



Kumamoto Living Guidebook

日本語

English

中文

한국어

Tiếng Việt

Tagalog

Compiled by :
the Kumamoto International Association

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I. Things to do Upon Arrival in Japan

😊 Please use this guidebook as a checklist to ensure you are prepared for life in Japan



Residence Card

You must carry your Residence Card with you at all times.
(With the exception of those under 16 years of age).

【 Front 】



【 Back 】



For More Information

Immigration Office (<http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/>)





Resident Registration

I

Foreign residents who are staying in Japan for 3 months or more are required to register their address with their ward office.

○ Upon Entering Japan

Once you know where you will be living, bring your Residence Card to your ward office/city hall within 14 days to complete the registration procedures.

*Please bring your passport with you if you did not receive your Residence Card at the airport. It will be sent to you after completing registration at your ward office.

○ Change of Address

- ① Please bring your Residence Card to the ward office within 14 days of choosing a new place to live to register your intention to move to a new address.
- ② Please bring your residence card to your new ward office within 14 days of moving into your new address to notify them of your residence.

For More Information

Go to your Municipality's "Residence Registration" Counter

Health Insurance

All residents in Japan are required to join the National Health Insurance System.

For More Information 

“Illness and Injuries” (Page 14)




Pension

All residents in Japan must register for the pension system. This system allows everyone to live comfortably after retirement.

○ Types of Pension

| Type of Pension | Applicability: (Above 20, and below 60 years of age) | Insurance Fee | For Inquiries: |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| National Pension | Self-Employed Unemployed | 16,410Yen / Month (For 2019) | City Municipality's “National Pension” Counter |
| Welfare Annuity Insurance | Employed | Dependent on Income | Your Company Pension Representative |

*In some cases, part-time workers may join the National Pension instead of the Welfare Annuity Insurance.

*If you become unable to pay the Insurance Fee, you may avail of either the Waiver (forgoing fee payment) or Deferment (postponing the fee deadline) Systems that have been set in place.

○ National Pension and Welfare Annuity Insurance “Lump-Sum Withdrawal”

Those who meet the conditions listed in 1 and 2 will receive the sum of their paid insurance fees.

- ① Paid the Pension fees for over 6 months.
- ② Completed the procedures to request a refund of payment within two years of leaving Japan.

For More Information

Japan Pension Service (<https://www.nenkin.go.jp/>)

National Pension: Municipal's “National Pension” Counter,

Any nearby “Pension Office” or “Pension Consultation Center”

WelfareAnnuity Insurance: Your Company Pension

Representative



Utility Contracts

Once you know your moving date, please apply for your utility contracts such as electricity, gas, and water.

*A witness must be present upon starting/terminating a gas contract



Garbage Disposal

Garbage disposal guidelines differ by area.

Please follow all rules to contribute to a more pleasant living experience for everyone.

○ Garbage Disposal Rules

Please refer to your area's rules for categories

① Separation

(Burnable, non-burnable, Recyclable, PET bottles etc.)

② Collection Days/Times

Please do not put your garbage out the night before

③ Place

Please bring your trash to the designated area.



*There might be a fee for the trash bags depending on the district.

For More Information

Go to your Municipality's "Garbage" Counter



Taxes

I

| Type of Tax | Contents |
|-----------------|--|
| Resident Tax | The tax paid to support the necessary costs for the administrative services of the prefecture or city municipality. The amount to be paid will change depending on one's income for that specific year. (January 1 to December 31) |
| Income Tax | Paid in accordance with one's income for that specific year (January 1 to December 31) |
| Consumption Tax | A tax applied to products and services. Japan has an 8% and 10% tax applied depending on the service or products purchased. (As of October 2019). |

*Filing Tax Returns: Calculate and report all earnings for the year (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31), and pay the taxes you are requested to pay. You may choose to report taxes via any of the following methods ① Bring the necessary documents to the tax office ② Send the documents by post ③ File taxes online

For More Information

National Tax: National Tax Agency
(<https://www.nta.go.jp/>)

Prefectural Tax: At the Prefectural Headquarters or
the Automobile Taxation Office

Municipal Tax: At your municipality's "Tax" Counter



II. Transportation

II

Japan's public transportation is very punctual.

You can purchase Commuter passes and one-day tickets to ride the trains and buses.

Trains

○ How to Ride the Train

- ① Buy the ticket for your desired destination.
(IC Card holders may go directly to the ticket gates.)



- ② Wait in line at the platform of the station.



*Allow passengers to exit the train before getting on



- 😊 Trains labeled as: "Limited Express", "Express" or "Rapid" will not stop at every station.

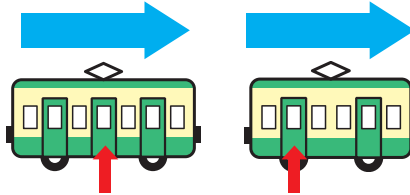
Please check the train route map or the information boards and ensure you know that your train will stop at the correct station.

Trams (Streetcars)

II

○ How to use the tram

- ① Enter through the middle or rear door of the tram



- ② If you have an IC Card, touch the card on the card reader



- ③ Press the “Stop” button once your destination has been announced as the next stop



- ④ Put money in the fare box located at the front of the tram beside the driver before you leave the tram.

If you have an IC card, scan it at the IC card reader located on top of the fare box.



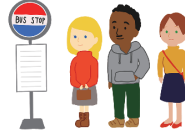
- 😊 Tram fare is 170 yen for adults and 90 yen for children, regardless of destination. (As of October 2019)

Bus

II

○ How to Ride a Bus

- ① Wait at the bus stop for the bus you wish to ride



- ② Take a ticket when you get on the bus. IC Card holders, scan the card on the card reader.



- ③ Press the “Stop” button once your stop is announced



- ④ Insert money into the fare box located at the front of the bus and exit the bus
IC Card holders should touch their card to the scanner located on top of the fare box.



*Some buses charge a fixed fare price.
Others charge based on the distance travelled.
(IC Cards can be easily used for both types of fare)

*The entry door will be different depending on the bus.

<How to check the train and bus fare>

Before exiting the bus, check the number on your ticket. Look at the screen to see the correct fare for your ticket number



| next kumamoto station | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | 300 | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | | | | | | | | |
| 300 | 300 | 290 | 270 | 230 | 210 | 190 | 150 | | | | | | | | |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | | | | | | | | |
| 150 | 150 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |



II

<Train and Bus Etiquette>

Please observe proper etiquette inside the trains and busses.

- Set phones to silent mode and do not take any phone calls.
- Do not speak in a loud voice
- Do not consume food or drinks inside the trains and buses



Bicycles

○ How to Ride a Bicycle

- ① Stay on the left side of the road when riding your bicycle.
- ② Do not ride your bicycle while using your smartphone or when wearing earphones
- ③ Follow traffic rules

<Traffic Rules for Bicycles>

- Do not cycle while intoxicated
- Two people are not allowed to ride a single bicycle
- Do not leave your bicycle unattended
- Use the bicycle light when it is dark
- Observe traffic lights

NO



NO



NO



Automobiles

To drive in Japan, you must have one of the following driver's license. ① Japanese Driver's License ② International Driver's License ③ Driver's license issued in a specific country/region (③ applies only to the following 6 regions: Swiss Confederation, Republic of Slovenia, Federal Republic of Germany, French Republic, Kingdom of Belgium, Principality of Monaco and Taiwan.)

*Holders of licenses from these countries must have a Japanese translation of their license by an embassy, consulate or the JAF

People who hold a driving license from another country may exchange it for a Japanese driving license

😊 Japan drives on the left.

For More Information



Kumamoto Police(<https://www.pref.kumamoto.jp/police/>)



III. Work

Employment Qualifications

Depending on the type of your Residence Status, you may be allowed to engage in work here in Japan.

If you have received a “Permission to Engage in Activity Other Than That Permitted under the Status of Residence Previously Granted” you may be allowed to work a limited number of hours

*International students may get a part-time job but there is a limit to the number of hours per week that they can work.

For More Information

Immigration Office (<http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/>)



Employment Insurance System

Japan has a public insurance system that provides financial support for people who are unable to work or who are searching for work

| Type of Allowance | Details |
|---|--|
| Basic Allowance (Unemployment Benefits) | For people who were forced to quit their job, a basic allowance is allotted for a SET PERIOD if the person is unable to find new employment. |
| Child care leave benefits | Money paid to allow you to take leave in order to raise your child. |
| Family-care Leave Allowance | Money paid to allow you to take leave to take care of sick/elderly family members. |

IV. Illness and Injuries

All residents in Japan can sign up for public medical insurance and receive high-quality medical treatment.

When you feel unwell, please go to your closest hospital.

*In the case of university hospitals, there may be cases where you will not be allowed to see a doctor or charged a high fee if you go to the hospital without a referral letter

Medical Insurance

There are two types of public medical insurance. Everyone living in Japan must join one of them.

You will receive your health insurance card once you have signed up

If you use your health insurance card, 70% of your medical costs will be covered. You only have to pay 30% of your total medical bill.



Example of
an Insurance Card

○ Types of Health Insurance Available to the Public and the Persons Applicable

| | National Health Insurance | Health Insurance |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Contents | You only have to pay 30% of medical fees (If a bill costs ¥1000, you pay ¥300) | |
| Persons Applicable | Self-Employed, Unemployed, Students | Company Employees |
| Insurance Fee | Dependent on one's annual income | |
| For Inquiries | Go to your city hall/ward office's "health insurance desk" | The person in charge of the company insurance |

*People coming from countries that have a Social Security Agreement with Japan may choose not to enter Japan's insurance programs

*There may be cases when part-time employees are registered into the

National Health Insurance program instead of their employer's Health Insurance program.

Seeking Diagnosis at Medical Institutions

- 1 Present your Health Insurance Card at the reception and describe your condition on the medical questionnaire form you are given.
- 2 Stay in the waiting room until your name is called.



- 3 Once your name is called, enter the examination room and explain your symptoms to the doctor.
- 4 After finishing the examination, wait in the waiting room. When your name is called, pay the examination fee and collect your prescription.



- 5 Go to a Pharmacy. Show them your prescription and your health insurance card, receive the medicine and pay.



For More Information

Kumamoto General Medical Information System
"Kumamoto Medical Navi" (<http://mis.kumamoto.med.or.jp/>)
AMDA International Medical Information Center
(<https://www.amdamedicalcenter.com/>)



V. Child-rearing and Education

There are some procedures you must complete if you become pregnant.

If you think you may be pregnant, please visit an obstetrician or gynecologist.

Pregnancy Notice

Notify the municipality you live in about your pregnancy. They will give you a maternity record and child health handbook.



Maternity record and Child Health Handbook

The vaccination records of both the mother and child will be recorded in this book until the child begins elementary school. With health insurance, you only have to pay 30% of the actual cost of your medical fees, as your insurer will cover the other 70%.

*The Maternity Record and Child Health Handbook is also available in foreign language but this has an additional cost.

Birth Certificate

Send the birth certificate to the city municipality within 14 days of the birth of the child.

Regardless of the nationality of the parents, the city municipality must be informed when a child is born in Japan.

The child's name will be written on the birth certificate so, please choose a name before sending the certificate to the municipality.

Regular Medical Checkup

Children aged 3 to 4 months, 6 to 7 months, 9 to 10 months, one year and 6 months and three years old can get a free health checkup.

Your child's height and weight will be recorded and a doctor will check their health.

Education System

In Japan, children aged 6 to 15 years old must be enrolled in full-time education.

| | Age | School Grade | | | |
|----------------------|-----|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| compulsory education | 0 | | Daycare Center (Newborn and above) | Authorized Childcare Facility (Newborn and above) | Kindergarten (3 years old and above) |
| | 1 | | | | |
| | 2 | | | | |
| | 3 | | | | |
| | 4 | | | | |
| | 5 | | | | |
| | 6 | 1 | Elementary School (6 years) | | Compulsory Education (9 years) |
| | 7 | 2 | | | |
| | 8 | 3 | | | |
| | 9 | 4 | | | |
| | 10 | 5 | | | |
| | 11 | 6 | | | |
| | 12 | 1 | Secondary School (6 years) | Junior High School (3 years) | |
| | 13 | 2 | | | |
| | 14 | 3 | | | |
| 15 | 1 | High School (3 years) | Technical College (5 years) | | |
| 16 | 2 | | | | |
| 17 | 3 | | | | |
| 18 | 1 | University (4 years) | Junior College (2 years) | | |
| 19 | 2 | | | | |
| 20 | 3 | | | | |
| 21 | 4 | | | | |

*Age as of April 2nd.

*There are also Special-needs Schools to support the education of children with disabilities

Kindergarten

A school for children 3 years of age or older. They can attend kindergarten until they begin elementary school.

Day-Care Center

A center that supervises and cares for children while their parents are at work.

Authorized Childcare Facility

A facility that acts as both a kindergarten and a day-care center that provides education and care (or childcare) for children.

Enrollment/Admissions

When considering enrollment into a public daycare center, elementary, middle school, or high school, please contact your ward office.

Please contact the school directly regarding enrolling your child into a national or private school.

Children who are not fluent in Japanese may have to take Japanese language classes.

For More Information

Ministry of Education: "Schooling Guidebook for Foreign Students"
(http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/clarinet/003/1320860.htm)



International School

An educational institution for children of foreign nationalities. The language and curriculum vary depending on the school. For more information, please contact the school directly.

Subsidies

A Lump-Sum Birth Allowance and Child-care Allowance are provided to support people raising their children.

| Type of allowance | Applicability |
|--------------------------|---|
| Lump-Sum Birth Allowance | Women 4 months into their pregnancy and women who have just given birth (¥404,000 to ¥420,000 per child) |
| Child-care Allowance | Given to people with a child/children under 16 years old. *Some income restrictions may apply |

V

For More Information

Visit your city municipality's "Education and Child-care" desk
National Health Insurance Association "Kyoukai Kenpo"
(<https://www.kyoukaikenpo.or.jp/>)



VI. Disaster and Emergency Preparation

Japan experiences a lot of earthquakes.
This is what you should do to protect yourself.

Earthquake

When the ground starts shaking, damage to structures and tsunami (large waves) may occur.

○ Preparations

- ❶ Make sure your furniture is secure and will not fall over
- ❷ Keep survival goods such as water and emergency rations in an easy-to-access place



For More Information

Go to your city municipality's "Disaster and Safety" desk.

○ In the event of an earthquake:

- ❶ Take shelter under a table and protect your head from falling objects.
- ❷ Once the shaking stops, turn off all heat sources like kitchen stoves to prevent fires.
- ❸ Open doors and prepare an escape route
- ❹ Stay calm and evacuate the premises.



Typhoon

Heavy rains and strong winds may pose a danger by causing violent seas and an increase in water levels in rivers.

Typhoons are common between July and October. Trains may be delayed or stopped due to typhoons.



○ When the Storm Comes

- ① Use the internet or TV to get up-to-date information
- ② Do not leave the house or building if the rain or winds are very strong.

Fire

○ In the Case of a Fire

- ① (If you hear someone shout “Fire”, hear fire truck sirens or notice smoke) Quickly leave the building.
- ② Ask people nearby for help. Call 119 and ask for the fire department.



Fire Department, Ambulance (☎119)

When contacting the emergency services, please have the following information ready:



- ① Know whether you need a fire truck or an ambulance
- ② Explain the situation (Is anyone hurt or unconscious?)
- ③ Tell the operator your location and contact information (nearby landmarks can help them find you)

Police (☎110)

Crime victims(Theft, Violence etc.),
Traffic accidents



VII. Consultations and Questions

【Kumamoto Support Center for foreign residents】

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Consultation Times | Monday to Friday From 8:30a.m. until 5:15p.m. Closed: National Holidays and from December 29 to January 3. |
| For Consultation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Via Telephone: TEL 080-4275-4489 • Via Internet: Send a "Consultation Form" • Visiting the Center: *Please call and make a reservation |
| Location | Kumamoto-shi Chuo-ku, Suizenji 6-18-1 Prefectural Main Office 7th floor (International Affairs Division) |
| Consultation Fee | None (Free of Charge) |
| Consultation Topics | Livelihood inquiries Residence Registration, Employment, Health Problems, Welfare, Childbirth and Child-rearing, Education |
| Supported Languages | Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Nepalese, Indonesian, Tagalog, Thai, Portuguese, Spanish, Malaysian, French, Russian, German, Italian, Burmese, Cambodian, Mongolian |

●Livelihood Information can also be found at the following website.

<http://www.kumamoto.jp/support-center/>



【Kumamoto City Municipalities】

Reception Desk Hours: Day: Generally Mondays ~ Fridays
(8:30a.m.~5:15p.m.)

*Times are different depending on the municipality.

| Municipality | Address | Phone Number |
|---|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Asagiri-cho | Mendahigashi 1199 | 0966-45-1111 |
| Ashikita-machi | Ashikita 2015 | 0966-82-2511 |
| Aso-shi | Ichinomiyamachi Miyaji 504-1 | 0967-22-3111 |
| Amakusa-shi | Higashihamamachi 8-1 | 0969-23-1111 |
| Arao-shi | Kunaideme 390 | 0968-63-1111 |
| Itsuki-mura | Kou 2672-7 | 0966-37-2211 |
| Uki-shi | Matsubasemachi Oono 85 | 0964-32-1111 |
| Uto-shi | Uratamachi 51 | 0964-22-1111 |
| Ubuyama-mura | Yamaga 488-3 | 0967-25-2211 |
| Ozu-machi | Ozu 1233 | 096-293-3111 |
| Oguni-machi | Miyahara 1567-1 | 0967-46-2111 |
| Kashima-machi | Uejima 530 | 096-237-1111 |
| Kamiamakusa-shi | Ooyano-machikami 1514 | 0964-56-1111 |
| Kikuchi-shi | Waifu 888 | 0968-25-7111 |
| Kikuyo-machi | Kubota 2800 | 096-232-2111 |
| Gyokuto-machi | Konoha 759 | 0968-85-3111 |
| Kuma-mura | Watarihei 1730 | 0966-32-1111 |
| Kumamoto-shi central district City Ward | Chuo-ku Tetori Honcho 1-1 | 096-328-2111 |
| Kumamoto-shi east district City Ward | Higashi-ku Higashi Honmachi 16-30 | 096-367-9111 |
| Kumamoto-shi west district City Ward | Nishi-ku Oshima 2-7-1 | 096-329-1111 |
| Kumamoto-shi south district City Ward | Minami-ku Tomiai-machi Kiyofuji 405-3 | 096-357-4111 |
| Kumamoto-shi north district City Ward | Kita-ku Ueki-machi Iwano 238-1 | 096-272-1111 |
| Kosa-machi | Toyouchi 719-4 | 096-234-1111 |

| Municipality | Address | Phone Number |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Koshi-shi | Takaba 2140 | 096-248-1111 |
| Sagara-mura | Fukami 2500-1 | 0966-35-0211 |
| Takamori-machi | Takamori 2168 | 0967-62-1111 |
| Tamana-shi | Iwasaki 163 | 0968-75-1111 |
| Taragi-machi | Taragi 1648 | 0966-42-6111 |
| Tsunagi-machi | Kotsunagi 2123 | 0966-78-3111 |
| Nagasu-machi | Nagasu 2766 | 0968-78-3111 |
| Nagomi-machi | Eta 3886 | 0968-86-3111 |
| Nankan-machi | Sekimachi 1316 | 0968-53-1111 |
| Nishiki-machi | Ichibu 1587 | 0966-38-1111 |
| Nishihara-mura | Komori 3259 | 096-279-3111 |
| Hikawa-cho | Shimachi 642 | 0965-52-7111 |
| Hitoyoshi-shi | Shimoshiro motomachi 1578 Banchi 1 | 0966-22-2111 |
| Mashiki-machi | Kiyama 594 | 096-286-3111 |
| Misato-machi | Baba 1100 | 0964-46-2111 |
| Mizukami-mura | Iwano 90 | 0966-44-0311 |
| Minamata-shi | Jinnai 1chome 1-53 | 0966-61-1603 |
| Minamiaso-mura | Kawayo 1705-1 | 0967-67-1111 |
| Minamioguni-machi | Akababa 143 | 0967-42-1111 |
| Mifune-machi | Mifune 995-1 | 096-282-1111 |
| Yatsushiro-shi | Matsuejyo-machi 1-25 | 0965-33-4111 |
| Yamae-mura | Yamadakou 1356-1 | 0966-23-3111 |
| Yamaga-shi | Yamaga 987-3 | 0968-43-1117 |
| Yamato-cho | Hamamachi 6 Banchi | 0967-72-1111 |
| Yunomae-machi | 1989-1 | 0966-43-4111 |
| Reihoku-machi | Shiki 660 | 0969-35-1111 |

