1 If you entered Japan by receiving a new landing permission

Those to whom a Residence Card has been issued (including those to whom a Residence Card is determined to be issued later) must file a moving-in notification at the city office of the municipality where you reside by bring your Residence Card (or passport, if a Residence Card is to be issued later) within 14 days after you settled into a new address.

\* If you live in Japan with your family, you need a document that proves your family relationship (such as a marriage certificate, a birth certificate, etc., issued by a government agency of your home country) .

### 2-2 When you move

When you move to another municipality, you must file a moving-out notification in advance at the municipal office where you currently reside. Then, you need to file a moving-in notification at the municipal office for your new address within 14 days after you have settled in.

When you change your address within the same municipality, you need to file a notice of relocation at the municipal office within 14 days after you have relocated.

In cases where you leave Japan to live abroad, you must, as a rule, file a moving-out notification in advance at the office of the municipality where you reside.

### 3 My Number (Individual Number) System

#### 3-1 Definition of the My Number System

The My Number System is a system in which every person with an address in Japan is assigned a unique number ("My Number"). Its purpose is to facilitate reliable and quick identification and confirmation of personal information kept in more than one public offices in the area of social security, taxes, and disaster response, and to streamline administrative procedures, improve the convenience of residents, and realize a fair and just society.

You need to provide "My Number" mainly when you 1) receive pension, childcare allowance or medical services, 2) make or receive overseas remittances, and 3) open a bank account.

When you provide your "My Number", it is necessary to confirm that (A) the number is really yours, and (B) you and the person carrying an ID with a photo, such as a passport, are really the same.

#### 3-2 My Number Card

(1) The My Number Card is defined as:

A plastic card with an IC chip, the face of which shows your name, address, date of birth and gender with a photo of yourself facing forward. On the back of the card, My Number is printed. My Number Card is issued free of charge.



front side



back side

A My Number Card is an official identification card that can confirm 3-1 (A) and (B), which is very convenient. In addition, it can be used for filing an income tax return online, and for electronic application for various administration services. In addition, in some municipalities, a My Number Card can be used for services such as library use, and for acquiring a certificate that certifies your place of residence at a convenience store.

## (2) How to apply for a My Number Card

You can submit an application for a My Number Card using 1) a PC, 2) a smartphone, 3) mail, 4) an ID Photo Booth downtown, or 5) at the office of the municipality where you live (with some exceptions). You can also use a photo you have taken with a digital camera or a smartphone.

\* The photo must show you facing forward, without any hats or head coverings. The background must be plain. It must be taken within the last six months.

### 1) Application using a PC

Take a photo showing yourself facing forward with a digital camera, and file an application online using a prescribed form

### 2) Application using a smartphone

Take a photo showing yourself facing forward with your smartphone, and apply online using a prescribed form.

### 3) Application by mail

Paste a photo showing yourself facing forward on an application form for a My Number Card, place it in an envelope, and put it in the post

### 4) Application using an ID Photo Booth downtown

Take a picture with the camera, and apply online from the screen

### 5) Office of the municipality where you live (with some exceptions)

\* Click here for details of application procedures and flow of application

My Number Card website: Application for issue of a My Number Card (English page)

(Also available in Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Korean, Spanish and Portuguese)

<https://www.kojinbango-card.go.jp/en-kofushinse/>



## (3) How to receive a My Number Card

1) Around one month after filing an application, you will receive a postcard delivered to your home from the municipality.

2) Make sure that the applicant himself/herself will come (for identification) to receive his/her My Number Card by the deadline indicated on the postcard sent from the municipality, bringing required items. The place where the My Number Card will be delivered is indicated on the postcard.

3) After it is confirmed at the office that you and the applicant are the same, you will be asked to set a security code, and then you can receive your card.

\* Click here to learn more about how to receive a My Number Card

My Number Card General Website: Receiving a My Number Card (English Page)

(Also available in Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Korean, Spanish and Portuguese)

<https://www.kojinbango-card.go.jp/en-uketori/>



### 3-3 A note about the handling of a My Number Card

When there is a change in any of the items listed on your My Number Card, such as name, address and so on, please report to the city office of the municipality where you live.

one point



#### Validity period of My Number Card

- If you are 20 years old or older: 10th birthday after the date of issue
- If you are under 20 years old: The fifth birthday after the date of issue
- If you have an authorized period of stay: Until the day the authorized residence period expires

\* If the authorized period of stay is extended, please also renew the validity period of your My Number Card.

If the period of authorized stay expires during the procedures for extension of the period of authorized stay, you can stay in Japan for up to two months after the expiration date as an exception period, but the effective period of the My Number Card is not automatically changed, so you need to renew the validity period of the My Number Card at a municipal office for your residence within the effective period of the My Number Card.

### 3-4 Other

For more information about My Number, please visit the following website.

#### \* Regarding the My Number System

My Number System (social security/ number system) Website  
"To residents of foreign nationals"

<https://www.cao.go.jp/bangouseido/Foreign Nationals/index.html>



#### \* Regarding the My Number Card

My Number Card General Website: English Page (Also available in Chinese (Simplified / Traditional), Korean, Spanish and Portuguese)

<https://www.kojinbango-card.go.jp/en/>



## 4 Report of a Birth

When a child is born in Japan, the father or the mother is required to report the birth within 14 days after the child was born. A notification must be submitted to the office of the municipality where the child was born or where the address of the notifier is located.

When both parents are foreign nationals, a residence certificate will be issued for a child without a residence status for the period of 60 days after the birth if the birth certificate is accepted. If the child is to stay in Japan for more than 60 days after the birth, the parents must apply for the child's residence status at a regional office of Immigration and Residence Control within 30 days after the birth.

If the child has not obtained a residence status when 60 days passed after the birth, the residence certificate may be deleted, and the child may not be able to receive administrative services such as National Health Insurance and Child Care Allowance.

### 4-1 Documents required for notification of a birth

- Birth certificate
- As for other required documents, please inquire at the municipal office where you will file a birth notification

### 4-2 Other procedures

A birth must be notified to the country of the nationality of the father or the mother. For details of the procedures, please inquire at the embassy / (general) consulate in Japan of the home country of the father or the mother.

In addition, please obtain a passport for your child as well.

## 5 Notification of Marriage

When a Japanese and a Foreign National or Foreign Nationals wish to marry each other in Japan, a notification of marriage must be filed at a municipal office. If both parties are recognized as meeting the requirements for getting married and the notification is accepted, a marriage can take place ("Japanese-style marriage").

### 5-1 Documents required for notification of a marriage

If foreigners wish to have a Japanese-style marriage, they must satisfy the requirements for marriage as defined by the laws of their home countries (such as having reached the eligible age to marry, being single, etc.).

In order to prove that the requirements are met, a Japanese national must submit a transcript of the family register, and a Foreign National must submit a certificate of legal capacity to contract marriage.

A certificate of legal capacity to contract marriage can be obtained at the embassy/ (general) consulate in Japan of the native country of the foreign national who is going to marry. Some countries may not issue these certificates. In that case, alternative documents must be submitted.

In addition, when you submit documents written in a foreign language, such as a certificate of legal capacity to contract marriage, a Japanese translation must be attached to all of the documents. The name of the translator must be recorded in the translation. There is no particular regulation on who the translator should be, so you can do the translation on your own if you choose to do so.

### 5-2 Other

Although marriages that take place in Japan are valid in Japan, please inquire at the Embassy/ (general) consulate in Japan of your native country whether the marriage is a valid marriage in your home country.

## 6 Notification of Death

When a foreign national dies in Japan, relatives, cohabitants, etc., must report the death to the office of the municipality where he died, and where the address of the notifier is located, within 7 days after the day the death was known.

### 6-1 Documents required for a notification of death

A death certificate or a postmortem certificate

As for other required documents, please inquire at the municipal office where you file the notification of death.

## 6-2 Other

The Residence Card of the deceased must be returned to the Director General of the Immigration and Residency Agency.

It must be sent to the following address:

〒135-0064

Odaiba office, Tokyo Regional Immigration and Residency Bureau  
9th floor, Tokyo Port Joint Government Bldg., 2-7-11 Aomi, Koto-ku, Tokyo 135-0064

## 7 Registration of a Seal Impression

In Japan, a *hanko* (seal) in which the person's name is engraved is used on a daily basis as a substitute for a signature. In some important situations, for example when you conclude a real estate sales contract, you may need to have a *hanko* (seal) registered at the municipality. The procedures for registering a seal impression at a municipality is called seal impression registration (*inkan toroku*), and a *hanko* (seal) registered at a municipality is called a *jitsuin* (registered seal).

### 7-1 Procedures for seal impression registration

Procedures for a seal impression registration are different depending on the municipalities where you reside, but in general, the following are required.

- An application form for a seal impression registration
- A *hanko* (seal) to be registered
- Identification documents of the person applying for a seal impression registration (My Number Card, Residence Card, driver's license, etc.)

Please inquire at the office of the municipality where you reside for the details.

When the procedures for seal impression registration are completed, a seal registration card will be issued. Please keep the card in a safe place.

### 7-2 Certificate of a Registered Seal

A Certificate of Registered Seal is a document that certifies that a *jitsuin* (registered seal) is a seal registered at the municipality.

If you wish to have a Certificate of Registered Seal issued, you or your agent must present a seal registration card, etc., to apply at the office of the municipality.

In some municipalities, it is possible to submit an application and receive the certificate at a convenience store by using a My Number Card.

## 1 Status of Residence

A foreign Nationals are permitted to engage in activities in Japan within the scope of activities permitted by their residence status.

Foreign Nationals can be divided into the following three categories, depending on whether they are permitted to work or not.

- \* Status of Residence with which people may work within the specified scope  
Diplomat, Official, Professor, Art, Religion, Press, Highly Skilled Professional, Business Manager, Legal /Accounting Services, Medical Services, Researcher, Instructor, Engineer / Specialist in Humanities / International Services, Intra-company Transferee, Nursing Care, Entertainer, Skilled Labor, Designated Skilled Labor, Technical Intern Training, Designated Activities (Working Holiday, Foreign Nurse and Certified Care Worker, etc., based on Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) )
- \* Status of Residence with which people may not work in principle  
Cultural activities, Temporary visitor, Student, Trainee, Dependent
- \* Status of Residence with which people are permitted to work without restriction  
Permanent resident, Spouse of Japanese national, Spouse of permanent resident, Long-term resident

## 2 Basic knowledge before starting work

### 2-1 Labor contract

To prevent workers from starting work without fully understanding the working conditions, such as wages, working hours, etc., thus getting into trouble later with their company, the Labor Standards Law (one of the laws concerning working) in Japan stipulates that the company (the employer) must clearly indicate working conditions to the worker concerned when they conclude a labor contract.

With regards to the following five items, which are particularly important, it is required, as a rule, for the company to issue a written document to the worker concerned, clearly indicating such conditions. (exceptionally, the conditions can be clearly indicated by a fax or an E-mail, etc. (limited to those which can be output to create a document), provided the worker concerned prefers).

- 1) When the contract starts and when it ends (pertaining to the term of contract)
  - \* A labor contract may be concluded with or without a fixed-term. The type of employment itself, such as regular employees, contract employees, part-time workers, temporary staff (*Arubaito*), etc., does not reflect whether it is a contract with a fixed-term. Therefore, it is important for an employee to confirm the term of contract, as well as the type of employment.
- 2) Provisions related to renewal of the contract, when concluding a fixed term contract (possibility of renewal, how decisions are made for renewal)
- 3) Place of work and job duties (content of work)
- 4) Schedule of work hours and rest time (the time work begins and the time work ends; if there is overtime, rest periods, rest days / holidays, rotation for alternative work schedule, etc.)
- 5) The amount of wages, and when and how they are paid (determination, computation and payment of wages, the period of computation, and the date of payment)

In addition, the Labor Contract Law stipulates that the employer and the worker need to confirm details of the labor contract as regards other matters besides those mentioned above, and in writing as far as possible.

Here, the term “worker” refers to a person who works under the instruction and control of an employer, receives wages as compensation for the work, and is subject to the protection of certain labor laws including the Labor Standards Law. A “worker” is a worker regardless of the type of employment, including not only a regular employee, but also a dispatched worker, a contract employee and a part-time worker.



## Prohibitions pertaining to a labor contract

The Labor Standards Act also stipulates matters that an employer must not incorporate in a labor contract.

- 1) Having a penalty charge paid if a worker violates a labor contract, or predetermining the amount

\*This is to prohibit fixing the amount of penalty or damages in advance.

It is not prohibited for a company to claim compensation for damages actually incurred as a result of a willful or careless act of a worker, without predetermining the amount of damages.

- 2) Advancing credit as a condition for work, and unilaterally offsetting monthly wages against credit advances as repayment.

- 3) Requiring a worker to make compulsory savings through the company

\* It is prohibited for a company to impose compulsory savings on its employees regardless of reasons for savings, even for employee welfare such as company retirement.

However, it is permitted under certain conditions for the company to take charge of part of the wages entrusted to the employer by the employees based on its own decision, regardless of the labor contract.



## If the working conditions as promised turned out to be different from actual fact...

If a worker, once he/she started working, noticed that the working conditions as promised at the time of conclusion of the labor contract differ from actual fact, he/she may immediately cancel his/her labor contract on these grounds.

In addition, since the working conditions are decided based on the labor contract concluded by the company and the worker concerned, the employment regulations of the company, and the laws in Japan, etc., the company in principle cannot unilaterally change to working conditions unfavorable to the worker concerned without obtaining the consent of the worker after he actually started working.

## 2-2 Various insurance / pension schemes

### (1) Employment insurance

The employment insurance system provides unemployment benefits, etc., to displaced workers to ensure a certain standard of living and promote his employment. Regardless of the size of the business establishment, a worker who:

- has prescribed working hours of 20 hours or more per week, and
- is expected to be employed for at least 31 days,

is eligible, whether he is a dispatched worker, a contract worker, a part-time worker or a temporary worker.

The company has a responsibility to enroll its workers in the employment insurance system. However, the payment of premiums is shared by both the workers and the company.

### (2) Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance

Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance is a public system in which the government provides necessary insurance benefits in cases where workers incurred injury, illness or death due to their job (Occupational Accidents), or accidents on their way to work (Commuting Injuries).

Basically, a company that employs at least one worker is required to take procedures to join the Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance and pay the entire insurance premium.

All workers, including part-time workers and temporary workers (*Arubaito*), are eligible for benefits for work-related and commuting-related injuries.

### (3) Health insurance / National health insurance

Health insurance / National health insurance is a social insurance system to provide medical benefits and allowances necessary to ensure a certain standard of living for workers and their families (\*) in cases where they had an injury or illness, gave birth, or died and so on. If you join the Health insurance / National health insurance scheme, you can receive a health insurance card to bring with you to a doctor's office or a hospital. By doing so, the medical fee you pay at the reception desk of a doctor's office / hospital will be reduced to 30% of the full medical service fee in principle.

\* If you are 75 years old or older, you can receive medical care as an insured person of the Medical care system for older people aged 75 and over instead of health insurance.

Health insurance is compulsory for:

- Businesses run by the state, or regional governments or corporations
- Individual businesses of certain industries which regularly employ five or more persons

Workers employed by applicable business establishments are covered by this system (dispatched workers, contract employees, part-time workers and temporary workers shall be covered as well, provided their prescribed working hours per week and prescribed working days per month are at least three-quarters of those of regular workers). Even if they are less than three-quarters, workers will be covered by health insurance if the following five conditions are met:

- At least 20 hours or more prescribed working hours per week
- Monthly wage of 88,000 yen or more
- Expected employment period of at least one year
- Not a student
- Employed by a company with at least 501 employees (a worker employed by a company with 500 employees or less shall also be covered by health insurance if it is provided in a labor contract)

As a rule, the company and the workers share the payment of the premiums equally.

Workers who do not qualify for health insurance coverage are eligible for National Health Insurance coverage if they have an address in Japan. In this case, they must make arrangements for enrollment by themselves at a local municipal office.

National Health Insurance premiums are calculated in household units based on the premium rate that each municipality establishes, and the householder bears the whole amount.

\* For more details, please refer to Chapter 6, "Medical Care".

#### (4) National pension / employee pension insurance

National pension and employee pension insurance provide insurance benefits to workers and their families in order to ensure a certain standard of living for workers and their bereaved families, and contribute to the improvement of their welfare, in cases where the workers become older and suffer from physical disability due to illness or injury, or die, leaving the bereaved families to face great difficulties.

In the same way as health insurance, employee pension insurance is compulsory for business establishments to which the following apply:

- Businesses run by the state, or regional governments or corporations
- Individual businesses of certain industries regularly employing five or more persons

Workers employed by applicable establishments are covered by this system (dispatched workers, contract employees, part-time workers are covered the under employee pension insurance as well, provided their prescribed working hours of one week and prescribed working days of one month are at least three-quarters of those of regular workers). Even if they are less than three-quarters, workers will be covered by employee pension insurance if the following five conditions are met::

- At least 20 hours or more prescribed working hours per week
- Monthly wage of 88,000 yen or more
- Expected employment period of at least one year
- Not a student
- Employed by a company with at least 501 employees (a worker employed by a company with 500 or less employees will be covered by employee pension insurance if it is provided in a labor contract)

Insurance premiums under the employee pension insurance scheme are paid at fixed rates, and the company and the workers share the payment of premiums equally. Premiums under the National Pension scheme are a fixed amount, and the insured person pays the full amount.

### 3 Rules for working

#### 3-1 Wages

The Minimum Wage Act stipulates the minimum amount of wage that a company must pay. The "minimum wage" applies to all workers, including regular employees, dispatched workers, contract employees, part-time workers, temporary workers and so on regardless of differences in their type of employment. It is prohibited, even if a worker agrees, to conclude a contract at a lower wage than the minimum wage. Hence, even if you agreed to work at a lower wage than the minimum wage at the request of a company, such a promise is null and void under the law, and it shall be regarded you agreed to a wage equal to the amount of the minimum wage.

Therefore, you can claim a sum equal to the difference of your wage from the minimum wage, x hours worked, later.

one point



#### Leave allowance

In the event of an absence from work for reasons attributable to the company, the company must pay leave allowance equal to at least 60 percent of the worker's average wage in order to guarantee the minimum living standard of the worker. As long as the reasons for absence from work are attributable to the company, a certain level of salary is guaranteed to the worker.

Therefore, one should not assume that "I cannot be paid because I did not work".

### 3-2 How the wages are paid

There are rules on how wages must be paid to ensure that wages are paid in full to the workers. The following four principles are established.

1) Principle of payment in currency

Wages must be paid in cash. It is not permitted to pay in kind (such as company goods).

However, if a worker agrees, bank transfer or other means can be used.

In addition, if a company and the labor union made an agreement, payment can be made in kind instead of payment in currency.

2) Principle of direct payment

Wages must be paid directly to the worker himself. For example, a company can not make payment to parents, etc., on the ground that the worker is a minor.

3) The principle of payment in full

The wages must be paid in full. It is prohibited to forcibly deduct part of the wages (deduction).

However, deductions stipulated by law, such as income tax and social insurance premiums, etc., are permitted. In addition, it is permitted for a company to deduct part of the wages if a written agreement is concluded with a labor union formed by a majority of workers, or a representative of a majority of workers in cases where there is no union formed by a majority of workers.

4) Principle of payment at least once a month periodically

Wages must be paid at least once a month on a fixed date. For example, it is not permitted to pay a two-month wage altogether. In addition, it is prohibited not to specify the date of payment, for example, is not permitted to say "from 20th to 25th every month", or "the 4th Friday every month", in which the payment day changes within the range of 7 days in a month. However, extraordinary wages and bonuses are exceptions.

### 3-3 Working hours, rest periods, rest days

Maximum Working hours are stipulated by law. The Labor Standards Law stipulates that the maximum working hours should be 8 hours a day and 40 hours a week (legal working hours). If a company wants to have workers work overtime, the company must pay extra wages.

In addition, a company must provide its workers, during the working hours, with a rest period of at least 45 minutes if the working hours per day exceed 6 hours, and at least 60 minutes if they exceed 8 hours.

The company must give workers at least one rest day (legal holiday) per week, or at least 4 rest days over the period of 4 weeks.

In addition, although the worker dispatching agency shall assume responsibility for making decisions on working conditions of dispatched workers, including working hours, rest periods, holidays, etc., the company receiving the worker dispatch service shall assume responsibility for observing those rules.



## Annual paid leave

Annual paid leave is a holiday (vacation) that a worker may take for which wages are paid even though he is absent from work on the prescribed work days. A worker who has been working continuously for 6 months and reported for work on at least 80% of the total working days can take annual paid leave of 10 working days. Furthermore, as the worker's years of service increases, the number of paid holidays he can enjoy annually will increase as well as long as he meets the condition of at least 80% of attendance at work (with an upper limit of 20 days).

In addition, workers such as dispatched workers and part-time workers, even though they have different types of employment from that of regular employees, shall be granted the same number of paid holidays as regular employees, provided they:

- have worked continuously for 6 months
- reported for work on at least 80% of all working days (\*)
- worked for at least 5 days a week or 217 days a year

Even in cases where they work only 4 days or less a week or 216 days or less a year, they shall be granted paid holidays in the same amount as regular employees, if their prescribed working hours are at least 30 hours a week.

Workers whose prescribed working hours are 4 days or less a week or 216 days or less a year, and whose prescribed working hours are less than 30 hours a week, are granted paid holidays commensurate to the prescribed number of their working days.

\* When the contract of an employee with a fixed-term contract is renewed, the days he reported for work prior to renewal of the contract will be included in the calculation if renewal of contract makes it virtually the same as continuous employment.

## 3-4 Overtime work, and work on holidays

A company must conclude a written agreement (hereinafter referred to as the “36 agreement”) with a labor union organized by a majority of workers, or a representative of a majority of workers if there is no union organized by a majority of workers, if the company wants to have workers work beyond statutory working hours, or on legal holidays.

In addition, a company must pay increased wages if the company has workers work over legal working hours, or on legal holidays, based on the 36 agreement.

one point



## How to calculate the rate of premium for overtime

- 1) 25% or more for overtime work beyond statutory working hours  
\* For overtime work exceeding statutory working hours by 60 hours a month, increased wage by 50% or more must be paid
- 2) 35% or more for work on a legal holiday (holiday work)
- 3) 25% or more for late night work, 10:00 pm to 5:00 am (midnight work)  
\* For example, in a case of overtime work beyond statutory working hours, when it is also late-night work at the same time (1 + 3), the wage to be paid shall be increased by 50% or more.

The wage premium for overtime shall apply to all workers, regardless of types of employment. Therefore, the extra pay shall be paid to dispatched workers, contract employees, part-time workers and temporary workers (*Arubaito*).

## 3-5 Safe and comfortable work environment

The Occupational Safety and Health Act is provided to ensure the safety and health of workers in the workplace, and to create a comfortable working environment.

The Occupational Safety and Health Act stipulates that a company must take necessary measures to prevent workers from having accidents or getting sick due to their work. In addition, it stipulates that workers must abide by the rules necessary to prevent occupational accidents and participate in measures taken by the company.

For example, a company must conduct a medical check by a doctor when a worker is hired, and once every year thereafter (workers performing dangerous or harmful work shall receive a health checkup every six months), and workers must receive such medical checkup.

In addition, mental health problems due to work stress have also become a major issue in recent years. In the light of this, companies must undertake stress checks on workers and take necessary measures based on the results, such as job rotation.

Furthermore, companies must, from the viewpoint of health management, objectively grasp the state of working hours of workers, and provide workers who suffer from fatigue due to long working hours with face-to-face guidance by a physician. Based on the results, the company must take necessary measures on employment, such as job rotation.



## Medical checkup

The Safety and Health Law applies not only to regular employees but also to dispatched employees, contract employees, part-time workers and temporary workers if they meet the following two conditions:

- Being employed with a contract without fixed period (in case of employees with a fixed-period contract, the worker must be expected to be employed for at least one year, or have been employed at least one year by renewal of the contract)
- Working hours per week are three-quarters or more of the prescribed working hours of regular workers engaged in the same type of job at a relevant business site.



## Face-to-face guidance by a physician

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, not only regular employees but also dispatched workers, contract employees, part-time workers and temporary workers who have performed overtime work / holiday work / for over 80 hours a month, and who are recognized to be suffering from fatigue (if they submit a request), are eligible (\*) for face-to-face guidance by a physician.

\* R & D workers who worked overtime or worked on holidays for 100 hours or more per month, and workers under the highly skilled professional system who worked longer hours than the Health Management Hours by 40 hours per week where the excess hours per week have accumulated to more than 100 hours per month, are eligible for face-to-face guidance by a physician without making a request.

### 3-6 Injuries, illness, etc., at work

Workers are compensated by Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance if they incurred an injury or illness due to their jobs.

For example, if you get treatment at a hospital participating at Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance, the treatment cost in principle will be free (if you go to a hospital which is not participating, you must pay the cost initially, but you will be reimbursed by making a request to the Labor Standards Inspection Office). If you have to take a break from work, you can receive compensation for absence from work (the business owner shall pay 60% of the average wage until the third day of leave, and 80% of the amount equivalent to the average pay shall be covered by Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance from the fourth day). If a worker dies, Benefits (Compensation) for the Surviving Family will be provided to the bereaved family.

It should be noted that it is prohibited to fire a worker during a period he is away from work, and 30 days thereafter, for treatment of an injury or illness due to an industrial accident.

In addition, Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance covers not only injuries and illnesses at work, but also injuries, etc., incurred during commuting. Mental disorders such as depression due to causes such as long working hours are also covered by Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance.

You can not use health insurance if the injury or sickness was caused because of work, so you must claim for workers' injury insurance benefits. If you have any issue concerning injuries, etc., incurred during work or commuting, please consult the Labor Standards Inspection Office.

\* Industrial Accident Compensation Insurance is applicable to not only regular employees but also dispatched workers, contract employees, part-time workers and temporary workers (*Arubaito*).

### 3-7 Prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex

With regard to the recruitment and employment of workers, employers shall provide equal opportunities for all persons regardless of sex.

With regard to the following matters, employers shall not discriminate against workers on the basis of sex. Assignment, promotion, demotion, and training of workers; Loans for housing and other similar fringe benefits as provided by Ordinance of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare; Change in job type and employment status of workers; and Encouragement of retirement, mandatory retirement age, dismissal, and renewal of the labor contract.

Employers shall not use the fact that a Worker is a woman as a basis for engaging in differential treatment in comparison to men with respect to Wages.

### 3-8 Maternity leave, childcare leave / family care leave, etc.

If a woman who is expecting to give birth within 6 weeks (or within 14 weeks in the case of multiple fetuses) requests leave from work, the Employer shall not make her work. In addition, employers shall not have a woman work within 8 weeks after childbirth; provided, however, that this shall not prevent an Employer from having such a woman work, if she has so requested, after 6 weeks have passed since childbirth, in activities which a doctor has approved as having no adverse effect on her.

In the event that a pregnant woman has so requested, an Employer shall transfer her to other light activities.

In the event that an expectant or nursing mother has so requested, an employer shall not have her work in excess of the statutory working hours per week or per day even when an irregular work system is adapted in the workplace. In addition in the event that an expectant or nursing mother has so requested, an employer shall not have her work overtime nor work on days off, at night.

Employers shall not stipulate marriage, pregnancy or childbirth as a reason for retirement of women workers.

Employers shall not dismiss women workers for marriage.

Employers shall not dismiss or give disadvantageous treatment to women workers by reason of pregnancy, childbirth, or for maternity leave before childbirth, etc. (this applies to companies receiving dispatched workers).

Dismissal of women workers who are pregnant or in the first year after childbirth shall be void. However, this shall not apply in the event that the employers prove that dismissals are not by reasons prescribed in the preceding paragraph.

Employers shall secure the necessary time off so that women workers they employ may receive the health guidance and medical examinations. In addition, Employers shall take necessary measures, such as change of working hours and reduction of work, in order to enable the women workers they employ to comply with the directions they receive based on the health guidance and medical examinations. (this also applies to companies that receive dispatched workers).

Under the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law, a worker can take childcare leave, in principle, until the child becomes 1 year old (up to 2 years old in certain cases). Men as well as women can take childcare leave. Furthermore, it is possible to take childcare leave for one year until the child becomes one year and two months if certain conditions are met, such as both parents will take childcare leave.

In addition, under the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law, a worker can take family care leave in order to care for a family member requiring nursing care.

Family care leave can be divided up to three times for up to 93 days in total per family member requiring nursing care.

The company can not refuse applications for childcare leave and family care leave from eligible workers.

The company is prohibited by the law from firing or treating workers unfavorably on the grounds that they have requested or taken childcare leave / family care leave. (Also applies to the company receiving dispatched workers).



## Maternity leave for dispatched workers, etc.

- \* Dispatched workers must submit a request for maternity leave, childcare leave and family care leave to the temporary worker dispatching agency.
- \* Fixed-term contract employees, such as dispatched workers, contract employees, part-time workers and temporary workers, can also take childcare leave and family care leave, if they meet the following two conditions at the time they request leave.
  - They have continued working for more than one year
  - It is not clear that the term of their labor contract will expire prior to:
    - the day the child becomes one and 6 months old (two years old, for childcare leave for a child of one and six months to two years old) (in the case of childcare leave),or,
  - a period of six months after 93 days has elapsed from the scheduled day that family care leave begins.

### 3-9 Harassment prevention measures

Employers shall establish necessary measures in terms of employment management to give advice to workers and cope with problems of workers, and take other necessary measures so that workers they employ do not suffer any disadvantage in their working conditions by reason of sexual harassment, maternity harassment, etc. (this applies also to companies receiving dispatched workers).

### 3-10 Guidelines for Employment Management of Foreign Nationals

In order to keep Japan a country that is attractive to non-Japanese workers who are currently working in Japan in various specialized / technical fields as well as those wishing to work in Japan in the future, it is necessary to create an environment where workers with various backgrounds can safely exercise their abilities effectively, including ensuring fair treatment. Guidelines for employers to deal appropriately with the improvement of employment management of foreign workers, etc. (the “Guidelines for Employment Management of Foreign Nationals”) have been drawn up so that employers will take appropriate measures to improve employment management and re-employment support for non-Japanese workers. The personnel of the Public Employment Security Office (*Hello Work*), when they visit business establishments employing foreign workers, use these guidelines to provide necessary advice and guidance.

Please visit the website below for the main content of the Guidelines for Employment Management of Foreign Nationals.

[https://www.mhlw.go.jp/file/06-Seisakujouhou-11650000-Shokugyouseiteikyokukenyukiroudoutaisakubu/300529\\_3.pdf](https://www.mhlw.go.jp/file/06-Seisakujouhou-11650000-Shokugyouseiteikyokukenyukiroudoutaisakubu/300529_3.pdf)

Please visit the website below for the Guidelines for Employment Management of Foreign Nationals.

<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/file/06-Seisakujouhou-11650000-Shokugyouseiteikyokukenyukiroudoutaisakubu/1015820920.pdf>

## 4 Forms of employment

### 4-1 Dispatched workers (dispatched employees)

Under the worker dispatching arrangement, a worker who has concluded a labor contract with a temporary staff company (dispatching company) is sent to another company based on a worker dispatching service contract concluded in advance, and the worker works under the directions and orders of the company receiving the dispatched worker. The worker dispatching arrangement is complicated, because the company that pays the worker and the company that gives instructions and orders at work are different. Thus, the Worker Dispatching Law sets forth detailed rules for dispatched workers.

In dispatching, the legal employer is the dispatching company. Therefore, if an accident or problem occurs, the dispatching company must deal with it responsibly. However, it is inappropriate for a company receiving dispatched workers not to assume any responsibility, because it is the company that is actually giving instructions and orders to the workers. Therefore, the Worker Dispatching Law provides for matters for which both parties should take responsibility, including provisions pertaining to the Labor Standards Act and the Industrial Safety and Health Law. There are personnel who offer consultation in both the dispatching companies and the companies receiving dispatched workers. Therefore, please seek consultation with a person in charge if you encounter problems at work.

### 4-2 Contract employees (employees with fixed-term employment contracts)

A labor contract with prefixed contract term based on an agreement between a worker and a company will be automatically terminated upon expiration of the term of contract (the term of contract can be extended if the worker and the company agree to renew the labor contract). The term of contract shall be 3 years maximum, with exceptions in certain cases.

### 4-3 Part-time workers

Part-time workers are "part-time employees" as defined in the Part-Time Employment Act, and the term refers to workers whose prescribed weekly working hours are shorter than that of ordinary workers (so-called "regular employees") employed at the same workplace. Under the Act, there is no distinction between part-timers and "temporary part-time workers (*Arubaito*)", and they are all regarded as part-time workers, regardless of how they are called, provided they meet the same conditions.

Also, since part-time workers are essentially workers, various labor laws apply to them as well. Therefore, if they meet certain requirements, part-time workers can take annual paid leave, and be eligible for employment insurance, health insurance and employees' pension insurance.

While companies are obligated to clearly indicate working conditions when hiring workers, and with regard to five particularly important conditions, issue documents in principle (see 2-1), the Part-Time Employment Act also stipulates that companies must provide documentation or other measures to clarify the availability of pay raises, retirement allowances, bonuses and relevant contact window.

#### 4-4 A Person who works by concluding service agreement / contract

In a "subcontracting" or "contract" arrangement, unlike a "worker" mentioned in the above, payment is made for completion of a work assignment that a contractor receives from a customer. Therefore, contractors are treated as "business owners" who do not work under the instruction of a client. So, basically, a contractor can not receive protection as a "worker".

However, even if you conclude a contract as a "subcontractor" or "contractor", if it is judged from the actual type of employment that you are a "worker" who actually receives instructions from the client, you can be protected as a "worker".

If you can not decide if you are a "worker" or not, please consult the Labor Standards Inspection Office.

### 5 Resignation / Dismissal

#### 5-1 Resignation

In general, termination of a labor contract by any means other than dismissal or termination of fixed-term employment (see 5-2) is called resignation.

When a worker submits his/her request to leave, applicable laws and regulations differ depending on whether the labor contract was concluded with or without a fixed-term.

If the worker had concluded a labor contract without a fixed-term, the labor contract will be terminated in 2 weeks, in principle, if a worker submits a request to leave (if the company's employment rules provide for retirement procedures, you must submit your request to leave accordingly).

If a worker concluded a labor contract with a fixed-term, he/she can not resign in the middle of the term of contract unless there are unavoidable circumstances, and the labor contract will end when the term of contract expires. Also, in order for the same worker to continue working after the expiration of the term of contract, it is necessary to re-enter a new labor contract (such contract renewal requires the consent of both the company and the worker).

A worker, at his/her sole discretion, may resign from the company, but it is important to follow the rules as a member of society in Japan, for example by informing your superior of your intention to resign in advance, given notice in writing, handing over work duties, etc. In some cases, the company will have set up procedures for resignation in the employment rules and so on. If you decide to resign, it is necessary to find out how the resignation procedures work at your company first.

## 5-2 Dismissal

### (1) Dismissal

A unilateral termination of a labor contract by a company is referred to as dismissal.

A company cannot dismiss its workers at will for any reason. If the dismissal lacks an objective, rational reason and is deemed inappropriate under socially accepted conventions, the dismissal shall be invalid.

In addition, it is required for a company to prescribe, in its employment rules, reasons for dismissal (the circumstances that are the basis for dismissal) in advance.

In addition, in the event that a company wishes to dismiss a worker, the company is required to provide at least 30 days advance notice to the worker concerned. If no advance notice is given, the company must pay the worker the average wages for 30 days or more (dismissal notice payment) (even if advance notice is given, if it was given less than 30 days in advance, the company must pay the average wage for the number of days falling short as dismissal notice payment).

### (2) Termination of fixed-term employment

If a new contract is not concluded or a current labor contract is not renewed when a fixed-term employment expires, it is termination of fixed-term employment.

In case of a fixed-term labor contract, in principle, the labor contract will automatically terminate when the term of contract expires.

Thus, termination of fixed-term employment is different from dismissal in which a company unilaterally terminates a labor contract in the middle of the term of contract.

If the contract was renewed three or more times, or if the person has continued to work for more than one year, the company is required to provide at least 30 days advance notice if the company does not intend to re-enter the next labor contract.

When it can be virtually regarded as a dismissal as in a case of a labor contract without a fixed term considering the contract was renewed repeatedly, or when the worker reasonably assumed continuation of the employment, etc., in other words, when no objective or rational reasons to terminate the fixed-term employment exist, and it is recognized inappropriate under socially accepted conventions, the company can not terminate the fixed-term employment. In this case, the labor contract with a fixed term shall be renewed under the same working conditions as before.

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### Dismissal for purposes of reorganization

When a company carries out workforce reduction due to recession, poor management, etc., a dismissal in this case is referred to as dismissal for the purposes of reorganization. Whether or not such a restructuring termination is valid or not is judged in the light of the following matters.

#### 1) Necessity of workforce reduction

It must be based on needs serious enough to carry out workforce reduction measures in the light of company management, such as recession, business slump, etc.

#### 2) Efforts made to avoid dismissal

Efforts have been made to avoid dismissal through other means, such as reassignment, recruitment of desired retirees, etc.

#### 3) Rationality for choosing suitable persons

The criteria for choosing persons subject to restructuring termination must be objective and rational, and their implementation must be fair

#### 4) Appropriateness of dismissal procedures

The need for dismissal, and its timing, scale and method, must be explained to the labor union or workers to gain their understanding



## Encouragement to retire

When a company encourages its worker to voluntarily retire, saying, "We want you to quit," or "Will you do us a favor and quit?" , it is referred to as encouragement to retire. It is different from a notice of dismissal (see 5-2 (1)), in which the company unilaterally gives a notice of termination of an employment contract.

It is up to the worker to decide whether to accept the encouragement to retire or not, and there is no need to make an immediate decision on the spot. If the worker has no intention to retire, he must clearly communicate that he will not accept the encouragement to retire.

## 6 Bankruptcy of the company

A system exists for the government to reimburse unpaid wages under the Act on Ensuring Payment of Wages, in the event a company goes bankrupt and can not pay salaries to its workers.

Please consult with the Labor Standards Inspection Office in such a case, as part of the unpaid wages will be reimbursed.

## 7 Basic allowance

If you become unemployed, you can receive a basic allowance if you were covered by employment insurance. In order to be eligible to receive a basic allowance, a worker must have worked at least 11 days per month for 12 months during the span of two years before he left the company. However, if the reason for leaving the company was bankruptcy or termination due to circumstances of the company, or non-renewal of a fixed-term labor contract, etc., a worker can receive the basic allowance provided he worked at least 11 days for at least 6 months during the period of one year before he left the company.

In addition, the date that payment of the benefit begins and the period of the benefit vary depending on the reasons for becoming unemployed.

The benefit is provided starting on the day you have been unemployed for at least 7 days in total after you submitted a job application and a letter of separation (when an employee leaves the company, the company is required to issue the letter of separation) was accepted at the Public Employment Security Office (Hello Work). But, if you resigned for your own reasons or if you were dismissed for serious reasons due to your fault, the benefit payment will not start until another three months have passed.

Therefore, when you receive a letter of separation, make sure to check and read the column for the reasons for your leaving the company. Because if it states "voluntary resignation", when in fact you were dismissed due to company circumstances or you merely responded to the encouragement to retire, you will be at a disadvantage in receiving the basic allowance.

In addition, it is possible to get a certificate of reasons for retirement or termination from the company.

## 1. Pregnancy

## 1-1. Maternal and child health handbook

Once you learn about your pregnancy, report it to your local municipal office as soon as possible.

The office will issue you a maternal and child health handbook (*boshi kenko techo*) and give you tickets for receiving subsidized prenatal checkups and information on consultations with public health nurses and other professionals and prenatal classes, for example.

The maternal and child health handbook is designed to enable healthcare professionals to note and view all required health records from pregnancy to birth and beyond including the period from infancy to early childhood and to allow parents and guardians to note and manage information.

## 1-2. Prenatal health checkups

During pregnancy, you must take even greater care of your health than usual. Please have regular prenatal checkups and manage your health according to the advice of doctors, midwives, and other healthcare professionals.

It is best to have a checkup once every four weeks from early pregnancy until week 23, once every two weeks from week 24 to week 35, and once a week from week 36 until birth.

## 1-3. Home visits by a public health nurse, midwife, or other healthcare professional

A public health nurse, midwife, or other healthcare professional will visit you at your home to give you advice on home life, meals, and other relevant topics and respond to any uncertainties or concerns you may have about pregnancy or childbirth or questions about caring for an infant. There is no fee for these visits. For details, please visit your local municipal office.

## 1-4. Prenatal classes (for mothers and fathers)

Your municipality holds prenatal classes on pregnancy, childbirth, parenting, nutrition, and other relevant topics. These classes are also an opportunity to meet and talk with other expecting parents.

## 2. Procedure after birth

### 2-1. Notification of birth

Regardless of your child's nationality, a notification of birth must be submitted within 14 days of birth for all children born in Japan.

Submit the notification of birth to the municipality where your child was born or the municipality of the person submitting the notification.  
(See Chapter 2, number 4.)

### 2-2. Obtaining Japanese nationality for your child

If both parents do not have Japanese nationality, your child cannot obtain Japanese nationality even if he or she is born in Japan.

The procedure for acquisition of Japanese nationality for your child must be completed at the embassy or consulate in Japan for the country of which the father or mother is a citizen. (See Chapter 2, number 4.)

## 3. Childbirth expenses and allowances

As pregnancy and childbirth are not illnesses, they are not generally covered by health insurance, but C-sections and other surgical procedures are covered by health insurance.

### 3-1. Lump sum birth allowance

This is a system for paying out a fixed amount as insurance benefits based on the Health Insurance Act and other laws to reduce the financial burden of childbirth when the mother is enrolled in employees' health insurance or the national health insurance program, or the dependent of someone who is enrolled in an employees' health insurance program.

There are two types of payment systems: the direct payment system and the proxy recipient system.

- Direct payment system: In this system, the medical institution requests and receives the lump-sum allowance for childbirth on the mother's behalf. As the lump-sum allowance is paid directly to the medical institution, you do not have to pay the full amount of childbirth for childbirth expenses at the payment counter when leaving the hospital.
- Proxy recipient system: In this system, when requesting the lump-sum allowance for childbirth from the Health Insurance Association or other association you are enrolled in, you request the medical institution where your child will be born to receive the allowance so that it is paid directly to the medical institution.

### 3-2. Childbirth allowance

If you are enrolled in health insurance yourself and must take a leave of absence from work without pay, you will receive a childbirth allowance for the duration you were absent within the period starting 42 days before birth (the due date) and ending 56 days after the date of birth (98 days for multiples).

The date of birth is included in the period prior to the date when the child is born. If the actual date of birth is later than the due date, you will also receive a childbirth allowance for the delayed period.

### 3-3. Childcare leave benefits

If you are enrolled in unemployment insurance and take childcare leave to care for a child who is less than one year of age (one year and two months if certain conditions are met or one year and six months or two years if other certain conditions are met) and meet certain conditions, for example your earnings during childcare leave drop to less than 80% of the earnings you made when starting your leave, you can apply for benefits at Hello Work to receive the benefits.

### 3-4. Child allowance

The child allowance is given to ensure a stable home environment and healthy development of children.

#### (1) Eligibility

Households raising a child until the first March 31<sup>st</sup> after their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday

#### (2) Amount

Age of child	Amount of child allowance (monthly amount per child)
Under 3	Uniform amount of 15,000 yen
From 3 years until the first March 31 <sup>st</sup> after their 12 <sup>th</sup> birthday	10,000 yen (15,000 yen for third child and on)
From the first March 31 <sup>st</sup> after their 12 <sup>th</sup> birthday until the first March 31 <sup>st</sup> after their 15 <sup>th</sup> birthday	Uniform amount of 10,000 yen

\*If the income of the person supporting the child is over the income limit, a uniform amount of 5,000 yen a month is given as a special benefit.

\**Third child and on* means the third child and subsequent children among children who have not reached the first March 31<sup>st</sup> after their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday and are being supported.

### (3) Payment period

As a rule, child allowances are paid every June, October, and February for the period until the end of the previous month.



#### Main rules for the child allowance system

- As a rule, allowances are paid for children living in Japan.
- If the parents are separated, for example for divorce by agreement proceedings, priority for the allowance is given to the parent who lives with the child.
- If the parents live outside of Japan and the child lives in Japan, they may designate someone else to be responsible for the child and that person will receive the allowance.
- If a guardian of a minor is supporting the child, that person will receive the allowance.
- If the child lives in an institution or with a foster parent, for example, as a rule, the administrator of the institution or the foster parent will receive the allowance.

\*For details, please visit your local municipal office (or workplace if you are a civil servant).

## 4. Parenting

### 4-1. Checkup of infants

Your municipality is obligated to provide health checkups for 18-month-olds and 3-year-olds. Health checkups are also given to children of other ages as needed, and it is recommended to take your child for checkups.

Checkups consist of tests of development, height and weight measurement, and parenting advice, for example. For details, please visit your local municipal office.

### 4-2. Vaccinations

There are some illnesses that can be immunized against with vaccinations.

Vaccinations include routine vaccinations recommended by the municipality and optional vaccinations available by request. Routine vaccinations are free in many municipalities while optional vaccinations are paid out-of-pocket.

Consult your doctor or other healthcare professional to decide on the order and schedule for vaccinations based on your child's health.

#### 4-3. Medical expenses for children

If you are enrolled in health insurance, you pay 20% of the medical expenses for children up to age six prior to the start of compulsory education.

Depending on your local municipality, medical expenses may be free until the end of elementary school or additional aid may be provided.

#### 4-4. Facilities for preschool-aged children

There are different types of facilities for children up to age six prior to the start of compulsory education, such as daycares, kindergartens, and centers for early childhood education. Visit your local municipal office for information on what types of facilities are available in your area.

As of October 2019, fees for daycares, kindergartens, centers for early childhood education, and other such facilities will be free for all children aged 3 to 5. Fees will also be free for children aged 0 to 2 in households that are exempt from resident tax.

##### (1) Daycare (*Hoikujo*)

These facilities care for children in lieu of parents and guardians who are unable to provide care at home for work or other reasons.

Regular daycare services are 8 hours a day and some daycares also offer after-hours evening and holiday daycare services. Some daycares offer hourly care services in which children can be left there on an hourly basis in the event of urgent business or a short-term part-time job, for example.

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##### Non-registered daycare facilities

This is the general term for facilities that care for babies and young children that have not been approved according to the Child Welfare Act or other laws or regulations.

There are places called *muninka hoikujo* and *takujijo* as well as so-called baby hotels where you can leave your child overnight. Babysitters who are not certified are also considered non-registered daycare facilities. There are also other types of daycares such as workplace daycare facilities at some companies or hospitals for the children of employees, temporary daycares for events, and daycares for customers at department stores.

Non-registered daycare facilities can be established freely by individuals or companies but must meet certain standards similar to registered daycare facilities.

The main differences with registered facilities are in establishment standards, objectives of the business, application method, fees, and management costs.

##### (3) Kindergarten (*Yochien*)

These are educational facilities for children from age three until they start elementary school. The standard duration for education is four hours a day, but extended care is available at some kindergartens for parents and guardians who are working. Unlike education from elementary school and on, kindergartens focus on self-directed play. They also offer parenting advice for parents and guardians in the local area and some places open their schoolyard to the public.

### (3) Center for early childhood education (*Nintei Kodomoen*)

Centers for early childhood education are kindergartens and daycares that meet certification standards and

- provide early childhood education and daycare services for preschool-aged children
- support parenting in the local area

They can be used regardless of whether parents/guardians work or are at home. They also have other functions for all households with children such as consultation activities to help with the anxiety of parenting and providing a place parents and children to get together.

## 4 -5. After school children's club (after-school care program)

These are programs with after-school care workers that offer a place for appropriate play and to spend time after classes end for the day for elementary school children whose parents or guardians are not at home during the daytime for work or other reasons. (In addition to after school children's clubs, some municipalities also offer after-school children's classes that include different types of learning and interactive activities using spare classrooms as school with participation from community residents. These are open to all elementary school students regardless of whether or not their parents or guardians are working.)

## 4-6. Family Support Center

Members are stay-at-home mothers and others who need assistance watching infants, elementary school students, or other children they are raising and people who want to provide assistance. Family Support Centers are organizations that act as a go-between to help members support each other.

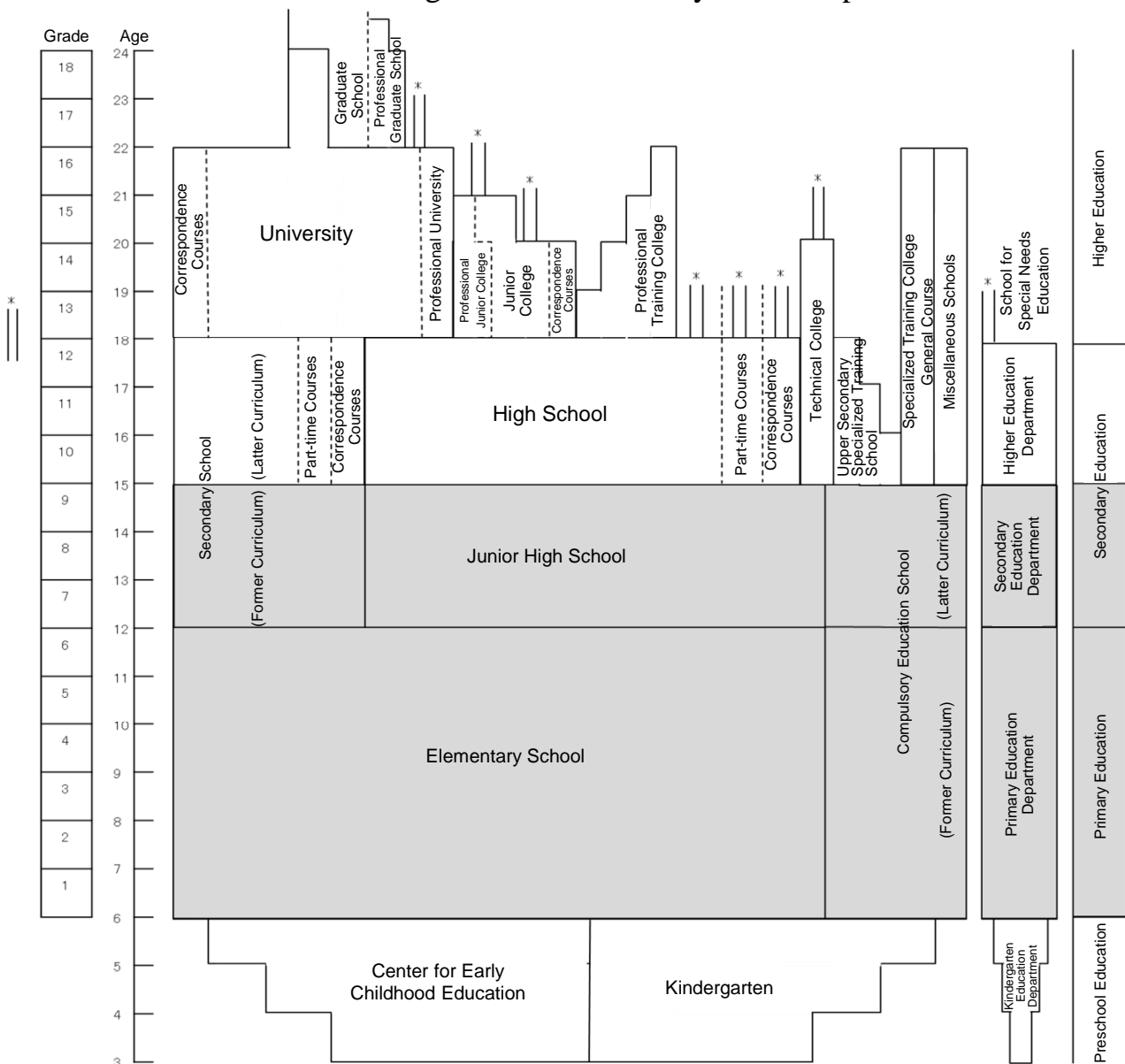
Examples of support are taking children to and from daycare facilities, watching children after daycare facility hours or after school, or watching children while parents or guardians go out for grocery shopping or to run other errands.

Members register at the nearest local Family Support Center. When you register, a Family Support Center advisor introduces you to a member who will provide you with assistance and acts as a go-between for you and that person. When you are done using the service, you pay a fee to the person who provided assistance.

## 1 Education system in Japan

The education system currently used in Japan is called a 6-3-3-4 system, with 6 years of elementary school, 3 years of junior high school, 3 years of high school, and 4 years of university. Elementary school and junior high school are compulsory. Kindergartens and other facilities offer preschool education.

Diagram of the school system in Japan



- Notes: (1) The gray sections are compulsory education.  
 (2) Asterisks denote specialist education.  
 (3) For a special course with a minimum term of study of one year can be placed in high schools, latter curriculum of secondary schools, universities, junior colleges, and higher education departments of schools for special needs education.  
 (4) Centers for early childhood education are both schools and child welfare facilities and children aged 0 to 2 years can also enroll.  
 (5) There are no uniform specifications for age and enrollment requirements for specialized training college general courses and miscellaneous schools.

## 1-1 Elementary school and junior high school

Parents and guardians with children aged 6 to 15 who have Japanese nationality are obligated to have those children attend elementary school and junior high school.

A foreign child may transfer to a public elementary school or junior high school and receive education at no cost (no tuition or textbook costs). Tell your local municipal office you wish to enter your child into a Japanese school. Then, take the Enrollment Permit for Non-Japanese Students and other documents you receive from the office and go to the school that was specified.

If you wish to have your child transfer to a public elementary school or junior high school (mid-year), tell your local municipal office you wish to enter your child into a Japanese school. Then, take the Enrollment Permit for Non-Japanese Students and other documents you receive from the office and go to the school that was specified.

Tuition and textbook costs for public elementary schools and junior high schools are free.

In Japan, in addition to elementary schools and junior high schools, there are also compulsory education schools that offer integrated compulsory education for nine years and schools for special needs education for children with disabilities.

- Guidebook for Starting School

(English, Korean, Vietnamese, Filipino, Chinese, Portuguese, and Spanish versions are available)

[http://www.mext.go.jp/a\\_menu/shotou/clarinet/003/1320860.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/clarinet/003/1320860.htm)



### Schools for special needs education

For children with disabilities, the educational needs of each individual must be assessed and appropriate education must be given with special considerations to maximize their abilities and potential, promote their independence, and allow them to participate in society. To achieve this, various systems are used depending on the type and level of disability, such as a special curriculum in schools for special needs education or classes for special needs education at elementary and junior high schools, small class sizes, textbooks created with special considerations, staff and faculty with expertise and experience working with children with disabilities, and facilities and equipment designed to accommodate disabilities.

Note that the elementary school department and junior high school department in schools for special needs education are part of compulsory education.



## PTA

The PTA is an organization that aims to promote healthy development of children and comprises parents, guardians, and teachers working together to deepen ties and learn from one another. Most PTAs in Japan are formed for each school by the parents and guardians of children attending the school and the staff and faculty at the school.

Note that the PTA is a volunteer organization of members who join because they agree with the objectives of activities proposed by the respective PTA.

## 1-2 High school

High schools take on the later stage of secondary education following junior high school and before university and offer not only regular secondary education, but also specialized education.

High schools are divided into full-time, part-time, and correspondence courses depending on the educational format.

As a rule, students must participate in a selection process when enrolling in a high school.

## 1-3 Schools for foreign nationals

In addition to elementary schools, junior high schools, and high schools, there are also various forms of educational facilities for foreign national students. They are grouped under the term 'schools for foreign nationals.' So-called International Schools are also included as schools for foreign nationals. As foreign nationals each have different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, languages, educational curricula, and school advancement and employment experience, when enrolling in school, it may be best to choose one that is most suited for their needs. (For details on admission qualifications for university for students who have graduated from schools for foreign nationals in Japan, see '1-7. Higher Education Institutions (e.g. universities).')

#### 1-4 Evening junior high school

There are 33 evening junior high schools in 27 cities in 9 prefectures in Japan for students past the age for compulsory education who could not complete compulsory education for various reasons.

Foreign nationals who could not complete compulsory education in their country of origin or in Japan may attend evening junior high school. If there is an evening junior high school nearby, consult the board of education in that jurisdiction.

#### 1-5 Examination for Granting an Equivalency Certificate of Lower Secondary School Graduation

If you did not graduate from junior high school in Japan for reasons such as lacking Japanese citizenship, this exam measures whether or not you have an equivalent level of academic skills or higher as someone who graduated from junior high school. The exam is held once a year, and those who pass are certified to have an equivalent level of academic skills as someone who graduated from junior high school and are given a qualification (for candidacy for an examination) that makes them eligible to take the entrance examinations for higher education schools in Japan.

#### 1-6 Upper Secondary School Equivalency Examination

If you did not graduate from high school in Japan, this exam measures whether or not you have an equivalent level of academic skills or higher as someone who graduated from high school. The exam is held twice a year, and those who pass are certified to have an equivalent level of academic skills as someone who graduated from high school and are given a qualification for candidacy for an examination that makes them eligible to take the entrance examinations for universities, professional universities, junior colleges, professional junior colleges, professional training colleges (specialized training college post-secondary course) in Japan. The qualification can also be used in job hunting and qualification examinations, for example.

#### 1-7 Higher education institutions (e.g. universities)

In Japan, students who have completed high school, secondary school, or a designated school for foreign nationals ([http://www.mext.go.jp/a\\_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111314/003.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/koutou/shikaku/07111314/003.htm)) are qualified for admission to a university, professional and vocational university, junior college, professional and professional training college (specialized training college post-secondary course).

The International Baccalaureate, Abitur, Baccalaureate, or GCE Advanced Level qualifications that are international qualifications for admission to university are also recognized as admission qualifications for university. (List of International Baccalaureate authorized schools in Japan: <https://ibconsortium.mext.go.jp/ib-japan/authorization/>)

Students who received education outside of Japan and have completed a 12-year program at an educational institution that has been accredited by an international evaluation organization (WASC, CIS, ACSI) are also recognized as having admission qualifications for university in Japan.

In addition to the above, institutions of higher education in Japan include graduate schools and professional graduate schools usually attended after graduating from university and technical college attended after graduating from junior high school, for example. Each of these have their own admission qualifications.

#### 1-8 Entrance examinations for higher education Institutions

To enroll in a higher education institution, you must take the exam held by the respective higher education institution and go through a document screening. However, special admission is sometimes available for foreign nationals as decided by the respective institution. The Examination for Japanese University Admission for International Students (EJU) held by the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) for international students can be used at many universities and other schools for special admission.

## 2 Financial aid for educational expenses

### 2-1 Financial school aid

There is a system that offers parents and guardians in low income households who have elementary or junior high school aged children partial assistance for the expenses such as school supplies and school lunch.

The types of assistance and income limits vary from municipality to municipality.

### 2-2 High school tuition support fund

This system provides subsidies to cover tuition for high schools and similar level schools for students in households with an annual income of less than about 9.1 million yen.

The amount provided for students attending national or public high school is the same as their school's tuition. For students attending private schools or other schools, the upper payment limit increases with their households' income.

In either case, an application must be submitted. Check with your school for information.

### 2-3 High school supplemental scholarship fund

This system subsidizes educational expenses other than tuition, such as costs of textbooks and school supplies only parents and guardians with high school students in low income households are eligible for this system.

The amount varies with the type of school students are-attending. To receive a scholarship, an application must be submitted. For details, please visit your school or local prefectural office.

### 2-4 Scholarships in the higher education stage

Scholarships are established by the national government, local governments, and private organizations.

The national scholarship system offers grants and loans. Foreign nationals whose status of residence is Special Permanent Resident, Permanent Resident, Spouse or Child of Japanese National, Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident, or Long-term Resident and who will attend a higher education institution are eligible for these grants and loans. There are also grant-type scholarships for foreign nationals with a 'Student' status of residence who meet criteria for grades.

While grants do not need to be paid back, loans are borrowed and must be paid back at some point. There are two types of loan-type scholarships: loans without interest (*murishi*) and loans with interest (*yurishi*).

### 3 Studying Japanese

Being able to speak Japanese expands your range of activities and helps facilitate day-to-day activities. You can make new friends and acquaintances and those people may help you during your life in Japan. Language has the power to make your dreams come true. Keep studying Japanese so you can live how you like in Japanese.

#### 3-1 Places for learning Japanese

In addition to Japanese study at regular Japanese language schools and universities or other higher education institutions, Japanese classes are also held by private organizations such as local government offices, international associations, and NPOs. Get information about daily life and make friends while studying Japanese. Look and see if there are any Japanese schools or Japanese classes in your area.

Also, a growing number of people are learning Japanese with distance learning using social media or e-learning. Find the learning method that works best for you.

##### (1) Japanese schools

There are different courses depending on your goal, such as furthering your education, finding a job, or preparing for an exam, and you can study at any level from beginner to advanced. You can choose the lesson style, such as classes, group lessons, or private lessons. Most places require a fee.

##### (2) Local Japanese classes

These are held by the local municipal government or private organizations, often in community centers, spare classrooms in schools, and churches. Many are taught by volunteers and are cheaper than Japanese schools, but few offer daily study and most are only once or twice a week.

\*Check the following when looking for a Japanese class:

(1) Name of class, (2) organizer, (3) location, (4) contact information, (5) contact method, (6) languages, (7) study period, (8) number of sessions, (9) day and time, (10) eligibility qualifications, (11) cost, (12) class format (e.g. group, one-on-one), (13) number of students, (14) level, (15) teachers, (16) curriculum, and (17) availability of parking and daycare services

##### (3) Correspondence and distance education

If you are too busy to attend Japanese classes because of work or caring for your children, for example, you can also learn Japanese through correspondence courses or e-learning. Fees and service format vary, so it is best to choose the one that is easiest for you to stick with.

#### 3-2 Japanese Language Education Program for "Foreigners Living in Japan"

Actions performed by foreign nationals living in Japan that are required for forming a basic life base in day-to-day life or are urgent in relation to safety are expressed as 'daily life actions' in 23 languages. Check what you are currently able to achieve in Japanese and what you want to be able to achieve. You can then convey this to your Japanese teacher or the person who is helping you study Japanese.

\*Examples of daily life actions (23 languages)

[http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/kokugo\\_nihongo/kyoiku/nihongo\\_curriculum/index\\_2.html](http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/kokugo_nihongo/kyoiku/nihongo_curriculum/index_2.html)

### 3-3 Teaching materials for learning Japanese

Before buying a textbook, consider if you want to study alone or with someone else. Most people have a friend, local volunteer, someone at their workplace, family member, or someone else who teaches them Japanese. When studying in a class, there is usually a textbook you have to use, but if you are just studying with someone, you can talk with them and decide what textbook to use together.

Next is the content for study. Do you want to study the Japanese writing system (hiragana, katakana, kanji, romaji), conversation, or comprehensive learning covering reading, writing, speaking, and listening? Textbooks vary depending on your needs.

You can find textbooks at large bookstores, and the Handbook of Learning Japanese and Life in Japan also has examples for your reference.

[http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/policy/japanese\\_language/education/handbook/](http://www.bunka.go.jp/english/policy/japanese_language/education/handbook/)

1 Medical institutions

There are many different types of medical institutions in Japan that have different roles.

Clinics are for treatment of common illnesses and injuries, small- and medium-sized hospitals are for surgeries, inpatient care, and emergency care, and large hospitals are for treating emergency care patients with serious illnesses or patients requiring advanced medical care.

Although there are no restrictions for visiting medical institutions, for minor illnesses that do not require emergency care, it is best to visit your local clinic.

Present your health insurance card at the hospital or clinic. When you present your health insurance card, part of the medical expenses are covered. If you do not present your health insurance card or are not enrolled in a health insurance program, you must pay the full amount of your medical expenses out-of-pocket.

1-1 Types of medical institutions

The medical department is determined by the type of illness or injury. The following are examples of the types of illnesses and injuries for each department.

Internal Medicine	: Diagnosis of illnesses in the digestive system, respiratory system, cardiovascular system, urinary system, blood, endocrine system, nervous system, and other internal organs and non-surgical treatment using mostly medicine. Also diagnosis and treatment of general illnesses like common colds.
Surgical Department:	Treatment with a focus on surgery for cancer or illnesses of internal organs caused by trauma.
Pediatrics	: Treatment of illnesses in children.
Orthopedic Surgery	: Treatment of illnesses in motor-related organs such as bones, joints, muscles, and tendons and related illnesses in the nervous system.
Ophthalmology	: Treatment of eye-related illnesses.
Dentistry	: Treatment of tooth-related illnesses, orthodontics, and prosthodontics.
Obstetrics	: Treatment of conditions related to childbirth such as pregnancy, delivery, and neonatal care.

## 1-2 Finding a medical institution

You can search for medical institutions in PR brochures published by your local municipal government, on the Internet, or in Medical Care Functional Information Provision System provided on prefectural websites, for example. You can also consult your local municipal office or one of the over 380 medical safety support centers\* located around Japan.

If you are not proficient at Japanese, you can consult your local municipal office or local International Exchange Association to see if there are any medical institutions that have interpreters. There are also incorporated NPOs you can consult in foreign languages.

\*Established by cities and prefectures in cities with established health centers and special wards.

## 2 Medical insurance

Regardless of your nationality, anyone living in Japan can enroll in the public health insurance program and anyone can use health insurance anywhere at any time if they fall ill or are injured. The costs are shared by the whole country, reducing each patient's personal coverage of medical expenses, and the system ensures everyone equal opportunities for receiving high quality, advanced medical care.

When you present your health insurance card at the reception counter of the medical institution, you can receive medical care for which you only cover a set percentage.

If you are from a country that has entered a social security agreement with Japan that includes health insurance and have been issued a social security enrollment certificate from the Japanese government, you do not necessarily need to enroll in a health insurance system in Japan.

### 2-1 Health insurance

If you work at a company (office) where enrollment in health insurance is mandatory and one of the following from (1) to (3) apply, you must enroll in health insurance.

- (1) You are a full-time (permanent) employee, the representative of a corporation, or an executive officer
- (2) - Your regular working hours are at least 20 hours a week
  - You are expected to be employed for at least one year
  - Your salary is at least 88,000 yen a month
  - You are not a student
  - You work at a company with at least 501 employees

If you meet all of the above 5 requirements

- (3) If you work part-time and your hours are less than 30 hours a week but you work at least three-quarters the number of hours a week as a full-time (permanent) employee at your company (office)

#### (1) Insurance premiums

As a general rule, the company and the insured person (insurance subscriber) each pay half of the health insurance premiums. Dependents do not have to pay any premiums.

## (2) Benefits

### a. Copayment ratio for medical fees

The ratio of medical fees paid by the individual using insurance (the copayment ratio) is:

- 20% for children under 6 (prior to the start of compulsory education)
- 30% for individuals under 70 years of age
- 20% for individuals aged 70 to 74 (30% for those with income comparable to current workforce)

### b. Medical expenses

If the insured person has just become employed and does not yet have an insurance card and so paid the full amount of expenses for treatment, for example to purchase a cast or other type of orthotic device, receive a massage or acupuncture as deemed necessary by a doctor, or receive medical treatment outside of Japan, they can submit a request to be reimbursed for the treatment fees minus a certain amount (copayment amount) if the request is accepted.

### c. High-cost medical care expenses

This system covers the amount in excess of a fixed amount for one month for payments made at a medical institution or pharmacy (not including fees for meals or a bed incurring an extra fee). The upper payment limit for each month that is the insurance subscribers copayment amount varies depending on whether or not they are 70 or older and their income level.

### d. Transfer expenses

If a patient was too sick or injured to move on their own and was transferred somewhere based on a temporary or urgent need specified by a doctor, the transfer expenses will be reimbursed in cash if the following conditions are met.

- the patient received appropriate treatment thanks to the transfer
- transfer was required because the patient was too sick or injured to move on their own
- transfer was urgent or otherwise unavoidable

### e. Injury and illness benefits

If an insured person (subscriber) is unable to work due to illness or injury and is absent from work for three consecutive days, they will receive benefits for days they are absent from the fourth day and on.

The remuneration period can be a maximum of 18 months from the date of the start of remuneration.

### f. Lump sum birth allowance

This is a system that gives women who are enrolled in health insurance (subscriber) or a dependent a payment after childbirth to reduce the financial burden of childbirth. As a rule, the amount is 420,000 yen per child.

### g. Childbirth allowance

If an insured person enrolled in health insurance took a leave of absence from work for childbirth, they will receive a childbirth allowance for the duration they were absent within the period starting 42 days before birth (the due date) and ending 56 days after the date of birth (98 days for multiples).

### h. Dependents' medical expenses

Dependents' medical expenses are paid to cover illnesses and injuries of dependents. The scope of payment, payment method, payment period, and other details are the same as remuneration for treatment for the insured person (subscriber).

## 2-2 National Health Insurance

Those who have completed resident registration, are not eligible for employees' health insurance, and are under age 75 must enroll in the National Health Insurance program.

With the exception of the following cases, foreign nationals are required to enroll in the National Health Insurance program.

- (1) The period of stay in Japan is no more than 3 months  
\*Even if your period of stay is no more than three months, if your status of residence is Entertainer, Technical Intern Training, Dependent, or Designated Activities (excluding cases (3) and (4) below) and you are qualified to stay longer than 3 months according to documents, you can enroll in health insurance.
- (2) Status of residence is Temporary Visitor
- (3) Status of residence is Designated Activities to perform activities to receive medical care or activities to provide regular daily care to that person
- (4) Status of residence is Designated Activities to perform tourism or recreational activities or similar activities
- (5) Status of residence is Diplomat
- (6) Illegal immigrant or other person without a status of residence
- (7) Someone who is from a country that has entered a social security agreement with Japan that includes health insurance and has been issued a social security enrollment certificate from the Japanese government

It is necessary to go through procedure for enrolling in National Health at your local municipal office. For details, please contact the municipal office.

When moving a city where you currently live to another city or enroll in another Japanese public health insurance program, you must go through a procedure to withdraw from the National Health Insurance program.

### (1) Insurance premiums

The head of a household in which someone is enrolled in National Health Insurance must pay insurance premiums. Premiums are valuable revenue that supports the National Health Insurance program and each subscriber's premiums support the program.

The amount of premiums is determined based on the income of the person enrolled and varies by fiscal year and household. Premiums are calculated for each insurance subscriber, but the total is combined in each household and the head of the household is the person responsible for paying them. The same applies if the head of the household is enrolled in his or her workplace's health insurance program and only his or her family members are enrolled in the National Health Insurance program.

From the month that the National Health Insurance subscriber turns 40, long-term care insurance premiums are added on a monthly basis. The month after the month that you turn 40, you will receive a notification of the change in the amount of premiums from the municipal office.

The date you became eligible for National Health Insurance (enrollment date) is not the date that you notified the municipal office, but the date your enrollment actually begins (e.g. the day after retiring).

Even if you are late to notify the municipal office, you will be required to pay for each month back to your enrollment date.

There are systems in place for reduction and exemption of premiums based on income and/or living conditions. For details, please contact your local municipal office.

## (2) Benefits

### a. Medical care benefits (when visiting a hospital)

If you present your health insurance card when receiving treatment for an illness or injury at a hospital or other healthcare institution, you only have to pay part of the medical fees.

The ratio of fees you must pay to the hospital or other healthcare institution (copayment ratio) varies based on your age and income.

The ratio of medical fees paid by the individual using National Health Insurance (the copayment ratio) is:

- 20% for children under 6 (prior to the start of compulsory education)

- 30% for individuals under 70 years of age

- For individuals aged 70 to 75:

  - 10% if they do not have an income comparable to current workforce and were born before April 1, 1944

  - 20% if they do not have an income comparable to current workforce and were born on or after April 1, 1944

  - 30% if they have an income comparable to current workforce

  - \*Individuals aged 75 or older are eligible for the Advanced Elderly Medical Service System.

### b. Medical expenses

If the insured person has just become employed and does not yet have an insurance card and so paid the full amount for medical fees, for example to purchase a cast or other type of orthotic device, receive a massage, acupuncture, or judo manipulation therapy as deemed necessary by a doctor, or receive medical treatment outside of Japan, they can submit a request to be reimbursed for the medical expenses minus the copayment amount if the request is accepted.

### c. High-cost medical care expenses

This system covers the amount in excess of a fixed amount for one month for payments made at a medical institution or pharmacy (not including fees for meals or a bed incurring an extra fee). The upper payment limit for each month that is the insurance subscribers copayment amount varies depending on whether or not they are 70 or older and their income

### d. Transfer expenses

If a patient was too sick or injured to move on their own and was transferred somewhere based on a temporary or urgent need specified by a doctor, the transfer expenses will be reimbursed in cash.

### e. Lump-sum allowance for childbirth

As a rule, women enrolled in the National Health Insurance program who give birth receive 420,000 yen. You can use the direct payment system in which the municipal government pays the lump-sum allowance for childbirth directly to the hospital so that the person enrolled in National Health Insurance only has to pay the hospital the amount for childbirth minus the allowance or a system in which lump-sum allowance for childbirth is paid directly to the medical institution where your child will be born if you specified the medical institution where your child will be born to receive the allowance on your behalf when submitting a request for the allowance at your local municipal office.

### f. If you get in a traffic accident

Treatment costs if you are injured in a traffic accident caused by a third party's actions are normally paid by the person who is at fault, but you can also use your National Health Insurance to receive treatment. When using National Health Insurance to receive treatment, please inform your municipal office.

## 2-3 Medical care system for older people aged 75 and over

If you have completed resident registration and are aged 75 or older\*, you must enroll in the Medical care system for older people aged 75 and over. In doing so, you leave the health insurance program in which you were previously enrolled (e.g. National Health Insurance, Health Insurance Society, Japan Health Insurance Association, or a mutual aid association).

\*This includes those who are age 65 to 74 and are certified as having a specified disability.

With the exception of the following cases, foreign nationals are required to enroll in the Medical care system for older people aged 75 and over.

(1) The period of stay in Japan is no more than 3 months

\*Even if your period of stay is no more than 3 months if your status of residence is Entertainer, Technical Intern Training, or Designated Activities (excluding cases (3) and (4) below) and you are qualified to stay longer than 3 months according to documents, you can enroll in health insurance.

(2) Status of residence is Temporary Visitor

(3) Status of residence is Designated Activities to perform activities to receive medical care or activities to provide regular daily care to that person

(4) Status of residence is Designated Activities to perform tourism or recreational activities or similar activities

(5) Status of residence is Diplomat

(6) Illegal immigrant or other person without a status of residence

(7) Someone who is from a country that has entered a social security agreement with Japan that includes health insurance and has been issued a social security enrollment certificate from the Japanese government

The procedure for enrolling in the Medical care system for older people aged 75 and over is completed at your local municipal office. For details, please visit your local municipal office.

If you move from your current municipality to a municipality in another prefecture, you must complete a procedure to leave the Medical care system for older people aged 75 and over.

(1) Insurance premiums

Premiums are calculated based on the expenditure required for payment of medical benefits, for example, and are the total of a per capita amount paid by all subscribers and an income-based amount paid according to the subscriber's income.

Those with low income, for example, have reduced premiums.

(2) Benefits

a. Medical care benefits (when visiting a hospital)

If you present your health insurance card when receiving treatment for an illness or injury at a hospital or other healthcare institution, you only have to pay part of the medical fees. The ratio of fees you must pay to the hospital or other healthcare institution (copayment ratio) is 10% (30% if you have an income comparable to current workforce).

b. Medical expenses

If the insured person has just enrolled in insurance and does not yet have an insurance card and so paid the full amount for medical fees, for example to purchase a cast or other type of orthotic device, receive a massage, acupuncture, or judo manipulation therapy as deemed necessary by a doctor, or receive medical treatment outside of Japan, they can submit a request to be reimbursed for the medical expenses minus the copayment amount if the request is accepted.

c. High-cost medical care expenses

This system covers the amount in excess of the maximum copayment amount for one month for payments made at a medical institution or pharmacy (not including fees for meals or a bed incurring an extra fee). The maximum copayment amount varies with income.

d. Transfer expenses

If you are too sick or injured to move on your own and were transferred somewhere based on an urgent and unavoidable need specified by a doctor, the transfer expenses will be reimbursed if the following conditions are met.

(1) You received appropriate treatment thanks to the transfer

(2) Transfer was required because you were too sick or injured to move on your own

(3) Transfer was urgent or otherwise unavoidable

e. If you get in a traffic accident

Treatment costs if you are injured in a traffic accident caused by a third party's actions are normally paid by the person who is at fault, but you can also use your insurance card to receive treatment. When using your insurance card to receive treatment, please notify your local municipal office.

### 3 Pharmacies

You can buy medicine at pharmacies and drugstores.

Medicine is sometimes used to treat illnesses and injuries, but you must be careful how you use them as they can have side effects.

If you have a question about some medicine, ask the pharmacist or registered sales clerk at the pharmacy or drugstore.

#### 3-1 Pharmacies

Pharmacies dispense medicine based on a prescription from a doctor and you can buy prescription medicine there. You can also buy over-the-counter drugs that can be purchased without a prescription.

#### 3-2 Drugstores

You can buy over-the-counter drugs at drugstores same as you would at pharmacies. However, drugstores do not usually accept prescriptions.

## 1 Pension

The Japanese public pension system is based on a structure supported by a whole society in order to provide for an unforeseeable future. It is necessary to make insurance benefits feasible and achieve security for the people throughout their lifetime by comprehensive supports through the generations.

The system operates in the way in which premiums paid by working generation will go toward pension benefits for elderly persons. As a rule, all citizens aged 20 to 59 years old and living in Japan are to join.

## 2 National Pension

All citizens aged 20 year old or older but less than 60 and living in Japan who are not covered by the Employees' Pension Insurance are to be Category-1 insured persons or Category-3 insured persons of a national pension.

### 2-1 Policy holder and subscription procedure

#### (1) Category-1 insured persons

A person who is self-employed or engaged in agricultural/fishery, etc. shall pay a national pension premium on his or her own. Such a person is to be Category-1 insured persons of a national pension.

The insured applies by themselves at a neighborhood municipal government office.

#### (2) Category-2 insured persons

A person who works for a company and join the Employees' Pension Insurance or Mutual Aid associations doesn't pay a national pension premium. Such a person is to be Category-2 insured persons.

Application procedure is initiated by an employer.

#### (3) Category-3 insured persons

A spouse supported by a person who joins Employees' Pension Insurance or Mutual Aid associations and who does not need to pay a national pension premium. Such a spouse is to be Category-3 insured persons.

A spouse supported by Category-1 insured persons needs to pay a premium on his or her own, because such a spouse does not qualify for the category of Category-3 insured persons. Likewise, a spouse supported by an eligible recipient aged 65 year old or older needs to pay a premium on his or her own, because such a spouse also does not qualify for the category of Category-3 insured persons.

Application procedure is initiated through the business organization of the spouse.

## 2-2 Premium

Premium is a fixed amount for “Category-1 insured persons.” “Category-3 insured persons” does not have to pay premium.

A discount may apply when premium is paid in advance; payment can be made via the bank transfer method, payment notices or a credit card.

In case payments of premium become difficult due to reduced income or loss of employment, the exemption of the Contributions system and the Contribution postponement system for the national pension program may be applicable. For details, please inquire at the neighborhood municipal government office or a Japan Pension Service Branch Office.

## 2-3 Insurance benefits

### (1) Old-age basic pension

A person who has paid premiums for the periods of 20 to 59 years of age and who has 10 years or more of the Period of coverage required for entitlement to an old-age benefit consisting of premium payment periods, premium-exempted periods, and so on, receives old-age basic pension benefits from the age of 65. The combined period of validity does not include a period of unpaid premiums.

A person who has paid premiums for 40 years during the periods of 20 to 59 years of age qualifies for full old-age basic pension benefits. In case a premium-exempted period exists, the calculating formula differs according to the kinds of exemption and the share of the state subsidy in the basic pension. For example, the amount of pension for a period during which premiums are all exempted shall be one-half.

### (2) Disability basic pension

If a certain disability remains due to illness or injury of which the first medical exam, the first day of a visit to a doctor or a dentist, is during the enrollment period of national pension, and the contribution requirements for entitlement to benefit of a national pension is satisfied, Disability basic pension shall be paid.

There are two grades of disability, 1 and 2, applicable for a disability basic pension, and the amount of pension is settled according to the grade of disability. The amount of disability basic pension for a person identified as applicable to disability grade 1 is a full old-age basic pension of 1.25 times, and the pension amount for a person identified as applicable to disability grade 2 is a full old-age basic pension. When an insured person has a child, the child’s additional amount is added for both grade 1 and 2.

### (3) Survivors' Basic Pension

When an insured person of a national pension or the person who was an insured person dies, and the contribution requirements for entitlement to benefit of a national pension is satisfied, Survivors' Basic Pension shall be paid to a “spouse who has a child” or a “child,” who was supported by the insured person.

The amount of Survivors' Basic Pension is a full old-age basic pension. When an insured person has a child, the child’s additional amount is added.

#### one point



#### Who is a “child”?

- A child who doesn’t exceed March 31<sup>st</sup> of the fiscal year in which a child becomes 18 years old
- A child who is less than 20 years old, and whose grade of disability is grade 1 or 2
- A child who is not married

#### (4) Lump-sum death benefit

When the bereaved family unable to receive Survivors' Basic Pension because of the death of an insured of an old-age basic pension or a disability basic pension without receiving any of these benefits, it shall be paid to the bereaved family.

An insured whose premium payment periods, premium-exempted periods, and so on as a Category-1 insured person is 36 months or more is eligible. The amount of lump-sum death benefit differs according to payment periods and premium-exempted periods.

#### (5) Widow's pension

Widow's pension shall be paid to the wife during the periods that the wife is from 60 to 65 years old if the husband has died, and at the time of his death he had 10 years or more of total premium payment periods and premium-exempted periods as a Category-1 insured person, and moreover on the condition that the wife was supported by the husband and also their marital relation was maintained for 10 years or more at the time of his death.

The amount of widow's pension is three fourths of the old-age basic pension benefits calculated based only on periods of the husband as a Category-1 insured person .

### 3 Employees' Pension Insurance

#### 3-1 Applicable Place of Business

This is a corporate workplace such as a stock company, as well as a private office with 5 or more full-time employees with the exception of industries in the fields of agriculture, forestry and fishery and service businesses.

A worker who works at an insurance applied workplace joins the Employees' Pension Insurance if he or she meets the requirements. Even if the workplace is not a certified Applicable Place of Business, it can qualify as an Applicable Place of Business if employer acquires permission by applying for such and over half of the employees agree to the Employees' Pension Insurance

#### 3-2 Premium

Premium is calculated by multiplying common insurance premiums to a monthly salary; standard monthly remuneration, and the bonus; standard bonuses, and is paid evenly by an employer and a worker.

By the end of the next month, an employer shall pay premiums including the employer's share of insurance contribution, after withholding the worker's share from a monthly salary and bonuses.

### 3-3 Insurance benefits

#### (1) Old-age employees' pension

When an insured person who has the enrollment period of the Employees' Pension Insurance and the Period of coverage required for entitlement to an old-age benefit long enough to receive an old-age basic pension turns 65 years old, an old-age employees' pension shall be paid in addition to an old-age basic pension.

For the time being, however, an insured person aged 60 years or older shall receive a Specially Paid Old-age Employees' Pension until the age of 65 in the case of a special exception and date of birth is an exception where appropriate, if the Period of coverage required for entitlement to an old-age benefit is adequate to receive an old-age basic pension, and eligibility requirements are met by having over one year of enrollment period of the Employees' Pension Insurance.

The amount of old-age employees' pension differs according to the standard remuneration amount and the enrollment period.

#### (2) Disability employees' pension

If certain disability remains due to an illness or injury of which the first medical exam the first day of a visit to a doctor or a dentist, is during the enrollment period of the Employees' Pension Insurance, and the contribution requirements for entitlement to benefit of a national pension is satisfied, Disability employees' pension shall be paid.

There are 3 grades (grades 1, 2 and 3) of disability employees' pension, and the amount of pension is settled according to the grade of disability. There is also a case whereby the disability allowance shall be provided as the lump-sum payment even though the degree of disability is inadequate with regard to receiving a Disability employees' pension.

The amount of Disability employees' pension for a person identified as being applicable to disability grade 1 is full old-age employees' pension of 1.25 times, and the amount for a person identified as being applicable to disability grade 2 is full old-age employees' pension. When a disabled insured person has a spouse, the amount to a spouse shall be added.

#### (3) Survivors' Employees' Pension

The pension shall be provided when an insured person dies, an insured person dies within 5 years from the date of first visit to a doctor due to illness or injury occurred during the enrollment period, an insured person has the Period of coverage required for entitlement to an old-age benefit of 25 years or more, the surviving family of the insured is eligible to receive disability employees' pension benefits in cases of grade 1 and 2. The cases of and must meet the premium payment requirements of a national pension.

Persons eligible to receive pension benefits are those who were supported by the deceased insured person as described below. Parents, a grandchild and grandparents shall not receive pension benefits, however, when the pension is provided to persons of higher rank in order of priority.

- a. Spouse ( in case of the husband, the qualifying condition is to be the age of 55 or older, start receiving a pension from the age of 60. The husband is able to receive an employees' pension for surviving family in addition only when he is receiving a basic pension for surviving family. )
- b. Child ( means a person who doesn't exceed the end of fiscal year in which the person turns the age of 18, or a person who is less than 20 years old, identified as being applicable to disability grade 1 or 2 of a disability pension and who is unmarried. )
- c. Parents ( the qualifying condition is to be the age of 55 or older, start receiving a pension from the age of 60. )
- d. Grandchild ( same requirements as a child )
- e. Grandparents ( the qualifying condition is to be the age of 55 or older, start receiving a pension from the age of 60. ) The amount of Survivors' Employees' Pension is three fourths of an old-age employees' pension of the deceased insured person.

#### 4 Lump-sum Withdrawal Payments

When a person who has six months or more of coverage periods of Employees' Pension Insurance or National Pension returns to his/her home country without fulfilling the required coverage periods of 10 years in total to receive old-age pension, he/she shall be entitled to claim the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payments ( "the Payments" ) within 2 years after the date that he/she no longer has a registered address in Japan.

However, once a person receives the Payments, all of the coverage periods before the claim for the Payments shall no longer be valid periods in the future. Please read “ **IMPORTANT INFORMATION** ” in the Application for the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payments carefully, taking into account of the possibility of future pension benefits, and carefully consider whether or not to claim the Payments.

If a person chooses to claim the Payments, he/she has to submit a moving-out notification to the municipal office before leaving Japan, because one of the requirements to receive the Payments is that he/she no longer has a registered address in Japan on the date the Japan Pension Service receives his/her application. If you wish to submit the application before you leave Japan such as by post, please make sure that the Japan Pension Service will receive your application after the (planned) date of your departure from Japan which you need to register at your municipal office. Also, the amount of the Payments is calculated based on the coverage periods up to 36 months (3 years). For this reason, if a person who is going to stay in Japan for several times, with the coverage periods expected to be 37 months or more in total, and plans to receive the Payments based on the coverage periods, there are some cases that he/she needs to claim the Payments after each of the stay in Japan.



#### Social Security Agreement

If a person has coverage periods of a country which has concluded a Social Security Agreement including totalization of periods with Japan, he/she may be eligible for pension benefits from Japan or/and the other country by totalizing coverage periods of both countries.

Once a person receives the Payments, however, all of his/her Japanese coverage periods before the claim for the Payments will no longer be valid for the totalization purpose.

## 5 Long-Term Care Insurance

The long-term care insurance system is founded with the intent of supporting the long-term care by society as a whole, and is mainly operated by municipal governments.

### 5-1 Persons eligible to be insured

A person who belongs to a long-term care insurance program shall be the primary insured person over 65 years old and the secondary insured person who belongs to a medical insurance program at the age of 40 to 64.

As for a foreign national, in the case of residing in Japan legally for over 3 months and with a residence registration, the person is eligible to enroll in a long-term care insurance program. Even when residence of less than 3 months is permitted, approved extension of residence of over 3 months obtained by submission of the required documents and so forth, makes a foreign national eligible for enrollment in a long-term care insurance program.

### 5-2 Premium

(1) A person over 65 years old

A premium is determined in stages according to taxation situations of a municipal tax or other factors.

(2) A person over 40 but less than 65 years old

i. The subscriber of a health insurance

A premium shall be collected by adding to a premium of health insurance. A premium of a long-term care insurance shall be paid evenly by a subscriber and an employer.

ii. The subscriber of a national health insurance

A premium shall be collected by adding to a premium of a national health insurance.

### 5-3 Use of long-term care service

To use a long-term care service, it is necessary to apply for “certification of needed long-term care (needed support)” at a municipal government office. The municipal government officials will verify all related matters and in principle the applicant will be informed of the certification result within 30 days of acceptance of the application.

Based on the result of certification, in the case of using a long-term care service, a care service plan will be made and the care service along with the plan will be provided.

## 6 Child Welfare

### 6-1 Child allowance

Please see “Chapter 4 3-4 Child allowance.”

## 6-2 Child rearing allowance

Child rearing allowance is provided for a child who is being raised in a single-parent family or under similar circumstances.

Eligible persons shall be persons such as a mother, a father or grandparents, who are raising a child under 18 years of age (the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday occurring before before March 31<sup>st</sup> of an associated fiscal year, or a child under 20 years of age if the child is disabled).

The payment amount in fiscal year 2019 shall be set according to an insured person's income earned in the previous year, and 42,910 yen to 10,120 yen per child shall be provided monthly. 10,140 yen to 5,070 yen for a second child, 6,080 yen to 3,040 yen for a third child shall be added on a monthly basis. The payment amount varies every year, and a person who gained a certain amount or more income the previous year shall not be eligible for payment. For details, please consult the neighborhood municipal government office.

## 6-3 Special child rearing allowance

A special child rearing allowance shall be paid to the caregiver, such as a mother or a father, who at home raises and has custody of a child who has a mental or physical disability and who is less than 20 years old.

The monthly payment amount in fiscal year 2019 shall be 52,200 yen per child with a disability equivalent to grade 1 of the disability basic pension, and 34,770 yen per child with a disability equivalent to grade 2 of disability basic pension. A person such as a recipient, who has gained a certain amount of income or more income in the previous year, shall not be eligible to receive this payment. The payment amount varies every year.

For details, please consult the neighborhood municipal government office.

## 6-4 Welfare allowance for children with disabilities

A welfare allowance is provided for children who have a disability, who are less than 20 years old, and who need constant nursing care their daily life because of the severity of their mental or physical disability/disabilities.

The monthly payment amount in fiscal year 2019 shall be 14,790 yen per person. A person such as a recipient, who has gained a certain amount of income or more income in the previous year, shall not be eligible to receive this payment. The payment amount varies every year.

For details, please consult the neighborhood municipal government office.

## 6-5 Administrative services to children with disabilities

Various services for children with a disability, including developmental support and nursing care for such children, are available. For details, please consult the neighborhood municipal government office.

## 7 Welfare for Disabled Persons

### 7-1 Certificate

#### (1) Physical disability certificate

A person with a permanent physical disability is eligible for a physical disability certificate. This certificate is classified according to the degree of disability, from class 1 (severe) to class 6 (slight).

A person holding this certificate is applicable to programs of tax exemption, public transportation discounts, and other such programs that are available.

#### (2) Rehabilitation certificate

A person with an intellectual disability is eligible to apply for this certificate, which is classified according to the degree of disability from class A (severe) to class B (otherwise).

Tax exemption, public transportation discounts, and other such programs become available to a person holding this certificate.

#### (3) Mental disability certificate

A person whose daily life or social life is restricted because of a mental disorder is eligible to receive this certificate, which is classified according to the degree of disability from class 1 to class 3.

Tax exemption, public transportation discounts, and other such programs become available to a person holding this certificate.

### 7-2 Administrative services to persons with disabilities and children with disabilities

A variety of services, nursing care and support for training are two examples, are available to support the daily life and social life of a person with a disability.

For details, please consult the neighborhood municipal government office.

Regarding administrative services for children with disabilities, please see “Chapter 7 6-5 Administrative services for children with disabilities.”

## 8 Public Assistance

After validating that a household income with minimum subsistence expenses (calculated based on the criteria defined by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare) is below the minimum subsistence expenses, the amount after subtracting income from minimum subsistence expenses is paid as public assistance expense.

In cases of fulfillment of the following requisites, a foreigner national is eligible for assistance pursuant to public assistance as long as the activities are not restricted for a person holding the resident status of permanent resident, Japanese spouse, permanent resident's spouse, or fixed domicile resident. For details, please consult the neighborhood municipal government office.

### 8-1 Requisites for public assistance, etc.

#### (1) Utilization of assets

Assets are defined as deposits with banks, savings, unused land and/or houses not being used for living, funds earned by selling those assets or by other means, and funds appropriated for living expenses.

#### (2) Utilization of abilities

A person who is able to work shall work in accordance with his/her abilities.

#### (3) Other benefits, etc.

If it is possible to receive benefits through other systems such as pension and allowance, make use of those benefits as a first step.

#### (4) Maintenance by support obligor

### 8-2 Types and contents of assistance

Assistance is determined considering the measure of expenses necessary to carry on a life.

Expenses necessary to carry on a life	Kind of assistance	Contents of assistance payment
Expenses necessary for everyday life ( Food, clothing, utilities, etc. )	Livelihood assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal expenses such as food costs</li><li>• Calculate the basic amount, combined family-unit costs such as utilities</li></ul>
Rent for an apartment, etc.	Housing assistance	Subsidization of actual expenses within the prescribed range
Expenses of necessary school supplies in line with compulsory education	Education assistance	Subsidization of the prescribed basic amount
Expenses of medical services	Medical assistance	Expenses will be paid directly to medical institutions ( No self-payment )
Expenses of long-term care services	Long-term care assistance	Expenses will be paid directly to long-term care business operators ( No self-payment )
Maternity expenses	Maternity assistance	Subsidization of actual expenses within the prescribed range

## 9 Independence Support System for Needy Persons

Staffed inquiry counters are established to help needy persons become independent. The content of assistance related to employment, livelihood and so forth depends on the contents of consultations. For details, please consult a neighborhood municipal government office.

A foreign national who meets certain conditions is required to pay taxes. For example, if you gain an income by working in Japan, you are as a general rule obliged to pay an income tax. In addition, persons having a domicile in Japan as of January 1 must pay an inhabitant tax levied on the income earned the previous year.

Furthermore, even a foreign national with no fixed address in Japan, if staying in a hotel while traveling, etc. or having a meal, is obligated to pay a consumption tax.



### Classification of taxes in Japan

Japan has two tax classifications with a view to payment of taxes:

The tax to be paid to the national government is referred to as a “national tax.” A representative example is the “income tax.” The tax to be paid to the governments of prefectures and municipalities where you live is referred to as a “local tax.” A representative example is the “inhabitant tax.”

Who pays the tax:

In cases where the person who makes the payment of the tax is the same as the person who bears the burden of the tax, the tax is called “direct tax.” It includes “income tax” and “inhabitant tax.”

In cases where the person who must pay tax to the government differs from the person who bears the burden of the tax, the tax is called “indirect tax.” It includes “consumption tax.”

### 1 Income tax

Income tax is a tax levied on an individual’s income arising from January 1 to December 31. The amount of income tax is calculated by multiplying the amount of taxable income (calculated by subtracting the various deductions (see1-3) from the amount of income (calculated by subtracting expenses, etc. from earnings)) by the relevant tax rate. The tax rate is designed to progressively increase as taxable income increases.

Note: From 2013 to 2037, both inclusive, special reconstruction income tax, which is 2.1% of the amount of income tax for each year, shall be filed and paid, together with income tax, for the purpose of securing financial resources necessary to implement measures for reconstruction following the Great East Japan Earthquake. Hereinafter, income tax and special reconstruction income tax are collectively referred to as “income tax, etc.”

## 1-1 Taxpayers and scopes of taxable income

The scope of taxable income varies depending on the classification of residence.

### (1) Residents

Residents are persons having a domicile in Japan or having a residence continuously in Japan for one year or more. As for residents other than non-permanent residents set forth in Item (2), all income including foreign source income is subject to taxation.

Note: “Domicile” as used above refers to the principal base and center of an individual’s life and whether it is qualified as a base and center of an individual’s life is determined based on objective facts including having a job in Japan and a spouse or other relative living in Japan who shares a means of livelihood.

“Residence” as used above refers to a place where a person resides continuously for a reasonable period but which does not qualify as a base and center of his or her life.

### (2) Non-permanent residents

Residents who do not hold Japanese citizenship and have been domiciled or resident in Japan for a total of no more than five of the past ten years are termed non-permanent residents.

As for non-permanent residents, incomes other than foreign source incomes and foreign source incomes paid in Japan or remitted to Japan from abroad are subject to taxation.

### (3) Non-residents

Persons not qualifying as residents are termed non-residents.

As for non-residents, only domestic source incomes including salaries arising from work carried out in Japan and compensations arising from provision of personal services in Japan are subject to taxation.

## 1-2 Filing final returns

The income tax system in Japan adopts the practice of taxpayers themselves calculating the amount of taxable income and income tax, etc. on income depending on the classification of residence, filing a final return by the due date of the following year, and settling the excess or shortage with the amount of tax withheld (see 1-4), regarding the income earned during the relevant year. This procedure is called a final return.

### (1) Those who are required to file a final return

Most of salary earners do not need to file a final return because income tax, etc. withheld at the source (see 1-4) are settled through the year-end adjustment (see 1-5) by their employers.

However, persons described below are required to file a final return:

- Persons whose total amount of salary income exceeds ¥20 million
- Persons whose total amount of income except for the employment income and the retirement income exceeds ¥200,000 when the salary is received from one source only and all of the salary is subject to the Japanese withholding.
- Persons whose sum of the total amount of income except for the employment income and the retirement income and the total amount of earnings from the salary not subject to the year-end adjustment exceeds ¥200,000 when the salary is received from two or more sources and all of the salary is subject to the Japanese withholding.
- Persons such as employees of foreign diplomatic establishment located in Japan and household employees, who are to receive payment of their salaries without income tax, etc. withheld at source.
- Persons who receive payment of salaries overseas, etc.

In addition, persons who acquire incomes other than salary through conducting business, stock transactions, etc. need to file a final return if calculating the income tax imposed on his or her total amount of income results in additional payment of the tax required to be made.

(2) Those who may receive a tax refund by filing a final return

If the computation of income tax, etc. based on the application of deductions (see 1-3) reveals that you have overpaid the income tax etc. as a result of the withholding system (see 1-4), the excess of the amount of tax paid will be returned through a final return for receiving the tax refund.

If there is no overpayment of tax due to withholding, no tax money will be returned.

(3) Departure from Japan

Departure from Japan in this case means a person ceases to be domiciled or reside in Japan without submitting a notification of tax agent which is a notification appointing a person to conduct tax procedures on behalf of the taxpayer to the tax authority. In such a case, he or she shall be subject to a year-end adjustment (see 1-5) of his or her salary generated during that year before the departure. However, those who are required to file a final return as provided for in Item (1), need to do so and pay any tax due before departure.

Moreover, if you are to initiate procedures for filing a final return and making tax payment after your departure from Japan, please appoint a tax agent residing in Japan to submit a notification of tax agent to the tax office which has jurisdiction over your place for tax payment.

(4) Due date for final returns and tax payment

Regarding income tax, etc. for each year, consultation for final tax returns and acceptance of final return forms are conducted at tax offices from February 16 to March 15, both inclusive, of the following year.

However, on days on which the tax office is closed including Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays, consultation and acceptance of final return forms are not conducted at the tax office.

In addition, final return forms for a refund may be submitted to the tax office even before February 15. The due date for payment of income tax, etc. for filing final returns is March 15.

\* If the above-mentioned due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday or a national holiday, the day following such day is to be the deadline.

## 1-3 Main deductions

Japan has an income deduction and exemption system for income tax, which is established to take the private conditions of each taxpayer into consideration when calculating the amount of taxable income.

If you meet the requirements for each income deduction or exemption, the total amount of income deductions and exemption in each class is subtracted from the total amount of income in each class.

The amount of income tax is calculated based on the remaining amount after the deduction (the amount of taxable income).

If the taxpayer is a non-resident (see 1-1), the types of deductions and exemptions to be applied is limited.

(1) Basic exemption

A basic exemption amounting to ¥380,000 is applicable to all taxpayers, instead of being granted if certain requirements are satisfied.

(2) Dependent exemption

If a taxpayer has any dependents who are eligible under the Income Tax Act, he or she is entitled to a certain amount of income exemption.

If a dependent exemption of a relative who is a non-resident is applied, it is necessary to attach a certain document to the final return form or present it to the tax officer at the time of filing the final return form.

(3) Exemption for a spouse or special exemption for a spouse

If a taxpayer has a spouse who is eligible under the Income Tax Act, he or she is entitled to a certain amount of income exemption.

A spouse covered by the exemption means the person who meets the requirements including being the spouse defined in the provisions of the Civil Code (a common-law wife or husband is not a qualified spouse), the total amount of annual income of the spouse is ¥380,000 or less, and the total amount of income of the taxpayer himself or herself to whom the exemption is applied is ¥10 million or less.

In addition, even if the total income of the spouse exceeds ¥380,000, there can be a case in which, according to his or her total income, a certain amount of exemption from income may be applied.

The requirements in this case include being the spouse defined in the provisions of the Civil Code (a common-law wife or husband is not a qualified spouse), the total amount of annual income of the spouse is anywhere over ¥380,000 up to ¥1,230,000, the total income amount for the relevant year of the taxpayer himself or herself to whom the exemption is applied is ¥10 million or less.

In addition, if a exemption for a spouse or special exemption for a spouse applies to a spouse who is a non-resident, it is necessary to attach a certain document to the final return form or present the document at the time of filing the final return form.

(4) Social insurance premium deduction

If a taxpayer paid a social insurance premium borne by himself or herself, the spouse or any other relative sharing a means of livelihood with the person, he or she is entitled to an income deduction for the amount paid.

The social insurance premiums covered by the deduction include premiums of health insurance, national pension and employees' pension insurance which are borne by the insured, national health insurance premiums and labor insurance premiums which are borne by the insured.

(5) Life insurance premium deduction

If a taxpayer paid certain premiums of life insurance, medical care insurance or private pension insurance, he or she is entitled to a certain amount of income deduction.

(6) Medical expenses deduction

In the case where a taxpayer paid medical expenses himself or herself, his or her spouse or any other relative sharing a means of livelihood with the person, if the medical expenses paid exceed a certain amount, he or she is entitled to an income deduction for the amount calculated based on the amount of medical expenses.

1-4 Withholding at source

When salary is paid, income tax, etc. imposed on the salary are deducted (withheld at the source) by the employer (salary payer).

In addition, residents must submit an "Application for Exemption for Dependents of Employment Income Earner" to the salary payer no later than the day preceding the day on which the first salary is received every year.

Note that, with respect to the final payment of salary for the relevant year, a "Withholding Slip" stating the amounts including the payment and the amount of income taxes, etc. withheld thereon shall be delivered by the salary payer to the recipient of the payment no later than January 31 of the following year.

### 1-5 Year-end adjustment

When a resident receives the last salary paid in the relevant year, the difference between the total amount of income taxes, etc. withheld at the source for the year by the salary payer and the amount of income tax, etc. to be paid for the total amount of annual salary (annual amount due) is settled. This procedure is called “year-end adjustment.”

At the time of the year-end adjustment, if you seek the application of an exemption for a spouse or insurance premium deduction, you must submit a prescribed application form to the salary payer.

However, most people who receive salary payments do not need to file a final return (see 1-2) as the settlement of income tax, etc. is made through the year-end adjustment.

### 1-6 Others

#### (1) Special tax treatment under tax conventions

When a tax convention has been concluded between your home country and Japan, you may be granted a reduction or exemption from the payment of income tax, etc. If you seek the reduction or exemption from the payment of income tax, etc., you need to submit a prescribed application form, etc. to the tax office via the payer of incomes.

#### (2) Payment of national taxes

Even if you are to pay national tax as, for example, filing a final return reveals that you need to make payment of income tax, etc., the tax office will not notify you of such due tax payment. Please, note that you must pay the tax by yourself before the due date for payment.

## 2 Resident Tax

### 2-1 What is Resident Tax?

Resident tax is a tax collected by the 47 prefectures of Japan and local municipalities. Any person residing in Japan as of January 1<sup>st</sup> is subject to resident tax. Prefectural tax and municipal tax combined are referred to as “resident tax”, and are collected together by municipalities.

Resident tax is composed of a (per capita) fixed amount levied from all residents, and an (income-based) amount adjusted for your prior year’s income. The method for calculating the tax amount for the income-based levy is the same as the calculation for income taxes.

### 2-2 Payment of Resident Tax

#### (1) General Collection

In accordance with the Notification of Tax issued by municipalities, taxes are divided into four payments throughout the year.

#### (2) Special Collection

Identical to income tax withholding, business operators (a person who has paid remuneration) on behalf of their employees (taxpayer) must deduct resident tax from the monthly wages paid to employees.

## 2-3 In the case of leaving Japan

Resident tax is levied by the municipality of your residence for the income of the prior year for those residing as of January 1<sup>st</sup>. Therefore, residents are still subject to pay that fiscal year's resident tax, even if you depart from Japan during that fiscal year. In the case that resident tax has been deducted from the wages paid by your workplace during your move from Japan to overseas, there is a way (lump collection) to deduct the remaining unpaid tax amount all at once from your final paycheck.

Additionally, in the case that resident tax could not be collected before you move from Japan to overseas, please designate someone living in Japan as a 'tax agent (someone who pays tax on behalf of the taxpayer)' and notify the municipality of your residence before you depart the country. Your tax agent will be notified of any unpaid taxes.

## 3 Other Taxes

### 3-1 Consumption Tax & Local Consumption Tax

Consumption tax is a taxation on the sale of goods or the provision of services. The tax is levied on the purchaser of the goods or recipient of the services and is collected by provider of the goods or services.

The tax rate of consumption tax (including local consumption tax.) is 8%. From October of 2019, the tax rate will increase to 10%. However, on the same date, the tax rate reduction system will be implemented, subjecting the purchase of food items, excluding alcohol and the food service industry; and the purchase of newspaper subscription contracts with newspapers delivered more than twice a week to an 8% tax rate.

Furthermore, there are stores where foreign travelers, etc. visiting Japan can purchase goods with a tax exemption (Tax-free stores). However, foreign nationals who maintain residence in Japan are not eligible for this tax exemption.

### 3-2 International Tourist Tax

In principle, the International Tourist Tax is a tax added onto the ticket prices of shipping and aviation companies which is levied on anyone departing (travelers) Japan and collected by the nation. Regardless of your purpose for leaving Japan, a 1,000 yen tax will be levied per every departure leaving Japan.

(Note) 'departure' here refers to exiting the territorial waters or airspace of the nation of Japan.

### 3-3 Automobile Weight Tax

The Automobile Weight Tax is a tax amount levied in accordance with a vehicle's weight during a vehicle inspection. The tax amount varies depending on the type and weight of the automobile. For example, in the case of a new private car (1.5 tons, valid 3 years on first inspection), the tax amount would be 36,900 Yen.

Additionally, in the interest of promoting the spread of eco-friendly vehicles (low-emission, fuel-efficient, etc.), a special exception reducing the Automobile Weight Tax (Eco-Car Tax Reduction) is being established for vehicles that have reached a set level of environmental performance.

### 3-4 Automobile Acquisition Tax

The Automobile Acquisition Tax is a tax levied at the time of the purchase of a vehicle or light vehicle depending on the vehicle's purchase price. The tax amount is 3% or 2% depending on the vehicle's type and use.

Additionally, in the interest of promoting the spread of eco-friendly vehicles (low-emission, fuel-efficient, etc.), a special exception for the Automobile Acquisition Tax (Eco-Car Tax Reduction) is being established for vehicles that have reached a set level of environmental performance.

Furthermore, from October 1<sup>st</sup> of 2019, the Automobile Acquisition Tax will be abolished, and a new tax with a set, eco-friendly based tax rate depending on how environmentally friendly vehicles and light-vehicles are will be introduced.

### 3-5 Automobile Tax

A tax levied on automobile owners to be paid to their prefecture of residence during May by any person owning a normal automobile as of April 1<sup>st</sup>. The tax amount varies depending on your vehicle's emission rate.

Additionally, to further promote the spread of eco-friendly vehicles (low-emission, fuel-efficient, etc.), a special exemption (Green tax system (light taxation)) is being established; Vehicles that reach a set level of environmental performance will have their tax rate reduced the year after purchase; and, vehicles that reach a fixed number of years from their initial new car registration date will be subject to higher tax.

### 3-6 Light Vehicle Tax

A tax levied on owners of light vehicles and motor-driven bicycles to be paid to their prefecture of residence during April by any person owning a light vehicle or motor-driven bicycle as of April 1<sup>st</sup>.

The tax amount varies depending on your light vehicle's emission rate.

Additionally, to further promote the spread of eco-friendly vehicles (low-emission, fuel-efficient, etc.), a special exemption (Green tax system (light taxation)) is being established. Light vehicles that reach a set level of environmental performance will have their tax rate reduced the year after purchase. Additionally, a special exemption (Light Vehicle Annual Special Increase (tax increase)) is being established, subjecting light vehicles that reach a fixed number of years from their initial new car registration date to higher tax rate (Heavy taxation on aging vehicles).

### 3-7 Property Tax

Every year, persons who own land, houses and depreciable assets as of January 1<sup>st</sup> will pay a tax amount calculated based on the price of these assets to the municipalities where the assets are located.

## 4 Where to Address Tax Related Inquiries

### 4-1 Where to Address National Tax Related Inquiries

#### (1) Phone Consultation Center

For general consultation about national tax, the following *phone consultation centers* can accept English consultations.

- Tokyo National Tax Agency Phone Consultation Center 03-3821-9070
- Osaka National Tax Agency Phone Consultation Center (will be forwarded from the dialed number) 06-6941-5331
- Nagoya National Tax Agency Phone Consultation Center 052-971-2059

#### (2) Tax Answer (FAQ)

You can look up general answers to common tax questions by tax type  
<https://www.nta.go.jp/english/taxes/index.htm>

#### (3) National Tax Agency Homepage Link

Useful information available on filing, payment, etc. pertaining to national taxes  
<https://www.nta.go.jp/english/index.htm>

National Tax Agency Japan

検索



### 4-2 Where to Address Local Tax Related Inquiries

Please inquire to your local prefecture or municipality.

**1 Traffic Rules**

As members of society, we are all obligated to obey traffic rules to ensure the safe and smooth movement of the many vehicles and pedestrians using our streets.

**1-1 Safety guidelines for pedestrians****(1) Walking on roads and sidewalks**

Generally, pedestrians should walk on the right side of the street so that vehicles approach on their left

- Pedestrians should keep to the right side of the road.
- Pedestrians should use the sidewalk or stay within the line marked for walking on the road when they are available.

**(2) Rules for crossing the street**

Crossing the street safely

- Pedestrians should cross the street using the nearest traffic light intersection or pedestrian crossing, overpass or underpass.
- Pedestrians should never cross a street that is marked with signs that prohibit crossing.



Crossing by pedestrians is prohibited

Traffic light rules

- Green light: Pedestrians can proceed to cross the street
- Yellow or flashing green light: Pedestrians may not begin to cross the street; if a pedestrian has already commenced crossing, he or she should either attempt to finish crossing quickly or turn back
- Red light: Pedestrians are prohibited from crossing the street
- Crossing streets that have traffic light buttons

Pedestrians should push the button to change the light to green, after which they can proceed to cross the street.

Crossing streets that have no traffic lights

- Pedestrians should cross the street only after confirming there are no vehicles coming from either direction.
- Before crossing the street, pedestrians should stop and look in both directions to check for oncoming vehicles.

If vehicles are approaching, pedestrians should wait until they pass.

- Pedestrians should continue looking both ways to check for oncoming vehicles when crossing the street, and walk straight ahead rather than diagonally.

Rules for rail crossing

- Before walking over a rail crossing, pedestrians should stop and look both ways to make sure it is safe.
- Pedestrians should never attempt to enter a rail crossing when the warning bell is sounding or the crossing bar is on its way down.

### (3) Walking at night

Pedestrians should wear brightly colored clothing or reflective materials at night. When walking on the street at night, pedestrians should wear brightly colored clothing such as white or yellow, as well as accessories with reflective materials or LED lights to ensure that drivers can easily see them.

## 1-2 Safety guidelines for cyclists

### (1) Five rules to follow to ensure safety when riding a bicycle.

Rule 1: In principle, cyclists should ride on the street and use sidewalks only in exceptional cases

- Bicycles are classified as vehicles, so as a general rule, cyclists should use the street.
- Cyclists should use designated bicycle paths when they are available.
- Cyclists should use the lanes marked for bicycles on sidewalks or roads when they are available.
- Children under 13, adults aged 70 and over, and people with physical disabilities are permitted to ride a bicycle on the sidewalk.

When the street is too narrow, cyclists can ride on sidewalks.

Rule 2: Cyclists should ride on the left side of the street

- Cyclists may ride inside the lines marking pedestrian paths. But they must not obstruct pedestrians.

Rule 3: Cyclists must reduce speed on sidewalks and give pedestrians the right of way

- When passing pedestrians on sidewalks, cyclists should reduce speed enough to enable a sudden stop.
- Cyclists should stop riding if there is a risk of obstructing passing pedestrians on sidewalks.
- Cyclists should refrain from unnecessarily ringing bicycle bells at pedestrians on sidewalks.

Pedestrians are given priority on sidewalks, so cyclists are expected to dismount their bicycle if necessary.

Rule 4: Cyclists must obey safety rules

- Cyclists are prohibited from riding under the influence of alcohol.
- Riding two people per bicycle is prohibited.
- Riding side by side is prohibited.
- Cyclists must use bicycle lights at night.
- Cyclists must obey traffic lights at intersections and check for safety after coming to a full stop.

Rule 5: Children must wear a bicycle helmet

Parents and guardians must ensure that children wear a bicycle helmet in the following cases :

- When a child under the age of 6 is riding in the children's seat of a bicycle
- When a child under the age of 13 is riding a bicycle



Reserved for pedestrians and cyclists only

#### Other rules

- Cyclists must not use umbrellas or smartphones while riding.
- Purchase personal accident insurance to be able to compensate for any damage or injury from a bicycle accident.

#### (2) Using intersections

##### When making a right-hand turn

- At intersections with traffic lights

When the light turns green, the cyclist should cross the intersection in a straight direction and come to a stop on the opposite side with the bicycle facing right. When the light of the intersecting street turns green, the cyclist should proceed in a straight direction after looking both ways to check that it is safe.

- At intersections without traffic lights

The cyclist should look behind to check it is safe, cross the intersection in a straight direction, then slow down to make a right-hand turn, and check for oncoming cars before proceeding.

##### When making a left-hand turn

Cyclists should make sure not to obstruct pedestrians crossing the streets.

Cyclists must come to a full stop at stop signs, and look both ways to check for oncoming cars before proceeding. Cyclists should come to a full stop at intersections where visibility is poor, narrow roads meet wide streets, or where sidewalks come to an end, and then look both ways to check it is safe before proceeding.

When an intersection has designated lines for bicycles, cyclists should ride within the lines.



Vehicles and bicycles must come to a full stop. Look both ways before proceeding



Bicycles may cross within the designated line

### 1-3 When driving a vehicle

- You must have a driver's license to drive a vehicle.

When requested by a police officer for your driver's license after an infraction or traffic accident, present your driver's license.

- Drive on the left side of the road.
- When driving near pedestrians and cyclists, make sure to slow down and keep a safe distance.
- Never drive a vehicle after drinking alcohol.

Never loan your vehicle to someone who has drunk alcohol, encourage someone who is driving to drink alcohol, or ask someone who has been drinking alcohol to drive.

- When driving a vehicle, you must wear your seatbelt. Passengers must also wear their seatbelts.
- Children who are under 6 years old must use a child seat.
- While driving, do not use your smartphone.

## 2 Driver's License

In Japan, there are three ways of driving a vehicle (including motorbikes) or motorized two-wheeled vehicle.

- Obtain a Japanese driver's license
- Drive using an international driver's license
- Drive by attaching a Japanese translation of your foreign driver's license

\*A driver's license is required for motorized bicycle with pedals, such as a moped.

### 2-1 Obtaining a Japanese driver's license

You can obtain a Japanese driver's license through the following two methods.

- Switching your foreign driver's license to a Japanese driver's license
- Obtaining through a regular driving test

#### (1) Switching your foreign driver's license to a Japanese driver's license

People who have a foreign driver's license can obtain a Japanese license for vehicles that they are allowed to drive under their original license, by being exempt from part of the driving test. However, the condition is that you must have remained for 3 or more months in the foreign country after having received your driver's license in that country. Thus, materials that prove the length of your stay, such as a passport with entry/departure stamps, are required.

As documents required for submitting an application may differ depending on the prefectural police, please inquire with the department of motor vehicles for the prefectural police at which you are planning on submitting an application for details. It is not possible to switch over to a Japanese driver's license from an international driver's license.

#### (2) Method of obtaining a Japanese driver's license through a regular driving test

It is necessary to take and pass a proficiency test, written exam and aptitude test at a driver's license center, etc.

However, you are exempt from the proficiency test if you study at a driving school (designated driver's school) and graduate. Although it is possible to obtain a driver's license by going directly to a driver's license center and taking the proficiency test and written exam, it is the norm to obtain a driver's license after going to a driver's school.

### 2-2 Driving with an international driver's license

It is possible to drive in Japan for up to one year after arriving in Japan if you have an international driver's license that meets the format specified in the Geneva Convention (Convention on Road Traffic signed on September 19, 1949) (for information on signatory nations in the Geneva Convention, refer to the following Point). In such cases, the period during which you can drive a vehicle, etc. in Japan using your international driver's license is either one year after you arrive in Japan or the expiry date of your international driver's license (one year from the date of issue, whichever comes first). Foreigners registered in the basic resident register should refer to the following Point.

### List of Signatory Nations in the Geneva Convention

As of March 1, 2019

Signatory Nations in Geneva Convention	Iceland	Cote d'Ivoire	Dominican Republic	Belgium
	Ireland	Congo	Trinidad and Tobago	Botswana
	United States of America	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Turkey	Poland
	United Arab Emirates	San Marino	Nigeria	Portugal
	Algeria	Sierra Leone	Namibia	Madagascar
	Argentina	Jamaica	Niger	Malawi
	Albania	Georgia	Japan	Mali
	Israel	Syria	New Zealand	Malta
	Italy	Singapore	Norway	Malaysia
	India	Zimbabwe	Haiti	South Africa
	Uganda	Sweden	Vatican	Monaco
	United Kingdom	Spain	Papua New Guinea	Morocco
	Ecuador	Sri Lanka	Paraguay	Montenegro
	Egypt	Slovakia	Barbados	Jordan
	Australia	Slovenia	Hungary	Lao People's Democratic Republic
	Austria	Senegal	Bangladesh	Lithuania
	Netherlands	Serbia	Fiji	Luxembourg
	Ghana	Thailand	Philippines	Romania
	Canada	South Korea	Finland	Rwanda
	Cambodia	Czech Republic	France	Lesotho
	Cyprus	Central African Republic	Bulgaria	Lebanon
	Cuba	Tunisia	Burkina Faso	Russian Federation
	Greece	Chili	Benin	
	Kyrgyzstan	Denmark	Venezuela	
	Guatemala	Togo	Peru	
Special Administrative Districts, etc.	Hong Kong	Macau	French overseas territories (French Polynesia, etc.)	Alba
	Curacao	St. Maarten	Cayman Islands	Isle of Man
	Guernsey	Jersey	Gibraltar	U.S. overseas territories (Guam, Puerto Rico, etc.)

\*Please note that even if a country is a signatory nation, there are countries, etc. that do not issue international driver's licenses that meet the format of the Geneva Convention.

#### One Point



### Date of expiry of international driver's licenses

Foreigners who are registered in the basic resident register who have

Departed Japan, remained in a foreign country for 3 or more months, and re-entered Japan  
Can drive for either one year since the date of re-entry into Japan or the date of expiry of their international driver's license (1 year from date of issue), whichever one comes first.

Departed Japan, remained in a foreign country for less than 3 months, and re-entered Japan  
The date of re-entry does apply to the initial date for the one-year period. Accordingly, such foreigners are able to drive for either one year from the date that they first arrived in Japan or the date of expiry of their international driver's license (1 year from date of issue), whichever one comes first.

### 2-3 Driving by attaching a Japanese translation of your foreign driver's license

People who have a driver's license from Estonia, Switzerland, Germany, France, Belgium, Monaco or Taiwan can drive the vehicle that they are certified to drive under their original driver's license in Japan, by attaching a Japanese translation (\*) of their foreign driver's license.

The period during which they can drive is one year from the date on which they arrived in Japan, or the last day of the valid period of their foreign driver's license, whichever one comes first. However, if a person recorded in a basic resident register leaves Japan and stays in a foreign country for less than 3 months, the period during which they can drive is the period described in the Point on the "International Driver's License" page.

\* The following entities are recognized as those who can create Japanese translations.

- Agency that issues driver's licenses, foreign embassy or consulate in Japan, etc.
- Foreign corporation or other entity recognized by the Japanese National Public Safety Commission (for Taiwanese driver's licenses, the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association)
- Corporation recognized by the Japanese National Public Safety Commission as being able to appropriately and accurately create a Japanese translation of driver's licenses. (Japan Automobile Federation (JAF))

### 2-4 Renewing a Japanese Driver's License, etc.

#### (1) Renewing a driver's license

Driver's licenses have a period of validity. People who need to renew their driver's license will be mailed a postcard indicating the items required for the renewal procedure at the address listed on their driver's license. Please carry out the driver's license renewal procedure within the period indicated on this postcard. People who do not renew their license and whose license has expired will not be able to drive.

#### (2) Changing the address on a driver's license

If changing the name, address, etc. written on a driver's license, carry out the change procedure at your nearest police station, etc. Inquire at your nearest police station regarding details, such as necessary documents.

## 2-5 Point system for driver's licenses

If you have a traffic violation or cause a traffic accident, a point will be added to your record. Depending on the total number of points over the last 3 years, you may have your license suspended or revoked.

## 3 Owning a Vehicle

### 3-1 Registering a vehicle

Vehicles that have not undergone registration may not be driven on the road.

When using a vehicle, it is necessary to register it.

If there has been a change to the name, address, etc. of the owner of a registered vehicle, it is necessary to change the registration.

When changing the owner of a registered vehicle due to the sale or purchase of a vehicle, it is necessary to carry out the procedure for a transfer of registration.

If a registered vehicle is dismantled, or if you are going to export a vehicle, it is necessary to carry out the procedure for disposal of registration.

All procedure are carried out at a Transport Branch Office, etc. For details, inquire at your nearest Transport Branch Office.

### 3-2 Garage certificate

In owning a vehicle, it is necessary for the owner of the vehicle to secure a storage space for the vehicle.

As a result, when purchasing a car or changing your address due to a move, etc., you must receive a vehicle storage certificate (garage certificate) from the chief of police that has jurisdiction over the location that was secured as a storage space when conducting the procedure for registering the vehicle.

For light motor vehicles, it is necessary to submit a notification to the chief of police that has jurisdiction over the area of the storage location.

Only special wards (refers to the 23 wards in Tokyo; hereinafter the same) and some cities require such procedures for light motor vehicles. For other vehicles, special wards, cities, towns, and some villages require these procedures.

For details on the issuance procedure for garage certificates, please inquire with the police station that has jurisdiction over the area of your storage location (parking space).

### 3-3 Vehicle inspections

By registering inspected vehicles, it is possible to ensure vehicle safety and prevent pollution, and it also becomes possible to systematically comprehend the actual state of ownership and use, as individual vehicles can be identified.

Thus, vehicle inspections exist so that the national government can periodically check whether individual vehicles conform to safety and environmental standards. It is not possible to operate a vehicle unless it passes this inspection, and a valid vehicle inspection certificate is issued.

Users can request an auto repair and maintenance shop for inspection, or have an inspection by himself/herself.

For detailed procedures and costs, please inquire to your nearby Transport Branch office.

### 3-4 Automobile insurance

#### (1) Compulsory automobile liability insurance (mutual aid)

The objective of compulsory automobile liability insurance (mutual aid) is to ensure fundamental coverage for bodily injury liability by compensating the economic burden that the wrongdoer should bear, in order to aid victims of traffic accidents. It is mandatory for all vehicles, including motorized two-wheeled vehicles, to be enrolled in insurance.

If you are not enrolled in compulsory automobile liability insurance (mutual aid), it is not possible to drive a vehicle. If you do drive a vehicle, it is a legal violation, and if you cause an accident resulting in injury or death, you will be responsible for a large amount of compensation for damages.

Compulsory automobile liability insurance (mutual aid) is available at insurance company (association) branches, as well as automobile and motorcycle dealers.

For motorized two-wheeled vehicles and light motor vehicles, it is possible to carry out procedures at the post office (not available at all post office branches), and some insurance companies (associations) make offer insurance on the Internet or convenience stores.

#### (2) Voluntary insurance (mutual aid)

Mandatory vehicle liability insurance (mutual aid) is paid for damages resulting from accidents in which someone is injured or killed due to a vehicle, etc., and does not apply to traffic accidents resulting in property damage.

In addition, it is possible to specify a maximum payment amount per victim. For traffic accidents resulting in property damages that are not covered under mandatory vehicle liability insurance (mutual aid) (accidents such as where somewhere else's property is damaged), vehicle damage (accidents such as where your vehicle is stolen), damage to a person where accident damages exceed the maximum payment by the mandatory vehicle liability insurance (mutual aid), there is voluntary insurance (mutual aid).

You can enroll in voluntary insurance (mutual aid) through a private insurance company (association). The compensation range, compensation amount, premium, etc. vary.

#### 4 What to do when an accident happens

(1) Stop driving

Stop driving your car immediately.

Move your car to a safe location such as the shoulder or an empty lot so that you do not obstruct traffic.

(2) Notify emergency responders and the police

If someone is injured, call an ambulance (dial 119). Until the ambulance comes, do not move the injured person unless necessary. Follow the operator's instructions, and carry out first-aid treatment as possible, such as to stop bleeding.

Regardless of whether there is an injured person, it is necessary to notify the police (dial 110). You must not leave the site of the accident until the police comes.

After a police officer arrives, report on the circumstances of the accident, and have the police officer check the site of the accident.

(3) Medical diagnosis

Although you may think that you are only slightly injured or not at all at the time of an accident, there are cases where you later find out that you have actually suffered a serious injury. It is recommended that you receive a medical diagnosis as quickly as possible.

(4) Issuance of an accident report

As a document that publicly certifies that you were involved in a traffic accident, there is the "accident report" issued by the Japan Safe Driving Center.

Even if it not necessary immediately after a traffic accident, an accident report may later become necessary to carry out procedures to receive various kinds of support. Thus, it is recommended that you obtain this report.

As accident reports are not issued for accidents where the police is not notified, make sure to notify the police when an accident occurs.

## 1 Making Calls in Emergencies

### 1-1 Sudden illness/injuries, fires, etc. (Dial 119)

When you encounter a sudden illness/injury or fire, please dial 119.

When you dial 119, the operator will ask you, “Do you have a fire emergency or a medical emergency?” Clearly answer whether there is a “fire” or whether you want an “ambulance” for a sudden illness or injury. In addition, tell the operator the location of the fire, or the location or landmark where you want the ambulance to come, your name and contact information. In the event of a sudden illness or injury, tell the operator the symptoms and age of the ill or injured person.

(Foreigners’ Guide for Using an Ambulance in Japan  
[https://www.fdma.go.jp/html/life/gaikokujin\\_kyukyusya\\_guide/index.html](https://www.fdma.go.jp/html/life/gaikokujin_kyukyusya_guide/index.html))

### 1-2 Victim of a traffic accident/crime (Dial 110)

If you are the victim of a traffic accident or crime, please dial 110 and notify the police.

When you dial, an operator will answer. Accurately convey to them what, where and when the incident happened, as well as your name and contact information.

If you are unable to call yourself, ask someone nearby for help.

## 2 Typhoons and Localized Torrential Downpours

In Japan, heavy rains fall from time to time when the seasons change, as the dividing line (front) between the warm air from the south and the cold air from the north stagnates in the air above Japan.

In Japan, heavy rain falls over a broad area when low air pressure associated with typhoons and fronts passes in the area near Japan. Also, due to the topography, clouds that are more than 10 km above ground (cumulonimbus clouds) that develop due to strong updrafts are formed one after another in the same location, causing heavy rains to continue falling in the same various locations (localized torrential downpours).

Due to such heavy rains, sediment disasters and flooding occur, and as they may cause major damage, precautions are necessary.

### 2-1 Sediment disaster

Disasters caused by shifting of sediment due to rainfall (sediment disaster) also cause catastrophic damage to buildings, and may also take away lives instantly. First, check the locations where there is risk of sediment disaster on a hazard map, etc. created by your local government.

When rain starts falling, use storm warnings and alerts published by your local meteorological observatory regarding heavy rains to make judgments on voluntary evacuation. When an evacuation advisory is issued by your municipality, evacuate promptly.

## 2-2 Flooding of rivers

Due to heavy rain, etc. rivers may flood, buildings along rivers may flood, and people may become swept up in rivers and lose their lives when the water flowing in a river increases abnormally and the river starts flooding. For the scope of areas that may be affected by flooding of rivers, check the hazard map beforehand. Depending on the topography, building structure, etc., it may be dangerous to take shelter inside.

Take note of storm warnings and alerts related to heavy rain. When an evacuation advisory is used by your municipality, evacuate promptly.

## 2-3 Obtaining weather information for disaster prevention

The Japan Meteorological Agency provides weather information for disaster prevention immediately via various channels to government disaster management agencies, local governments, TVs, the radio and Internet.

### One Point



#### Heavy Rain Emergency Warnings

Special heavy rain warnings are issued when heavy rain with a rainfall amount that occurs once every dozen years is predicted to occur due to a typhoon or localized torrential downpour, or when heavy rain is anticipated due to a strong typhoon that occurs once every dozen years.

If a special heavy rain warning is issued, it would not be a surprise if severe damages that you had never experienced before have already occurred.

### One Point



#### Real-time Risk Maps for Disaster Prevention

Real-time Risk Maps for Disaster Prevention shows inundation/flood/landslide risks in your location by color on a map, and is updated every 10 minutes. If you see or hear an alert or warning issued in your area of residence, check the areas with increased risk around you using a mobile device, and make efforts such as early evacuation.

### 3 Earthquakes

Around Japan, the Pacific Plate and the Philippine Sea Plate, which are tectonic plates, are submerged beneath continental plates (North American Plate and Eurasian Plate). As a result, these multiple plates result in the application of complex force applied near Japan, making the region a prominent earthquake-prone zone in relation to the world.

#### 3-1 Magnitude and earthquakes

Magnitude represents the size (scale) of the earthquake itself. When the value of the magnitude increases by 1, the energy increases by approximately 32-fold; when the magnitude increases by 2, the energy increase by approximately 1,000-fold.

Seismic intensity represents the strength of the shaking caused by the earthquake in a given location. In Japan, seismic intensity is expressed in 10 grades.

#### 3-2 Preparing for an earthquake

To minimize damage caused by an earthquake as much as possible, it is important to make efforts to protect yourself and to help out your neighbors, since there is a limit to the relief and assistance that can be provided by administrative agencies such as the national and prefectural governments. Thus, it is important to carry out the following actions on a regular basis, and be able to take appropriate actions in the event that an earthquake occurs.

- Regularly talk to your family members about evacuation areas so that you can take action calmly
- Actively participate in emergency drills so that you and your neighbors can help each other and prevent disasters, as well as learn basic disaster prevention knowledge, such as how to protect yourself, how not to cause fires and how to extinguish them, and how to administer first aid
- Prepare enough food and drinking water to sustain you until you can receive relief or assistance, as well as first-aid equipment to administer first aid for injuries (for at least 72 hours, preferably for one week)
- To prepare for furniture, etc. from falling over or shifting, anchor your furniture, etc. in place. Be aware of the placement of your furniture to prepare yourself in the event that your furniture ends up falling over or shifting.

#### 3-3 Actions to take if an earthquake occurs

If an earthquake occurs, remain calm and take action. The kind of action to take differs depending on where you are when the earthquake occurred. Keep in mind the following.

##### (1) Calm behavior

- If you are inside your home or a building  
To protect your head from objects falling due to shaking, cover yourself by going under a sturdy desk or table, and wait until the shaking stops.
- If you are outside  
If you are near a building, signage or a building, walls or window glass may fall. Protect your head with a bag, etc. and evacuate to a safe location.
- If you are in a vehicle  
If you feel shaking, remain calm, stop your car on the left side of the road, and stop the engine. Leave the keys in the car, walk to a safe location and evacuate.

(2) Manage fires

If a fire occurs due to an earthquake, damage will become larger.

After the shaking has stopped, turn off all heat in your kitchen, stove, etc. If a fire breaks out, extinguish to the furthest extent possible using an extinguisher.

After the earthquake, there may be a gas leak. Make sure not to light any fires.

(3) Evacuate to a safe location

In an earthquake, there is the risk of your house collapsing or a fire occurring. Near mountains, there is also the possibility of a landslide. After the shaking has stopped, promptly evacuate to an evacuation area specified by your municipality.

(4) Cooperate with and help neighbors

When a disaster has occurred, it is important to help out your neighbors. In particular, call out to elderly people who are living by themselves or to people who are physically disabled, and cooperate and help them out.

(5) Obtain accurate information

After a large earthquake has occurred, there will be all kinds of information everywhere. Obtain the latest, accurate information based on information on TV, radio, portable terminals and radio communications for disaster prevention and administration, and take action calmly.

One Point



Earthquake Early Warning (Alarm)

When an earthquake with a maximum seismic intensity of at least lower 5 is anticipated, the Japan Meteorological Agency issues an Earthquake Early Warning (alarm) to regions where there is expected to be shaking of a seismic intensity of 4 or higher.

The Earthquake Early Warning is broadcast on TV, radio, portable terminals, radio communications for disaster prevention and administration, etc., in applicable regions.

## 4 Tsunamis

When a large earthquake occurs at the bottom of the ocean, the ocean floor may swell or sink. In association with this, the surface of the sea fluctuates, forming large waves which then propagate in all directions, resulting in a tsunami.

There is a saying, “The tide goes out before a tsunami comes,” but this is not necessarily true.

The speed of a tsunami will slow down in areas where the water depth is shallow, but this does not mean that humans can outrun a tsunami. It is already too late if you start evacuating after watching a tsunami approach the shore. If you feel shaking near the ocean or an estuary, evacuate immediately.

### 4-1 Preparing for a tsunami

To protect yourself from a tsunami, it is important to start preparing on a regular basis.

It is important to routinely keep the following in mind, and to be able to take appropriate actions when a tsunami occurs.

It is also important to check the location of evacuation areas, as well as safe paths to the evacuation areas from your home, etc.

### 4-2 Handling tsunamis

- When you feel strong shaking, or when you feel weak shaking for a long period of time (i.e., slow earthquake), immediately move away from the shore or estuaries, and evacuate to a safe location such as high ground or an evacuation building.
- Even if you do not feel an earthquake, if a tsunami warning is issued, immediately move away from the shore or estuaries, and evacuate to a safe location such as high ground or an evacuation building.
- Obtain accurate information from the TV, radio, portable terminals, or radio communications for disaster prevention and administration.
- As tsunamis tend to occur repeatedly, stay away from the shore or estuaries until the tsunami warning/advisory is lifted.

## 5 Evacuation

### 5-1 Evacuation areas

When a disaster occurs or is at risk of occurring, there are cases where it is dangerous to stay at home. In such cases, it is necessary to evacuate immediately to a safe area. It is important to check the evacuation areas decided on by your municipality.

Evacuation areas are facilities or locations where people evacuate to urgently in order to protect their lives from disasters.

## 5-2 Evacuation information

If the occurrence of damage is imminent, and evacuation becomes necessary, your municipality will issue evacuation recommendations. If evacuation is announced, please start evacuating.

Issued Evacuation information may consist of the following.

- Prepare to evacuate / Start evacuating elderly and other persons requiring special care.

People who require time to evacuate (elderly people, children, etc.) should start evacuating.

Other people should prepare to evacuate for any moment. Those who sense danger should start evacuating.

- Evacuation recommendations

Issued when damage due to a disaster is anticipated, and there is increased risk of harm to humans.

When an evacuation recommendation is issued, evacuate to an evacuation site. Please evacuate to a safe place in the neighborhood, etc., in a situation that evacuation site occurs to endanger your life.

- Evacuation instruction (emergency)

Issued when conditions in which damage occurs, etc., worsen further, and the risk of harm to people has increased significantly and the risk of damage to human beings is markedly increased and it urges emergency or repeated evacuation. Please be aware that this is not mandatory.

If you have not yet evacuated, evacuate from where you are immediately. If the conditions are such that going outside is a threat to your life, move to a safe location indoors, such as inside your home. Please evacuate to a safe place in the neighborhood, etc., in case evacuating to the evacuation site would endanger your life.

### One Point



About evacuation information using warning levels in flood (except tsunami), earth and sediment disaster

In order to make it easy to intuitively understand the action to be taken based on the disaster prevention information by dividing the action to be taken by the residents into five stages from the time of the rainy season and typhoon in the year of 2001 according to the increased risk of disaster occurrence. In earth and sediment disaster (except tsunami), offer of evacuation information based on warning level begins.

Warning level 5 Take the best action to protect lives 【Disaster occurrence information】 1

Warning level 4 Everyone should evacuate [Evacuation recommendation] \* 1, [Evacuation order (Emergency)] \* 1

Warning level 3 Elderly people should be evacuated [Prepare to evacuate / Start evacuating elderly and other persons requiring special care-] 2

Warning Level 2 Confirm your evacuation actions in preparation for evacuation (alert) \* 2

Warning level 1 Improve attitudes to disasters (probability of warning class) \* 2

1 Information announced from the municipalities

2 Information released by the Japan Meteorological Agency



“Safety Tips” app that provides information during disasters

In Japan, an app called “Safety Tips” that provides information compiled by the Tourism Agency to foreign tourists during disasters is available. App users receive push notifications of Earthquake Early Warnings, tsunami warnings, special weather warnings, volcanic eruption information, etc. in Japan. In addition, an evacuation flowchart that shows evacuation behavior depending on surrounding circumstances, a communication card for obtaining information from people around you, and links from which you can obtain necessary information during disasters are also provided.



Disaster message phone service

When a large earthquake occurs, for example, phone lines may be congest with people checking on safety of others, sympathy calls and inquiries.

In such cases, a disaster message phone service is implemented. If you have NTT, dial “171” to easily record and play a message by following the usage guidance. In addition, all mobile phone carriers also provide a disaster message board service.

### 5-3 Evacuation method

Before evacuating, make sure to extinguish any kind of fire. When evacuating, minimize what you are going to bring with you and carry them on your back, so that both of your hands are free.

## 1 Japanese Homes

### 1-1 Owned homes

A home for which you have the right of ownership is commonly called “owned home” in Japan. “Owned home” comes in various forms, such as a single-family home, condominium, etc. When building and purchasing a home, various procedures and contracts are necessary.

### 1-2 Public housing

For people with low incomes who are having difficulty with housing, there is rental housing provided by local governments at a low rental rate, for which the local government has specified occupancy requirements, such as income standards.

### 1-3 UR rental housing

Housing that is managed by the Urban Renaissance Agency. Although the requirement for residency is income that exceeds a monthly income level specified by UR, residency is possible if one has certain residency status, making it housing where foreigners can live easily.

### 1-4 Private housing

General rental housing. Anyone can rent private housing by paying rent, based on a lease agreement. Agreement details vary depending on the property, and it is necessary to check the details thoroughly.

## 2 Occupancy

### 2-1 Public housing

As public housing is targeted towards people with low income who are having difficulty with housing, occupancy requirements such as income levels are specified by each of the local governments that is the manager of the housing. For foreigners, in addition to normal occupancy requirements, there may also be additional requirements such as more than 1 year of residence status or actual record of residence in Japan.

If you wish to live in public housing, please apply with the local government that manages the housing.

For details such as occupancy requirements, application method, etc., please inquire with the local government that manages your desired housing.

## 2-2 UR rental housing

Requirements consist of having a monthly income that exceeds the level specified by the Urban Renaissance Agency. Foreigners whose status of residence is Diplomat or Official, or who are a special permanent resident or medium- or long-term resident (including permanent resident) can reside in UR rental housing. For details such the residency application method, availability, etc., inquire with the UR Sales Center.

## 2-3 Private rental housing

The “Apartment Search Guidebook” is available for foreigners searching for private rental housing in Japan. Please refer to it, as it contains helpful information for searching for housing such as the following.

- Flow of how to search for rental housing in Japan and sign contracts
- Necessary documents and fees
- Move-in procedures
- Rules for living in Japanese housing
- Procedures for vacating housing
- Real estate terms for renting housing

Reference: MLIT homepage

[https://www.mlit.go.jp/jutakukentiku/house/jutakukentiku\\_house\\_tk3\\_000017.html](https://www.mlit.go.jp/jutakukentiku/house/jutakukentiku_house_tk3_000017.html)

## 1 Garbage

### 1-1 Basics of taking out garbage

In Japan, how garbage is taken out is determined based on the region in which you live.

Generally, the location and day on which garbage is taken out is determined based on the type of garbage. Take out the specified type of garbage in the specified location on the specified day.

In general, garbage should be taken out the morning of the day it is collected. Inquire with your municipality as to when, where and what type of garbage to take out.

### 1-2 Garbage sorting

When taking out garbage, there are rules for sorting each type of garbage. Although the sorting method differs depending on where you live, fundamentally,

- Recyclable waste : Glass bottles, PET bottles, aluminum cans/steel cans, newspaper, magazines, cardboard, used cloth, white Styrofoam trays, plastic packaging containers such as tofu and egg containers, etc.
- Burnable waste : Food waste from cooking such as vegetable scraps, paper waste and plastic waste other than recyclable waste, etc.
- Non-burnable waste: Metal, glass, containers, etc. other than recyclable waste
- Oversize waste : Categorized broadly into large electrical appliances, furniture, comforters, bicycles, etc. Each type of waste is taken out on specified days. Sorting of such waste and disposal methods are determined by your municipality. In addition, there may be cases where you have to purchase designated trash bags to take out the waste. Take out your waste by following the rules of your municipality.

#### One Point



#### Oversize waste

In contrast to the method for taking out regular waste, contact your municipality beforehand and submit an application for collection (your municipality may collect such waste from your residence, or you may have to directly transport your oversize waste to the disposal facility).

As mentioned later, among oversize waste items, those that are subject to the Home Appliance Recycling Act, such as A/C units, TVs, refrigerators/freezers, washing machines/dryers, etc. cannot be accepted as oversize waste.

In principle, it is illegal for a contractor without a permit from the municipality to take away waste from a household. Do not request a waste collector that does not have a permit to collect your garbage (there will also be issues such as hefty charges).



## Home appliance waste

Fundamentally, waste from households is collected and disposed of by each municipality. As home appliances include those that are heavy and large, as well as those that contain extremely hard components, some are difficult to dispose of as oversize waste. Components used for household appliances also contain those that can be reused as parts or materials.

Thus, it was decided that for certain home appliances, components and materials that can still be used will be recycled to reduce waste and effectively use resources.

As a result, it is necessary to pay a recycling fee to dispose of the following.

- A/C units
- TVs (cathode-ray tubes, LCD/plasma)
- Refrigerators/freezers
- Washing machines/dryers

### (1) If replacing an old product with a new one

Have the store where you are buying the new product take away your old home appliance. As the collection method varies for every store, inquire with the store for details.

### (2) If you are not replacing and simply getting rid of your old appliance

Ask the store where you purchased the appliance you want to discard to take away your appliance. If you do not know where you purchased the product, you can dispose of it through a method proposed by your municipality. As the collection method is different for each municipality, please inquire with the one in which you live.

## 1-3 Unlawful dumping, etc.

In Japan, it is prohibited to throw away waste without due cause anywhere other than in designated locations, regardless of where you may be, and you may be fined for doing so. Throw away trash by following the rules established by your municipality.

Even on garbage collection days, do not take out any garbage other than the type(s) specified and do not place garbage anywhere other than the specification locations, otherwise they will not be collected.

In many municipalities, there is also a “littering” ordinance that prohibits you from littering empty cans or cigarette butts in the street. Do not litter, as you may be fined.

## 2 Community Organizations (Neighborhood Councils/Community Associations)

In Japan, local residents voluntarily form and run organizations with the objective of developing a town where the residents can live easily and with peace of mind. The costs required to run such organizations are borne voluntarily by member residents.

Through various activities, community organizations promote mutual friendship and exchanges while holding discussions and cooperating with each other; there are also expectations for such organizations to ensure safety and peace of mind for children and the elderly.

As examples of activities, there are disaster prevention activities such as disaster prevention training, watching children on the way to and from school, welfare activities for the elderly and disabled, activities such as local cultural activities and sports activities, and circulation of notices from the ward office, etc.

## 3 Services Necessary to Lead a Daily Life

### 3-1 Electricity

#### (1) Starting electricity service

When you arrive in Japan and start living in a new residence or move to a separate residence, it is necessary to request electricity service from the electricity company. When the date on which you will start using electricity is decided, please contact the electricity company as soon as possible.

On the day that you will be turning on electricity service, you should be able to start using electricity by turning on the breaker switch. Depending on your contract and the facilities at your residence, however, it may be necessary for someone from the electricity company to visit. In such a case, you will be informed by the electricity company.

#### (2) Electricity charges

Depending on the electricity company, there are different electricity cost options that you can choose, depending on the lifestyle of the electricity user. Choose a contract that matches your own lifestyle. Fundamentally, electricity charges are determined based on the amount of electricity used, but there is also a monthly flat fee regardless of how much electricity you use. This is called the “basic fee”.

The amount of electricity that you use is checked once a month by an employee from the electricity company, who inspects the electricity meter installed at each residence. Then, a notice is sent every month to people who use electricity in the form of “Electricity Service Statement”.

Methods for paying your electricity bill include automatic deduction from your bank account, payment at a convenience store or bank, credit card payment, etc.

#### (3) Discontinuing electricity service

If you are going to move and need to discontinue your electricity, contact the electricity company as soon as possible once your move-out date is decided.

On the date that you are going to discontinue electricity, it is fundamentally not necessary for the person who was using the electricity to be present; however, if it is not possible for the employee from the electricity company to check the electricity meter from the outside, you will need to be present. In this case, you will be informed by the electricity company.

### 3-2 Gas

#### (1) Types of gas

There are several types of gas that can be used at general residences depending on components and combustion characteristics. Examples include 13A town gas and LP gas.

Select the appropriate gas appliances to be used in your home depending on your gas type.

When gas appliances that do not correspond to the gas type are used, it is dangerous, as fires or incomplete combustion may occur.

#### (2) Starting gas service

Once the date that you want to start gas service is decided, request gas use from a gas retailer or an LP gas sales company in your residential area.

An employee from the gas company will pay you a visit on your service start date, inspect the facilities, start gas service, and teach you how to use gas appliances.

#### (3) Gas charges

The gas retailer in your residential area will have available different gas charge options depending on your lifestyle.

Fundamentally, gas charges are calculated and billed every month, based on the total of the basic fees, which is a fixed amount, and the commodity charge, which increases or decreases depending on your gas usage amount.

Methods for paying your gas bill include automatic deduction from your bank account, payment at a convenience store or bank, credit card payment, etc.

The details of your gas contract can be confirmed on documents given to you by the contractor before or after concluding the agreement.

#### (4) Discontinuing gas service

If discontinuing gas service due to a move, etc., contact the gas company beforehand.

You can request discontinuation of gas service on the Internet or by phone. When doing so, prepare the meter reading slip that is sent to you every month and tell the gas company your “Customer Number” to make the entire process smooth.

On the final day of gas service, an employee will stop your gas meter. If the employee cannot access your gas meter, the gas customer or an agent must be present.

### 3-3 Water

#### (1) Using water

When starting water service due to a move, etc., it is necessary to request the Waterworks Bureau of your municipality or the department in charge of water to start water service.

#### (2) Water charges

Based on regulations by your municipality, water charges are billed by your municipality upon checking the water usage amount on your meter.

Water charges are a total of the basic fee and the fee that is based on your usage amount.

The basic fee is determined based on the diameter of your water meter and is not related to how much water you use. As you are also charged depending on how much water you use, you will be charged more if you use more water.

Methods for paying your water bill fundamentally include automatic deduction from your bank account, payment at a convenience store or bank, credit card payment, etc.

### 3-4 Opening a Bank Account

You can open a bank account by directly visiting a bank. For some banks, it is also possible to carry out these procedures by postal mail, smartphone app, or on the internet.

If you are accompanied by an interpreter when opening a bank account, the interpreter may be required to be available for continuous support, such as someone related to your workplace or school.

In order to open a bank account, you will need an original photo identity verification document issued by a public agency (residence card, My Number card, passport, or driver's license) to verify your name, address and birthdate, as well as your seal.

\* Passports and driver's licenses are limited to those that show your address.

\* Some banks allow you to use a signature instead of a seal.

When opening a bank account, you can carry out the procedure for issue of a cash card. Normally, however, the cash card will be mailed to your residence at a later date.

Sale or transfer of a bank account (cash card, bankbook) is a crime, with a penalty of imprisonment for up to 1 year, or fine of up to 1 million yen. When you are going to return to your home country and no longer need to use your bank account, carry out bank account closure procedures at your bank beforehand.

### 3-5 Mobile Phones

#### (1) Mobile phone contracts

When making a mobile phone contract, you are required to show a document that indicates your name, birthdate and address or to submit a copy by mail or through the Website to confirm your identity. For this, you can use your residence card, driver's license, My Number card, etc.

\*Passports and driver's licenses are limited to those that show your address.

If a minor is to make a contract, a document that confirms the identity of the minor, an agreement form from the parent or guardian, and a document that confirms the identity of the parent or guardian are required.

To pay for your mobile phone charges, you need a credit card, cash card or bankbook for a Japanese bank account, etc.

Depending on the mobile phone company, foreign language support may be available on the homepage, via telephone or at a store. If you have questions related to services or need to check the documents required for making a contract beforehand, please use these resources.

#### (2) What to keep in mind when signing an agreement or using a mobile phone service

There are malicious brokers who may approach you, saying that they will sign a mobile phone agreement on your behalf. They will use your identity verification documents to make a mobile phone contract for themselves without your permission, so that they can commit a crime. Therefore, when requesting someone else to sign an agreement, make sure to verify the contents of the agreement yourself.

In addition, transferring a mobile phone under contract to a third party without obtaining approval from the mobile phone company will be punished as a breach of law.

### 3-6 Post offices

The symbol for post offices and postboxes in Japan is a red “〒” sign.

At post offices, services such as banking and insurance are also available in addition to sending postal mail within Japan and to foreign countries. You can also conduct bank transfers and remit payment for public utility charges, enroll in life insurance, etc.

## 4 Public Transportation

### 4-1 Rail

In Japan, there is a robust railway network made up of the *shinkansen* (bullet train), JR, private railways, subways, streetcars, etc. As a result, by using the railway system, you can safely arrive at your destination relatively fast. When riding a train, check your destination on the route map, purchase a ticket for your destination, and pass through the ticket gate. If you have an IC card for a transportation system, you do not have to buy a ticket. Simply hold your IC card over the IC card reader to pass through the ticket gate.

Depending on the train that you ride, it may be necessary to separately pay an express fare, reserved seat fare or green fare, in addition to the normal ticket fare.

#### One Point



#### Types of train tickets

**Ordinary train ticket:** Ticket that is required when riding a train. The tickets that you can purchase using a ticket vending machine are fundamentally for distances up to 100 km. If your destination is more than 100 km away, purchase your ticket from a station staff member at the counter.

Train fares are determined based on the distance.

**Round-trip ticket :** You can purchase tickets for going to and returning from your destination as a set. A 10% discount will be applied to round-trip tickets for distances of 601 km or more.

**Reserved seat ticket :** When you purchase a reserved seat ticket, you will be able to sit in a pre-determined seat. Purchase by paying a separate fee on top of your ordinary train ticket. Reserved seat tickets indicate the date of travel, train name and seat number. It is not valid on any trains other than the one that is specified.

**Limited express ticket/**

**express ticket:** Purchase by paying a separate fee from the train ticket. You will use this ticket together with the train ticket. Necessary when riding a limited express train or express train.

**Green car ticket :** It is necessary to purchase a green car ticket when riding in the green car of a train. It is normal to use this ticket together with an ordinary train ticket and limited express ticket/express ticket.

**Commuter pass :** Used when repeatedly traveling between a given interval for a specific period of time for commuting to/from work or school. Prices are set at a discount compared to when purchasing ordinary train tickets for the same interval. You can purchase a new commuter pass up to 14 days in advance of when you will start using the pass. You may also be able to purchase one using a ticket vending machine.

## 4-2 Bus

There are two types of buses in Japan—one that fundamentally travels for long distances (long-distance bus) and one that travels set routes within a local area (fixed-route bus).

When riding a long-distance bus, it is necessary to pay first, such as by purchasing a bus ticket before getting on the bus.

Fares for fixed-route buses may be the same fare regardless of where you get off, or they may be different depending on the distance you travel. If the fare is the same regardless of where you get off the bus, place money inside the fare box when you get on the bus, or if paying using an IC card for transportation systems, hold the card over the fare box and pay before getting on.

If the fare changes depending on your distance, take a numbered ticket when you get on the bus. When you leave the bus, check the number written on your ticket with the board located above the bus driver, and pay the fare indicated underneath your number.

## 5 Manners and Customs in Daily Life

In daily life and work situations, rules, customs and manners in your home country may be different from those in Japan. This may be rooted in the different cultures and traditions in each country and region, but there may be times when even the same gesture or action has a different meaning.

Not understanding such differences may cause hindrances to human relationships and communication. Understanding others' cultural backgrounds and customs is important when living in a foreign country.

### 5-1 Words

For people learning the Japanese language, Japanese characters may be one of the things of great interest. There are 4 types of characters in Japanese—*hiragana*, *katakana*, *kanji* characters, and Roman characters. The basics of learning Japanese characters start with being able to write and express the 50 sounds in *hiragana* and *katakana*.

Although there are some difficult *kanji* characters, start learning those that you see frequently, as they are convenient to remember. In addition, Roman characters are often used when typing documents on computers, such as e-mails, and thus they are convenient to learn.

When living in Japan, it is very important to learn the names (pronunciation and *kanji* characters) of locations and roads in the area where you live. In addition, there are many words that are specific to regions in Japan (regional dialects), and these are also important for living in the region. It is recommended that you learn such words through your local Japanese language classes or through exchanges with locals.

There are also honorifics in the Japanese language. By learning the differences among the honorific language, humble language and polite language, and using these languages, you will be able to have skillful exchanges of words.

## 5-2 Associating with neighbors

Recently, due to the growth of nuclear families, an increase in the number of people living in apartment buildings or condominiums and the importance of privacy, relationships with neighbors have become sparse.

However, associating with neighbors, such as by exchanging greetings on a regular basis, makes it more difficult for problems to arise among neighbors, and it also allows for exchange of information, such as what to look out for in the area. Also, when a disaster, etc., occurs, it is possible to help each other out.

As it is important to communicate with your neighbors regularly, make efforts to actively participate in local events, etc.

## 5-3 Baths

Generally, in Japanese households, the bath area consists of a bathtub and a washing area. Families fill the bathtub with hot water and take a bath.

It is customary for the hot water in a bathtub to be kept in the bathtub until all family members have finished taking a bath. If there is someone after you who will be taking a bath, do not drain the hot water from the bathtub after you have taken a bath.

When using a public bath that is used by the general public, wash your body first before entering the bathtub. Do not use towels inside the bathtub. You must also not use soap or shampoo to wash your body or hair inside the bathtub.

## 5-4 Toilets

When using a flushing toilet in Japan, make sure to flush used toilet paper.

Although there are some countries where it is customary to throw away used toilet paper in a garbage bin near the toilet, used toilet paper rarely clogs flushing toilets in Japan. Do not discard used toilet paper in the garbage bin; flush it down the toilet instead. Make sure, however, to use the toilet paper that is provided next to the toilet.

## 5-5 Using mobile phones and smartphones

You may not operate your mobile phone or smartphone while walking, or while riding a bicycle. Doing so may cause you to bump into other passersby and cause injury to them, or you may hurt and injure yourself.

Talking on your mobile phone on the train or bus is a breach of etiquette in Japan.

## 5-6 Noise

The Japanese have the awareness that loud noises and voices are a nuisance to others. When it comes to loud voices, parties, and TV and radio sounds, make sure that you are not causing a nuisance to your neighbors.

### 5-7 Crime prevention

In daily life, be careful not to become the victim of a crime, such as theft. When going outside, make sure to lock your windows and doors. When parking vehicles, motorcycles and bicycles, make sure to lock them as well.

For inquiries and concerns regarding crime prevention, consult with your nearest police department.