



2019



# GUIDE TO LIVING IN URASOE



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SECTION





Did you know?

The City PR Magazine is now available in English! Details below!

## Get access to the latest info!

As of May 2019, Urasoe City will be implementing a new way to access the city magazine via the application "Catalog Pocket." The free application is available on iOS and Android platforms via the App Store and Google Play respectively, distributing the city magazine in 10 different languages. Foreign residents living in Urasoe City will now be able to keep up with any current events as well as gain access to the various announcements and reminders that the city sends out!

## App Functions

### Translates into the following languages:

- |            |              |           |               |               |
|------------|--------------|-----------|---------------|---------------|
| • Japanese | • English    | • Korean  | • Chinese[TW] | • Chinese[CN] |
| • Thai     | • Portuguese | • Spanish | • Indonesian  | • Vietnamese  |

### Push Notifications

Bookmarking the Urasoe City PR Magazine allows the app to notify you when each edition is published. The application also pushes notifications in multiple languages during disasters.

### Pop-up Viewing Mode

Enlarges selected text to make browsing easier.

### Audio Translation

Translates text via audio for the selected language. \*Vietnamese audio is currently unavailable.

### Computer Friendly

Access the PR Magazine via browser on the computer. Just search "Urasoe" on the Catalog Pocket website!

<https://www.catapoke.com/search/?keyword=urasoe>

## Downloading Catalog Pocket



Catalog Pocket



iOS



Android



## 市長挨拶

浦添市長 松本 哲治

浦添市在住外国人を対象とした生活ガイドブック「Guide to Living in Urasoe」の更新発刊にあたり、「あいさつ」を申し上げます。

さて、仕事や語学留学、各種研修など、様々な理由により本市在住の外国人の方々がいらつやいます。その人数は令和元年五月末現在で、1,204人を数えます。

見知らぬ土地で生活する上で、言葉や文化、習慣などの違いにより、様々な苦労があるものと存じます。

このガイドブックは、そうした方々の一助となるよう、事務手続きや生活に必要な様々な情報を記載しております。

また、浦添にお住まいの皆様には、本市の歴史と文化などにも触れていただき、浦添のことを好きになつて欲しいと考えております。本市の紹介も記載しておりますので、このガイドブックをきっかけに、もっともつと浦添のことを知っていただきたいと思います。

本誌は「太陽とみどりにあふれた国際性豊かな文化都市」を目指して、あらゆる多様性を認め、お互いに尊重し支えあう優しいまちづくりを展開してまいりますので、皆様にも是非本市のまちづくりにご参加くださいますようお願い申し上げます。

結びに、皆様の本市での生活が有意義なものになりますことを祈念申し上げます、「あいさつ」といたします。

## Message from the Mayor

Tetsuji Matsumoto  
Mayor of Urasoe City

I would like to say a few words regarding the renewal of this guidebook produced for foreign nationals living in Urasoe City.

As of May 2019, there are 1,204 foreigners in Urasoe City working, attending school, and undergoing training. In addition to living in an unfamiliar place, foreign residents face many hardships due to differences in language, culture, and customs.

This guidebook was created in order to support foreign residents by providing essential information about city hall procedures and daily life in Urasoe and Okinawa.

I hope that the city introduction covered in this guidebook will encourage foreign nationals to learn even more about Urasoe. I could ask for nothing more than to have foreign residents fall in love with Urasoe and experience the city's history and culture first hand.

Our city's motto is "sunlit and green, a cultured city rich with international spirit." While continuing our best to live up to our city motto, we would also like to ask for your help in developing a diverse and friendly city where we can respect and support one another.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone to have a wonderful time living in Urasoe City.



# Guide to Living in Urasoe 2019

This guide is produced by the International Relations Section of Urasoe City Hall to provide information about Urasoe City to foreign residents. All information stated in this guidebook is correct to our knowledge at time of publishing and subject to change without notice. If you have any questions about anything printed here, please feel free to contact the International Relations Section.

International Relations Section (Kokusai Kōryū-ka)  
Urasoe City Hall  
1-1-1 Ahacha, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2501, Japan  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 2612)  
E-mail: [kokusai@city.urasoe.lg.jp](mailto:kokusai@city.urasoe.lg.jp)

**Please understand that many phone numbers listed in this guidebook require knowledge of the Japanese language. In order to avoid problems in communication, please have a Japanese friend or colleague help you.**

## How to use this guidebook

This guidebook has quick navigation tools embedded into the text making it easier to find the information you are looking for!

Click on the chapter or section that you want to see  
in the following page to jump to the appropriate page!



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## About Urasoe City

### The City of Tedako: Urasoe



Urasoe is known as the birthplace of the Ryukyu Kingdom. This is the site where one of the most powerful rulers of the Chūzan Kingdom, King Shunten, maintained his court. In the past, Urasoe covered an area much larger than that of the present-day city, including the expansive region of Ginowan, Naha Port, and parts of Nishihara. The name "Urasoe" stems from the word うらおそい (*ura-osoī*) which takes meaning from the phrase "to rule throughout the realm" ( 津々浦々を支配する *tsu-tsu ura-ura wo shihai-suru*). The pronunciation gradually changed to ura-shī, which then changed to the current spelling of "Urasoe."

Urasoe was the capital of the Chūzan Kingdom from 1187 to 1405, and the royal court was based at Urasoe Castle. It was a flourishing political, economic, and cultural center that traded with China and numerous other countries in Asia. In 1406, the Chūzan royal court moved to Shuri. After defeating the rulers of the the Hokuzan and Nanzan Kingdoms, Shō Hashi of the Chūzan Kingdom became the first ruler to unite the entire island of Okinawa, creating the Ryukyu Kingdom in 1429. Urasoe moved to the background until the 1500s, when the eldest son of King Shō Shin was banished from Shuri. He took up residence in Urasoe and brought renewed life to the castle.

In 1609, the Kyushu-based Satsuma Clan occupied the Ryukyu Islands and propagated Japanese language and customs. During the invasion much of the Urasoe area was destroyed. However, the region eventually recovered and while the rest of Japan was subject to the central government's policy of isolation, the Ryukyu Islands were not bound by this and benefited from continued trade with overseas countries. In 1872, the Ryukyu Kingdom was dismantled and designated as "Ryukyu Han." In 1879, the island chain officially became known as Okinawa Prefecture.

During World War II, Urasoe faced intense fighting and everything was razed to the ground. 4,117 people, 45% of Urasoe's population, lost their lives. After the Battle of Okinawa ended on June 23, 1945, the first task to be undertaken by Urasoe's village administration was that of accepting returnees who had evacuated because of the fighting. In 1946, the village office was re-established to coordinate official business and restore basic agricultural operations. Four years later, under United States occupation, Urasoe experienced a significant increase in the US military presence in the western area that today makes up Camp Kinser.

Urasoe was designated a city in 1970, two years prior to the return of Okinawa to Japan, and has been developing as a thriving suburb of Naha ever since. Though Urasoe covers a relatively small area of 19.09km<sup>2</sup>, the city's population of over 110,000 makes it the fourth largest in the prefecture after Naha, Okinawa City, and Uruma.

In keeping with its historical experiences as a center of trade and overseas contact, Urasoe has established its motto "sunlit and green, a cultured city rich with international spirit" continuing to pursue a policy of increasing international understanding.



## Climate

An abundance of sunny days combined with the beauty of the sea and the rolling hills around Urasoe make it a very pleasant city to live in or visit. Okinawa's climate is sub-tropical, with hot, humid summers and mild winters. The average annual temperature for Okinawa is around 23°C (73°F) with summer highs reaching 34°C (93°F) and winter lows of 10°C (50°F). Sunshine is abundant throughout the year, although the prefecture experiences a rainy season in May to June and a typhoon season from April to November. Average yearly rainfall is about 1,700mm (5.5 feet) and average humidity is about 75%.

## Friendship Cities

### Gamagōri (蒲郡市)



The city of Gamagōri is located in the southeastern part of Aichi Prefecture and has a population of around 82,000. Located on the seaside at the center of three estuaries, it is a beautiful and peaceful city. Thanks to its warm climate, it is known for its successful mikan cultivation.

Exchange between Gamagōri and Urasoe began in 1962 when a memorial was erected at the Urasoe Castle Site in order to honor the casualties of the Pacific War from Aichi Prefecture. On November 4, 1981, Urasoe and Gamagōri signed a Friendship and Cooperation City agreement to formalize their long history of exchange. These activities continue through the Youth Friendship Delegations that have participated in culture programs, sports competitions, and other exchange programs.



### Quánzhōu (泉州市)



Quánzhōu is the provincial capital of Fujian Province in the People's Republic of China and has a population of about 7,790,000. The city's port has contributed to its long history of trade and exchange with foreign countries. Throughout the Sung Dynasty, up until the Mongol Dynasty, the city flourished through foreign trade. Trade and exchanges between the Ryukyu Kingdom (Okinawa) and Quánzhōu were particularly noteworthy. During the Ming Dynasty (1350 AD), King Satto of the Ryukyus, who ruled from Urasoe, began paying tribute and sent gifts to China. This relationship continued for approximately 500 years. Cultural, sports, educational, and other types of exchange continue to take place through delegation exchange programs.

Present-day Quánzhōu is a thriving city with active agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial industries. Lacquerware, pharmaceuticals, electronics, tea, and wheat are all principal products of Quánzhōu's economy.



## City Symbols

### Urasoe Citizens' Charter (浦添市民憲章)

We, the people of Urasoe, the City of the Tedako (Sun child), with our venerable history and our hopes for the future, establish this charter to help us achieve these hopes.

We will steward the natural environment and make our city green.

We will abide by the rules and make our city comfortable to live in.

We will build a dynamic community by taking joy in our work.

We will value peace and make our city culturally rich.

We will train our minds and bodies to create a happy and healthy community.



#### Urasoe Citizens' Flower (市民の花)

*Allamanda, Golden Trumpet*

Native to South America, this flower belongs to the oleander vine family. This flower, also called the "Golden Cup," blooms a vivid yellow for about half of the year (from April to October).



#### Urasoe Citizens' Plant (市民の花木)

*Barbados Flower*

Along with "Sandanka" (Ixora) and "Deigo" (Indian coral bean), the Barbados flower is one of the Three Flowers of the Ryukyu Islands.

Growing to a top height of 2-3 meters, this plant, which is colored with a beautiful mixture of red and yellow, blooms between June and November. In the Okinawan language, this plant is called "Akosa." It is also a very easy plant to grow and cultivate.



#### Urasoe Citizens' Tree (市民の木)

*Elaeocarpus Tree*

This tree is called "Tārashi" or "Tārasā" in Okinawan dialect. On the main island of Okinawa, this tree has long been known as a "Kari Tree" or "Special Tree." Its leaves are evergreen with red coloring on the underside.



#### Urasoe City Emblem (市章)

This emblem symbolizes the limitless progress of peace and homeland. The Japanese phonetic characters (katakana) that spell "Urasoe" (ウラソエ) are used as the base for the design. The character that is pronounced "U" expresses the concept of eternal progress. The four characters are placed in a circle that stands for peace and harmony.



#### Urasoe City Flag (市旗)

The indigo blue background brings to mind the deep blue of the Bingata stencil-dyed fabric, one of Urasoe's traditional arts, and expresses optimism for eternal progress. The color white in the emblem symbolizes hope for successful and healthy lives for Urasoe's citizens.

## About City Hall

1-1-1 Ahacha, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2501

Telephone: (098) 876-1234

Office Hours: Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 5:15 pm

(Closed for lunch 12:00-1:00 pm)

Closed on Saturdays, Sundays, and Public Holidays

Parking for City Hall is available in the underground parking lot, the parking area behind City Hall, and the lower parking lot down the hill from the Central Community Center.





## Urasoe City Hall Floor Guide

Basement	Parking Lot	駐車所	Chūsha-jo
	City Hall Store	売店	Baiten
1F	Citizen's Affairs Section	市民課	Shimin-ka
	National Health Insurance Section	国民健康保険課	Kokumin Kenkō Hoken-ka
	Lively Old Age Support Division	いきいき高齢支援課	Iki-iki Kōrei Shien-ka
	Accounting Section	会計課	Kaikei-ka
	Hello Work	ハローワーク	Harō Wāku
2F	Tax Collection Section	納税課	Nōzei-ka
	Municipal Tax Section	市民税課	Shiminzei-ka
	Property Tax Section	資産税課	Shisanzei-ka
	Child's Welfare Section	こども家庭課	Kodomo Katei-ka
	Infant Welfare Section	保育課	Hoiku-ka
	Child's Policy Section	こども政策課	Kodomo Seisaku-ka
3F	Financial Assistance Section	保護課	Hogo-ka
	Information Policy Section	情報政策課	Jōhō Seisaku-ka
	Emergency Management Office	防災危機管理室	Bōsai Kiki Kanri-shitsu
	Welfare General Affairs Section	福祉総務課	Fukushi Sōmu-ka
	Persons With Disabilities Welfare Division	障がい福祉課	Shōgai Fukushi-ka
	Audit Committee Secretariat	監査委員事務局	Kansa I-in Jimu-kyoku
4F	Secretariat	秘書課	Hisho-ka
	Planning Section	企画課	Kikaku-ka
	International Relations Section	国際交流課	Kokusai Kōryū-ka
	West Coast Development Section	西海岸開発課	Nishi Kaigan Kaihatsu-ka
	Land Development Public Corporation	土地開発公社	Tochi Kaihatsu Kōsha
5F	Industrial Promotion Section	産業振興課	Sangyō Shinkō-ka
	Sightseeing Promotion Section	観光振興課	Kankō Shinkō-ka
	Environmental Conservation Section	環境保全課	Kankyō Hozen-ka
	Citizens' Livelihood Section	市民生活課	Shimin Seikatsu-ka
	Sewerage Section	下水道課	Gesuido-ka
	Building Repairs Division	建築営繕課	Kenchiku Eizen-ka
	Building Guidance Division	建築指導課	Kenchiku Shidō-ka
	Contract Inspection Section	契約検査課	Keiyaku Kensa-ka
6F	Road Section	道路課	Dōro-ka
	Land Acquisition Section	用地課	Yōchi-ka
	Land Readjustment Section	区画整理課	Kukaku Seiri-ka
	Churamachi Promotion Section	美らまち推進課	Churamachi Suishin-ka
	City Planning Section	都市計画課	Toshi Keikaku-ka
7F	Education Section	学校教育課	Gak'kō Kyoiku-ka
	School General Affairs Section	学校総務課	Gak'kō Sōmu-ka
	Education General Affairs Section	教育総務課	Kyōiku Sōmu-ka
	Facility Section	施設課	Shisetsu-ka
	Culture Sports Promotion Section	文化スポーツ振興課	Bunka Supōtsu Shinkō-ka
8F	General Affairs Section	総務課	Sōmu-ka
	Personnel Section	職員課	Shokuin-ka
	Administrative Reform Promotion Section	行政改革推進室	Gyōsei Kaikaku Suishin-shitsu
	Property Management Section	財産管理課	Zaisan Kanri-ka
	Finance Section	財政課	Zaisei-ka
9F	Auditorium	講堂	Kōdō





**Assembly Building** (Gikai-tō 議会棟)

The Urasoe City Council meets in the building next to Urasoe City Hall.



**Water Section of Urasoe City** (Suidō-bu 水道部)

The Water Section of Urasoe City is located west of City Hall adjacent to the Urasoe City Central Community Center.

<b>1F</b>		
Storage / Machinery Room	倉庫・機械室	Sōko / Kikai-shitsu
<b>2F</b>		
Business Operation Section	営業課	Eigyō-ka
Water Supply Section	配水課	Haisui-ka
<b>3F</b>		
General Affairs Section	総務課	Sōmu-ka



**Akahira Station** (あかひらステーションビル)

Akahira Station houses a few sections of City Hall that could not be accommodated in the main building. It is a red brick building located about 400m to the west of City Hall on the opposite side of the road (Route 38).

<b>1F</b>		
Welfare Plaza	福祉プラザ	Fukushi Puraza
<b>2F</b>		
Culture Section	文化財課	Bunkazai-ka
<b>3F</b>		
Child and Youth Affairs Section	子ども青少年課	Kodomo Seishōnen-ka

## Prefectural Government

Responsible Organization: **Okinawa Prefectural Government**  
 Exchange Promotion Division (Kōryū Suishin-ka)  
 1-2-2 Izumizaki, Naha 900-8570  
 Telephone: (098) 866-2479

The Exchange Promotion Division of the Okinawa Prefectural Government is a valuable resource for foreigners living in Okinawa. There are native English, Spanish, Chinese, and Korean speakers employed there to help out speakers of those languages. They also provide an external link with extensive information about foreigner's living in Japan in various languages online at:

<http://www.pref.okinawa.lg.jp/site/chijiko/kohokoryu/foreign/english/living/index.html>



# Emergencies

## Emergency Phone Numbers / Japanese

From a public phone, insert 10 yen or push the red button at the bottom to make the call free of charge.



**110**  
Police  
(Keisatsu 警察)



**119**  
Fire Truck  
(Shōbō 消防)



**119**  
Ambulance  
(Kyūkyūsha 救急車)



**118**  
Japan Coast Guard Okinawa HQ  
(Kaijō Hoanchō 海上保安庁)

Please create a card with your name and phone number should you ever need to give your information to an emergency operator.

For example:

Name: Watashi no namae wa \_\_\_\_\_ desu.

Address: Watashi no jūsho wa \_\_\_\_\_ desu.

Telephone Number: Watashi no denwa bangō wa \_\_\_\_\_ desu.

## Emergency Japanese

In an emergency situation it might be difficult to find a person proficient in a foreign language.

Therefore, the following phrases could be helpful.

I can't speak Japanese.	Nihongo ga dekimasen.	日本語ができません。
Please come and help me.	Tasukeni kite kudasai.	助けに来て下さい。
There has been an accident.	Jiko/Jiken desu.	事故 / 事件です。
There has been a robbery.	Dorobō desu.	どろぼうです。
The address is _____.	Jūsho wa...	住所は _____。
My name is _____.	Namae wa...	名前は _____。
My phone number is _____.	Denwa bangō wa...	電話番号は _____。
Fire!	Kaji desu.	火事です。
Please call an ambulance!	Kyūkyūsha onegaishimasu.	救急車お願いします。
Someone is drowning!	Oboreteimasu.	溺れています。
Come quickly!	Sugu kite kudasai.	すぐ来て下さい。

## How to say numbers in Japanese

0 zero, 1 ichi, 2 ni, 3 san, 4 yon, 5 go, 6 roku, 7 nana, 8 hachi, 9 kyū, 10 jū

\* The dash (-) in a phone number is pronounced "no."

## Pronunciation of Japanese sounds

### VOWELS:

- A "ah" as in "father"
- I "ee" as in "meet"
- U "oo" as in "flute"
- E "eh" as in "etch"
- O "oh" as in "rope"

### CONSONANTS:

- \* Japanese consonants are basically the same as English.
- The "R" sound is halfway between the English "R" and the English "L" sounds.



## Police Boxes (Kōban 交番)

If you are in need of help while walking or driving in Urasoe, there are police boxes which offer services.

This system exists throughout Japan. Police boxes in Urasoe City are listed below.

Police Box	Kanji	Address	Telephone
Gusukuma	城間	2121-1 Gusukuma	(098) 877-2061
Makiminato	牧港	1-7-9 Makiminato	(098) 877-9377
Nakama	仲間	319 Nakama	(098) 877-9376
Uchima	内間	4-26-13 Uchima	(098) 877-8126

## Home Safety

### LP Gas (LP ガス)

Please cooperate with the periodic inspections by the gas company. They are in accordance with regulations.

If the gas is used over two hours, it may automatically shut off for safety reasons. Your oven is not out of order. Wait a few minutes and then open the plastic lid beside the gas meter and reset it. Keep pressing the button until it restarts.

### What to do When a Gas Leak Occurs

- Extinguish all open flames and sources of combustion.
- Close the main gas valve, and unplug electric appliances.
- Open doors and windows to vent the gas out of the room.
- Do not turn on any electrical appliances. (This includes ventilation fans.)
- Phone the gas company, housing agency, or landlord immediately for inspection.
- Do not attempt to fix a gas problem yourself. LP gas can be extremely dangerous if someone inexperienced tries to fix it.

### Fire Extinguishers (Shōkaki 消火器)

When buying a fire extinguisher, select a reinforced solution type effective for oil fires. It is extremely dangerous to use old or damaged fire extinguishers, so make sure yours is new. The new type has a yellow safety plug and a pull-ring with a 2cm or larger inner diameter. To use a fire extinguisher, pull the plug upward, aim at the fire, and grip the lever. Most fire extinguishers work for 14 seconds.

In the event you cannot put the fire out, phone the fire department immediately, and alert your neighbors. Say "kaji desu," and give your address.

### Smoke Detectors (Jūkeiki 住警器)

Smoke detectors are not currently standard equipment in homes in Japan. If you want a smoke detector in your house or apartment, you will have to purchase one on your own. However, as of June 1, 2011, smoke detectors will be required in all apartments and private houses in Urasoe. If you are a private homeowner, you are responsible for installation. Landlords are responsible for installation in rental housing.





## Typhoons

(Taifu 台風)

The typhoon season is from April to November. Typhoon conditions are broadcast on AFN television and radio, and on Japanese television.

### Preparing for a Typhoon

- Have enough bottled water, food, and flashlight or candles available for a couple of days.
- Make sure your radio has batteries.
- Secure all loose objects outside.
- Make sure all pets are inside.

If the buses are not running, schools and public services (City Hall etc.) close for the day. Information about bus, ferry, and airplane cancellations is broadcast continually on Japanese television during typhoons as well as on the Urasoe City Homepage and Official Facebook.

### During a Typhoon

- Avoid going outdoors.
- Be prepared for power outages.
- Listen to the radio for information and updates.
- If your windows are not reinforced, tape them in a crisscross fashion. (This is only necessary if the wind is extremely strong.)

## Earthquakes

(Jishin 地震)

Okinawa is not known to have damaging earthquakes, and even minor tremors are rare compared to other areas in Japan. Nevertheless, here are some tips on preparing for earthquakes.

### Preparing for an Earthquake

- Have enough bottled water, non-perishable food, and flashlight or candles to last a few days.
- Have a portable radio with batteries that work. You should also have some spare batteries available.
- Make sure all objects in your home are secured.
- Have a First Aid Kit available.
- Have some money in cash available.
- Make sure you know where your identifying documents are. Have your passport and other important documents readily available.

### During an Earthquake

- Stay calm.
- Turn off all sources of fire and extinguish any flames.
- Open doors for escape.
- Protect yourself against injury from falling furniture and objects.
- Take refuge under a table or some other strong object and hold onto it.
- Cover your head.
- Stay away from brick and concrete block fences, etc.
- Do not use elevators.
- If you are operating a vehicle, pull over to the side of the road in a safe manner. After pulling over, listen to AFN, or a broadcasting system you understand, in order to get earthquake, traffic, and tsunami warning bulletins.
- Leave the center of the road open.
- Leave the engine key inserted and close the windows. Do not lock the doors.
- Do not attempt evacuation by car.
- Walk to the nearest safe area.



## Evacuation Shelters

(Shitei Hinanjo 指定避難所)

Area	Shelter	Address	Telephone
Nakama	1 Urasoe Elementary School	2-47-1 Nakama	877-2064
	12 Urasoe Junior High School	2-46-1 Nakama	877-2066
Yafuso	2 Nakanishi Elementary School	2-32-1 Yafuso	877-2067
	13 Nakanishi Junior High School	2-13-1 Yafuso	877-2070
Jicchaku	3 Kamimori Elementary School	1-4-1 Jicchaku	877-6380
Iso	4 Urashiro Elementary School	2-13-1 Iso	877-3335
	18 Urasoe Commercial High School	3-11-1 Iso	877-5844
Makiminato	5 Makiminato Elementary School	2-14-1 Makiminato	877-4142
Toyama	6 Toyama Elementary School	2-34-1 Toyama	877-7595
	16 Uranishi Junior High School	3-1-1 Toyama	879-3236
Uchima	7 Uchima Elementary School	4-3-1 Uchima	877-0369
	14 Kamimori Junior High School	1-6-1 Uchima	877-5165
	17 Urasoe High School	3-26-1 Uchima	877-4970
Gusukuma	8 Minatogawa Elementary School	4-37-1 Gusukuma	879-1974
Miyagi	9 Miyagi Elementary School	3-7-3 Miyagi	879-5312
Takushi	10 Takushi Elementary School	998 Takushi	879-3238
Maeda	11 Maeda Elementary School	333 Maeda	879-1947
	19 JICA Okinawa Center	11463-1 Maeda	876-6000
Minatogawa	15 Minatogawa Junior High School	1-1-1 Minatogawa	876-1323

## Welfare Shelters

(Fukushi Hinanjo 福祉避難所)

Area	Shelter	Address	Telephone
Iso	1 Wakakusa Youth Center	3-44-1 Iso	877-0047
	7 Urashiroko Youth Center	2-13-2 Iso	878-6815
Uchima	2 Uchima Youth Center	3-28-12 Uchima	876-1502
Nishihara	3 Nishihara Youth Center	4-9-1 Nishihara	878-1766
Kyozuka	4 Kyozuka Yuimaru Center	1-17-1 Kyozuka	876-4100
Miyagi	5 Miyagigahara Youth Center	2-4-1 Miyagi	876-1895
	10 Miyagi Kibo no Mori Community Center	3-7-3-1 Miyagi	870-0227
Makiminato	6 Machinato Youth Center	2-38-2 Makiminato	873-1898
Jicchaku	8 Mori-no-ko Youth Center	1-4-1 Jicchaku	874-7610
Nakama	9 Urasoe Gusuku Youth Center	2-47-5 Nakama	874-0417
Maeda	11 Maeda Yubushigaoka Youth Center	323 Maeda	871-1558
Ohira	12 Ohira Special Education School	1-27-1 Ohira	877-4941

## Tsunami Shelters

(Tsunami Hinan-biru 津波避難ビル)

Area	Shelter	Address	Telephone	Floor
Makiminato	1 Okinawa Prefectural Construction Hall	5-6-8 Makiminato	876-5211	3
	2 Makiminato Driving School	5-10-1 Makiminato	879-1774	4
Jicchaku	3 Okinawa Toyota Motor Co., Ltd.	4-18-1 Jicchaku	877-2494	3
	4 Urasoe Industry Promotion Center Yui no Machi	4-13-1 Jicchaku	877-4606	3~5
	9 Symba Network Building	4-15-15 Jicchaku	871-3100	3~4
Inanse	5 Okinawa Central Wholesale Market	1-11-1 Inanse	865-2111	3
	8 Inanse Assembly Hall	1-7-1 Inanse	866-6111	4
Naha Minatomachi	10 Hotel Morlia Classic	4-3-27 Naha Minatomachi	860-5555	4
Minatogawa	7 Tech Land Urasoe (Yamada Denki)	241-3 Minatogawa	870-1106	Parking lot
Irijima	6 Ryukyu Cement Co.	2-2-2 Irijima	870-1080	6

## Evacuation Fields

(Kōiki Hinanjo 広域避難所)

Area	Shelter	Address
Nakama	1 Urasoe Culture Park	1-9 Nakama
	2 ANA SPORTS PARK Urasoe	1-13 Nakama





## Dangerous Animals

### Habu Snakes (ハブ)

Related Organization:

**Okinawa Prefectural Government Habu Laboratory**

(Okinawa-ken Eisei Kankyō Kenkyū-jo Habu Kenkyū-shitsu 沖縄県衛生環境研究所ハブ研究室)

Telephone: (098) 946-6710

Habu are a group of venomous snakes native to Okinawa and other islands in Okinawa Prefecture. Color varies slightly by species, but in general the snakes are dark green and yellow with a triangular head, measuring up to 2m in length.

Habu are usually encountered in dense vegetation or on the roadside. Although habu are sometimes seen in urban areas, they are more numerous in isolated rural areas. They are often found in and around tombs, in sugarcane fields, in caves, and in stone walls. In Okinawa, these and other snakes are most active during the spring and fall. They are for the most part nocturnal.

If bitten, symptoms include paralyzing pain, swelling at the bitten point, and internal bleeding.

If you see a habu snake in Urasoe, please do not try to trap it yourself.

**If you spot a snake, call the police (110)**

**If bitten, call the fire department (119)**



### Precautions and Treatment

If you are hiking or working outdoors in an area far away from a hospital, you may want to bring an anti-venom kit with you.

If bitten,

- Stay calm and confirm that you have been bitten by a habu snake.
- Phone 119 and avoid moving around vigorously.
- Suck out the venom. You may use your mouth within the first 5 minutes of being bitten.
- Tie up the affected limb, but leave enough space for 1 finger to pass through.

### Box Jellyfish (Habu Kurage ハブクラゲ)

Habu Kurage are venomous jellyfish sometimes found in the warm waters of Okinawa. They tend to appear from May to October and are 12cm in diameter, and about 1.5m long. They have four legs, each having eight tentacles.

Habu Kurage stings can cause permanent scarring, and due to the toxicity of its venom, can also lead to cardiac arrest and even death.

### Precautions and Treatments

Cover as much of your body as possible while swimming and snorkeling.

Swim in areas protected by jellyfish netting.

Bring cooking vinegar to the beach.

If stung

- Avoid washing the affected area with sand or fresh water.
- Gently remove the jellyfish with cooking vinegar or saltwater.
- Apply ice or cool water to the affected area to soothe pain.
- Phone 119 and get to a hospital as quickly as possible.
- Try not to panic and stay calm.





# Registrations and Visas

## Important Documents

### The Residence Card (Zairyū Kādo 在留カード)

If you enter Japan via Narita, Haneda, Chubu, or Kansai airport, then you will have a card made for you at Immigration. If you come into Japan via another airport, then you will receive a temporary landing verification stamped in your passport, and you will have a Residence Card mailed to you after registering at your local municipal office.

You must carry your Residence Card with you at all times.



### The Individual Number “My Number” System (Kojin Bangō 個人番号)

Starting October 2015, all individuals residing in Japan for the mid-to long-term status will be issued an individual number in conjunction with the introduction of the Social Security and Tax Number System. Individual numbers are unique to each holder (similar to a social security number) and can be used for procedures at municipal offices, etc. Your municipality will mail an envelope to your residence (at the address registered therewith), containing a “Notification Card” with your Individual Number printed on it.

If desired, “Individual Number Cards” can also be issued upon completion of the application provided with the Notification Card. Individual Number Cards also serve as an ID card bearing your Individual Number. Please handle your Individual Number with care to avoid illegitimate use.



## Basic Resident Registration System

Starting July 9, 2012, Alien Registration Cards are no longer issued by municipalities in Japan (such as Urasoe City Hall). Instead, foreign nationals residing in Japan for the mid-to long-term status are eligible to receive a Residence Card upon landing in Japan, and are then required to register their address at their local municipality office. Special Permanent Residents with Alien Registration Cards may visit City Hall to update to a Residence Card.

### Who does this apply to?

Status	Details of Status
1. <b>Medium to Long Term Resident</b> (Persons holding a Residence Card)	Foreign nationals granted a status of residence <u>other than</u> the following: <b>1)</b> those granted permission to stay for less than 3 months; <b>2)</b> persons with temporary visitor/ diplomat/ official visa status.
2. <b>Special Permanent Resident</b> (Persons holding Special Permanent Resident Certificates)	Persons recognized as Special Permanent Residents under the Special Act on Immigration Control.
3. <b>Persons who may continue to stay transitionally in Japan by birth</b>	Foreign nationals who are born in Japan to foreign parents. Such persons may continue to stay in Japan up to 60 days without acquiring a status of residence.



## Registration of Residency

(Jūminhyō Tōroku 住民票登録)

Responsible Organization: **Citizens' Affairs Section** (Shimin-ka 市民課)  
 Urasoe City Hall, 1st Floor  
 Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3065)

Those who have received a Residence Card (or temporary stamp) at a point of entry are asked to visit their city's municipal office with their residence card/ stamp, and notify the Ministry of Justice where they live. Upon visiting city hall, you will be entered into the city's Basic Resident Registration System alongside native residents as part of the new foreign residency system. Foreign nationals will have a Certificate of Residence made for them at the local municipality in which they reside, just as is done for Japanese nationals. Please note that all registrations done at City Hall are free of charge; however, printed copies of each certificate comes with a nominal fee.

### Types of Residential Certificates

Type of Application	Period of Application	Applicant	Necessary Documents
<b>Notification of Moving In</b> (Tenyū Todoke 転入届)  For those moving into Urasoe from overseas or another municipality	Within 14 days of moving in	Member of Household or person to be registered	<b>1. Personal Identification</b> (Residence Card, Passport, Driver's License, etc.) <b>2. Residence Card or Stamp</b> <b>3. Passport</b> (required in the absence of a Residence Card) <b>4. Personal Seal</b> (Signatures OK) <b>5. Notification of Moving Out</b> (if available) <b>6. Notification Card or Individual Number Card</b> (if available) <b>7. Individual Number Card or Basic Resident Registry Card</b> (if available)  Additional Documents - <b>Letter of Proxy</b> (for proxy applicants) ① - <b>Consent Form</b> (if a registered person lives in the same household) ② - <b>Certificate of relationship between head of household and person to be registered</b> (if head of household is a foreign national) - <b>National Pension Book</b> (for those in the National Pension Program)
<b>Notification of Moving Out</b> (Tenshutsu Todoke 転出届)  For those moving out of Urasoe	Within 14 days of moving out	Member of Household or person to be registered	<b>1. Personal Identification</b> (Residence Card, Passport, Driver's License, etc.) <b>2. Personal Seal</b> (Signatures OK) <b>3. Notification Card or Individual Number Card</b> (if available)  Additional Documents - <b>Letter of Proxy</b> (for proxy applicants) ①
<b>Notification of Change of Residence</b> (Tenkyō Todoke 転居届)  For those changing residence within Urasoe City	Within 14 days of changing residence	Member of Household or person to be registered	<b>1. Personal Identification</b> (Residence Card, Passport, Driver's License, etc.) <b>2. Residence Card</b> <b>3. Personal Seal</b> (Signatures OK) <b>4. Notification Card or Individual Number Card</b> (if available) <b>5. Basic Resident Registry Card</b> (if available)  Additional Documents - <b>Letter of Proxy</b> (for proxy applicants) ① - <b>Consent Form</b> (if a registered person lives in the same household) ② - <b>Certificate of relationship between head of household and person to be registered</b> (if head of household is a foreign national)

① The letter of proxy must be written or typed by the person to be registered

② The registered individual must fill out the consent form. (Confirmation via phone will be accepted during the registration process.)

For any other changes (name, nationality, etc), please notify the bureau below within 14 days of the change.

### Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services Bureau Naha District Immigration Office

(Fukuoka Shutsunyūkoku Zairyū Kanri-kyoku Naha-shi-kyoku 福岡出入国在留管理局那覇支局)

Address: 1-15-15 Higawa Dai-ichi Chihō Gōdōchōsha, Naha, Okinawa 900-0022

Telephone: (098) 832-4185



## Registration of Marriage

(Kon-in Todoke 婚姻届)

Responsible Organization: **Citizens' Affairs Section** (Shimin-ka 市民課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 1st Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3064)

### Marriages Performed in Japan (Nihon-nai no Kekkon 日本内の結婚)

To be legally married in Japan, you must register the marriage with your embassy or consulate and with the municipal office in the city or town where you live. The registration service is free of charge, but there is a nominal fee for your Marriage Certificate.

#### Necessary Documents

- **Marriage Registration Form** completed in Japanese and signed by two witnesses. (Forms are available at City Hall.)
- **Copy of family register** for Japanese party. (Unnecessary when registering in permanent domicile)
- **Affidavit of Eligibility** (foreign national party). Affidavits are to prove that you can be legally married in your home country. Please obtain one from your consulate or embassy.
- **Japanese translation of the Affidavit of Eligibility** with the translator's signature or stamp. Affidavits may be translated by anyone proficient in Japanese.
- **Proof of nationality** (Passport, Birth Certificate, Residence Card, etc.)

In the case of countries that do not issue Affidavits, another document will be required in its place. Instead, a (1) copy of the laws in the foreign national's home country with a reference to the source with a Japanese translation and (2) proof of identity issued by the foreign national's home country, such as a passport, ID or registration card, or birth certificate with Japanese translations may be submitted. Please note that cases where the applicant cannot provide an Affidavit of Eligibility will take extra time.

#### Notes

- Remember that under Japanese law, marriage within 100 days of a divorce is illegal for women.
- Marriage Registration is required even for Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) personnel.

### Marriages Performed Outside of Japan (Nihon-gai no Kekkon 日本外の結婚)

You must also register the marriage with the municipal office in the city or town where you live if you marry a Japanese national overseas. Please note that marriages between foreign nationals performed outside of Japan will not be recorded in Japan.

#### Necessary Documents

- **Marriage Registration Form** (with signature from Japanese party)
- **Copy of family register** (Japanese party)
- **Marriage Certificate** issued by a public authority in the country where the marriage was registered (original document)
- **Japanese translation of Marriage Certificate**
- **Proof of nationality** (Passport, Birth Certificate, Residence Card, etc.)

Note that all documents in foreign languages must be accompanied by a translation in Japanese, with the translator's signature or personal seal. The translation may be done by the applicant. Original documents submitted in the application process will not be returned.

### Marriage Certificates (Kon-in Juri Shōmei-sho 婚姻受理証明書)

After assembling the necessary documents and registering your marriage, you may purchase a Marriage Certificate (kon-in juri shōmeisho 婚姻受理証明書). The price is ¥350 for a Standard Certificate and ¥1,400 for a Decorative Certificate. The Decorative Certificate includes the names of the witnesses to the marriage registration, whereas the Standard Certificate does not.



## Registration of Divorce

(Rikon Todoke 離婚届)

Responsible Organization: **Citizens' Affairs Section** (Shimin-ka 市民課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 1st Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3064)

If either party is a Japanese national, then the divorce will be established in Japan upon submitting the divorce notification form at the Citizens' Affairs Section. If both parties are foreign nationals, then the divorce will not be established upon submitting the notification form at the Citizen's Affairs Section.

Complete and submit the divorce notification form at the Citizens' Affairs Section. This form must be signed or stamped with a personal seal by both parties showing their full consent, and witnessed by two people over 20 years of age. If both parties are in agreement, then registering a divorce in Japan is relatively simple. However, depending on the laws of your home country, the process can become very complicated.

You are advised to consult with the relevant embassy or consulate in order to determine what is required. Even if a divorce becomes effective in Japan, be sure to obtain official recognition in your home country.

### Necessary Documents

- Divorce Notification Form (with signatures from both parties and 2 witnesses)
- Copy of family register for Japanese party (Unnecessary when registering in permanent domicile)
- Copy of residence certificate for Japanese party

## Registration of Newborn Children

(Shusseido 出生届)

Responsible Organization: **Citizens' Affairs Section** (Shimin-ka 市民課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 1st Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3064)

If you give birth in Japan, notify your embassy or consulate and apply for a passport as soon as possible.

Births must be reported within 14 days to the Citizens' Affairs Section of City Hall. This will enable you to receive a "Certificate of Acceptance of Birth Registration" (shusseido juri shōmeisho 出生届受理証明書).

### Necessary Documents

- Newborn Child Notification Form
- Birth Certificate (from the hospital)
- Mother and Child Health Handbook

### Notes

Parents who are enrolled in the National Health Insurance Plan are required to report the birth to their health plan as well if they want to receive a maternity allowance that defers some of the costs of childbirth.

### Applying for Status of Residence (Zairyū Shikaku Shinsei 在留資格申請)

If your child will stay in Japan for more than 60 days after birth, you must apply on their behalf for Status of Residence at the Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services Bureau Naha District Immigration Office within 30 days. Note that this application process does not take place at City Hall.

### Necessary Documents

- Certification of Birth (Certificate of Acceptance of Birth, Mother and Child Health Handbook etc.)
- Status of Residence Application (available at the Immigration Bureau)
- Questionnaire (available at the Immigration Bureau)
- You may also be asked to provide an Employment Certificate (koyō shōmei-sho 雇用証明書) and Earnings Statement (gensen chōshū hyō 源泉徴収表) to prove that you are working in accordance with your visa status. There may be different requirements depending on your status of residence.

### Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services Bureau Naha District Immigration Office

Address: 1-15-15 Higawa Dai-ichi Chihō Gōdōchōsha, Naha, Okinawa 900-0022  
Telephone: (098) 832-4185





## Registration of Death

(Shibō Todoke 死亡届)

Responsible Organization: **Citizens' Affairs Section** (Shimin-ka 市民課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 1st Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3064)

Deaths in Japan must be reported to City Hall within 7 days after the death becomes known. Please also report the death to the embassy or consulate of the deceased's nationality and return the deceased's Residence Card to the Immigration Bureau.

### Necessary Documents

- Death Notification Form
- Death Certificate (from hospital)

## Personal Seal Registration

(Inkan Tōroku 印鑑登録)

Responsible Organization: **Citizens' Affairs Section** (Shimin-ka 市民課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 1st Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3065)

### About Inkan

In Japan, personal seals (inkan 印鑑 or hanko 判子) are traditionally used instead of signatures. Although institutions increasingly allow foreigners to use their signatures, personal seals are still very handy for life in Japan. They can be made to order at stores all over Okinawa. In most cases, you can purchase an ordinary personal seal (mitome-in 認印) and begin to use it. Mitome-in can be used at banks, at work, and for city-related documents.

A formal personal seal (jitsu-in 実印) registered at City Hall may be required to buy a white-plate car, and for various other procedures. Jitsu-in are considerably more expensive than mitome-in. If you are told you need a registered personal seal, please bring the seal you wish to register as well as your residence card or passport.

### Personal Seals that CANNOT be Registered

- Seals that are smaller than 8mm or larger than 25mm
- Seals that are engraved with a name other than your first or last name
- Seals that are made of rubber or plastic
- Seals that have a border more than 1/4 the size of the whole seal or chipped in 2 or more areas

Nicknames are generally not acceptable for formal personal seals; however, you may register a nickname if and only if the nickname is registered alongside your real name on the Proof of Seal Registration. Because there are no regulations regarding personal seals, it is recommended to use your real name.

### Notes on Personal Seals

- The application form is available at City Hall for a nominal fee
- You require proof that the name on the personal seal is one you actually use. For example, you could use your bank book or ATM card, health insurance card, car registration, medical cards, mail addressed to you, etc. Without this proof, only the romanized version of the name, as it appears on your passport, will be allowed. With the above proof, the katakana version of the name will also be allowed. As a general rule, Chinese and Korean residents are asked to create jitsu-in using Chinese characters (kanji 漢字), though providing one of the forms of proof listed above would theoretically make one eligible to use katakana if desired.
- Personal seals cannot be registered to more than one person.



## Visa Issues

Responsible Organizations: **Fukuoka Regional Immigration Services Bureau Naha District Immigration Office**  
Address: 1-15-15 Higawa Dai-ichi Chihō Gōdōchōsha, Naha, Okinawa 900-0022  
Telephone: (098) 832-4185

**Kadena Immigration Branch Office** (Kadena Nyūkoku Kanrikyoku 嘉手納入国管理局)  
Address: Rotary Bldg #1, 290-9 Kadena, Kadena-cho, Nakagami-gun, Okinawa 904-0203  
Telephone: (098) 957-5252

### Re-entry into Japan (Sai-nyūkoku 再入国)

The Residence Card has also replaced the previously used system of re-entry permits. Foreign nationals in possession of a valid passport and residence card who will be re-entering Japan within 1 year of their departure to continue their activities in Japan are not, in principle, required to apply for a re-entry permit.

When you leave Japan, be sure to present your residence card and tick the column indicating your intention of departure by the Special Re-entry Permit System on an ED card for Special Re-entry Permit.

Foreign nationals who have departed from Japan on a special re-entry permit will not be able to extend that permit while abroad. Please note that such foreign nationals will lose their resident status if they fail to re-enter Japan within 1 year of their departure.

The special re-entry permit system does not apply to those falling under any of the following:

- Those whose resident status is in the process of revocation
- Those whose confirmation of departure is suspended
- Those who have received a written detention order
- Those who are in the process of a refugee application and staying with the resident status of "Designated Activities"
- Those who are specified by Japan's Ministry of Justice to be a threat to Japan's national interests or public order, or for other good reasons to be in need of a re-entry permit for the sake of fair control of entries and departures

The maximum validity period of a re-entry permit issued after implementation of the new system (July 9, 2012) is to be "5 years," instead of "3 years."

### Permission to Engage in Activities Not Specified By Your Visa (Shikaku-gai Katsudō no Kyōka 資格外活動の許可)

You must apply for this when you wish to engage in a secondary or temporary remunerative activity that is not covered by your present resident status but does not require a formal change of status.

#### Necessary Documents

- Application Form (along with duplicate)
- Materials explaining the nature of the activity in which you will be engaged (e.g. contract of employment, etc.)
- Materials explaining the nature of your current activities (e.g. enrollment certificate)
- Residence Card

#### Foreign Consulates in Okinawa

Consulate	Address	Postal Code	Telephone
Bolivian Consulate	1985-1 Gusukuma, Urasoe	901-2133	(098) 877-0021
Brazilian Consulate	1-15-5 Izumizaki, Naha Yamazato Building 1F	900-0021	(098) 867-3304
Croatian Consulate	3-9-10 Makishi, Naha	900-0013	(098) 864-1613
French Consulate	2-4-1 Takara, Naha	901-0145	(090) 1949-4041
German Consulate	586-15 Kouchi, Nakamigun, Nishihara	903-0116	(098) 945-7678
Laotian Consulate	1-26-6 Uehara, Nakamigun, Nishihara	903-0125	(098) 944-4880
Latvian Consulate	1-8-50 Yorimiya, Naha	902-0064	(098) 832-5023
Nicaraguan Consulate	727 Uebaru, Naha	901-0153	(098) 987-0841
Peruvian Consulate	112-1 Asahi, Naha	900-0029	(098) 868-6844
Philippine Consulate	2-35-1 Aragusuku, Ginowan Alsoa Building 2F	901-2201	(098) 892-5486
Thai Consulate	1-35 Sakiyama, Shuri, Naha	903-0814	(098) 885-1534
Taiwan (TECRO)	3-15-9 Kumoji, Naha	900-0015	(098) 862-7008
U.S. Consulate	2-1-1 Toyama, Urasoe	901-2104	(098) 876-4211



## Daily Life

### Housing

#### Looking for an Apartment or House

If you cannot speak or read Japanese well, then bring a Japanese speaker along when searching for an apartment, preferably an impartial and trustworthy person who can explain the terms of housing contracts clearly as well as convey your thoughts and questions to real estate agents (fudōsan 不動産). Be aware that some real estate agencies will refuse to rent to foreigners, especially those who do not speak Japanese.

#### Things to Consider:

Price	Flooring (western or tatami mats)	Privacy and noise level	Number of electrical outlets	Storage space
Wifi	Bathroom (western or oriental)	Exposure to sunlight	Air-conditioner Heater	Allowance for pets
Access to transportation, shopping, banks, workplace, convenience stores, etc.	Apartment size e.g. 2LDK includes 2 rooms, living room, dining room, kitchen, and bathroom	Natural ventilation	Location for washing machine (inside or outside)	Parking facilities (a separate charge for parking is not uncommon)

Sometimes the size is termed according to the number of straw tatami mats (jō 畳) that would cover the floor space. Standard size for a tatami mat is 90cm by 180cm (roughly three feet by six feet). Hence, a room of less than six mats is rather small. The average size of a Japanese room in an apartment is about six jō (6 畳).

Larger houses, office rental space, and land area are sometimes measured in tsubo (坪). One tsubo equals two jō (180cm by 180cm).

#### Furnishings and Amenities

In general, apartments are unfurnished. Only electrical outlets and bathroom facilities are supplied. Appliances such as gas ranges, refrigerators, and washing machines are usually the responsibility of the tenant. Central heating is a rarity, but some real estate agents lease air conditioners along with apartments. Rent for apartments with air conditioners is usually a little higher.

#### Renting

##### Deposit/Intent Money (Tetsukekin 手付け金)

Once you have found an apartment, you may pay an initial deposit in order to show your interest and hold the apartment in your name. If you decide to rent the apartment, the deposit money will go toward the first month's rent. However, if for some reason you decide not to enter the contract, this payment is non-refundable. Conversely, if the landlord were to back out of the agreement for some reason, you are entitled to a refund of twice the amount you paid.

#### Formalizing a Contract

Be sure to understand the contract completely. Important points to double-check include:

- Period the lease is in effect
- Amount of rent (yachin 家賃) and maintenance expenses (kyōekihi 共益費)
- Amount of deposit and how much will be returned when the lease expires.
- What utilities are included in the rent
- How much notice is required before moving out
- Most real estate agents may require a Japanese sponsor or "guarantor" (hoshōnin 保証人). This person will co-sign your lease, and is responsible if you don't pay your rent.
- A personal seal (inkan 印鑑) may also be necessary.



## Up-Front Costs (Shoki Hiyō 初期費用)

When you sign the contract, you will likely be charged a number of fees. These fees may add up to over ¥200,000. They include:

- First month's rent and maintenance fees
- Insurance (fire, theft, and earthquake insurance are the most common)
- Real estate agent's fee (usually equivalent to one month's rent)
- Deposit (shikikin 敷金) This will be used to clean and repair the apartment when you move out. A small portion may be returned to you. (Usually equivalent to 1-3 months' rent)
- Key money (礼金) This is a non-refundable fee to the landlord. (Usually equivalent to 1-3 months rent)

## Moving In

In Japan, it is common for a person to greet their neighbors once they have moved into a new property. Often Japanese people will take a small gift (omiyage お土産), but this is not really necessary if you do not wish to.

When moving in, don't forget to ask the landlord where and when the garbage is collected. Information about garbage collection is available from the Environmental Conservation Section on the 5th floor of City Hall.

Also, find out about your Neighborhood Association (jichikai 自治会). These groups can provide you with useful information about living in your area, and community centers offer classes in various fields from computers to tea ceremony.

## Living in a Japanese House

### Genkan 玄関

When you walk into a Japanese house you will immediately enter the genkan, an area that is on a slightly lower level than the rest of the house. Shoes are removed here, and people enter the house barefoot or wearing socks/slippers.

### Tatami 畳

Tatami are straw mats used as flooring in many Japanese homes. They consist of a thin straw sheet bound to a 4-5cm thick mat. These are usually laid on top of unfinished wooden boards. When a tenant leaves, the realtor will have a tatami shop come to put new straw sheets on the thick mats. This is called omotegae, and it costs about ¥4-6,000 per mat. If you have a 12 tatami apartment, this will cost you upwards of ¥60,000. This cost gets taken out of your deposit, and is the primary reason that you will see little of that money ever again.

Tatami mats are extremely easy to damage. If they get wet, mold will form, and they will have to be replaced. Placing heavy furniture on them may dent them.

To clean them, use a vacuum or a broom, but do not use any chemicals or cleaning agents.

### Mold (Kabi カビ)

If you do not take care to ventilate your house or apartment, mold WILL form in dark, moist places. De-moisturizing agents (kansōzai 乾燥剤) can be purchased at grocery stores and placed around the house where mold is likely to form. Clothing and books are particularly susceptible to mold. A mold remover (kabitori カビ取り) can be used for bathrooms. Even in the winter it is very important that you leave the windows open as often as possible in order to prevent mold from forming.

### Insects

Insecticides (sattchūzai 殺虫剤) are available in various forms at drug stores, supermarkets, and discount department stores. To get rid of tatami ticks (dani ダニ), try airing the mats or spraying the surface with insecticide. Next to getting rid of your tatami, the most effective way to eliminate these pests is to use the specially manufactured tick insecticide (dani taiji ダニ退治). Be careful not to leave food or pets indoors when you use these insecticides, and be sure to air out the room after using them.

Mosquitoes (ka 蚊) appear in large numbers during the summer. Various repellants can be used, including the incense-like (katori senkō 蚊取り線香) and a fumeless electric device called (denki katori 電気蚊取り). For hiking and other outdoor activities, personal insect repellant (mushi sasare yobōzai 虫刺され予防剤) might be a wise precaution. Once bitten, try applying a lotion (kayumi dome 痒み止め) to stop the itching.





## Drinking Water

You may notice that the water here tastes different from the water in your home country. However, Japan's water supply system is extremely well monitored and there is no danger in consuming water taken directly from a water supply outlet, such as a household tap or faucet.

Some people find that a sudden change in water can cause an upset stomach and that it helps to drink bottled water until one's body gets used to the difference. If problems persist, please consult a doctor.

Note that fluoride and other chemicals are not added to the water here. Absence of fluoride may cause teeth to decay faster, so one should pay particular attention to oral hygiene.

Water quality may deteriorate due to typhoons. You should either boil your water or buy bottled water when such reports are made. Water shortages may make it necessary to ration water, particularly during the summer months. Please do your best to conserve water.

## Utilities

Ask your real estate agency how to set up gas, electric, and water service to your apartment or house.

## Paying Bills

Living in Japan, you will likely have to pay rent (yachin 家賃), water (suidō 水道), electricity (denki 電気), gas (gasu ガス), and phone (denwa 電話) bills. You can pay most bills by bringing the invoice to a bank or convenience store and paying in cash, or by automatic bank payment (jidō kōza furikae 自動口座振替). Some service providers and landlords also send a bill collector door-to-door.

If you choose to pay in cash, most providers will send you a notice (shirase 知らせ) of the amount you owe, followed later by an invoice (seikyūsho 請求書). When you get the invoice, bring it to a convenience store or bank to pay.




If you want to use automatic payment, you must have a savings account. To set up automatic bill pay for water and rent, talk to your landlord or realtor. For electric and gas, bring an invoice, ID, and your personal seal to the bank where you have an account. Phone bills can be arranged at the time you apply for your line (or cell).

If there is not enough money in your account at the time of automatic payment, the company will usually send out a notice stating that it tried unsuccessfully to take money from your account, and that it will make a second attempt later. You may need to pay directly at the bank in cases of insufficient funds or overdue bills.






## Waste and Recycling

Responsible Organizations: **Environmental Conservation Section** (Kankyō Hozen-ka 環境保全課)  
 Urasoe City Hall, 5th Floor  
 Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3212)

The city of Urasoe collects five types of garbage as described below. If you do not sort your garbage properly, it will not be collected. Please place your garbage outside for collection before 8:00am and make sure to tie the opening closed.

<b>Combustible Garbage</b> (Moeru Gomi 燃えるごみ)	
<b>Disposal Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combustible garbage must be placed in Urasoe's designated combustible garbage bag. These bags have orange writing on them and are sold at supermarkets and convenience stores.</li> <li>Please place your garbage outside for collection before 8:00am and make sure to tie the opening closed.</li> <li>Make sure nothing is sticking out of the bag.</li> </ul>
<b>Types of Waste</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plastic (toys, containers, recorders, VHS tapes, CD / DVD, etc.)</li> <li>Styrofoam Packaging</li> <li>Paper (thermal paper, pictures, carbon paper, waterproof processing paper, etc.)</li> <li>Cloth (clothing, towels, shoes, etc.)</li> <li>Rubber (boots, gloves, etc.)</li> <li>Plastic bags (register bags, etc.)</li> <li>Leather goods (satchels, shoes, bags, etc.)</li> </ul> 
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kitchen Waste (remove all fluids)</li> <li>Diapers (flush solid waste down the toilet)</li> <li>Futon / Pillows               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only "Medium" (中) and "Small" (小) size bags are acceptable. "Large" (大) bags will not be collected.</li> <li>Place in the designated bag and tie the top.</li> <li>Use multiple bags to make sure the contents do not stick out.</li> <li>Items that do not apply to the above will be categorized as Bulk Garbage.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Non-combustible Garbage</b> (Moenai Gomi 燃えないごみ)	
<b>Disposal Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Non-combustible garbage must be placed in Urasoe's designated non-combustible garbage bag. These bags have blue writing on them and are sold at supermarkets and convenience stores.</li> <li>Please place your garbage outside for collection before 8:00am and make sure to tie the opening closed.</li> <li>Make sure nothing is sticking out of the bag. (Umbrellas are an exception)</li> </ul>
<b>Types of Waste</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Metals (pots, umbrellas, hangers, paint cans (excluding spray cans), etc.)</li> <li>Glass / Bottles (beauty product bottles, oil bottles, mirrors, light bulbs, glass cups, etc.)</li> <li>Pottery (tea bowls, plates, vases, clay pots, flowerpots, etc.)</li> </ul> 
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small Electric Appliances (VCRs, radio cassette, fans, vacuum cleaners, rice cookers, toasters, etc.)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recyclable home appliances will not be collected.</li> <li>Refer to the "Garbage not collected by the City" section below.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Blades (wrap in item in newspaper and write "Dangerous" on top before placing in the designated bag.)</li> </ul> <p><b>WARNING</b>            Electric appliances are categorized as non-combustible garbage. To avoid explosions, make sure to separate items that contain combustible gas.</p>
<b>Harmful / Dangerous Garbage</b> (Yūgai & Abunai Gomi 有害・危ないごみ)	
<b>Disposal Method</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please place harmful and dangerous garbage into clear plastic bags under 45 liters in size.</li> <li>Please place your garbage outside for collection before 8:00am and make sure to tie the opening closed.</li> <li>Make sure nothing is sticking out of the bag. (Flourescent lamps are an exception.)</li> </ul>
<b>Types of Waste</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flourescent Lamps</li> <li>Dry-cell Batteries (rechargeable batteries will not be collected; use the retailer's collection box, etc.)</li> <li>Spray Cans (use all contents)</li> <li>Lighters (use all contents)</li> <li>Items Containing Mercury (e.g. thermometers)</li> </ul> 
<b>Cautions</b>	Please use all contents in spray cans and lighters to avoid explosions.



Recyclable Garbage (Shigen Gomi 資源ごみ)	
Disposal Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please place your garbage outside for collection before 8:00am and make sure to tie the opening closed.</li> <li>For <b>Containers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place all cans, bottles, and PET bottles into a basket.</li> <li>Remove the label and cap and separate into the appropriate garbage (can lids will be collected as Recyclable Garbage).</li> </ul> </li> <li>For <b>Yard Waste</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please place leaves and small sticks into clear plastic bags under 45 liters in size.</li> <li>Bundle branches with rope and place outside for collection (1 bundle = 10kg).</li> <li>Please call in advance of the collection day for branches that exceed 5cm in diameter.</li> <li>Up to 6 bags / bundles may be collected at one time.</li> </ul> </li> <li>For <b>Paper Waste</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bundle paper waste with rope according to type for collection (no bags necessary).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Types of Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Containers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cans, bottles, PET bottles (metal caps / lids are Non-combustible Garbage)</li> </ul>  </li> <li><b>Yard Waste</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sheared leaves, sticks, branches, etc.</li> </ul>  </li> <li><b>Paper Waste</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cardboard Boxes</li> <li>Newspapers, Flyers</li> <li>Books, magazines, snack boxes, tissue boxes</li> <li>Paper Cartons (Rinse with water and open flat)</li> </ul>  </li> </ul>
Cautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For <b>Containers</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can lids will be collected as Recyclable Garbage (As of May 2018)</li> </ul> </li> <li>For <b>Yard Waste</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Processed wood products (plywood, timber, etc.) are unrecyclable and will be collected as Bulk Garbage)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Bulk Garbage (Sodai Gomi 粗大ごみ)	
Disposal Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Please place your garbage outside for collection before 8:00am and make sure to tie the opening closed.</li> <li>Please call in advance of the collection day for all bulk garbage.</li> <li>Please attach a "bulk garbage sticker" to the items for collection (we will inform you of how many to attach during the reservation). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stickers are available at supermarkets, convenience stores, etc.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Types of Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Furniture (drawers, chairs, desks, tables, sofas, beds, carpets, matting, etc.)</li> <li>Home Appliances (microwaves, gas stoves, etc.)</li> <li>Others (plants / trees, laundry poles, soil, bicycles, etc.)</li> <li>Items that stick out of their designated garbage bags</li> <li>Items that can fit in their designated bags, but may damage the collection truck (iron dumbbells, barbells, etc.)</li> </ul> 
Cautions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Futons (please see the notes for futons in the Combustible Garbage section)</li> <li>Large items and heavy items may need to be inspected before collection</li> </ul>
Items that cannot be collected (Kaishū Dekinai Gomi 回収できないゴミ)	
Examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pianos</li> <li>LP Gas Cylinders</li> <li>Tires</li> <li>Autobikes</li> <li>Rechargeable Batteries</li> <li>Water Tanks</li> <li>Fire Extinguishers</li> <li>Computers</li> <li>Recycleable Electronics (TVs, refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, dryers, air conditioners)</li> </ul> 

## Establishing a Place to Discard Your Garbage (Cooperative Area)

Normally, garbage is collected from the front of each home, or from a common collection area established by the landlord. However, there are several roads too narrow for the garbage truck to enter, and therefore there is an established area where the neighborhood leaves its garbage for collection. If you live in such an area, your garbage will not be collected from outside your home. All garbage must be brought to the designated collection area. Please consult your neighbors and landlord for more information or to make arrangements for a designated area if you live in area where the streets are too narrow for cars to pass through.

## Garbage NOT Collected by the City

Washing machines, refrigerators, air conditioners, freezers, and televisions are all designated by law as recyclable household appliances. If you want to dispose of one of these items, please contact the maker to arrange for their disposal. If you are replacing an appliance, ask the store if they can dispose of the old appliance. If neither of these options is possible, you will have to find a private disposal company to dispose of the item. The Environmental Conservation Section can assist you with locating a disposal company. If an item is old but functional, consider donating it to charity or to a recycle shop.

The city also does not collect items such as pianos, LP gas canisters, fire extinguishers, tires, mopeds, batteries, and water tanks. For the disposal of these items please contact a private disposal company.

## Garbage Collection During Typhoons

Garbage collection will vary during typhoons depending on whether busses are running or not. It is dangerous to go outside during a typhoon, so please refrain from discarding your garbage until the next appropriate collection day. Collection will not take place if busses stop running by 8am. If busses resume running by 3pm, then garbage collection will take place at the same time busses resume running.

## Recycle Plaza

Responsible Organizations: **Recycle Plaza** (Risaikuru Puraza リサイクルプラザ)  
Address: 555-25 Jicchaku, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2122  
Telephone: (098) 861-3196

Recycle Plaza is a facility maintained by Urasoe to promote the recycling and reuse of household items. They accept donations of used bicycles, furniture, clothing, dishes, and toys from anyone living in Urasoe. If you live in Urasoe, this is a way to get rid of used furniture without having to pay the bulk garbage fee. Donated items are then sold at low prices in the plaza's "recycle store."

## Banking

Both banks and post offices provide banking services. Deciding whether to open a regular savings account (futsū yokin 普通預金) at a bank or a postal savings account (yūbin chokin 郵便貯金) at the post office depends on the services you require. Since post office accounts can be used nationwide, they are convenient if you will need to withdraw or deposit money while traveling to other parts of Japan. The two largest banks in Okinawa, Ryūkyū Ginkō (琉球銀行) and Okinawa Ginkō (沖縄銀行), do not have many branches outside of Okinawa. However, traditional bank accounts are often required for direct deposit or direct bill pay. Opening both types of accounts may be a good idea depending on your needs.

## Opening a Bank Account (Kōza Kaisetsu 口座開設)

In general, foreigners who are residing in Japan for the short term (90 days or less) are unable to open a bank account. In addition, mid to long term foreign residents are only able to create an account if they have lived in Japan for over 6 months, or if they are currently employed.

There are various kinds of accounts available, but a general savings account (futsū yokin kōza 普通預金口座) is best for daily transactions and bill payments. When opening an account you will need your Residence Card. A personal seal (inkan 印鑑) might also be required, although some banks allow foreign residents to use their signature instead.

In order to open an account, you must fill out a new savings account application form and select a personal identification number (kādo anshōbangō カード暗証番号) for your cash card.

After opening an account, customers receive a bankbook (tsūchō 通帳). Cash cards are sent to the account holder's address approximately two weeks after the account is opened.



## Deposits (O-azuke ire お預入れ)

For deposits at the service window, fill out a deposit slip (nyūkinhyō 入金票) and present your bankbook or cash card.

To deposit money from an ATM:

- Insert your bankbook or card
- Enter your PIN
- Select the "deposit" button (お預け入れ or ご入金).
- Put your money in the slot. The machine will count the money.
- Select the "confirm" button (確認) if the amount is correct, or 訂正 to correct it.

## Withdrawals (O-hikidashi お引き出し)

For withdrawals at the service counter, a bankbook, an inkan, and a withdrawal slip (harai modoshi seikyūsho 払戻請求書) are necessary.

To withdraw money from an ATM:

- Insert your bankbook or card
- Enter your PIN
- Select the "withdrawal" button (お引き出し)
- Enter the amount of withdrawal, correcting if necessary (訂正).
- Confirm the amount (確認).
- You may be asked if want a receipt. Enter 不要 for no and 要 for yes.

## About Cash Machines (ATMs)

Bank and postal ATMs are generally in service during business hours Monday – Friday. Some locations may also have extended hours on evenings and weekends. However, these ATMs will charge a service fee (tesūryō 手数料) of around ¥100 if you use them outside of business hours. Withdrawal-only ATMs, often located in supermarkets and department stores, may be open longer hours but will also charge a service fee.

It is also good to withdraw money in advance of holidays, especially New Years and Golden Week. Banks and their ATMs will be closed, but you can still use ATMs at department stores and grocery stores.

You will be charged a fee when you use your bank's card in another bank's machine, transfer funds (furikae or furikomi), or use an ATM after hours.

Some ATM vocabulary:

Ten Thousand	Man	万
Thousand	Sen	千
Hundred	Hyaku	百
Withdrawal	O-hikidashi	お引き出し
Deposit	O-azukeire	お預け入れ
Show Balance	Zandaka-shōkai	残高照会
Update Bankbook	Tsūchō kinyū	通帳記入
Transfer of Funds	O-furikae	お振替
Direct Transfer	O-furikomi	お振込
Confirmation Button	Kakunin	確認
Correction Button	Teisei	訂正
Cancellation Button	Torikeshi	取り消し



## Bank Loans

It is difficult but possible to get a bank loan in Japan as a foreigner. You must be working in Japan, and you will need to bring documents such as your passport, Residence Card, and proof of employment (consult your bank to find out what is necessary). You must also find a guarantor (hoshōnin 保証人). The bank may ask to see a permanent residence permit (eijūkyokasho 永住許可書). Some banks offer loans to foreigners more readily than others, and the availability of loans may affect your choice of bank. Many Japanese have several bank accounts because some offer better loan arrangements than others.

## Credit Cards

You must bring your passport and Residence Card, and information about your workplace to your bank when applying. Owning a Japanese credit card will be useful if you decide to use a callback system for international phone calls. You may also want a Japanese credit card if you plan to shop online, particularly on Japanese sites. Another advantage of having a Japanese credit card is that you can use it to take out money from bank machines. Outside of postal ATMs, very few ATMs in Japan will allow you to withdraw money using a foreign credit card.

## Sending Money Overseas (Sōkin 送金)

### GoRemit (go レミット)

GoRemit is a fast, convenient, and inexpensive way to send funds electronically overseas. Remitters simply use any bank ATM or internet banking in Japan to transfer the funds domestically to the bank account designated by Shinsei Bank. GoRemit then completes the overseas remittance.

Funds received by 3:00 pm (by noon if yen funds) on a business day will be processed according to that day's exchange rate, and in many cases will take 1-3 days to reach the beneficiary account. Please note that local banking practices at the beneficiary end may cause delays in some cases.

The service fee is ¥2,000 and is not dependent on the amount you send. Yen-basis remittances are subject to an additional charge of 0.1% of the amount sent (minimum charge of ¥1,500). As with any international remittance, intermediary banks will deduct a fee. In addition, beneficiary banks in some countries may also levy a charge.

### Japan Post Bank (Yūcho Ginkō ゆうちょ銀行)

Japan Post is a well-known way to transfer money out of Japan, via its bank. However, it is worth noting there are only 233 branches in Japan that provide this service, so make sure there's one nearby. To use this service, you have two options:

- A paper money order (jūsho ate sōkin 住所あて送金). This means the funds (in your target currency) will be sent in an envelope to either a bank or address. This is neither fast nor secure.
- An electronic transfer (kōza ate sōkin 口座あて送金), in which case the money is transferred directly to an overseas bank account (in your target currency.) This can be done with cash or via your Japan Post Bank account, if you have one.

To do so costs 2500 yen in most cases. Sending money to a US bank account costs just 2000 yen, excluding receiving fees.

To transfer money from the post office, you'll need your Residence Card or passport and you will need to fill out the appropriate form (the forms have English on them). You can tell the staff which type of transfer you want to do.

After going through the process, if you plan to transfer money the same way to the same place more than once, you can ask for a special form (kokusai sōkin seikyūsho inji sabisu mōshikomisho 国際送金請求書印字サービス申込書) to pre-fill out the information and they can keep it on file for you.

### Bank Remittance Checks (Sōkin Kogitte 送金小切手)

Bank remittances vary from bank to bank. This method is safe but slow, and requires the cooperation of a friend or relative in the country you are sending the money to if you want to deposit the money in your own account. At the Japanese bank, yen or foreign currency is written up as a check, which you can mail to anyone you like. It may take 4-5 days for the bank to prepare the check. Whoever you send the money to can then cash the check at a bank you specify, and dispose of it as you instruct them to. On the Japanese side, you may be charged fees around ¥2,500-¥5,000. There may be further fees at the bank where the check is cashed.



## Postal Services

Responsible Organizations: **Urasoe Central Post Office**  
 Address: 3-3-1 Nakama, Urasoe 901-2199  
 Telephone: (098) 877-4405

Postal Service Information in English: (0570) 046-111  
 8am-10pm Monday-Friday  
 9am-7pm Saturday-Sunday

### Branch Post Offices

Name	Address	Postal Code	Telephone
Gusukuma Post Office	3-6-9 Gusukuma	901-2133	(098) 878-7809
Iso Post Office	3-3-15 Iso	901-2132	(098) 876-2992
Jicchaku Post Office	118-1 Jicchaku	901-2122	(098) 878-7001
Maeda Post Office	1301 Maeda	901-2102	(098) 876-9007
Makiminato Post Office	1-7-18 Makiminato	901-2131	(098) 877-2719
Miyagi Post Office	1-32-3 Miyagi	901-2126	(098) 878-1550
Uchima Post Office	2-11-19 Uchima	901-2121	(098) 878-0799
Yafuso Post Office	203-1 Yafuso	901-2127	(098) 877-5008

Post offices and stamp vendors are marked by the sign 〒.

### Domestic Mail

- **Letters** (Tegami 手紙) and **Postcards** (Hagaki はがき)  
 Postage is ¥82 for a standard domestic letter (up to 25g) and ¥52 for a standard domestic postcard.
- **Parcels** (Kozutsumi 小包)  
 You can send packages of up to 30kg. The postal rate is slightly lower if you are sending printed material (e.g. books, magazines, newsletters, calendars, ect.) If you want this rate, tell the postal worker your package is a sasshi-kozutsumi (冊子小包).
- **Registered Mail** (Kakitome 書留)  
 With registered mail, you can track the progress of your letter or parcel. It is also possible to send cash through this service. To send cash, you must also purchase a cash registration envelop (genkin kakitome fūtō 現金書留封筒) from the post office for ¥20.

### International Mail

- **EMS**  
 EMS is the speediest way to send packages and documents abroad. EMS can be sent to over 120 countries and areas world-wide. Computerized tracking is also available for 40 countries and regions for a fee, as is insurance. Delivery speed differs between regions, but generally it takes only 2-4 days. You will need to fill out a special EMS envelope or label for your letter or package. These are available at the post office.
- **Airmail** (Kōkūbin 航空便)  
 Airmail is the standard way to send overseas mail. Delivery speed depends on mail conditions in the destination country, but mail will generally arrive in 3-6 days. To send something by airmail, simply write "Airmail" on the packaging, or ask the post office staff for an airmail sticker.
- **Economy Air (SAL)**  
 Economy Air is a method by which parcels and printed matter are air transported abroad using open space on airplanes. This method is less expensive than airmail but faster than surface mail. Delivery generally takes 6-13 days. To use this service, write "SAL" on the packaging, or ask the post office staff for an SAL sticker.
- **Surface Mail** (Senbin 船便)  
 Surface mail is significantly cheaper than other methods. However, surface mail takes 1-3 months to reach its destination. Write "surface" on the packaging to send mail with this method.

### Urasoe Postal Codes (Yūbin Bangō 郵便番号)

Ahacha (安波茶)	901-2114	Kyozuka (経塚)	901-2111	Nishihara (西原)	901-2101
Gusukuma (城間)	901-2133	Maeda (前田)	901-2102	Ohira (大平)	901-2113
Inanse (伊奈武瀬)	901-2128	Makiminato (牧港)	901-2131	Takushi (沢岬)	901-2112
Irijima (西洲)	901-2123	Minatogawa (港川)	901-2134	Toyama (当山)	901-2104
Iso (伊祖)	901-2132	Miyagi (宮城)	901-2126	Uchima (内間)	901-2121
Jicchaku (勢理客)	901-2122	Nakama (仲間)	901-2103	Yafuso (屋富祖)	901-2127
Kowan (小湾)	901-2124	Nakanishi (仲西)	901-2125	(Not listed above 901-2100)	



## Telephones

### Landlines

Responsible Organizations: NTT (Nippon Telephone & Telegraph)  
Address: 4-35-1 Gusukuma, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2133 (on Route 58)  
Telephone: (0120) 364-463 (Toll-free)

NTT is responsible for regular landline phone service. To set up service, please visit the Urasoe NTT branch office. There is a one-time sign-up fee (ichiji harai-kin 一時払い金), plus installation charges if your apartment or house does not have wiring or a phone jack. You can avoid the sign-up fee if the person who lived in your apartment before you agrees to transfer their telephone account to you, as opposed to canceling the account.

You will then be charged a monthly telephone fee, plus charges for phone calls you make. You may also purchase a telephone from NTT, but prices are better at local electronic stores.

If you are late in paying your phone bill, you will receive a notice stating that if you do not pay your bill by a certain date, your phone will be cut off. If this happens, you will be required to pay in person during business hours at the Urasoe NTT branch to reinstate service.

If you move to a new apartment, it is possible to have your old telephone service transferred there. Please contact NTT for more details.

Disconnection of service should be made in person at least 15 days in advance. You must bring some identification with you. At this time, you will have the option to transfer the line to another individual if you are selling or giving the line to someone else, or to put your line on hold, so that you can transfer it to your next residence.

NTT also has a website (with English). For detailed information about prices at different times of day and other such information, please check it out here: <http://www.ntt.co.jp>

### Mobile Phones (Keitai Denwa 携帯電話)

A cell phone may be a more practical option than buying a landline phone, both because of the prohibitive cost of landline phone installation and the portability of the cell phone. If you decide to get a cell phone, you will need your Residence Card and personal seal.

There are 3 major cell phone companies in Japan: AU, NTT Docomo, and SoftBank. AU has the best reception throughout Okinawa, and has transmission towers even on small outer islands. In other ways, all of the companies are quite similar.

Cell phones may cost around ¥10,000-¥20,000, depending on the model. All companies offer discounts for students, families, couples, and multi-year contracts. These may entail lower rates, a discount on the cell phone itself, and other benefits. Please note that most contracts last 2 years, and companies may charge a fee for withdrawing before the contract ends.

### International & Long Distance Phone Calls

Unless you sign up for services through other companies, you will automatically be directed through KDDI on long-distance and international calls. It is not the cheapest option, so consider looking into supplementary plans if you will be making a lot of long distance or international calls.

To make an international phone call, dial 010 + Country Code + Area Code + Phone Number. Unless you sign up for a different company's services, you will be directed through KDDI.

Brasel is a long-distance calling company that offers reasonable rates, and Internet phone services such as Skype allow you to make calls for free. If you have a smart phone, you can also use applications such as LINE and WhatsApp to make free international phone calls to other people who also use the same application.

### Calling On-Base Phone Numbers

To call an on-base phone number from off base, first dial 911-5111, wait for the dial tone, and then dial the on-base phone number. The on-base operators sometimes get jammed with calls, in which case you will find yourself unable to get through to the number you want to reach via the operator (the initial number listed above).



## Internet

You can get broadband internet service through NTT, Yahoo BB, or a number of smaller companies. Most large electronics stores have booths for broadband providers.

Wireless internet connections are available at various restaurants and cafes throughout Urasoe, such as McDonald's and Starbucks.

## Television

Local TV Channel Guide

- Channel 1 Japan Broadcasting Corporation NHK
- Channel 2 NHK Educational
- Channel 3 Ryukyu Broadcasting Corp RBC
- Channel 5 Ryukyu Asahi Broadcasting QAB
- Channel 8 Okinawa Television OTV

Please check Okinawa Cable Network Inc. for more information.

[http://www.nirai.ne.jp/english/en\\_catv/en\\_catv\\_guide.html](http://www.nirai.ne.jp/english/en_catv/en_catv_guide.html)

## English Television Programming

If you have a bilingual TV, you will be able to receive foreign language programming on selected shows. Bilingual programs are marked in the newspaper with a symbol. These programs include a few foreign films, RBC news at 6pm, and NHK news translated into English that is broadcast during the week from 7 to 7:20 pm. Some news programs are not translated over the weekend. To listen to NHK and RBC English language broadcasts, a converter is required. You will have to buy a television with bilingual capabilities (Onsei Tajū Kirikae 音声多重切り替え ).

## Cable Television

Responsible Organizations: **Okinawa Cable Network (OCN)**  
 Address: 1-18-26 4F Matsuo, Naha, Okinawa 900-0014  
 Telephone: (098) 863-4141

In order to receive cable television, you must contact OCN. OCN offers several channels with programming in English, as well as numerous Japanese channels. There are several large costs up-front. There is a fixed start-up fee of ¥10,500, and then an installation fee that depends on the difficulty involved in the installation (you should expect to pay around ¥20,000 for this). Set-up and monthly fees depend upon the channels to which you subscribe, but basic service costs around ¥3,360 a month (including cable box rental). Sometimes, OCN offers "campaigns," during which the installation and start-up fees are dramatically reduced.

## Satellite Television

Satellite Television is available in Okinawa. In order to use satellite television, you must either rent or buy a small satellite dish. These are available at several electronics shops in Okinawa. There is an array of different channels, including BBC World, CNN International, MTV, ESPN, Discovery Channel, Pay per View. There are programs in several different languages including Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, English, Chinese, and Spanish.

## Public Television Fee

NHK offers commercial-free television by covering its expenses through subscription. Residents in Japan with TVs are expected, but not obliged, to pay this fee in accordance with the Broadcasting Law. However, residents who do not speak Japanese might not be asked to pay. If you do not wish to pay, you can explain to the collector that you cannot understand Japanese, and therefore you do not watch NHK. NHK bill collectors visit houses and apartment complexes every two months. (Fee is approximately ¥2000/month.)

## Newspapers

- Ryukyu Shimpō 琉球新報 <http://english.ryukyushimpo.jp/>
- Okinawa Times 沖縄タイムス <https://www.okinawatimes.co.jp/category/okinawa-beat>
- Japan Times <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/>
- Japan Update <http://www.japanupdate.com>

## Pets

When looking for a pet, please consider adopting an unwanted dog or cat. There are many abandoned animals at the Prefectural Animal Protection Center. Before getting a pet, please double check that your residence allows animals.

### Bringing Pets to Japan

Responsible Organization: **Prefectural Quarantine Office** (Dōbutsu Ken-eki-sho 動物検疫所)  
Address: Naha Port Office: 2-11-1 Minato-cho, Naha, Okinawa 900-0001  
Telephone: (098) 945-3043

The Prefectural Quarantine Office gives out information on Japan's quarantine regulations if you plan to bring a pet with you to Japan. Laws vary according to type of animal, country of origin, and whether the animal has had all the necessary shots. They also have information in various languages online at:


<http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/languages/info.html>

### Owning a Dog

Responsible Organization: **Environmental Conservation Section** (Kankyō Hozen-ka 環境保全課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 5th Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext.3216)

#### All Dog Owners are Responsible for Registration

If you own a dog, it must be registered at City Hall. Please visit the Environmental Conservation Section to complete the registration. Upon registration, you will receive a registration tag which your dog must wear at all times. Your dog's birthdate will be used during the registration process.


Tag Image	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Registration Fee: ¥ 3,000</li> <li>Replacement Tags: ¥ 1,600</li> <li>This tag is to certify that your dog has been registered.</li> <li>Registration is valid throughout the dog's lifetime.</li> </ul>

Please contact the Environmental Conservation Section for the following changes:

- Change in Owner.
- Change in Owner's Name.
- Change of Residence. (Within Urasoe City.)
- Notification of Dog's Death.
- Notification of Missing Dog.

#### April, May, and June are Vaccination Months

All dogs must be vaccinated against rabies (kyōken-byō 狂犬病) once a year. Every year between April and June, the city provides rabies vaccinations in local community centers. Contact the Environmental Conservation Section for exact dates. If you acquire a new pet after or before the public vaccination period, please visit a veterinarian to get the vaccination. There is a small fee for the vaccination.

Tag Image	Details
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vaccination Tag: ¥ 550</li> <li>Replacement Tags: ¥ 340</li> <li>This tag is to certify that your dog has been vaccinated.</li> <li>Vaccination must be done 1 time per year.</li> </ul>

### Owning a Cat

There are no special regulations regarding keeping cats, but you may want to get a collar and tags with your address and phone number for your cat, so that it can be returned to you if it gets lost. Cat owners are encouraged to keep their cat indoors to avoid accidents with cars and the spread of disease.





## Common Pet Issues

### Spaying, Neutering and Animal Population Control

There are many stray animals in Okinawa. Unless you plan to breed your pet, spaying or neutering it will prevent unwanted pregnancies, thereby reducing the problem. Sterilization serves both the human and the animal community by preventing disease and stray dog attacks. Consult your veterinarian about the appropriate time to have surgery performed (usually 8 weeks old). In Okinawa, most veterinarians charge about ¥20,000 for spaying or neutering pets.

#### Veterinarians in Urasoe

**Makiminato Pet Clinic** (Makiminato Petto Kurinikku 牧港ペットクリニック)

Address: 2-46-12 Makiminato, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2131

Telephone: (098) 879-1125

### Stray Pets

Responsible Organization: **Prefectural Animal Protection Center** (Okinawa-ken Dōbutsu Aigo Sentā 沖縄県動物愛護センター)

Address: 2000 Ozato, Ozato, Nanjo, Okinawa 901-1202

Telephone: (098) 945-3043

Stray animals are picked up by the Animal Protection Center. Please contact them if your pet is missing. If the pet has identification, an animal control officer will attempt to contact the owner. Animals without identification tags will be put to sleep after three days (cats) or four days (dogs).

### Pet Sitting

If you are unable to have a friend take care of your pet while you are away, you can check the animal into a "pet hotel" (petto hōteru ペットホテル).

### Giving up your Pet

If you can no longer care for your pet, please try to find a new owner before contacting the Animal Protection Center. You can leave your pet with them. Some pets are adopted, but if your pet is not adopted quickly, it will be put to sleep.

### Death of a Pet

If your pet dies, you are responsible for dealing with the remains. You may bury pets on land that you own, or you may make arrangements with a private Pet Funeral Company (petto sōgi-sha ペット葬儀社).

In the case of dogs, you will also have to submit a notification of death to the Environmental Conservation Section.

# Healthcare

## National Health Insurance

(Kokumin Kenkō Hoken 国民健康保険課)

Responsible Organization: **National Health Insurance Section** (Kokumin Kenkō Hoken-ka 国民健康保険課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 1st Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3723)

### Japan Has a Universal Health Insurance System

Everyone living in Japan is required to enroll in a medical insurance so they can receive medical treatment without worry (universal health system). National Health Insurance (NHI) is one of the medical insurances and is operated by prefectures and municipalities we live in. NHI is a mutual assistance system under which every insured person pays premiums. Let's unite and support NHI to maintain our health life.

### Who Joins NHI?

Everyone must enroll in NHI. (Except those who are insured by a workplace health insurance program or the Older Senior Citizens' Medical System and who are living on welfare.)

### Eligibility for Enrollment

Foreigners of any nationality who are expected to stay in Japan for more than three months must enroll in NHI, except those who are:

- Enrolled in a workplace health insurance program
- A dependent of a person enrolled in a workplace health insurance program
- Enrolled in the Older Senior Citizens' Medical System
- Living on welfare
- Staying in Japan with a medical visa and those who are attending the patient
- Staying in Japan with a tourist or recreational visa

### Notification for NHI

Notification is required in the following cases.

#### Enrollment notification

1. When you change residence or enter Japan (and are not enrolled in a workplace health insurance program, etc.)
2. When you withdrew from an employees' insurance, etc. (the following day you retired.)
3. When a child is born in your family
4. When you stop living on welfare

#### Withdrawal notification

1. When you leave Japan
2. When you move out
3. When you join a workplace health insurance program, etc.
4. Upon the death of an NHI member
5. When you start living on welfare

### Keep Your NHI Card in a Safe Place

NHI (National Health Insurance) card certifies that you are insured by NHI. By presenting it at the counter of medical institutions, you can receive NHI benefits.

### How to Handle Your NHI Card Correctly

- When you receive your NHI card, check for any mistake in the description. (Rewriting information without permission will invalidate your card.)
- Present your NHI card at the reception desk when you see the doctor.
- Never lend or borrow an NHI card (punishable by law).
- A duplicated or expired NHI card is invalid.
- Make sure to notify and return your NHI card to City Hall when withdrawing from NHI.



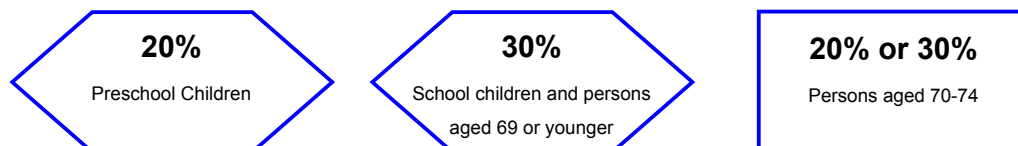
## National Health Insurance Benefits

### 1) Medical Treatment Costs

When you get sick or injured, you can receive the following medical care for only a part of the medical costs by presenting your NHI card at the reception of medical institutions.

- Medical consultations.
- Medical treatments.
- Medication, injection, and other treatments.
- Hospitalization and nursing. (Excluding meals while hospitalized.)
- Home care (Home-visit by a regular doctor.) and nursing
- Home-visit nursing. (If a doctor judged as necessary.)

### Co-payment Amount Varies Depending on Age, etc.



\*Those born on or before April 1, 1944 will pay 10% as co-payment.

### 2) Third Party Injury Coverage

You are still able to receive NHI benefits if you are injured due to an act by a third party, such as traffic accidents. However if you receive medical expenses from a person who caused the accident or settle it out of court, you may not receive NHI benefits. If you sustain damage, be sure to consult us.

### Paying Insurance Tax (Premiums)

National insurance tax (premiums) is a valuable financial source allocated to your medical expenses. In preparation for unexpected illnesses or injuries, make sure to pay your insurance tax before the due date. Householders are responsible for the payment of insurance tax.

### Determination of Insurance Tax (Premiums)

Insurance tax (premiums) is determined per fiscal year and per household. When there are changes in the middle of a fiscal year, your insurance tax will be changed.

Your insurance tax is decided based on your income for the previous year and other factors. Please declare your income correctly.

### When Your NHI Premiums Fall into Arrears

If your premiums are in arrears without any specific reason, or if you don't consult about premium payments, the following measures will be taken accordingly.

- You won't receive NHI benefits.
- You may be required to foreclose on personal assets, etc. due to delinquency.
- The validity of your NHI card will be shortened.
- You will be required to return your NHI card and bear all medical expenses.

If you have difficulties in paying your tax premiums,, please consult the National Health Insurance Section as soon as possible. Households with situations that fall under established laws or regulations are able to start installment payments or file for an exemption.

### Older Senior Citizens' Medical System

The Older Senior Citizens' Medical System clarifies the burden on senior citizens determining how society can support the elderly. All municipalities in every prefecture participates in the Older Senior Citizens' Medical Regional Union, and each municipality provides services at reception. Senior citizens over the age of 75 and certain persons with disabilities between 65 and 74 years old are eligible.

All insured individuals who will become members in the Older Senior Citizens' Medical System pay health premiums. When you become 75 (for certain persons with disabilities 65) years old, you are required to pay taxes for insurances that did not cover premiums (Health Insurance Society and Mutual Aid Association medical insurances), including insured dependents.

## Hospitals and Clinics

Although language and culture differences can make it challenging to navigate the medical system, healthcare in Japan is widely available, efficient, and affordable. However, it is important to be aware that Japanese doctors do not usually discuss the patient's medical condition with the patient. This does not mean you do not have the right to ask questions. Just keep in mind that perseverance might be necessary to get the answers you feel you need from the doctor.

Please save all your receipts for doctor visits and prescription medicine. If you have out-of-pocket medical expenses of over ¥100,000 per year, you can deduct them from your taxes.

### Dealing with the Language Barrier

All medical doctors and nurses have studied English, but their ability to speak the language varies. For this reason, it may be necessary to bring along someone who can translate. If you cannot find someone to translate for you, you can also print out a bilingual medical questionnaire and bring it with you to your appointment, such as the one located here:

[http://www.tanaka-clinic.net/eng/medical\\_terms.htm](http://www.tanaka-clinic.net/eng/medical_terms.htm)

Another option is the Adventist Medical Center (see below). Many doctors at the Center have been trained in the United States and speak excellent English.

### Local Hospitals

**Makiminato Chuo Hospital** (Makiminato Chuō Byōin 牧港中央病院)

Address: 1199 Makiminato, Urasoe (Located off of Route 58 near Yamada Denki)

Telephone: (098) 877-0575

Makiminato Chuo Hospital specializes in cardiovascular medicine and cardiovascular surgery. They can also treat common internal medicines such as the common cold, high blood pressure, and diabetes. Services include general health check-ups covered by National Health Insurance, out-of-pocket cardiac check-ups and blood vessel check-ups, and hemodialysis treatment. Two full-time medical interpreters (English and Chinese) are employed at Makiminato Chuo Hospital, and AI interpretation devices and videophone interpretation for other languages are also provided.

**Urasoe General Hospital** (Urasoe Sōgō Byōin 浦添総合病院)

Address: 4-16-1 Iso, Urasoe (Located off of Route 330, just south of the Iso tunnel)

Telephone: (098) 878-0231

Urasoe General serves many foreign patients and there are several doctors and nurses there who speak English well, both in the Emergency Room and other departments.

**Dojin Hospital** (Dōjin Byōin 同仁病院)

Address: 1-37-12 Gusukuma, Urasoe (Located off of Route 58)

Telephone: (098) 876-2212

**Adventist Medical Center** (アドベンチスト・メディカルセンター)

Address: 868 Kōchi, Nishihara-cho (Located on Route 29 toward Ryukyu University)

Telephone: (098) 946-2833



## Visiting the Doctor

Many hospitals and clinics do not accept appointments, and service is provided on a first come, first served basis. It is therefore recommended that you go early in order to avoid a long wait. However, it is a good idea to call in advance to find out whether or not the hospital operates on an appointment-based system.

## Choosing a Doctor

Consumers may choose between large, general hospitals, and small specialty clinics. This means that if you are having a serious medical problem of uncertain causes, it is best to visit a larger hospital, where they will have a wider variety of specialties. However, if you have a good idea of what your medical complaint is, you may visit a specialist (either at a hospital or at a clinic) without a referral. For example, if you are having a skin problem, you can go straight to a dermatologist. However, some hospitals will charge higher fees if you arrive without a referral from a smaller clinic.

Here is a list of medical specialties:

Internal Medicine (for colds, flus etc.)	Naika	内科
Surgery	Geka	外科
Dermatology	Hifuka	皮膚科
Gynecology	Fujinka	婦人科
Obstetrics	Sanka	産科
Pediatrics	Shōnika	小児科
Eye Specialist	Ganka	眼科
Orthopedics	Seikeigeka	整形外科
Ear, Nose and Throat Specialist	Jibi-inkōka	耳鼻咽喉科
Dentistry	Shika	歯科
Psychiatrist	Seishinka	精神科

If you go to a hospital, the staff at the reception desk will ask you to describe your symptoms or specify a medical specialty, so that you are seen by the right kind of doctor.

## What to Bring

It is important to bring the following items when you visit the doctor:

- Health Insurance Card
- Hospital or clinic card (This card will be made the first time you visit a clinic or hospital. Please bring this card on any subsequent visits.)
- Residence Card
- Documentation of any medication you are taking. Be sure to discuss this with the doctor.
- Cash to pay the hospital bill

Normally, only small amounts of medication are given at one time, so if you have a chronic condition, you will have to visit the hospital every two months to renew your prescription.

Medication comes in a variety of forms in Japan, including pills, liquids, and powders. If you are given powdered medication and find it difficult to swallow, edible gelatin paper (oburāto オブラート) can be purchased from pharmacies.



## Dental Care

In searching for a good dentist, seek advice from friends or colleagues, as they may be able to recommend someone to you. Many non-Japanese visit the Adventist Medical Center where consultations can be given in English. Unlike other physicians, dentists nearly always operate on an appointment system.

Clinic Name	Location	Telephone
San-ai Dental Hospital (三愛歯科医院)	1-2-28 Jicchaku, Urasoe	876-1203
Uehara Dental Clinic (上原歯科クリニック)	1-48-1 Maeda, Urasoe	879-1555
Ohira Dental Clinic (おおひら歯科クリニック)	1-27-8 Ahacha, Urasoe	875-0648
Kojo Dental Clinic (湖城歯科クリニック)	1-36-5 Ohira, Urasoe	874-1256
Wellness Dental Care (ウィルネスデンタルケア)	1-2-6 Minatogawa, Urasoe	879-6070
Takamiyagi Dental Hospital (高宮城歯科医院)	1-31-20 Makiminato Urasoe	877-3621
G Dental Clinic (G 歯科クリニック)	2-20-5 Iso, Urasoe	878-2535
Chiharu Dental Clinic (ちはる歯科クリニック)	3-3-9 Nakama, Urasoe	877-6480
Yamauchi Dental (山内歯科)	2-2-5 Iso, Urasoe	875-2848
Kyozuka Dental Clinic (経塚歯科クリニック)	437 Kyozuka, Urasoe	876-1102
NY Dental Clinic (NY デンタルクリニック)	2-1-24 Mekar, Naha	869-6932

## HIV and STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections)

### Getting Tested

Testing and treatment for HIV and other STIs are available at most hospitals, but because preventive medical care is not covered by insurance, you may have to pay for these tests out of pocket. However, free, anonymous HIV testing can be done at the Health Centers listed below. These centers can also test for other STIs, although they may charge a nominal fee. Those who wish to receive testing must make an anonymous reservation at least a day in advance. The results of the test (in Japanese) are available about 2 hours after the test.

Test Center	Address	Telephone
Okinawa Nanbu Fukushi Hokensho (沖縄南部福祉保健所)	212 Miyahira, Haeburu	(098) 889-6591
Okinawa Chūō Fukushi Hokensho (沖縄中央福祉保健所)	1-3-21 Yogi, Naha	(098) 853-7971
Okinawa Chūbu Fukushi Hokensho (沖縄中部福祉保健所)	1-6-28 Mihara, Okinawa City	(098) 938-9701

If you have any questions or concerns about AIDS or HIV, you may also contact the AGAPE AIDS/HIV Hotline for 24-hour English-language assistance. Telephone: (0120) 46-1995 or visit <http://www.jhelp.com/en/aids.html>

## Contraception

The most common form of birth control in Japan is the condom. Condoms are sold in many 24-hour convenience stores and pharmacies (yakkyoku 薬局). The selection of condoms is limited in Japan, so you may want to bring your own, or have them shipped. Condoms are normally good for two years from the date of manufacture.

### Hormonal Birth Control

The birth control pill is now legal in Japan as a method of contraception. Please see a gynecologist (sanfujinka 産婦人科) to get a prescription (up to two months at a time). A birth control prescription costs around ¥2,500 for a one-month supply. Emergency contraception (the "morning after pill") is also available by prescription, usually under ¥1,000 (not covered by insurance).

If you plan to bring a supply of the pill with you to Japan, you can only legally bring in a one-month supply. If you wish to bring more, you must mail an application (yakkan shōmeisho 薬監証明書) and a copy of your prescription to the Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare at least three weeks prior to your arrival in Japan. If your application is accepted, you will be mailed a certificate, which you must bring with you to Japan. For more information about bringing birth control (or other prescription medicines) into Japan, please see:

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/topics/import/index.html>

If you plan to have birth control pills sent, only one month's supply may be sent at a time. Make sure the prescription and a note from your doctor are included in the package.



## Pregnancy and Childbirth

Home pregnancy tests are sold at pharmacies. "Check One" brand has English instructions. If find you are pregnant and are unsure of what to do, Tokyo English Life Line provides pregnancy counseling. Their counselors can advise you both about childbirth in Japan and about abortion.

### Pregnancy Services and Support

Responsible Organizations: **Urasoe Health Counseling Center** (Urasoe Hoken Sōdan Center 浦添市保健相談センター)  
Address: 1-8-1 Nakama, Urasoe  
Telephone: (098) 875-2100

Because Japan has such a low birthrate, the government takes all kinds of measures to assist pregnant women and encourage childbearing. There are a dizzying number of services and programs for pregnant mothers and new parents. However, doctor visits and delivery are not covered by National Health Insurance unless there are medical complications.

When you have the pregnancy confirmed at a medical facility, your doctor will issue you a certificate. Take this certificate to City Hall and complete "pregnancy registration" (ninshin todoke 妊娠届) at the Urasoe Health Counseling Center. You will then be given a Mother & Child Health Handbook (boshi kenkō techō 母子健康手帳). With this you will be entitled to two free prenatal check-ups. However, it is usual to visit the doctor once a month, and you will have to pay for some visits out of pocket. Each time you visit the medical center, updated information will be written in the handbook and it will become a record of your pregnancy and child's development.

If you are pregnant, you are entitled to unpaid maternity leave from 42 days before your due date until 56 days after the delivery. National Health Insurance will reimburse you for 60% of your standard remuneration during this time. To receive this payment, you must fill out an application (kenkō hoken shussan teatekin seikyū-sho 健康保険出産手当金請求書) at the Urasoe Health Counseling Center. Applications are generally filed after the applicant returns to work because the Counseling Center requires that the workplace confirm the dates of leave.

National Health Insurance will also award a one-time fixed payment of ¥ 420,000 (shussan ikuji ichijikin 出産育児一時金) for each child born (¥ 404,000 to those who give birth at hospitals not enrolled in the Maternity Care Security System). To apply for this payment, visit the National Health Insurance Section at City Hall.

### Infant Services and Support

Infants aged 3-4 months and 9-10 months are entitled to free medical check-ups at the Health Counseling Center. Contact the center for dates and times.

Polio and tuberculosis vaccinations for children are also provided free by the Health Counseling Center. Other standard vaccinations are also free, but you must visit a designated medical provider in Urasoe. The Health Counseling Center can provide you with a list of designated medical providers.

## Counseling

If you should need any counseling, or have any trouble adjusting to life in Japan, there are counselors available to help you. If the counselors listed here are not able to fulfill your needs, they may be able to refer you to someone who can.

Although most of these helplines are based outside of Okinawa, they may be able to give you a referral number to someone who can help you in Okinawa.

#### AMDA International Medical Information Center

Hours: Monday - Friday, 9am ~ 5pm Telephone: (03) 5285-8088

AMDA provides information about the Japanese medical system and counseling on medical issues. Available languages include English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Thai, Portuguese, and Tagalog.

#### Tokyo English Life Line (TELL)

Hours: Daily, 9am ~ 11pm Telephone: (03) 5774-0992

TELL provides information and assistance with any aspect of life in Japan. Can provide referrals to other resources.

#### Japan Helpline

Hours: 24 hours Telephone: (0120) 46-1997

Assistance and a listening ear for everything from ordinary gripes to a serious emergency.

#### 12 Step Okinawa

An umbrella group for 12 step programs on Okinawa such as Alcoholics Anonymous. (URL: [www.12stepokinawa.com](http://www.12stepokinawa.com))



# Welfare

## Welfare for Children

The City of Urasoe, like other municipalities in Japan, subsidizes many services for families with young children. Although not part of the official education system, these are government-run programs designed to lighten the burden of child rearing by providing child care services, financial assistance, and classes for parents.

### Daycare Centers (Hoiku-sho 保育所)

Responsible Organization: **Infant Welfare Section (Hoiku-ka 保育課)**  
 Urasoe City Hall, 2nd Floor  
 Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3626)

There are 32 certified daycare centers for children ages 5 months to 5 years old and 19 regional daycare centers for children ages 5 months to 2 years old. Although there are both public and corporate daycare centers, every center has the same mission, fees, and hours. Generally, center hours are from 7:00AM to 6:00PM, and their fees depend on the families' income.

Registration for daycare centers tend to open in the fall. Details about registration can be found in the October edition of the Urasoe monthly newsletter. While applications are accepted outside of the fall, please note that acceptance rates are low and your child will be placed on a waiting list. For families interested in registering their child into a daycare center, please consult the Infant Welfare Section at City Hall.

### What to Bring for Application

- Personal Seal
- Proof of your individual number (Parent and Child)
- Approval for Acceptance Form and Daycare Center Registration Form
- Confirmation Form
- Confirmation Checklist and Necessary Documents Checklist
- Document Proving "Need for Daycare Services"

Only guardians that cannot provide care for their child at home can apply for registration (document proving guardian's need for daycare services required). Once the need for daycare services disappears, you will be unable to leave your child in daycare.












### Documents Proving Guardians' Need for Daycare Services

Situation	Document
1. Employed or expecting employment	• Certification of Employment
2. Maternity leave	• Certification of Employment
3. Self-employed or working a side-job	• Proof of Self-Employment Form or Proof of Side-job Form
4. Expected delivery date	• Photocopy of Mother & Child Health Handbook
5. Guardian is ill	• Doctor's Note (for guardian or member of household)
6. Guardian is providing care to or nursing another family member	• Proof of Nursing or Family Care Form • Doctor's Note (for Nursing or Family Care) *Individuals who are certified to provide nursing must attach a photocopy of their "Proof of Insured Person for Long-term Care Insurance."
7. Recovering from a natural disaster	• Disaster Certification Form
8. Job hunting	• Job Hunting Confirmation Form (valid for 3 months)
9. Working student	• Proof of Enrollment or Class Schedule
10. Guardian or member of household has a mental or physical disability	• Photocopy of Physically Disabled Person's Handbook • Photocopy of Nursing Handbook • Photocopy of Mentally Disabled Person's Handbook *If available, please submit your Proof of Disability Pension.
11. Single parent households	• Certificate for Receiving Child Support Allowance • Photocopy of Certificate for Receiving Allowance for Single Parent Households For those without either form, please submit your Residence Certificate with a divorce date or Proof of Common-law Marriage
12. Households receiving welfare	• Certificate for Receiving Welfare *The Financial Assistance Section issues this certificate.



## Youth Centers (Jidō Sentā 児童センター)

There are eleven Youth Centers in Urasoe for children ages 0-18. (Children ages four and under must attend events with a parent). These centers are places where children can play after school and on weekends in a supervised environment. Registration of your child is free, and all that is required is the completion of a registration form and a brief sign-in upon each visit. There are often planned events, such as dodge ball, picnics, small festivals, and sports competitions. The centers are a good place for your children to meet local Japanese kids. For specific information, please inquire at the center. Facilities usually include a library, video room, and gymnasium with basketball hoops, badminton, and ping-pong facilities.

 <p><b>Wakakusa Youth Center</b> Wakakusa Jidō Sentā 若草児童センター</p> <p>Address: 3-44-1 Iso Telephone: (098) 877-0047</p>	 <p><b>Uchima Youth Center</b> Uchima Jidō Sentā 内間児童センター</p> <p>Address: 3-28-12 Uchima Telephone: (098) 876-1502</p>	 <p><b>Nishihara Youth Center</b> Nishihara Jidō Sentā 西原児童センター</p> <p>Address: 4-9-1 Nishihara Telephone: (098) 878-1766</p>
 <p><b>Kyozyuka Yuimaru Center</b> Kyozyuka Yuimāru Sentā 経塚ゆいまるセンター</p> <p>Address: 1-17-1 Kyozyuka Telephone: (098) 876-4100</p>	 <p><b>Miyagigahara Youth Center</b> Miyagigahara Jidō Sentā 宮城ヶ原児童センター</p> <p>Address: 2-4-1 Miyagi Telephone: (098) 876-1895</p>	 <p><b>Machinato Youth Center</b> Machinato Jidō Sentā まちなと児童センター</p> <p>Address: 2-38-2 Makiminato Telephone: (098) 873-1898</p>
 <p><b>Urashirokko Youth Center</b> Urashirokko Jidō Sentā 浦城っ子児童センター</p> <p>Address: 2-13-2 Iso Telephone: (098) 878-6815</p>	 <p><b>Mori-no-ko Youth Center</b> Morinoko Jidō Sentā 森の子児童センター</p> <p>Address: 1-4-1 Jicchaku Telephone: (098) 874-7610</p>	 <p><b>Urasoegusuku Youth Center</b> Urasoegusuku Jidō Sentā うらそえぐすく児童センター</p> <p>Address: 2-47-5 Nakama Telephone: (098) 874-0417</p>
 <p><b>Miyagi Kibo no Mori Community Center</b> Miyagi Kibō no Mori Komyuniti Sentā みやぎ希望の森コミュニティセンター</p> <p>Address: 3-7-3 Miyagi Telephone: (098) 870-0227</p>	 <p><b>Maeda Yubushigaoka Youth Center</b> Maeda Yubushigaoka Jidō Sentā 前田ユブシが丘児童センター</p> <p>Address: 323 Maeda Telephone: (098) 871-1558</p>	



Welfare



## Financial Support

Responsible Organization: Child's Welfare Section (Kodomo Katei-ka こども家庭課)  
 Urasoe City Hall, 2nd Floor  
 Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3611, 3612)

The Child's Welfare Section offers several types of financial assistance for families with young children. Benefits are limited to families with an income under a certain amount.

### ① Childcare Allowance (Jidō Teate 児童手当)

	Childcare Allowance (per month)
0 ~ 3 year olds	• Every child 15,000 yen
3 year olds ~ elementary school	• 1st child & 2nd child 10,000 yen • 3rd child and higher 15,000 yen
Junior high school	• Every child 10,000 yen
Income Limit	Households that exceed the income limit will receive 5,000 yen for every child. • 0 children (6.22 million yen) • 1 child (6.6 million yen) • 2 children (6.98 million yen) • 3 children (7.36 million yen) • 4 children (7.74 million yen) • 5 children (8.12 million yen)

If the qualifications for receiving benefits change due to child birth or moving into Urasoe, etc., you are required to apply directly at the Child's Welfare Section at City Hall to receive childcare allowance. Please apply within 15 days after giving birth or moving out, etc. You will be unable to receive allowance for months of late application.

### Necessary Documents

- Personal Identification and Notification Card or Individual Number Card
- Personal Seal
- Photo copy of applicant's savings account bankbook and health insurance card

\* Requirement of bankbook and health insurance card may vary depending on household situations

### ② Medical Expense Allowance for Infants and Children (Kodomo Iryōhi Josei こども医療費助成)

Applicable persons include guardians of children from 0 years old to junior high school, children enrolled in health insurance, and persons registered in the Urasoe Basic Residence Registry System.

Applicable Ages	Type of Coverage
0 years old ~ pre elementary school enrollment	• Outpatient Treatment & Hospitalization Fees
post elementary enrollment ~ pre junior high graduation	• Only hospitalization fees Cost of meals during hospitalization are not covered.

### Necessary Documents for Certification to Receive Allowance

- Health Insurance Card (Applicable Child's card)
- Guardian's Savings Account Bankbook
- Personal Seal

### Necessary Documents to Receive Allowance (When presenting medical receipts at City Hall)

- Health Insurance Card (Applicable Child's card)
- Receipt
- Personal Seal
- Allowance Certification Card
- Guardian's Savings Account Bankbook (only when there is a change in account)





### ③ Child Support Allowance (Jidō Fuyō Teate 児童扶養手当)

Financial support for children younger than 18 years old living in single-parent households and children not brought up by their parents. Children who bear a moderate or higher degree disability may receive financial support until they turn 20 years old.

#### General Requirements

- Approval for Allowance Form (Available at Child's Welfare Section)
- Personal Seal
- Residence Certificate (showing applicant and applicable child)
- Savings Account Bankbook
- Health Insurance Card (for applicant and applicable child)
- Pension Book
- Notification Card or Individual Number Card
- Others

\* Necessary documents vary depending on the applicant's situation. Please consult with the Child's Welfare Section for details.

### ④ Medical Expense Allowance for Children in Single Parent Homes

(Boshi oyobi Fushi Katei nado Iryōhi Josei 母子及び父子家庭等医療費助成)

Financial support for children younger than 18 years old living in single-parent households and children not brought up by their parents.

	Hospitalization	Outpatient Treatment
Single-parent Households & Children without parents	○	○
* Applicable until the 31st of March after the child turns 18 years old		

Age	Hospitalization	Outpatient Treatment
0 years old ~ pre elementary school enrollment	× (Eligible for Medical Expense Allowance)	× (Eligible for Medical Expense Allowance)
Elementary school ~ pre junior high graduation	× (Eligible for Medical Expense Allowance)	○
Junior high graduation ~ 17 years old	○	○

#### Requirements for Application

\* Necessary documents vary depending on the applicant's situation. Please consult with the Child's Welfare Section for the necessary documents



Welfare



## Welfare for the Elderly

Responsible Organization: **Lively Old Age Support Division** (Ikiiki Kōrei Shien-ka いきいき高齢支援課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 1st Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3567)

Urasoe City provides several welfare services to allow elderly citizens to continue an independent lifestyle.

1. For persons caring for elderly persons (65 and older) at home
  - Provision of nursing supplies
  - Home-nursing compensation
2. For elderly persons (65 and older) living alone
  - Meal delivery service
  - Emergency report system
  - Welfare phone

There are set conditions applied when using these services. Please consult with the Lively Old Age Support Division for details.

Elderly residents 60 years and older who are looking for activities to participate in or are interested in finding new hobbies are able to take advantage of the various workshops and clubs being offered. Several facilities geared towards supporting the elderly are listed below.

### **Elderly Welfare Center** (Rōjin Fukushi Sentā 老人福祉センター)

Address: 1-1-2 Ahacha, Urasoe (Inside the Central Community Center (Chūō Kōminkan 中央公民館))  
Telephone: (098) 879-5501

### **Regional Welfare Center** (Chiiki Fukushi Sentā 地域福祉センター)

Address: 2-18-2 Nakama, Urasoe  
Telephone: (098) 878-1478

### **Kariyushi Center** (Kariyushi Sentā かりゆしセンター)

Address: 4-11-8 Nishihara, Urasoe  
Telephone: (098) 871-1616



## Education

The Japanese education system consists of kindergarten, 6 years of elementary school (shōgakkō 小学校), 3 years of junior high school (chūgakkō 中学校), 3 years of high school (kōtōgakkō 高等学校), and 4 years of university (daigaku 大学). Only elementary and junior high school are compulsory, but many children also attend kindergarten and nearly all students complete high school. Foreign children may attend Japanese schools, but unlike for Japanese citizens, attendance is not compulsory. The school year runs from April to March of the following year and is divided into two or three terms, with a recess period at the end of each term.

### Kindergarten

(Yōchien 幼稚園)

Responsible Organization: **Infant Welfare Section** (Hoiku-ka 保育課)  
 Urasoe City Hall, 2nd Floor  
 Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3626)

There are 8 public kindergartens in Urasoe, as well as kindergartens that have been certified to transition into nurseries. All public kindergartens are located on the campuses of public elementary schools.

#### Urasoe City Public Kindergartens (As of April, 2019)

<b>Urashiro Kindergarten</b> Address: 2-13-1 Iso Telephone: 098-877-8050	<b>Makiminato Kindergarten</b> Address: 2-14-1 Makiminato Telephone: 098-877-1991	<b>Toyama Kindergarten</b> Address: 2-34-2 Toyama Telephone: 098-877-7876	<b>Uchima Kindergarten</b> Address: 4-3-1 Uchima Telephone: 098-879-1639
<b>Minatogawa Kindergarten</b> Address: 4-37-1 Gusukuma Telephone: 098-878-3011	<b>Takushi Kindergarten</b> Address: 998 Takushi Telephone: 098-878-5235	<b>Miyagi Kindergarten</b> Address: 3-7-3 Miyagi Telephone: 098-879-5997	<b>Maeda Kindergarten</b> Address: 333 Maeda Telephone: 098-879-5703

#### Kindergartens certified to transition into nurseries (As of April, 2019)

<b>Nakanishi Nursery</b> Address: 2-4-1 Miyagi Telephone: 098-877-5164	<b>Urasoe Nursery</b> Address: 2-47-2 Nakama Telephone: 098-877-1042	<b>Kamimori Nursery</b> Address: 1-4-1 Jicchaku Telephone: 098-877-2647
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Any child who has reached the age of four or five by April 1st is eligible to sign up for kindergarten. Four-year olds may apply to kindergartens if there are openings available. In addition, children who have reached the age of three by April 1st may consult with kindergartens for eligibility. For those who wish to apply, a parent-child interview will take place at the kindergarten after submitting application documents.

Children are generally assigned to the kindergarten located in the district in which they live. However, parents may apply to send their child to a specific kindergarten in certain circumstances.

Kindergarten is not part of compulsory education. Monthly childcare fees are determined by the parents' income and must be paid, as well as additional small fees for materials and snacks. Kindergartens also provide afternoon daycare until 6pm, which costs ¥5,000 per month. Extended hours for 6pm ~ 7pm are available for an additional ¥2,000 per month.

Children walk to school with their parents or other students and arrive around 8am. Some kindergartens do not prepare lunches, meaning lunch fees do not need to be paid. In addition, dismissal times vary depending on age.

For kindergartens with lunches, children bring their own lunches once a week (twice a week for kindergartens without lunches). Kindergartens without lunches release children without lunch for other days. Please refer to the application documents for details.



## Elementary School Junior High School

(Shōgakkō 小学校)

(Chūgakkō 中学校)

Responsible Organization: **Education Section** (Gakkō Kyōiku-ka 学校教育課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 7th Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 6562)

Urasoe City has 11 public elementary schools and five public junior high schools. If you live in Urasoe and your child falls between the ages of six and fifteen, he or she is eligible for enrollment at one of these schools. Please visit City Hall with Residence Cards for both student and guardian if you wish to enroll your child. Children will be assigned to the school in the district in which they live and placed into a grade level according to their age. If you wish to enter your child into an international school or national/private elementary school or junior high school, please apply directly to each school.

The school day usually runs from 8am ~ 4:30pm. Some students may have classes until 4pm, and students in 5th and 6th grades of elementary school and in junior high schools may have after-school commitments as well. Tuition is free, but school lunches (¥4,200/month for elementary and ¥4,600/month for junior high) and some teaching materials must be purchased.

## High School

(Kōtōgakkō 高等学校)

Responsible Organization: **Okinawa Prefectural Board of Education** (Okinawa-ken Kyōiku I'inkai 沖縄県教育委員会)  
Address: Kencho Building, 13th Floor, 1-2-2 Izumizaki, Naha 900-8571  
Telephone: (098) 866-2705

Unlike elementary and junior high schools, high schools are administered by the Okinawa Prefectural Government. As high school is not part of compulsory education, tuition fees are charged. These vary depending on the school.

After graduating from junior high school, students are placed in higher-level or lower-level high schools based on an entrance examination offered every year in March. Due to this system, many students attend schools far away from where they live. Urasoe has five public high schools and one private high school, with students in attendance who come from all over Okinawa Prefecture. Those of foreign nationality may also take the Junior High School Graduation Certification Exam (chūgakkō sotsugyō teido nintei shiken 中学校卒業程度認定試験) to certify that they have academic abilities equivalent to those who have graduated from junior high schools.

The entrance exam system makes it difficult for students not proficient in Japanese to attend public high school. If your child does not speak Japanese, you may wish to enroll him or her in a correspondence course, or investigate the Okinawa Christian School International, a private K-12 school where English is the language of instruction. The Christian School is located at 1835 Zakimi, Yomitan-cho and can be reached by telephone at (098) 958-3000 or at <http://ocsi.org/>.

## University

(Daigaku 大学)

Junior colleges take 2 years to graduate, and national, public, and private universities take 4 years to graduate. Applicants are required to take an entrance exam to enter university, and check with respective institutions for expenses and eligibility.

Applicants must fulfill one of 3 conditions to take the entrance examination.

- Graduate from high school in Japan or overseas
- Pass the Junior High School Graduation Certification Exam
- Possess an International Baccalaureate diploma or equivalent certification and be over 18 years old on April 1 of the year of entry



## Studying Japanese

Studying Japanese can help you make the most of your time in Okinawa. Luckily, there are a number of Japanese language schools and other organizations offering a wide variety of programs. Please contact the organizations listed below for further information.

Name	Address	Contact
<b>JSL Nippon Academy</b> (JSL 日本アカデミー)	1-1-1 Nakanishi, Urasoe	(098) 875-1456 <a href="http://www.jslnippon.jp/en/">http://www.jslnippon.jp/en/</a>
<b>Cross Cultural Communication Center</b> (異文化間コミュニケーションセンター)	4-13-18 Nagata, Ginowan	(098) 893-6467 <a href="http://www.e-cccc.com/en/">http://www.e-cccc.com/en/</a>
<b>Japanese Language Institute</b> <b>International Center of Language and Culture</b> (国際言語文化センター附属日本語学校)	2F Sunhills Tabaru, 1-4-1 Tabaru, Naha	(098) 859-3881 <a href="http://iclcjapan.com/course/english/">http://iclcjapan.com/course/english/</a>
<b>Japan Institute of Culture&amp; Economics</b> (日本文化経済学院)	2-12-14 Nishi, Naha	(098) 869-8686 <a href="http://gores.ac.jp/en/">http://gores.ac.jp/en/</a>
<b>Nichia Foreign Language Academy</b> (日亜外語学院)	1-1-1 Matsugawa, Naha	(098) 833-8666 <a href="http://orange.zero.jp/nichia/eindex.htm">http://orange.zero.jp/nichia/eindex.htm</a>
<b>Okinawa International Exchange &amp; Human Resources Development Foundation</b> (沖縄県国際交流人材育成財団国際交流課)	4-2-16 Isa, Ginowan	(098) 942-9215 <a href="https://kokusai.oihf.or.jp/project/yomikaki/">https://kokusai.oihf.or.jp/project/yomikaki/</a>  The OIHF has what is probably the most extensive offering of Japanese classes available on Okinawa. Although most of the schools listed here offer beginning Japanese, the OIHF has very advanced classes as well.
<b>Step World Japanese School</b> (ステップワールド日本語学院)	1-10-2 Uenoya, Naha	(098) 860-5353 <a href="https://k-stworld.com/">https://k-stworld.com/</a>



# Taxes and Pension

## Tax

(Zei 税)

As a foreign resident of Japan, your tax status varies depending on the tax treaties between your country and Japan, and on your Status of Residence. Check with your embassy or consulate regarding tax matters specific to your country.

In general, if you are liable for taxes in Japan, you must pay two types of income tax: income tax, which is collected by the national government, and resident tax, which is collected by the municipal government.

## Income Tax

(Shotoku Zei 所得税)

Responsible Organization: **North-Naha Tax Office** (Kita Naha Zeimussho 北那覇税務署)

Address: 5-6-12 Miyagi, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2126

Telephone: (098) 877-1324

The National Tax Agency publishes a comprehensive guide to income tax in English. Please refer to the following link if you have questions that are not answered here. <http://www.nta.go.jp/english/taxes/individual/index.htm>

In brief, income tax is calculated from your earnings between January 1st and December 31st. Taxable income is calculated based on your total income, minus deductions. The rate of tax depends on your income, and ranges from 5% if your annual income is less than ¥1,950,000, 10% if your annual income is between ¥1,950,000 and ¥3,300,000, to 20% if your annual income is over ¥3,300,000.

## Employer Tax Withholding (Gensen Chōshū-zei 源泉徴収税)

In most cases, your employer will ask you to fill out paperwork to determine if you qualify for any of the common deductions listed below (others listed in the above link). Your employer will then withhold the correct income tax from your paycheck. At the end of the year, your employer will provide you with a statement of earnings (gensen chōshū hyō 源泉徴収票), detailing your income, taxes withheld, and your contributions to the national pension and health insurance. In some cases, your December paycheck may be smaller or larger than usual, if your employer has any adjustments to make to the taxes it has withheld.

## Deductions Calculated by Employer (Zeigaku Kōjo 税額控除)

- Deduction for social insurance premiums (if you have paid social insurance premiums such as National Insurance, National Pension, etc.)
- Exemption for widows or widowers (if you are a widow or widower)
- Exemption for working students (if you are a working student)
- Exemption for person with disabilities (if you or your spouse qualified for an exemption or dependents have a disability)
- Exemption for spouses (if your spouse qualifies for an exemption)
- Exemption for dependents (if you have any dependents who qualify for an exemption)
- Basic exemption (all people receive the basic exemption)

## Filing Income Tax Returns (Kakutei Shinkoku 確定申告)

If your income tax is directly deducted from your pay (as it is in most cases) you do not usually need to personally submit an income tax return. However, salaried workers with an annual salary of more than ¥20 million or with income of more than ¥200,000 from other sources (e.g. self-employment or capital gains) must submit a final tax return regardless of whether the taxes were previously withheld. Also, if an incorrect amount of tax was withheld from your salary, you must file your taxes to get a tax refund. Appropriate forms are available at the tax office and tax filing site, and office staff can help you with filling out the forms.

## Tax Refund (Zeikin Kanpu 税金還付)

You may be eligible to receive a tax refund if you can claim any of the following deductions, which your employer would not take into consideration when deducting taxes from your salary.





## Deductions Calculated by Taxpayer (Zeigaku Kōjo 税額控除)

- Deduction for casualty losses (In the case of damage to property or household effects caused by theft, disaster or embezzlement)
- Deduction for medical expenses (If you have paid medical expenses, etc. that exceed a certain amount)
- Deduction for earthquake insurance premiums (if you have paid premiums on earthquake insurance policies or long-term casualty insurance policies)
- Deduction for donations (if you have made donations to national government in Kapan, hometown tax, or certain specified political donations)

If you think you may be eligible for a refund, please visit the Tax Office or Urasoe City Hall for assistance. Bring along your Statement of Earnings and documentation of deductions (e.g. medical receipts) you wish to claim.

## Resident Tax

(Jūmin Zei 住民税)

Responsible Organization: **Municipal Tax Section (Shiminzei-ka 市民税課)**  
 Urasoe City Hall, 2nd Floor  
 Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 2213)

Residents of Urasoe (as well as other municipalities) must pay resident tax. Those who are registered citizens of Urasoe City as of January 1 of the filing year must pay taxes. Resident tax is calculated based on income earned from the previous year, and the tax rate is a flat rate of 10% (4% for the prefecture and 6% for the municipality).

## Filing Resident Tax Returns (Shikenmin-zei Shinkoku 市県民税申告)

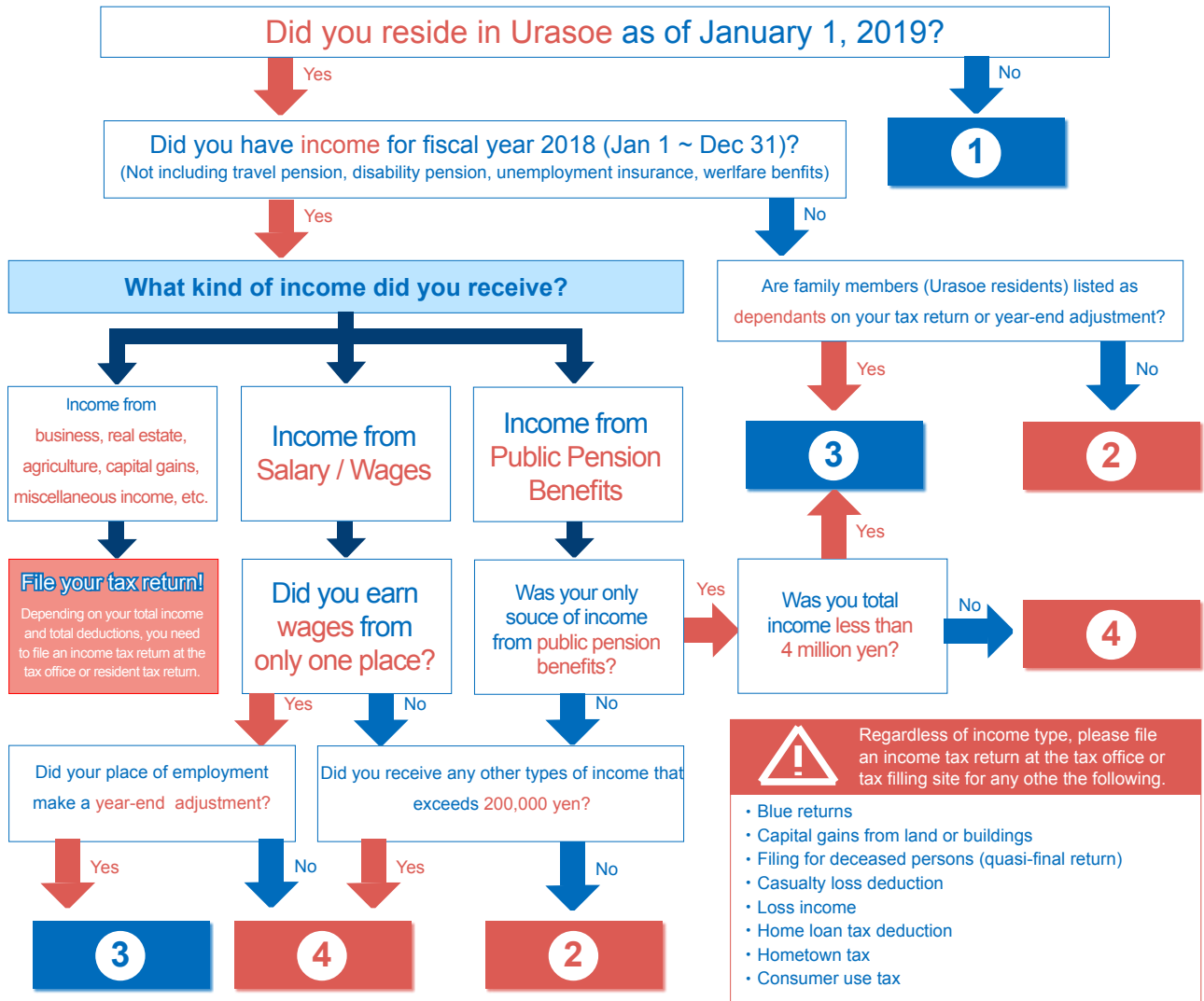
Those who are registered citizens of Urasoe City as of January 1 of the filing year must file for resident tax. The filing period is from the middle of February to the middle of March. You should receive a Tax Return Form in the mail during tax season. If not, copies are available at the Municipal Tax Section or at the filing site.

Check the following flow chart to see if you need to file a resident tax return.(Fiscal Year 2019 flow chart)



# Tax Return Flow Chart

## START



- 1** You do not need to file at Urasoe City. Please consult with the municipality you resided in as of January 1, 2019.
- 2** File a resident tax return. You do not need to file an income tax return.
- 3** Filing is unnecessary. Filing will be necessary if you include deductions for medical expenses, social insurance premiums, or life insurance premiums.
- 4** File an income tax return. Please file at the tax office or tax filing site (Yui no Machi).

Filing a resident tax return means . . . submitting a "Municipal/Prefectural and National Health Insurance Tax Form" to City Hall.

Filing an income tax return means . . . submitting a "Income Tax From" to the tax office or at the tax filing site.

### What to bring when filing a resident tax return

- ☐ Tax Return Form (if you did not receive one, forms are also issued at the filing site or at the Municipal Tax Section)
- ☐ Personal Seal (inkan)
- ☐ Personal Identification ("My Number" Card, "My Number" Notification Card, Driver's License, etc.)
- ☐ Proof of Income/Expenses (Statement of Earnings, Paycheck, Account Book, Receipts, etc.)
- ☐ Proof of Deductions
  - Social insurance premium receipts or payment certificates (for payments in 2018)
  - Life insurance and earthquake insurance premium payment certificates (for payments in 2018)
  - Medical expenses deduction statement (for payments in 2018)
  - Disability handbook, etc. (for disability exemptions), student ID (for working student exemptions)
  - Disability Exemption Certificate (for those over 65 certified to receive nursing. Issued by the Lively Old Age Support Division)
- ☐ Donation Deduction Certificate (receipts from organizations that issued donation monies)
- ☐ Other (receipts/certificates that confirm payments and/or applicable conditions)



## National Pension

(Kokumin Nenkin 国民年金)

Responsible Organizations: **Urasoe Social Security Office** (Urasoe Nenkin Jimusho 浦添年金事務所)  
Address: 3-3-25 Uchima, Urasoe, Okinawa 〒 901-2121  
Telephone: National Pension (Kokumin Nenkin 国民年金) - (098) 877-0511  
Dial Announcement→2 →Dial Announcement→2  
Pension Consultation (Nenkin Sōdan 年金相談) - (098) 877-0733  
Dial Announcement→1 →Dial Announcement→2

**Citizens' Affairs Section** (Shimin-ka 市民課)  
Urasoe City Hall, 1st Floor  
Telephone: (098) 876-1234 (ext. 3111)

The Japan Pension Service provides a comprehensive guide on the Japanese National Pension system in various languages. Please refer to the following link if you have questions that are not answered here.

<https://www.nenkin.go.jp/international/index.html>

All people registered to reside in Japan aged 20 to 59 are obligated to pay into the national pension system, regardless of their nationality. The National Pension Program will provide for you or your family in the event that you are seriously injured or die during the period you are making payments. Generally, employers will deduct premiums from your salary for you. However, please check with your employer to see if payments are being made. If you are not enrolled through an employer (for example if you are a student, self-employed, or unemployed), you must visit City Hall to sign up.

Regardless of your method of payment, when you enroll in the pension plan, you should receive a blue pension book. Please do not lose this book, as it is required for various pension procedures.

If you are having difficulty paying premiums due to low income, etc., please apply for a payment deduction at City Hall or the Urasoe Social Security Office. If your application is approved by the Japan Pension Service, you may be eligible for a premium exemption or a partial deduction.

## Lump Sum Withdrawal

(Dattai Ichiji-kin 脱退一時金)

Foreigners who leave Japan after paying into the pension plan for over six months may be entitled to a partial refund. To be eligible for the pension refund, you must satisfy all the following conditions and file an application within two years of leaving Japan. This procedure is called Lump Sum Withdrawal (dattai ichiji-kin 脱退一時金).

### Requirements

1. You must not possess Japanese citizenship.
2. You must have paid pension plan premiums for 6 months or more
3. You must have never received pension benefits.
4. You must not have a place of residence in Japan.

### Procedure

Before leaving Japan, you must obtain the claim form entitled "Request of Arbitration for Lump-Sum Withdrawal Benefit" (dattai ichiji-kin saitei seikyū-sho 脱退一時金裁定請求書) from the Japan Pension Service. After departing from Japan, you must fill out the form, attach the required documents, and mail them to the following address:

### Japan Pension Service

Takaidō-Nishi 3-5-24  
Suginami-ku, Tokyo 168-8505 Japan

### Required Documents

1. Pension Book (nenkin techō 年金手帳) or other documents showing your Basic Pension Number
2. A photocopy of your passport (include the pages showing your name, date of birth, nationality, signature, resident status, and the date of departure from Japan)
3. A document verifying the name of your bank, name of the branch office and its address, and account information (must be in your name)

It may take 6 months or longer for your paperwork to be processed. When the lump sum is remitted to your account, it will be converted to the currency of your country at the current exchange rate. Should the applicant die before receiving the Lump-Sum Withdrawal Payment, a spouse, child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, or sibling, living off the same income source, or anyone who is considered to be a member of the same fiscal household at the time of the applicant's death can receive payment in place of the applicant.



## Getting a Pension Refund (Dattai Ichiji-kin ni Kakaru Zeikin Kanpu 脱退一時金にかかる税金還付)

A 20.42% tax is imposed on the Lump-Sum Withdrawal Payment of your pension. However, you may also qualify to have the tax refunded. You must apply within five years of leaving Japan.

### Procedure

In the case of the lump sum withdrawal, the money is deposited directly into a bank account that you specify in your home country. However, the refund on the 20% flat tax cannot be deposited into bank accounts abroad. Therefore, you must designate an acquaintance in Japan with a bank account. The money will be deposited into that person's account and then you can have that person send you the money.

Before leaving Japan, you should get a copy of the "Tax Agent Designation Form" (nōzei kanri-nin no todokede-sho gaikokujin-yō 納税管理人の届出書外国人用) at the North-Naha Tax Office. Fill out the form and submit it to the North-Naha Tax Office.

### North-Naha Tax Office

Miyagi 5-6-12

Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2126 Japan

After leaving Japan, file for the Lump-Sum Withdrawal payment. Upon receipt of your payment, make a photocopy of the Notice of the Lump-Sum Withdrawal Payment (dat'tai ichiji-kin shikyū ket'tei tsūchisho 脱退一時金支給決定通知書) and mail the original form to your tax representative.

Have your Tax Representative go to the same tax office as before and file the Tax Refund Claim (Kakutei Shinkoku-sho 確定申告書) on your behalf. A bank account in Japan needs to be designated at the time of filing. The refund will be deposited into that account.

For more detailed information, please contact the North-Naha Tax Office in Urasoe.



# Transportation

In Okinawa, public transportation consists almost entirely of buses. There is no train or subway system, and the monorail runs only from Naha Airport to Shuri Castle with 3 stations currently being constructed within Urasoe City. There are many, many taxis. People commute primarily by car or motorbike, but as Urasoe covers an area of less than 19 square kilometers, it's not difficult to get around on foot or by bicycle.

## Buses

Ryukyu Bus	(098) 863-2821
Okinawa Bus	(098) 861-0385
Naha Bus	(098) 868-7149
Tōyō Bus	(098) 867-2313

There are four main bus companies in Okinawa. Ordinary buses have route numbers, which are coordinated between companies (e.g. there is only one route 86 bus line), so if you know the route number, you do not need to worry about getting on the wrong bus. The bus system may seem confusing at first, but once you get used to the bus lines, they can be quite convenient. When visiting an urban area, it may be easier and cheaper to take the bus than to park your car.

### How to Ride the Bus

- Stand visibly by the bus stop, or the bus driver may not see you.
- Take a ticket (seiriken 整理券) upon entering the bus. The number printed on your ticket corresponds to the stop where you boarded, and will determine the fare you pay when you get off.
- Press the "stop" button by your seat when you are approaching your stop (this will cause a sign at the front of the bus to become illuminated if it is not already).
- When you get off the bus, put your fare (exact change) into the fare box along with your ticket. If you do not have change, use the change machine below the fare box.

Bus stops generally have the name of the stop written in both kanji and the Roman alphabet. Inside the bus, the display is in Japanese, English, Chinese, and Korean. Bus stops are usually announced as well, so you can listen for your stop, but some bus drivers do not announce every stop. If you do not know when to press the stop button for your stop, you can speak to the bus driver when you board (see useful phrases below). Also, the maps on the bus stops are only in Japanese, but if you know your route number, you can check the timetable to find out when the next bus will come. If all else fails, ask the friendly Okinawans around you for help!

Discount passes are available for adults and students, but are usually limited to certain routes. You can purchase these at the main bus terminal in Naha. A book of all the bus routes in Okinawa, and timetables for all the routes is available from the bus information counter in Naha Airport.

### Useful Phrases for Riding the Bus

Please let me off at ____.	____ de oroshite kudasai.	____ で下ろしてください。
Does this bus go to ____?	Kono basu wa ____ yuki desu ka?	このバスは ____ ゆきですか。

### Other Tips for Using the Bus

A yellow IC card called Okica may also be purchased at any bus terminal or monorail station to be used in bus and monorail transportation. This allows you to use the bus or monorail without having to worry about carrying loose change. The Okinawa Busnavi website is another useful tool when researching bus stops and timetables. Currently, only the Japanese language section has access to bus GPS tracking.



## Taxis

Taxis in Okinawa are plentiful and can be readily found everywhere 24 hours a day. The starting rate is ¥500 for a standard taxi, but rates increase from 11:00pm to 5:00am. You'll notice that a rate-increase (warimashi 割増) light goes on to indicate this.

If you are traveling alone, or with one other person, it is far more economical to take the bus than a taxi. However, groups of three or four may want to take a taxi, for greater speed, comfort and convenience.

### Calling a Taxi

If you are near a main street, wave your hand in the air as you see a taxi approaching. A red light in the front window indicates that the taxi is vacant, while a green sign indicates that a passenger is already inside. If you would like to phone a taxi, please check the following link (Japanese only):

<http://www.oki-taxi.or.jp/call.html>

### Phoning a Taxi

I'd like a taxi, please	Takushī onegaishimasu	タクシーをお願いします。
I am at _____.	_____ ni imasu	_____ にいます。
I'd like to go to _____.	_____ made onegaishimasu.	_____ までをお願いします。
My name is _____.	Namae wa _____.	名前は _____。

### Giving Directions

Left/Right	Hidari/Migi	左・右
Please stop here.	Koko de tomatte kudasai.	ここで停まってください。
Go straight.	Massugu desu.	まっすぐです。
It's near _____.	_____ no chikaku desu.	_____ の近くです。

### Approximate taxi fares from Urasoe City Hall (during regular hours):

Kokusai Dōri, Naha: ¥1,400

Goya, Okinawa City: ¥3,000

Airport: ¥2,200

\* It is not necessary to tip taxi drivers in Japan.

## Monorail

The new monorail, also known as the Yui Rail (Yui-rēru ゆいレール), was completed in 2003 and runs from the Shuri Castle Station to the airport. It is safe and smooth, and provides a lovely view of Naha from above. It is also a lot faster than buses, particularly during rush hour. The maximum fare is ¥330 (¥170 for children) and the minimum fare is ¥230 (¥120 for children).

One or two-day unlimited use tickets are also available. A one-day unlimited use ticket costs ¥800 (¥400 for children) and the two-day unlimited use ticket costs ¥1,400 (¥700 for children).

## Ferries

Okinawa's outer islands can be reached by ferry or plane. You can take a ferry from Naha's Tomarin Port (Tomarin 泊港) to the Keramas, Kume, and other islands west of Okinawa's main island. Islands off the northern part of Okinawa's main island can be reached by ferry from ports in Motobu and Nakijin.

Long distance ferries to the Japanese mainland (Kagoshima, Osaka, Kobe, and Tokyo) and the Amami Islands leave daily from Naha Shinkō (那覇新港). As of 2008, long-distance ferry service to the Yaeyama Islands and Taiwan from Okinawa has been stopped.

## Bicycles

(Jitensha 自転車)

Bicycles are for sale at most major department stores. Alternatively, there are several specialty shops which sell high-end bicycles in Naha. Used bicycles are for sale at Recycle Plaza (see Housing Chapter) as well as at several independent bicycle repair shops around Urasoe such as Cycle Shop Pipeline (on Pipeline Street in the Iso area). No licenses are required for bicycles, but to prevent theft, the bicycle must be registered in your name. The shop where you purchase a bicycle will do the paperwork for you. Unlike other types of crime, bicycle theft is common on Okinawa, so please secure your bike.





## Converting a Foreign License to a Japanese License

Responsible Organizations: **Okinawa Prefectural Police Driver's License Center**  
(Okinawa-ken Keisatsu Menkyo Sentā 沖縄県警察免許センター)  
Address: 3-22 Tomisaki, Tomigusuku  
Telephone: (098) 851-1000

Starting from April 2017, the License Center will begin operating under a reservation system. Please note that reservations can be made starting from 2 months in advance. Reservations may be made over the phone or in person, but any specific consultations must be made in person. Reservations and consultations may be made from 8:30am ~ 11:00am or 1:30pm ~ 3pm. Please note that you will be placed on a waiting list if you arrive at the License Center without a reservation.

### Requirements for Japanese License Conversion

- Documentation proving that you have held a driver's license for at least 90 days, as well as documentation proving your emigration and immigration dates
- Your foreign driver's license is NOT expired
- Proof that you are registered within Okinawa Prefecture in the Basic Resident Registration System
- Your passport and residence card are NOT expired

### Necessary Documents (Original Documents)

- Foreign Driver's License (proof that you have held a driver's license for at least 90 days)
- Driving record (if the license issue date is not recorded on the driver's license)
- Japanese Translation of foreign driver's license (translated by Japanese Automobile Federation)
- Passport (to confirm emigration and immigration dates)
- Residence Card and Certificate of Residency
- Two 3cm x 2.4cm ID photos (white background, no head covering)
- Proof of mid-long term residence (more than 90 days)
- Depending on your nationality, other documentation may be required (please consult with the License Center)

### Basic flow of license conversion

1. Application and document verification
2. Payment of application fee
  - Automobile ¥2,550
  - Motorbike ¥2,600
  - Moped ¥1,500
3. Eyesight test, etc. and reservation for written test
4. Written test (Available in 10 languages, 10 questions, offered every Wednesday starting from 10am)
5. Practical test ( ¥1,450 for the first test, subsequent tests are ¥1,450 + the appropriate application fee)
  - Automobile Wednesday afternoons and Friday mornings
  - Motorbike Every 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month
  - Moped Practical test is not required
6. Payment for driver's license ( ¥2,050), license picture taking, and receive driver's license

### The following countries are exempted from the written and practical test for license conversion:

Iceland, Ireland, England, Italia, Austria, Australia, Netherlands, Canada, Greece, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, Finland, France, Belgium, Portugal, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Monaco, Korea, Taiwan, Maryland State, Washington State, Hungary, Hawaii State (effective December 20, 2018)

Applicants who cannot speak Japanese should have an interpreter accompany them. SOFA personnel who do not have a driver's license are not able to apply for a license conversion. All written tests must be reserved by the day before the test.



## Getting a Japanese License for UNLICENSED Drivers

Responsible Organizations: **Okinawa Prefectural Police Driver's License Center**  
(Okinawa-ken Keisatsu Menkyo Sentā 沖縄県警察免許センター)  
Address: 3-22 Tomisaki, Tomigusuku  
Telephone: (098) 851-1000

If you do not have a license from your home country and you wish to get a Japanese license, you must go through the same licensing process as a Japanese national. As instruction and tests are conducted in Japanese, you must be able to speak a certain amount of Japanese to get your license this way.

### Mopeds (Gentsuki Jitensha 原付自転車)

A Japanese moped license allows you to drive mopeds (2-wheeled vehicles under 50cc) without any special certification.

### Necessary Documents (Original Documents)

- Residence Card
- Two 3cm x 2.4cm ID photos (white background, no head covering)
- Application forms (available at the License Center)
- About ¥10,000 to cover all expenses

You will need to bring these documents and take a written test. The test is offered at 1:00pm on weekdays, excluding holidays and the New Year holiday period. The test costs ¥1,500, which you must pay beforehand. Because the License Section is closed from 11:45am-1:00pm, you must arrive before 11:45am in order to turn in your paperwork and pay in time. A grade of 90% or over is passing, and it is a tricky test, so many people take it more than once. Subsequent re-tests have a reduced fee of ¥1,000. Those who pass the test must complete a short training course for a fee of ¥4,200, after which your license will be issued for ¥2,050. Please note that you must make a reservation for the training course beforehand.

### Motorbikes (Jidō Nirinsha 自動二輪車)

There are two ways to get a license for a motorbike. If you already know how to ride a motorbike, you may take the practical test at the License Center in Tomigusuku. It costs about ¥4,050 and ¥3,100 for subsequent re-tests. If you pass, you will have to sign up for a supplementary training course to receive your license. This costs about ¥13,000 for either the standard or large motorbike license as well as ¥2,050 for the issuance of your license. Even if you already know how to ride a motorcycle, it is advisable to take a 50 minute practice test at the following driving school. Each test costs around ¥5,000, and will prepare you for the test course and requirements.

### Itoman Jidōsha Gakkō (糸満自動車学校)

Address: 2278 Itoman, Itoman  
Telephone: (098) 992-2138

You cannot make an appointment at the school, so you must visit directly and wait for a cancellation. Tell the staff at the school that you want to practice for "Ippatsu Shiken."

If you do not know how to ride a motorcycle, you will have to enroll in a training course at a driving school. Training courses last 2-3 months and cost upwards of around ¥150,000 - ¥250,000 depending on the type of motorbike license. Upon completion of the course, you will take the practical test at the driving school, rather than at the License Center.

### Automobiles

Unlicensed drivers will have to attend driving school before they can receive their automobile driver's license. Tuition fees can cost upwards of ¥250,000 - ¥270,000 depending on the type of transmission (automatic or manual). Applicants will also be required to take and pass a written exam at the License Center that costs ¥3,350 and ¥1,750 for subsequent re-tests. Upon completion of the course, applicants will take the practical test at the driving school, rather than at the License Center.



## Renewing your License

Responsible Organizations: **Okinawa Prefectural Police Driver's License Center**  
(Okinawa-ken Keisatsu Menkyo Sentā 沖縄県警察免許センター)  
Address: 3-22 Tomisaki, Tomigusuku  
Telephone: (098) 851-1000

Licenses for all vehicles (moped, motorcycle, and automobiles) should be renewed before they expire. Generally, the renewal period is 3 months revolving around your birthdate, including both the month before and after your birthday. If you allow your license to expire, you will have to take the driver's test again to get a new license.

### Necessary Documents (Original Documents)

- Driver's License
- Driver's License Renewal Notice
- Driver's License Renewal Application
- Residence Card
- ¥3,300 for a mandatory short training course

Take the above documents to the License Center on weekdays from 8:30am ~ 11:30am, or 1pm ~ 4:45pm and schedule for the mandatory short training course. If you choose to not take the training course, your renewal will become invalid.

## Buying, Selling, and Disposing of Vehicles

### Buying a Vehicle

If you wish to purchase a car, motorcycle, or moped, you will need a valid Japanese driver's license or IDP, your residence card, and a personal seal. If you are buying a white plate car, you will also need a proof of parking space (shako shōmeisho 車庫証明書). To get one, you must get a document from your landlord or rental agency showing your parking space. Your landlord may charge you a hefty sum for this document. Once you have the document from your landlord, bring it to the License Center. They will verify that it is correct, and prepare a proof of parking certificate for ¥2,200.

### Automobile Acquisition Tax (Jidōsha Shutoku-zei 自動車取得税)

When an automobile is purchased, regardless of whether it is new or used, the purchaser must pay an acquisition tax. If you purchase a car through an auto dealer, they will take care of the paperwork for you.

### Selling a Vehicle

Responsible Organizations: **Okinawa Land Transportation Office** (Okinawa Riku-un Jimusho 沖縄陸運事務所)  
Address: 512-4 Minatogawa, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2134  
Telephone: (050) 5540-2091

If you wish to sell your vehicle, you must change the name on the vehicle registration. This process is called meigi henkō (名義変更). Visit the Land Transportation Office together with the buyer of your vehicle. Bring along both people's personal seals, proof of insurance, proof of vehicle inspection, proof that you have paid the yearly vehicle tax, and both people's resident cards and licenses. If you are selling a white plate car, you will also need both people's Personal Seal Registration Certificates, and the buyer's proof of parking space (shako shōmeisho 車庫証明書).

### Disposing of a Vehicle

If you want to get rid of your vehicle, you must contact a private vehicle disposal company. Vehicle disposal is called haisha (廃車).



## Vehicle Inspection & Insurance

### Vehicle Inspection (Shaken 車検)

Cars must be inspected every two years (once a year for cars over 12 years old). Inspection is quite pricey, and will probably cost ¥100,000 plus any repairs your car might need. For this reason, it is good to confirm how much shaken is left if you wish to purchase a used car. Car inspections are carried out by private companies, so please check the phone book for a certified car inspection provider near you. Motorcycles of 400cc and above also require inspection.

### Accident Insurance

All vehicle owners are required to purchase "Compulsory Liability Insurance" (jidōsha songai baishō sekinin hoken 自動車損害賠償責任保険). This insurance covers you (up to a certain sum) if you kill or injure a third party while driving. If you purchase your vehicle from a dealer, the dealer will take care of this for you.

The insurance will be good until your shaken expires and you have the vehicle inspected. You must keep your insurance certificate in the vehicle at all times. It is advisable to also take out "Optional Liability Insurance" (jidōsha nin-i hoken 自動車任意保険). With only the compulsory insurance, you will almost certainly be faced with paying some damages yourself in the case of a serious accident. Optional insurance not only covers third party injury or death to a higher amount, but also can cover property damage, injury, and death of passengers or drivers of your car. If you want to purchase optional insurance, talk to the dealer where you are buying a car.

### Vehicle Tax

(Jidōsha-zei 自動車税)

Every year in May, all vehicle owners must pay a vehicle tax. You should receive a notice (nōfusho 納付書) in the mail telling you when and where to pay your taxes. The tax must be paid by the due date or you will not be able to drive legally on the roads of Okinawa.

The amount of the tax depends on what type of vehicle you own. The tax for yellow-plate cars, light motorcycles, and mopeds is under ¥10,000. This tax is collected by the city. The tax for white-plate cars and large motorcycles is considerably higher, depending on the engine size, but ranges from ¥30,000-¥100,000. This tax is collected by the prefecture.



# Explore Tedako!

## Cultural Facilities



### Urasoe Art Museum (Urasoe Bijutsu-kan 浦添市美術館)

Address: 1-9-2 Nakama, Urasoe, Okinawa 901- 2103

Telephone: (098) 879-3219

Hours: 9:30 ~ 17:00, Fridays until 19:00  
(admission until 30 minutes to closing)  
(Closed Mondays and holidays)

WEB: <http://museum.city.urasoe.lg.jp/>

The Urasoe Art Museum was built in 1990 to showcase the beautiful lacquerware of the Ryukyu Kingdom and was the first public museum in Okinawa, and the first museum in Japan to specialize in lacquerware. The museum also hosts visiting exhibitions several times throughout the year.



### Tedako Hall

Address: 1-9-3 Nakama, Urasoe, Okinawa 901- 2103

Telephone: (098) 942-4360

Hours: 9:00 ~ 22:00 (Reception until 17:00)  
(Closed every 2nd and 4th Monday of the month)

WEB: <http://www.tedakohall.jp>

Tedako Hall is the new multi-purpose civic auditorium. It is the largest auditorium in Okinawa, and famous for its excellent acoustics. Local, national, and international groups perform at Tedako Hall all year round. Please visit the auditorium's website for upcoming events.



### National Theatre Okinawa

(Kokuritsu Geki-jō Okinawa 国立劇場おきなわ)

Address: 4-14-1 Jitchaku, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2122

Telephone: (098) 871-3311

WEB: <http://www.nt-okinawa.or.jp/en>

The National Theatre in Okinawa was built for the preservation and promotion of traditional Okinawan performing arts, particularly kumi-odori, a refined variety of Ryukyuan dance that has come to be recognized as an "important intangible cultural asset." It hosts theatrical and musical performances throughout the year. Please see the theatre's website for information on upcoming events.



### Urasoe City Public Library

(Urasoe Shiritsu Toshokan 浦添市立図書館)

Address: 2-2-1 Ahacha, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2114

Telephone: (098) 876-4946

Hours: Tuesday ~ Sunday 10:00 ~ 19:00  
(Closed Mondays and holidays)

WEB: <http://library.city.urasoe.lg.jp/>

The Urasoe City Public Library is a free library that lends to anyone who lives or works in Urasoe. Non-residents are welcome to visit and read books in the library without checking them out. The library has a large children's section, in addition to the usual fiction, non-fiction and reference books. There are also CDs and videos as well as manga available for rental.



Explore Tedako!





### Yui no Machi

Address: 4-13-1 Jicchaku, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2122

Hours: 9:00 ~ 22:00

WEB: <http://yuinomachi.jp/>

The Urasoe City Industrial Promotion Center, Yui no Machi (meaning "The City of Friendly Ties"), was completed in 2004, directly across from the National Theatre. Its first floor features an interesting exhibit on the history of Urasoe's economy, with a particular emphasis on interaction with Americans.



### Urasoe City Central Community Center

(Chūōu Kōmin-kan 中央公民館)

Address: 1-1-2 Ahacha, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2114

Telephone: (098) 879-5503

Hours: 9:00 ~ 21:00

The Community Center is used by many local groups for activities such as calligraphy, painting and crafts, Okinawan language, dance, tai-chi, cooking, and music. If you want to cultivate an existing hobby or start a new one, this is a good place to go.



### Urasoe Harmony Center

Address: 2-3-5 Ahacha, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2114

Telephone: (098) 874-5711

Hours: 9:00 ~ 10:00, Sundays 9:00 ~ 17:00

(Closed on holidays)

The Harmony Center is home to many Urasoe City clubs and groups. Its facilities are used by the Urasoe choral group, guitar ensemble, eisa groups, local bands, flower arranging and tea ceremony clubs, and many others, with the goal of promoting equality and equal social participation between men and women. The Harmony Center consists of a small auditorium and stage, semi-soundproofed band practice rooms, meeting rooms, a lounge and kitchenette and even a tea house.



### JICA Okinawa Center

Address: 1143-1 Maeda, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2552

Telephone: (098) 876-6000

WEB: <https://www.jica.go.jp/okinawa/>

The JICA Okinawa Center was established by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to develop human resources in developing countries and to promote international cooperation. The center hosts many trainees from around the world and provides an opportunity for the people of Urasoe to meet wonderful people from other countries. JICA Okinawa Center hosts various lectures and events, including five Friendship Seminars (Fureai Kōza) and the annual JICA Festival each year.



### Urasoe International Relations Association (UIRA)

Address: 2-3-5 Ahacha, Urasoe, Okinawa 901-2114

Telephone: (098) 879-3010

WEB: <https://okinawauira.wixsite.com/uira>

The Urasoe International Relations Association is housed in the Urasoe Harmony Center. UIRA plans many activities and events for all residents of Okinawa to learn about new cultures such as cooking workshops and international exchange workshops.





## Athletics & Outdoor Recreation



### ANA SPORTS PARK Urasoe

Address: 1-13-1 Nakama, Urasoe, Okinawa 〒 901-2103

ANA SPORTS PARK consists of the following facilities:

1. ANA FIELD Urasoe (field and track, soccer, ground golf, gateball, Frisbee)
2. ANA ARENA Urasoe (handball, badminton, basketball, volleyball, martial arts room, training room) \* Clean indoor shoes required.
3. ANA BALL PARK Urasoe (baseball; used by local teams and Tokyo Yakult Swallows for spring training)
4. ANA SPORTS HALL Urasoe (futsal, dodgeball, tennis, baseball training, gateball, ground golf, etc.)
5. ANA DOSUKOI PARK (sumo)
6. ANA MAJUNLAND Urasoe (pools, sauna, training room, etc.) \* Admission is a little cheaper for Urasoe residents.
7. Tennis Courts (Address : 1-37-1 Makiminato, Urasoe; reservations made at ANA ARENA)



### Urasoe Park

This is the giant park encompassing the Urasoe Castle Site and the massive children's playground with the giant slide. The Maeda Escarpment or "Hacksaw Ridge" can also be seen from this park. At the southern end of the Urasoe Park is the Urasoe Castle & Yodore Museum and the South Entrance Management Office, both of which have various exhibitions about the Urasoe Castle Site.



### Beaches

Although most of the west coast of Urasoe is occupied by a military base and therefore inaccessible, there are several beaches near Urasoe. The closest is Tropical Beach, a manmade beach that is by the Okinawa Convention Center in Ginowan, just north of Urasoe. The next closest is Nami-no-Ue Beach in Naha. The east coasts of Nago and Higashi also have lovely spots that are visited by surprisingly few people. To see Okinawa's most pristine and spectacular beaches, check out the outer islands!



Explore Tedakoi



## Annual Events

### January



#### New Year Party

@ Tedako Hall

Mingle with the locals and other foreigners in this intercultural New Year Party. There are performances, mochi pounding, and more!

### February



#### Tokyo Yakult Swallows Camp

@ ANA BALL PARK Urasoe

A chance to see the professional baseball team, the Yakult Swallows, up close in action for practice and pre-season games!



#### Tedako Walk

@ ANA SPORTS PARK Urasoe

A two-day walk with various courses taking the walkers around Urasoe and beyond. One course even passes through Camp Kinser!

### March



#### The Okiten Exhibition

@ ANA ARENA Urasoe

The largest art exhibition to be held in the prefecture featuring various arts, photography, graphic designs, crafts, and more!



#### Lion Dance

@ Jicchaku, Nakanishi, & Uchima

Lion dances performed for Bon Festivals according to the lunar calendar.

### August



#### Nishihara Otsunahiki

@ Umai Street, Nishihara

Giant tug of war event with eisa, etc.

### September



#### Urasoe Youth Festival

@ ANA FIELD Urasoe

Various Youth Associations gather together to hold an energetic festival with eisa, fireworks, and kachashi.



#### Tedako Festival

@ ANA SPORTS PARK Urasoe

The largest festival in Urasoe featuring eisa, lion dance, martial arts, performances, concerts, and fireworks!

### October



#### Gusukuma Otsunahiki

@ Sun Park Street, Gusukuma

Giant tug of war event with eisa, etc.

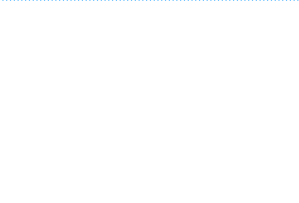
### November



#### Okinawa Global Festa

@ JICA Okinawa Center

An intercultural festival featuring the JICA program participants from all over the world!



#### Iso Otsunahiki

@ Suzuran Park, Iso

Giant tug of war event with eisa, etc.

### December



#### Kyozuka Illumination

@ Kyozuka Yuimaru Center area

Christmas lights decorate the area and extend nearly 400 meters along the street.



Explore Tedako!





## Sightseeing



**Urasoe Castle Site**

This was the royal castle for the Chuzan principality, thought to have been built around the 13th century. It is believed to have been the king's residence for a span of 220 years during the Shunten Eiso, and Satto dynasties. The castle was left abandoned after Sho Hashi (1372 ~ 1439), the first king of the Ryukyu Kingdom, overthrew it in 1405 and moved the capital to Shuri in 1406. Although the site became the residence for Urasoe Aji chieftains during the 16th century, it was burned and destroyed by the invading Satsuma army in 1609.



**Iso Castle Site**

This is said to be the castle where Eiso Yononushi, the father of King Eiso (1229 ~ 1299) resided. King Eiso is also known as the "child of the sun" thanks to an intriguing legend; he is said to have been born after his mother dreamed that the sun was entering her bosom. Inside the castle ruins, one can distinguish ramparts and stone steps. The Kerama Islands are visible to the west, and Makiminato and Yomitan can be seen to the north.



**Urasoe Yodore**

This tomb was built by King Eiso (1229 ~ 1299) in the 13th century. It saw constant repairs thereafter and was rebuilt by King Sho Nei (1564 ~ 1620) in 1620. Both King Eiso and King Sho Nei are entombed here. Although the tomb was destroyed during the Battle of Okinawa, it was restored in 2005. Yodore means "evening calm."



**Wakariji**

Also called "Hanariji," Wakariji is a massive rock that stands a short distance from the Eastern edge of Urasoe Hill. This behemoth of a rock can even be seen from southern and central areas of Okinawa, and it has become a landmark of Urasoe. At the base of Wakariji lies a place of worship which is still frequented by pilgrims today.



**Ahacha Bridge**

This is part of the Nakagamiho Seikaido, a roadway that extends from Shuri to the Yomitan area. The king crossed this bridge to visit Futenma Shrine. It is believed that the section of cobblestone road which includes Ahacha Bridge was built under the command of King Sho Nei in 1597, when the roadway between Urasoe Gusuku and Shuri was constructed. Two stone bridges were built across the kowan River, the north bridge and the south bridge. Although the south bridge was destroyed during the Battle of Okinawa, it was reconstructed in 2006.



**Toyama Stone Road**

This is part of the Futenma Roadway that connected Shuri and the central region of the main island starting from Maeda and continuing to the north. During the era of the Ryukyu Dynasty, the King made a pilgrimage from Shuri to Futenma Shrine via this road. While only a 200 meter portion of the road remains to this day, it was said that this area was known as the "Horse Toppler" as the slope was so steep that horses had difficulty keeping their balance.





### Kamiji

Kamiji is a very large swelling of limestone located off the northernmost point in Minatogawa's Sakibaru. The name "Kamiji" (Turtle Island) is derived from its turtle-like appearance. A coral reef lagoon, also known as Inoh, stretches along Kamiji and is a great place to see fish and play during the day, and then watch the beautiful sunset in the evening.



### Minatogawa Stateside Town

Formally a housing area for the US military, this area was returned to Okinawa. Houses lined along the streets taking on the names of American states have been changed into homes, stores, cafes, etc.



### Urasoe Udon Tomb

It is believed that this tomb was built around the 18th century. This is the largest kamekobaka, or "turtle shell grave" in Urasoe City. It is the tomb of the Urasoe family, whose ancestor was Shoto (Urasoe Cho-o, 1762 ~ 1797), son of King Shoboku (1739 ~ 1794). Several important politicians and intellectuals from the modern Ryukyu era (1609 ~ 1879) were members of the Urasoe family.



### Nakama Spring

Nakama Spring is one of the city's largest wells. It used to be a public well providing water for drinking and other daily uses. It still produces abundant water, and it is revered by the community as a local divinity. Urasoe designated it a cultural asset on March 1, 2002. From olden times, clean water from a wellspring was said to have a special spiritual power that fosters human health. An incense burner is placed next to the trough of the Nakama Spring (well) and it is still visited by many people as a place of worship today. The spring is the site of worship by the village council during seasonal festivals in May, June, and December of the lunar calendar. In the past, before water was piped to each household, when a child was born, spring water was used at the birth, and at New Year, fresh water was placed before the Buddhism altar of the house.



### Urasoe City Guide Book

The Sightseeing Promotion Section has produced a guide book detailing various places and shops in Urasoe City. The guide book is available for free online as a PDF file in Japanese, English, and Traditional Chinese languages.



### Urasoe Navi

The Sightseeing Promotion Section also manages an application listing recent shops and events in Urasoe City in Japanese, English, Traditional Chinese, and Korean.

<https://www.urasoenavi.jp/tokushu/2017082900010/>



## Shopping

The Shintoshin area of Naha is the shopping district closest to Urasoe. Shintoshin has clothing, toy, and sports stores, food shopping, restaurants, playgrounds, a skate park, and a movie theater. To get there from Urasoe, drive south on Pipeline Dōri. Shopping districts inside Urasoe include SAN-A Kyojuka City, SAN-A Machinato City, Urasoe Shopping Center, P's Town, Barclays Court, and SAN-A Parco City.

### Home Improvement & DIY

#### Makeman

Makeman is a large 2-story home improvement and DIY center located on Route 58 not too far from Camp Kinser and the Urasoe Shopping Center. They have everything ranging from furniture, tools, futons and bedding, and other materials required for building things.

### Thrift Stores

#### 2nd Street

Address: 248 Minatogawa, Urasoe (Along Route 58)

#### Manga Sōko

Address: 2689 Gusukuma, Urasoe (Along Route 58)

### Food

The main supermarket chains in Urasoe are Max Value, San-A, Kanehide, Union, and Ryubo. There are also numerous small vegetable stands where you can buy locally grown produce. Several options are available if you are shopping for food on a budget. The aforementioned vegetable stands often sell fruit and vegetables at slightly lower prices, round off prices to give you a deal, or throw something in for free when you buy several other items (this depends on the establishment). Supermarkets discount their wares when the expiration date is near, so keep a look out for the characteristic brightly-colored discount stickers which pop up around the supermarket in the evening.

### Organic and Vegetarian Foods

For those interested in ordering organic, natural foods, there is a delivery service provided by Tengu Natural Foods (located in Saitama Prefecture near Tokyo). Basic shipping charges to Okinawa Prefecture start from ¥ 1,000.

#### Tengu Natural Foods

URL : <https://store.alishan.jp/en>

TEL : (042)982-4811

It is somewhat difficult for a vegan or vegetarian to eat out in Okinawa because of the preponderance of pork and fish products used in bento, prepared foods, and restaurant cooking. Fried and battered things contain egg, and almost all bread (with the exception of baguettes) contains dairy. Do the best you can, and don't be discouraged. If you are eating at a restaurant, or in someone's home, make sure to let your host know as soon as possible what you can and cannot eat. If you have an actual food allergy, simply say " \_\_\_\_\_ wa arerugi desu" (I'm allergic to \_\_\_\_\_).

Here are a couple of useful phrases:

"Oniku ga haitte imasu ka?" (Is there any meat in this?)

" \_\_\_\_\_-nuki ni shite kudasai" (Please make it without \_\_\_\_\_.)







