

**To foreigners working on a temporary/seasonal contract**

There are many types of work contracts, but regardless of the type any foreign employee benefits from the safety net of the employment insurance and is protected by Japanese labour law.

**Are you subscribing to the employment insurance plan?**

Subscribing to this plan insures that you receive unemployment benefits. This applies to temporary/seasonal employees as well.

*You qualify for this insurance if:*

1. You estimate you will be employed continuously for a period of at least a year.

\*You may satisfy this requirement, even if for example you hold a 1 or 2 months contract with your employers and that contract is being constantly renewed.

2. Your working hours exceed 20 hours a week. \*If you fulfil these requirements contact the nearest Hello Work (ハローワーク) office for advice.

Also, temporary/seasonal workers may qualify for workmen's accidents insurance, health insurance and welfare/annuity insurance if they fulfil certain requirements. For more detailed information regarding each type of insurance contact the nearest Hello Work office (for employment insurance), Social Insurance Office (for health insurance and welfare/annuity insurance), or Labour Standards Supervision Office (for workmen's accidents insurance)

**People working in Japan are protected by the Labour Standards Law**

1. Employees shall not be discriminated against based on their nationality.

Employers shall not discriminate against their employees based on nationality, creed, or social status. (Art. 3)

\*Not only the recruiting firm but the temporary employer too may not discriminate based on nationality, and may not terminate a temporary contract based on that. (Art. 44, 27)

2. Working condition must be explicit

Upon signing a contract the employer has the obligation to state clearly the terms of employment, working hours and wages. This has to be done in writing and presented to the employee in a clear and understandable manner. (Art. 15)

3. Employees have the right to the minimum wage (minimum wage depends on the region of dispatch and industry)

Employers must pay wages equal to or above the minimum wage established in a given region (prefecture) and for a given industry. (Art. 4)

4. Employees have the right to receive their wages regularly

Employers must pay wages at least once a month at a determined date. Exception make taxes, employment insurance fees, health insurance fees, and other fees specified in the labour agreement. Employers are forbidden from signing a contract based on which wages are forcefully being transferred to a savings account. (Art. 24, 18)

5. In case of retirement/resignation employees must receive all rightfully earned money and goods as well as their passports.

Employers must pay wages to their retiring/resigning employees within seven days. They must also return all money and goods which rightfully belong to those employees. Also, they are not allowed to withhold the employees' passports of alien registration cards. (Art. 23)

\*For more detailed information contact the nearest Labour Standards Supervision Office.

**Dismissal/contract termination rules**

*General dismissal rules*

1. Employers may not dismiss an employee based on their nationality.

2. Even in case of dismissal the employers must support reemployment in any way possible (by offering recommendation to other work places, facilitating re-skilling, training courses etc, offering information about potential jobs)

3. In case of dismissal a reasonable notice must be given, as stipulated in the Labour Standards Law.

\*The standard notice period is 30 days. In case the notice period is shorter the employer must pay a dismissal stipend.

\*This does not apply employees with a 2 month contract.

\*Upon receiving a dismissal notice you can request a "reason for dismissal proof", and your employer is obliged to provide one as soon as possible.

◆For workers who's period of employment is not set

Employers must respect the labour contract law. Dismissing an employee without a reasonable, objective, socially accepted reason is considered rights' violation and is therefore invalid.

◆For workers whose period of employment is set (for example 6 months or 1 year)

Employers must respect the labour contract law. Dismissal of temporary workers before their period of employment expires is severely judged and unless there is a strong reason for dismissing the person it is not allowed.

Period until dismissal	Dismissal stipend
30 days notice	0
20 days notice	10 days' wages
10 days notice	20 days' wages
No notice	30 days' wages

\*If a dismissal is considered unlawful, employers must pay wages for the period in which they dismissed a person.

*Rules in place for contract termination*

◆After a contract period expires, a contract

termination notice must be issued a month in advance in all cases (if the contract will not be renewed, if the contract has been renewed more than 3 times, or if one has worked under a specific contract for more than one year)

◆Upon receiving a dismissal notice you can request a "reason for dismissal proof", and your employer is obliged to provide one as soon as possible.

◆There is legal premise that considering contract termination is a violation of rights if a certain contract has been renewed multiple times.

To people under a temporary dispatch contract/or manufacturing contract agreement:

*Even if your temporary contract is terminated, your labourcontract is not!*

◆The dispatch contract and the labour contract are two different things. Even if your temporary contract is terminated, **the contract between yourself and the recruiting firm continues and the recruiting firm has the duty to pay you wages.**

◆In case your temporary contract is terminated, the recruiting firm must assist you in finding a job in another company.

◆In addition, the recruiting firm must pay you an unemployment stipend (60% of the medium wage) until a new work place is found.

◆The fact that your temporary contract has been terminated is not easy reason for dismissal.

*Even if your contract agreement of manufacturing has been terminated your labour contract has not!*

◆The contract agreement and the labour contract are two different things. Even if your agreement is terminated, **the contract between yourself and the contractor agency continues and the contractor agency has the duty to pay you wages.**

◆If the agreement termination is the responsibility of the contracting party, they must provide an opportunity for reemployment, must give a 30 days notice, and in case that is not possible pay a compensation equal to 30 days' wages or more.

◆If your reason for becoming unemployed is the fact that no new order was received, the contractor agency must pay an unemployment stipend (60% of the medium wage) until new work is found.

◆The fact that your contract agreement has been terminated is not easy reason for dismissal.

When you become unemployed you can receive an unemployment stipend out of the employment insurance.

*Conditions*

If you have lost your job, you can receive an unemployment benefit in any of the following cases:

◆If you have been subscribing to the employment insurance plan for a total period of 12 months in the last 2 years.

◆In case of bankruptcy or dismissal, if you have been subscribing to the insurance plan for 6 months out of the last year.

*Even when you have not been subscribing.* If your employer has not provided you with employment insurance even though you think you qualify for it, you can complete the necessary procedures (for up to 2 past years), even after you have been dismissed, and receive unemployment benefits. For more information contact Hello Work.

**Inquiries:** Ibaraki Labour Office, Work Counselling Corner, TEL 029-224-6212. Tsuchiura Labour Standards Supervision Office, Work Counselling Corner, TEL 029-821-5127. Tsuchiura Hello Work, TEL 029-822-5124



the **tsukuba**

FEBRUARY 2009

bulletin

**Time to File for an Income Tax Return**

*Feb 16—March 16*

All residents in Japan, regardless of nationality or form of income must as a rule pay an income tax. The amount of income tax is calculated according to the total income received between January and December of a given year. Usually, the amount of income tax withdrawn from a person's salary is levied as a temporary expected sum. To establish the final tax amount for a year, the entire income sum for that year must be declared. This is called income tax return. However, persons who have already gone through an *end of year adjustment* at their work place do not need to file for tax return. Even persons who are subject to tax exemptions should file for an income tax return if they haven't gone through the end of year adjustment, because such things as the amount of health insurance tax or day care centre fees are calculated according to the total income amount.

The place to file for an income tax return is the tax office close to your place of residence. Consultations regarding these matters will be held by city halls as follows:

**Date & Time:** Feb 16<sup>th</sup> – March 16<sup>th</sup> (except Sat/Sun); 9am-4pm (not between 12pm.-1pm.);

**Notes:** At Sakura Gymnasium you will be asked to change into slippers. Oho and Toyosato branches only hold sessions until March 12<sup>th</sup>. A special session will be held on March 1<sup>st</sup> (Sun) at the Yatabe branch. (Times: 9am-11am; 1.30pm-3pm)

Area	Place	No. of cases	Notes
Yatabe	Yatabe City Hall, East Side, 1F Office	240/day	*As long as you are a Tsukuba resident you may request assistance with your tax refund at any of the sites listed.
Sakura	Sakura Gymnasium, 1F Meeting Room	240/day	
Toyosato	Toyosato Community Centre, 2F, Training Room 1&2	120/day	*The number of cases handled each day is limited.
Oho	Oho Community Centre, 2F Training Room	120/day	*Accordingly, even people arriving in the morning may be scheduled after 1:00 p.m., depending on the number of cases.
Tsukuba	Tsukubane Citizens' Hall, 2F Meeting Room	160/day	*Depending on the number of cases the reception may close at any given time.
Kukizaki	Kukizaki City Hall, 2F, Meeting Room 1	160/day	

**TSUKUBA CITY HALL**  
**International Relations & Culture Division**  
 City Hall- Sakura Branch Office 1979 Konda, Tsukuba, Ibaraki 305-0018  
 029-836-1111 (Switchboard). If dialing within city limits, dial the last 7 digits only. For the ph. ext., dial main # and ask operator.

**Who needs to file for income tax return?**

- Persons with business income (from commercial activities, agriculture, real estates), dividends income, capital income.
  - Employees whose work place hasn't yet submitted the Salary Payment Report. \* contact the person in charge at your work place.
  - Persons who have quitted / lost their job during the year, and have not yet found another employment.
  - Persons who receive a medical treatment exemption, etc.
  - Persons receiving income from public pension who would like to apply for a medical treatment exemption, exemption for dependents, life insurance, social insurance, etc.
  - Persons needing an income certificate, or tax exemption certificate.
- \*Income from part-time jobs is included in the employment income.

**Things to bring to the consultation**

Consultation may become impossible without these items.

1. Income tax return form
  2. Personal stamp (inkan)
  3. Documents attesting to the income amount for 2008
    - a) For salary and pension, a certificate of income and withholding tax/ payment bill; for person with income from business activities a balance of payment sheet.
    - b) Certificate of income and withholding tax for family members under support.
    - c) Persons with income from business activities should prepare their balance of payment sheet beforehand.
  4. Certificates or receipts for payments made in 2008
    - a) Life insurance, earthquake insurance, national health insurance, nursing insurance, national pension insurance, agriculture pension insurance, etc.
    - b) National pension insurance certificate is emitted by the Social Insurance Office in Tsuchiura (Tsuchiura-shi, Shimotakatsu, 2-7-29).
    - c) The certificate of exemption from national health insurance tax is emitted by the Sakura City Hall, Health Insurance and Pension Division, or any other city hall branch offices.
  5. (for persons filing for medical treatment exemption) Receipts of medical fees paid and bill detailing the amount of medical fees covered by insurance. a) By amount covered by insurance we mean the amount returned through high-cost medical care and life insurance. b) Please calculate the total amount beforehand. Sort the receipts by medical institution/pharmacy, write the amounts on a separate sheet and calculate the total for each institution. Bring the receipts with you.
  6. (for persons filing for disability exemption) Show disabilities booklet.
  7. The documents necessary for filing for a House Loan Exemption are too many to list here. Please contact the tax office in advance. If the current address is not the same as the one mentioned on your certificate of income and withholding tax: Alien Registration/ Drivers licence with current address.
  9. Document showing an account number at a given financial institution.
- \*Necessary for persons filing for a return refund on their income tax
- Inquiries:** About income return refund, medical treatment/house loan exemption: Tsuchiura Tax Office; TEL 029-822-1100  
About national pension tax: Tsuchiura Social Insurance Office; TEL 029-824-7121  
About tax return consultation schedule: Tsukuba City Hall, Citizen's Tax Division; TEL 029-836-1111

**Sign up for the Prefectural Mutual Aid Traffic Accident Insurance Plan**

The Prefectural Mutual Aid Traffic Accident Insurance Plan is an insurance system in place, providing relief money to people involved in traffic accidents, following a request from the person involved or a family member. Subscription is done annually (April 1 – March 31 of the following year). Applications for the April 2009 – March 2010 period are being currently accepted by the city hall.

**Target:** Tsukuba City residents, registered foreigners.

**Annual Subscription fee:** ¥900/adults, ¥500/junior high school students and below

**Application method:** apply directly to the Sakura City Hall, Public Safety Division, or any other city hall branch office.

**Inquiries:** Tsukuba City Hall, Public Safety Division (生活安全課); TEL 029-836-1111

**Prefectural and Municipal Housing – Income Standard Has Been Changed**

As of April 1, 2009, the income level necessary to acquire access to municipal and prefectural housing has been changed. Persons exceeding the new standard will not be able to apply for this type of housing after April 1.

**Inquiries:** Tsukuba City Hall, Housing Division (営繕・住宅課); TEL 029-836-1111

Household Type	Current Standard	Modified Standard
<b>General Household</b>	Decreed monthly income <¥200.000	Decreed monthly income < ¥158000
<b>Discretionary Household</b>	Decreed monthly income < ¥268.000	Decreed monthly income < ¥214.000

\*Decreed monthly income : Amount of monthly income calculated after deducting the salaried worker exemption, spouse exemption, dependents exemption from one’s yearly income; calculated based on government ordinance.

**Regarding Municipal Housing**

Applications accepted at the Tsukuba Branch, Housing Division (営繕・住宅課). Please apply directly either in person or through a family member (who lives with you). Applications lodged at other branch offices or submitted by post will not be accepted. Application forms and the information booklet are available at each city hall branch. You can find information regarding housing location and waiting periods on the city hall web page. (URL) : <http://www.city.tsukuba.ibaraki.jp/60/1705/507/index.html>

**Regarding Prefectural Housing**

There are 4 application periods scheduled for 2009. The next one will be in April. More information can be found on the Ibaraki Prefecture Housing Administration Association: (URL) [http://www.ijkk.jp/k\\_j.html](http://www.ijkk.jp/k_j.html).

\*Only for the Prefectural Kasuga Apartments you can lodge applications at any time.

**IT training course for foreigners**

This course aims among other things to teach foreign residents the way to type in Japanese or write an email in Japanese. (Translation to English is available). **Target:** foreign residents of Tsukuba. **Capacity:** 15 (first come first served); **Fee:** ¥100 **INFO/Application:** Tsukuba Cultural Foundation (TFC); TEL 029-869-7675; (E-mail) [class@tsukubacity.or.jp](mailto:class@tsukubacity.or.jp)

**EVENTS**

**1. Tsukuba-san Ume Matsuri (Plum Blossom Festival)**

The “*bairin*” (Plum Orchard) on top of Mount Tsukuba has about 1000 plum trees and they create a splendid scene during blossoming season. During the period, free “ume cha”(tea containing plum) will be offered at the “*Oyasumi dokoro*” (rest area). The entry is free, and the status of the blossoming can be viewed on the webpage (in Japanese):

URL: <http://www.umematsuri.jp/>

**Date:** Feb 21~March 22; **Place:** Tsukuba-san Bairin (\*About 40 minutes by shuttle bus from TX Tsukuba Station, get off at Tsukuba-san Shrine entrance and walk 5minutes). Bus tickets for adults is 700yen one way. There are parking spots at the nearby business houses. ¥500 per time for car, ¥250 for bikes;

**Contact:** Tsukuba Sightseeing Association. Tel: 029-869-8333

**2. Mito Ume Matsuri**

This festival is the most famous sightseeing event in Ibaraki and is held at the “Kairakuen” in Mito City. Kanrakuen was established in 1842, and is one of the 3 greatest gardens in Japan along with the “kenrokuen” in Kanazawa and the “kourakuen” in Okayama. In this garden there are over 100 types and over 3000 plum trees. More information is found on the website

URL: <http://www.mitokoumon.com/maturi/ume/ume.html>

Apart from a few parts, the viewing of the blossoming is free of charge. **Date:** Feb 20~Mar 3; **Place:** Kairakuen (\*JR Jouban Mito line, Mito station, bus from North exit for about 15 minutes, get off at the Kairakuen. \*\*From Feb 21~Mar 22, on Sat/Sun/P.H. the Jouban line will stop at the Kairakuen Mae Station. \*\*\*20 minutes from the Mito Inter City Express form Jouban Highway). Paid parking available. **Contact:** Mito Tourism Association TEL: 029-224-0441

**3. Makabe Hima Matsuri**

Built in the Edo, Meiji and Taisho Era, Makabe-cho in Sakuragawa City, has 104 registered warehouses and gates as cultural assets. There are over a 100 varieties of Hina Dolls made by the business and the people. Historical buildings and traditional food makes this event very popular. This year the event is held between the 14th of February till march 3rd. A bus goes to Makabe from Tsukuba Bus Station. For more information visit the following URL. <http://www.makabe-hina.com/> However, Wednesdays are holidays for the businesses so not all the dolls would be visible on Wednesday. Normally the business are open from (10 am-5 pm)

**Date:** Feb 4th– Mar 3rd; **Place:** Makabe-ku, Sakuragawa City (5 minutes walk from the Sakuragawa City Hall). ( Bus for Makabe “Makabe for Hina Matsuri Go” goes from TX Tsukuba station. Free pass for 2 days can be bought at the Tsukuba Station gates for 1500 yen); **Contact:** Sakuragawa City Hall; Tel. 029-55-1111

**4. Ibaraki Flower Fiesta 2009**

Come and admire the beauty of Spring flowers! With the theme “Spring of Ibaraki”, this event will feature a special exhibition by the winner of the Japan Grand Prix International Orchid Festival 2008. The first 500 guests on the 21st and 22nd will receive with a flower or a flower bulb. There will also be sale of flowers on the 22nd. The event will be held on the 21st and 22nd of Feb from 10 am till 4:30pm at the Tsukuba Capio. Tickets bought before the day is 500 yen, on the day for 600 yen. Free for children from Junior High and below. Tickets are sold at Seven Eleven and Tsukuba Capio.

URL: <http://hanafes.hp.infoseek.co.jp/>; **Contact:** Ibraki Fiesta 2009 Executive Commitee; Tel: 029-301-3954

**Clinics Open During Holidays**

**Feb 15** Yatabe Shinryo-jo , Yatabe 6123-1, Ph:836-1606 Sakayori Iin, Kunimatsu 857, Ph: 866-0106

**Feb 22** Yokota Iin , Yatabe 2980, Ph: 836-0025 Hirose Clinic , Kunimatsu 56-1, Ph: 866-0129

**Mar 1** Watanabe Iin Onozaki 476 Tel: 851-0550 Aoyagi Iin, Uenomuro 887, Tel: 857-1522

**Mar 8** Miyamoto Naika Clinic, Karima 1-4 Tel: 855-6565 Iioka Iin, Sakura 3-20-2 Tel: 857-7526

**Mar 15** Sunshine Clinic, Yatabe 6107-14, Tel: 839-3333 Kashimura Naika Shokaki-ka Clinic, Shimohirohka 744-1 Tel: 863-0606

**March 20** Kushida Iin, Kamigo 2783-1, Tel: 847-2355 Kanou Iin, Hanamuro 860, Tel: 857-2981

**Mar22** Toukou-dai Naika Ichoka Clinic, Toukoudai 4-19-4 Tel: 847-8468

Kurata Naika Clinic, Kurihara 3443, Tel: 857-8181

**Library:** Tsukuba Public Library; TEL: (856) 4311. Open : Tue thru Fri: 9:30-19:00, Sa/Su/PH 9:30-17:00

Other than Tsukuba Public Library, there the library rooms at Yatabe Community hall, Tsukuba Community hall, Onogawa Community Hall and Kukizaki Community hall.(Tue - Fri: 10am - 6pm)

**Library closed on:** Feb: 16,23,24,25,26,27. Mar: 2,9, 16,20,23, 30

**When borrowing from the library...**

When borrowing books and other materials from the city libraries you will need a “Member’s Card”. If you are a resident in Tsukuba, you can simply apply at the central library or community center libraries after having presented some document that states your address. Even if you don’t live in Tsukuba, but work or study here, you can apply for a card, but you will also need to present a work or student ID.

**Story telling:** The library organizes story telling meetings in the “Story Room” at the back of the Children’s Corner. Stories are told by volunteer story tellers.

Feb 21,Mar 7, 14, 21: 3.00 – 3.30pm

Feb 28,Mar 28: 3.00 – 3.30pm; 3.30 – 4.00pm

**Book Talk for Adults**

People who like reading can come and discuss about books they like. Beginners are also welcome. Entrance is free. Please bring the book you want to talk about. This event is on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February from 10.00~12.00, on the 2nd floor of the library. Space for only 20 people, (no need to apply beforehand).

**Child Care Assistance for Household with 3 or More Children**

In Ibaraki, households which had 3 or more children in 2008(under 18 as of April 1st 2008) and those which satisfy the following conditions, may get assistance for part or whole of the Day Care Centre fee.

**Assistance Content:** The fees for a public or private Day Care Centre. (Except for unauthorized facilities)

**For:** Children who satisfy the following conditions 1.~4.

**1.** The child must be the third or later child, and must be below the age of 3. ( The Day Care Centre fee is limited to only children under the age of 3. In case the child entered the centre in the middle of the year, they must be below 3 on the first day of the month in which the child entered the centre.

**2.** 2 or more children from the same household are attending the Day Centre or Nursery, currently gets alleviation of the fee(1/2 or 1/10)

**3.** The household falls into layers 2-5 of the Standard Day Care Fee Table ”houikuryo kijunhyo”.

**4.** Does not have arrears for the Day Care Centre Fee in 2008 and in the past.

**Decision for the Assistance:**

After the application the successful applicants will be notified by post, and then the declaration of the assistance amount and the bill will be delivered, so write bank account and other necessary information and submit. The unsuccessful applicants will be sent a rejection notice.\*Even if there was no arrears before, if there is any arrears at the end of the year, this assistance will be cancelled.

**Medical Check-ups**

Irrespective of residence area you can receive the check-ups at the Sakura Health Center or Yatabe Health Center. A notification will be sent to you in the month prior to when the check-up is supposed to be administered. For more information, please inquire at either of the health centers or the City Hall, Health Promotion Division.

Sakura Health Center: 029-857-3931. Yatabe Health Center: 029-838-1100

**Check-up at 1year and 6 months**

**February:** babies born in July 2007: Sakura Health Center: Feb 24,25, **March:** babies born in August 2007

Sakura Health Center: Mar 6, 11. Yatabe Health Center: Mar 18

**Check up at 3years of age**

**February:** babies born in January 2006: Yatabe Health Center: Feb 18.

**March:** babies born in February 2006

Sakura Health Center: Mar 3,5. Yatabe Health Center: Mar 19

**Polio Vaccination**

**Qualifying age:** from 3 months ~ 90 months. **Reception hours:** 13:00~14:20

\*Children between the age of 1 and 2, who haven’t been vaccinated, need to get vaccination for measles and rubella as a priority.

**February:** Yatabe Health Center: Feb16. Sakura Health Center: Feb 26

**March:** Oho Health Center: Mar 2. Sakura Health Center: Mar 17

Yatabe Health Center: Mar 24

**Measles and Rubella (MR vaccine) Boosters**

Children in the age who have not been vaccinated after April 1st 2008may get vaccinated before March 31st at any designated medical institutions in Tsukuba. (Reservation needed). Will need to pay for the vaccinations if done after this date.(~10,000yen)

\*Children entering Elementary Schools from April 2009(Born between 2nd April 2002~1st April 2003)

\* 1st grader Junior High (Born between 2nd April 1995~1st April 1996)

\* 3rd grader High School (Born between 2nd April 1990~1st April 1991)

**Free Distribution of books at the Tsukuba Public Library**

The library will freely distribute unneeded books to the citizens. This event will be held on the following dates until all unneeded books are distributed. Also, entrance tickets will be needed at the places where there is a limit for the number of people.(The tickets will be distributed on the day from 8.30 to people above elementary school ).

**Contact:** Tsukuba Public Library (T.P.L) Ph:029-856-4311

Date	Time	Place	Intended For	Distribution of	Limit/ person
2/27	9 am-3 pm	T.P.L 2nd floor assembly room	First 250 citizens	General library books	30 books
2/28	9 am-3 pm	T.P.L 2nd floor assembly room	First 250 citizens	General library books	30 books
	9 am-noon	Commercial use car park	Every-body	Magazines (science, society )	No limit
3/1	9 am-3 pm	T.P.L 2nd floor assembly room	First 250 citizens	Children's Book	5 books
	9 am-12pm	Commercial use car park	Every-body	Magazines ( Interest, livelihood)	No limit
3/3-5	1pm-3 pm	T.P.L 2nd floor assembly room	Every-body	General, children's books, magazines	No limit

**The Open University Of Japan”*housou daigaku*” is Recruiting Students**

The Open University of Japan uses T.V etc, to teach classes. Students who want to study while working, want to enjoy education, and people from various walks of life are able to study here. For more information visit the website.

**Field:** Psychology, economics, history, environment science, literature, etc

**Application Period:** Until February 28

**Contact:** Open University of Japan, Ibaraki Learning Centre

Tel: 029-2228-0683. URL: <http://www.u-air.ac.jp/>

**Application:** You can get the application form from any Day Care Centre's or Children’s Divisions in the City Hall. Fill it and submit it with the application period to the Children’s Division at the City Halls.

\* Please contact the Children’s Division if the Child has quitted the Day Care Centre in the middle of the year.

**Contact** Tsukuba City Hall, Children’s Division, 2nd Floor Sakura Branch Office. Tel: 029-836-1111