

JET LEAVERS' GUIDEBOOK

Important Information for
All Leaving JETs

Fukushima International Affairs Division
福島県生活環境部国際課

Cover photo: Lake Inawashiro and Mt. Bandai
<https://gokujo-aizu.com/>

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1. PREPARING TO LEAVE

Please refer to Chapter 7: Leaving the JET Programme in the 2024 General Information Handbook (GIH) for more detailed information about leaving.

<http://jetprogramme.org/en/qih/>

The After JET Guide contains useful information about leaving the JET Programme as well.

<http://jetprogramme.org/en/ajg/>

Things to do before leaving

2~3 months before leaving:

- Start going through your apartment and decide what you want to take back, what are the things you want to sell, what to leave for your successor, and what you will discard.
- Make a budget for your final months and start sending money home in a planned manner.
 - Remember that your final pay-check is calculated on a daily rate basis and may be less than the amount you normally receive. You should prepare enough money for moving.
- If you are planning to send items home, make arrangements now. For items to be sent by sea, such as books, start the process as soon as possible as they take time to arrive.
- Please inform your landlord at least one month in advance of the day you will be leaving.
- Start organizing bills and other finances that you will be entrusting to someone after you leave.
- If you are applying for an extension visa, start processing the paperwork you will need. Apply for the extension visa at least 2 weeks in advance of your visa expiration.

1 month before leaving:

- Organize to have your mail forwarded at the post office.
 - ◇ If you will be staying in Japan after JET, all your mail can be forwarded to your new address for up to one year if you complete a change of address form at the post office. If you will not be staying in Japan, have your mail forwarded to the address of a friend or colleague.
- Obtain copies of all the forms you will need if you plan on claiming the pension refund, as well as filing in forms for someone to be your tax representative to claim back tax subtracted from the refund.
- Inform the utility companies of your departure date and arrange payment.
- Submit the Moving Out Notification (転出届, tenshutsu todoke)
 - ◇ Please note that once you have submitted this you will become unable to apply for some forms required for other procedures (including selling your car), so make sure to do this last.
- Settle any outstanding Inhabitants Tax with your municipality prior to leaving.
 - ◇ JETs who are liable for income taxes are also liable to pay Local Inhabitants Tax (住民税, jumin-zei).

- Thoroughly clean your apartment
 - ◇ It is important to clean up your apartment after moving out your belongings. If the apartment is left untidy or has severe damages, deposit money might not be returned, and the landlords may even charge extra for cleaning costs. (The responsibility for cleaning the apartment is with you, not with your Contracting Organization (CO).)
 - ◇ Also, note that it may require several weeks to dispose of larger items.
- Hand in your Residence card to immigration authorities when you leave Japan, or update your details at your local government office if you are staying in Japan.

Welcome Letter for Your Successor

Please take the time to create an informative welcome letter for your successor. Although you will be busy with packing and different errands, the following list of things to leave for them would be extremely useful to help them settle in. Please check out p. 207 of the 2021 GIH to find the form to help you introduce Fukushima to your new successor.

The following is a list of information you should provide to your successor:

- ◇ Self-Introduction
- ◇ Pre-Departure advice
- ◇ About your city, town or village
- ◇ About your house or apartment
- ◇ About your office or base school
- ◇ About your job (ALT)
- ◇ About your job (CIR)

Return Airfare

JET participants are eligible to receive a travel allowance back to their home countries as long as they meet the three conditions below:

1. The participant has completed their term of appointment.
2. Does not enter into a subsequent term of appointment/employment with their CO or a contract with a third party in Japan within one month of completing their term of contract.
3. Leaves Japan to return to their home country within 30 days of the end of their appointment.
 - ◇ The CO will bear the cost of your travelling from an international airport in Japan to the international airport in your home country designated at the time of entering Japan, via the most reasonable route and means of travel as determined by the travel expense regulations of the CO.
 - ◇ This includes domestic travel to the airport as well as the cost of the flight.
 - ◇ The CO may select the type of ticket to be provided and may also select whether to provide an actual ticket or the equivalent in a sum of money.

Each CO differs in their policies so please talk to your supervisor. If they are providing you with cash, keep in mind that you may have to make the travel arrangements on your own. You may have to pay with your own money, and be reimbursed later. Alternatively, they may organize everything themselves for a departure date that you have selected. Do not purchase any tickets until you have your CO's approval.

Disposal of Personal Belongings

Before deciding to get rid of something please make sure to confirm who owns the item. There may be items that have been lent out by your CO including appliances (fridge, television, washing machine, etc.) or furniture (kotatsu, cabinets, etc.). Before selling/disposing everything, double check with your supervisor as to who owns what. You should not sell items that belong to your CO!

You have 5 options:

1. Sell it
 - ✧ To you successor
 - ✧ To second-hand stores (Book-Off/2nd Street)
2. Give it away
3. Donate it
4. Take it home with you
5. Throw it away

Selling Your Car

Selling your car requires more than just an agreement between you and the purchaser. You will have to officially transfer the ownership, which requires getting hold of the items below. Please note that the forms may vary by municipality, so check if you must follow any additional local regulations. Make sure to complete the transfer within three months. Note that if the transfer of ownership is not completed, the tax will be charged to the previous owner. An application fee of around 500 Yen will be required.

Documents needed for selling your car:

Current Owner:

- Motor Vehicle Inspection Certificate (Car Registration) – (車検証, shaken shō)
- Inkan (personal seal)
- Certificate of inkan impression (less than 3 months old)* – (印鑑証明書, Inkan shōmei shō)
- Certification of transfer in ownership of car (with the owner's seal pressed)

Buyer:

- Inkan (personal seal)
- Certificate of inkan impression (less than 3 months old)
- Proof of address (e.g. residence card, certificate of residence)

- Certificate that proves you have a parking space (less than 1 month old) – (車庫証明, shakō shōmei)

The certificate of transfer in ownership (譲渡証明書, joto shomei-sho) can be found online at: <https://annai-center.com/pdf/jotosyomei.pdf>

Please note that if you submit your Moving Out Notification (転出届, tenshutsu-todoke), you will be unable to obtain the required forms above, and will have difficulty completing the transfer in ownership.

Certificate of Parking Space (車庫証明, shako shōmei) ※Must be done by buyer

You should apply for a Certificate of Parking Space at the police station that has jurisdiction over the area where the parking space is. Depending on the city, town or village, a Certificate of Parking Space is not required for title transfers of yellow plate kei-cars.

Documents needed for Certificate of Parking Space Application:

- Application form
- Map detailing the layout/location of the parking space
- Document showing that you have the owner's consent to use the parking space
- Cost: for white plate cars 2,750 yen; for yellow plate cars 550 yen

Registering your personal seal (印鑑証明書, inkan shomei sho)

Bring your seal and your Residence Card to your local public office, and registration can be completed the same day. It will cost you around 300 yen (depending on municipality).

*If your name on the seal is not in the same characters as your Residence Card (i.e. it is in katakana not romaji), you will have to register your name as shown on the seal on your Registration Card record as well.

Cancelling your voluntary insurance

If you have paid for a year's worth of insurance, you will not receive a refund even if you cancel your policy mid-term. However, if you are paying by the month, you will not be charged after you cancel your policy. For detailed information, contact your insurance agency.

Q&A

1. I lost my Motor Vehicle Inspection Certificate (Car Registration), what should I do?
As a Motor Vehicle Inspection Certificate is necessary for transferring ownership, you will need to apply to have it re-issued. In order to do so you will need the following items:

- Your number plate number (written down)
- Inkan
- Identification (Driver's License, Passport, Residence Card)
- Application fee (roughly 300 Yen)

2. How long will the transfer of ownership take?

As long as you have all the required documents, registration should finish on the same day you apply.

3. Can I apply by mail?

Unfortunately, the law stipulates that the transfer of ownership must be requested directly by the buyer.

Contact Information

Tohoku Transportation Bureau – Fukushima Transportation Branch Office

(Fukushima/Koriyama/Shirakawa/Aizu Number Plates)

960-8165, Fukushima-shi, Yoshikura-Aza-Yoshida 54

TEL: 024-546-0345

FAX: 024-545-1561

<http://www.tb.mlit.go.jp/tohoku/fs/fs-index.htm> (In Japanese)

Areas governed by this office:

Fukushima City, Aizu Wakamatsu City, Koriyama City, Shirakawa City, Minami Soma City, Tamura City, Date City, Sukagawa City, Kitakata City, Soma City, Nihonmatsu City, Date Area, Adachi Area, Iwase Area, Minami Aizu Area, Yama Area, Kawanuma Area, Oonuma Area, Nishi-Shirakawa Area, Tamura Area(Miharu Town), Soma Area

Tohoku Transportation Bureau – Iwaki Transportation Branch Office

(Iwaki Number Plates)

973-8403, Iwaki City, Uchigou Tsudzura Machi, Funaba 1-135

TEL: 050-5540-2016

FAX: 0246-27-2815

Areas governed by this office:

Iwaki City, Higashi-Shirakawa Area, Ishikawa Area, Futaba Area, Tamura Area (Ono Town)

Disposing Your Car

It is not permitted to leave a vehicle at an airport or on the side of the road.

Your car is registered and can be identified as yours even without the license plates. Your home contact information is on record at the city office and you will receive a bill for it eventually. You will be liable not only for vehicle taxes but also for any accidents involving the vehicle until you dispose of your car properly.

Vehicle scrappage and disposal

You can choose to take care of the paperwork yourself, but this and the physical disposal is usually taken care of by a vehicle sales or disposal company. Car sales or disposal companies can assist you with the paperwork if you supply them with the necessary documents:

- Motor Vehicle Inspection Certificate (Car Registration) – (車検証, shaken shō)
- Front & Back License Plates (ナンバープレート, nambā purēto)
- Certificate of Disposal (自動車廃車証明, jidōsha haisha shōmei)
 - ◇ You can obtain this from the disposal company, or from the Fukushima Transportation Branch Office if you dispose of the car yourself.
- Letter of Attorney (委任状, i-ninjō)
 - ◇ Only if you are authorizing the disposal company to take care of your paperwork.
- Proof of Automobile Tax Payment (自動車税納付証明書, jidōsha-zei nōfu shōmeisho)
 - ◇ It depends if the office or company is processing the paperwork.
- Your seal and registration of your seal*.

*The registration must be less than 3 months old. Bring your personal seal and Residence Card to your local public office and registration can be completed on the same day.

Cancelling Services/Accounts and Paying Bills

The electric, gas and water services

On the day you move out, your electricity, gas and water services will be suspended on the same day and any outstanding bills will be paid. Contact the electricity, gas and water company in advance to confirm that they will read the meter on the last day. You can ask the person in charge to come and pay in cash, but it is not compulsory to be present.

If the company's staff are not available, an invoice will be issued and sent to a domestic address at a later date. It will not be sent to a foreign address. If an invoice is issued, arrange for a friend or colleague to pay it before you leave the country.

Your internet service

This can be disconnected on a requested date, but you will not be billed at that time. The monthly charges must be paid at your local service provider or from your bank account at a later date (be aware that internet charges are deducted the following month). If you are unable to pay beforehand and will be closing your bank account before you leave, apply to have a representative pay for you. If you are staying in Japan it is often possible to have your internet account transferred to your new home.

Your mobile phone service

The mobile phone can be cancelled by going to the contract company's dealer before the termination date. To cancel the mobile phone, the person must go to the dealer in person (the cancellation procedure cannot be done over the phone). Bring your residence card, certificate

of residence, passport, personal seal (inkan), and your mobile phone with you when doing so.

Japanese credit cards

If you have acquired a Japanese credit card while in Japan, you can still use it overseas but as you will be billed in yen, it is better to cancel the card before you return back home. Contact your credit card company after you have decided when you will be returning home, and pay any remaining bills and cancel your card.

Closing your Bank Account (口座解約, kōza kaiyaku)

If you no longer plan to use your bank account, bring your bank book, bank card and inkan to your branch to close the account. It is not possible to close your own bank account from abroad. If you close your account at a branch other than the one where you opened your account, you may be subject to a cancellation fee. If you need to close your account before your final paycheque or before paying for public utilities and other charges, make sure that adequate measures are taken for payments to be handled in cash.

Forwarding Your Mail

Unfortunately the Japan Post service is unable to forward mail overseas. You can ask someone at your school, BOE, office or a friend who is staying in Japan if you can use their address as your forwarding address.

If you are staying in Japan after JET, it is convenient to arrange to have your mail forwarded to your new address. You can do this at your local post office or online. If you apply in person at a post office, bring your new address details, ID card and personal seal (inkan).

2. SENDING THINGS BACK HOME

Sending Money

There are a number of different companies offering services for sending money back home including the Japan Post Office, GoRemit and TransferWise. Each have different conditions for use and differing fees. Be sure to check all your options before deciding on a method of sending money back home. Of the three mentioned above, TransferWise is the fastest (usually arriving in 1-2 days, and is also one of the cheapest (depending on the country sent to). They also have a useful app and all of their information is in English.

Japan Post Bank International Remittance service

https://www.jp-bank.japanpost.jp/en/djp/en_djp_index.html

Shinsei Bank GoRemit

<https://www.shinseibank.com/english/goremit/>

TransferWise

<https://transferwise.com/>

Sending Belongings Overseas

There are limits to baggage allowance when you fly home and going over the limit can be costly. The most important thing is to plan early. You will have to go through everything to decide what you'd like to keep and what you really don't need in your next place of residence. Here are the options for sending things back to your home country safe and sound.

Sending belongings via Japan Post

- Surface mail (船便, senbin): Sent by surface. Slowest (1-3 months depending on destination), but the rates are reasonable.
- Economy Air (SAL, エコノミ航空, ekonomi kōkū): Faster than surface and cheaper than air, as the service is handled as a shipping service within Japan and the destination country, and transported by air between the two countries. Available to a limited number of countries and regions.
- Airmail (航空便, kōkūbin): Transport by air, which is more expensive but takes 3-6 days to arrive.
- EMS (国際スピード郵便, kokusai speed yūbin): Treated as the highest priority international mail and arrives in 2-4 days.

The post office may want to inspect the contents of your items. To avoid having to unwrap your parcels at the post office, take the box in unsealed, allow for inspection, and then wrap it up there. For all items, you will need to fill out an "international parcel label" which is a combination

of invoice, customs declaration and address labels.

It might be a good idea to label things "Used Items for Personal Use" as customs may otherwise charge you for commercial shipping costs. Breakable things can be safely shipped in a sturdy chest. Clearly label "fragile" in English and "こわれもの" (kaware mono) in Japanese on all sides.

For more information on international mail (including how to guides and a price calculator), please visit the Japan Post website below (English):

http://www.post.japanpost.jp/int/index_en.html

Shipping Overseas

Using a shipping company to get your belonging back home is a great idea if you have a large volume of things to send. It is generally well handled and ideal for sending home those odd-sized items, as long as it fits within the size restrictions. Some companies charge a minimum fee for shipping, so check on this ahead of time.

Advance Notice

The shipping companies like to have at least one month's advance notice (preferably 2-3 months' notice), as calculations on weight and shipping schedules need to be arranged. Start planning early so you don't spend a fortune sending everything home by regular mail.

Insurance Policies

When shipping items, ask about the insurance policies. Insurance policies can be taken out based on the value of your items and are normally charged at 1.5% of the total value of the contents. Discuss the details thoroughly with the company. It is best to keep a list of what was packed and what condition they were in at the time of packing. This is useful later if you need to claim insurance payments.

Customs Restrictions

Remember that each country has its own customs requirements as well as restrictions on items that can be brought into the country. As customs fees vary from country to country, you will need to inquire about the restrictions ahead of time.

Shipping Companies

Nippon Express

www.nipponexpress.com/moving/index.html

Japan Luggage Express

Tel: (toll free) 0120-48-0081 (English speakers available)

www.jluggage.com

Sending Your Luggage to the Airport

You can arrange to have your luggage picked up from your home and delivered to the airport luggage holding counter. Make sure your luggage is sent by the "delivery deadline," 2 days before your departure (this may be 3 days in advance in certain places)

Yamato Transport CO., LTD. (Kuroneko)

www.kuronekoyamato.co.jp/ytc/en/send/services/airport/

3. TAXES AND PENSION REFUND

Inhabitants Tax (IT)

Inhabitants Tax (IT) is a general term referring to Municipal Residence Tax and Prefectural Residence Tax which is levied on a municipal level.

Who has to pay Inhabitants tax (IT)?

Anyone who started residing in a municipality in Japan on 1 January and whose earnings exceed a municipality decided amount. For example: A JET residing in a municipality on 1 January 2022 will start paying their IT for that year from June 2021. The amount they will have to pay will be calculated based on their income from the previous year (1 January to 31 December 2021).

What is the taxable period for the Inhabitants Tax?

Inhabitants Tax is calculated based on your income from the previous year (1 January to 31 December) and then is levied from June of the current year. The tax can be payed monthly, quarterly or in one go. Please consult with your CO about how you pay your IT.

Tax exemptions from tax treaties

By law JET participants are required to pay taxes in Japan, but some countries have tax treaties with Japan to avoid their citizens from being taxed twice on the same income. People from those countries can apply to their national tax office for an exemption on paying income and inhabitants taxes in Japan. For more details please contact your CO. Please note that the above tax exemptions do not apply to the following: all CIRs, SEAs, 3rd year+ ALTs, and 4th year+ ALTs from China.

Example of how Inhabitants tax is levied

Example for if you are a 3rd year JET planning to go home in 2021 and your first year of employment was from August 2018 to July 2019.

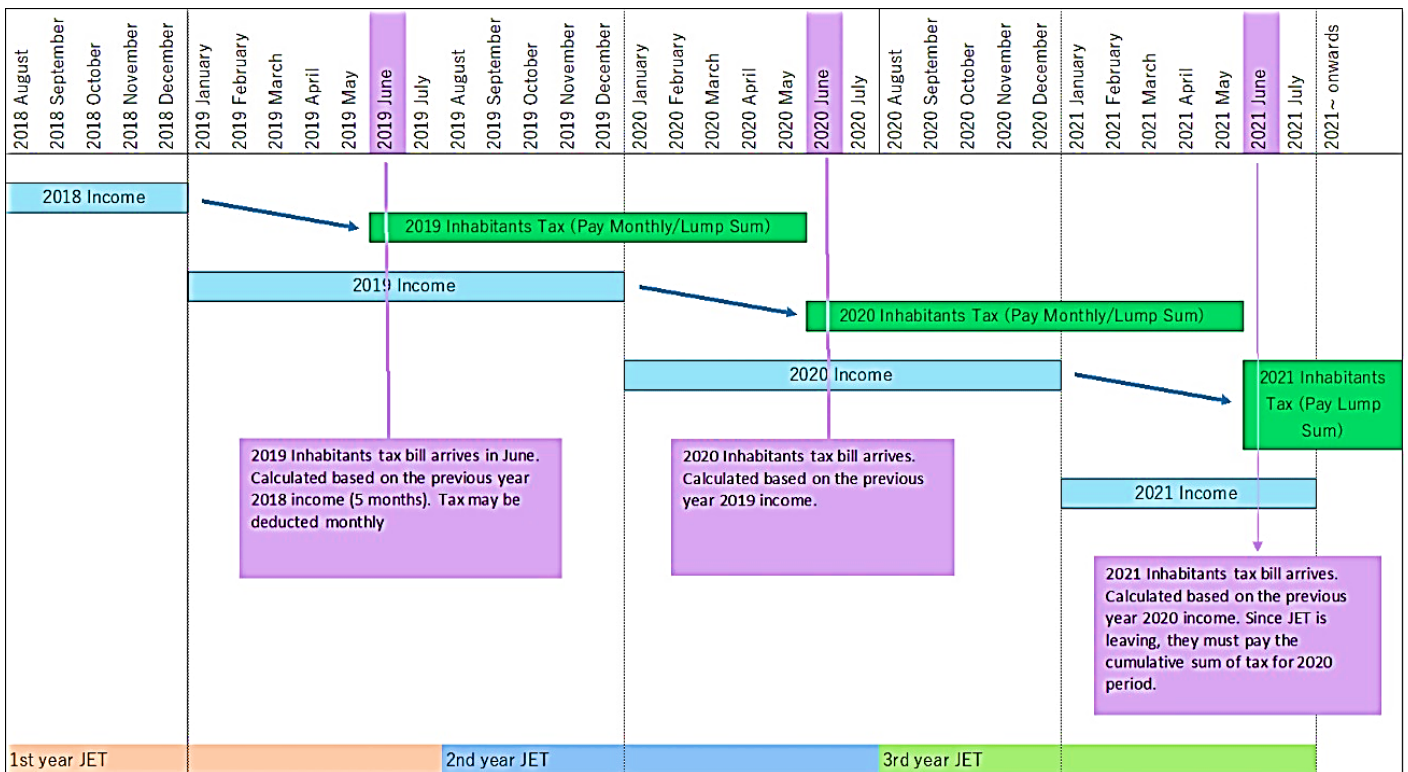
- ✧ First year of employment (August 2018 to July 2019)
As you will be residing in Japan on 1 January 2019 onwards, you are required to pay inhabitants tax for 2019 which will be calculated based on your income earned the previous year (August 2018 to December 2018 (5 months' worth)). You will start paying this tax from June 2019.

- ✧ Second year of employment (August 2019 to July 2020)
As you will be residing in Japan on 1 January 2020, you are required to pay inhabitants tax for 2020 which will be calculated based on your income earned the previous year (January 2019 to December 2019 (12 months' worth)). You will start paying this tax from

June 2020.

❖ Third year of employment (August 2020 to July 2021)

As you will be residing in Japan on 1 January 2021, you are required to pay inhabitants tax for 2021 which will be calculated based on your income earned the previous year (January 2020 to December 2020 (12 months' worth)). You will start paying this tax from June 2021 (if you are going home in July or a few months later, you will likely have to pay 12 months' worth of taxes in one go, so please confirm with your supervisor).



Pension Refund (Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment)

All participants on the JET Programme pay into the Japanese pension system. Payment into this system is mandatory for all people working in Japan, and is deducted from your monthly salary. A foreign resident who has been paying Pension Insurance, and who gives up residence in Japan, is able to apply for a Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment. In order to be eligible, you must meet all of the following conditions:

- Apply within two years of leaving Japan
- Do not possess Japanese citizenship
- Have paid Employee's Pension Insurance premiums for six months or more
- Do not have a place of residence in Japan (You must submit a Moving Out Notification (転出届, tenshutsu-todoke,) before leaving Japan.)
- Never qualified for pension benefits (including Disability Allowance.)

Filing for the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment and the tax refund associated with it is a 7-step process, as outlined below:

1. Before leaving: Get the necessary forms from the Japan Pension Service Office or the National Pension Section of your city hall, and designate a tax agent. (You can also find the forms online at Japan Pension Service website.)
2. After leaving Japan, mail necessary forms to the Japan Pension Service
3. Receive Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment into overseas bank account
4. Mail notice of refund to tax agent in Japan within 2 years
5. Tax agent files for refund of tax on Lump-sum Withdrawal
6. Tax agent receives tax refund in Japanese account
7. Tax agent transfers the money to you

Amount Refunded

The Japan Pension Service will calculate your pension refund taking into account how long you have paid into the system and by using specially calculated rates. Unfortunately, the pension refund is always calculated in 6 month intervals. Even if you have paid 11 months into the pension, the amount refunded will be calculated on the 6 month rate. Please check the Japan Pension Service website or the GIH for more information.

Filing for Lump Sum Withdrawal (2023 GIH p. 176-183)

1: Before leaving Japan, obtain the form "Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment Arbitration Bill" (脱退一時金請求書, dattai ichijikin seikyu-sho) from the Japan Pension Service Office or the National Pension Section of the municipal office nearest you, or download the form here:

<https://www.nenkin.go.jp/international/japanese-system/withdrawalpayment/payment.html>

2: Fill in all necessary information (you will need to know the information included in your blue Pension Book) and mail the completed forms and accompanying documents to the Japan

Pension Service after leaving Japan.

You need to attach the following items to your claim form:

- ◇ A copy of your passport (the page(s) showing your status of residence and the date of your final departure from Japan, as well as the page(s) showing your name, date of birth, nationality, and signature).
- ◇ If your claim form is not stamped with a certified bank stamp, a document (a copy of your bank statement, bank passbook, etc.) which verifies your bank's name, branch office name, branch address, bank account number, and the full name of the account holder (must be your name) must be attached.
- ◇ Your Pension Book (The book will be returned to you at a later date.) If you do not have your Pension Book, be sure to fill in all the required information in the appropriate section of the claim form.

3: Please send the claim form, along with the accompanying documents to:

Japan Pension Service

3 – 5 – 24 Takaido-nishi

Suginami-ku, Tokyo 168 – 8505

JAPAN

If granted, the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment will be deposited directly into your bank account overseas. The amount of the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment remitted to the account will be calculated at the currency exchange rate on the date of transaction.

Note: Beginning April 1st 2021, the Lump-Sum Withdrawal limit was extended from 3 years to 5 years.

Also, for JETs from countries with Social Security Agreements in Japan who have at least 4 years, it is possible to have your full pension contribution rolled over into your home country's pension scheme instead. For details and related forms regarding Pension Rollover, refer to the Japan Pension Service website under International Social Security Agreements.

Procedure to apply for the Tax Refund

1. Designate a Tax Agent (person to file your tax paperwork)

Before leaving Japan, obtain a copy of the document called "Notification of Tax Agent" (納税管理人の届出書 (外国人用) nouzeikanrinin no todokedesho (gaikokujin you)) from any tax office branch. Submit the form to the tax office with jurisdiction over the address where you last lived before departure from Japan, to designate your tax agent. When designating a tax agent, find someone you trust (e.g. a colleague or friend) with financial matters and whom you can easily correspond with once you return to your home country. A tax agent must be a resident of Japan, but does not have to be Japanese. If you leave Japan without filing the "Notification of Tax Agent" you can file it when making your claim for a tax refund. Keep in mind that asking someone to be your tax agent places a burden on them and nobody, including anyone at your CO, is obligated to do so.

2. File for and receive the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment

After leaving the country, file for the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment. Once you have received the payment from the Japan Pension Office, make a copy for your records and then send the original copy of the “Notice on Payment of the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment (Entitlement)” (脱退一時金支給決定通知書, dattai ichijikin shikyu kettei tsuchisho) to your tax agent, which is sent to you with remittance of the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment.

3. Tax agent files for the tax refund

Have your tax agent go to the same tax office as in Step 1 above and file an Income Tax Return (確定申告書, kakutei shinkokusho) on your behalf. The refund will be deposited into the bank account your tax agent designates in Japan. Once received, have your tax agent transfer the refunded amount to your own bank account. You may file for the tax refund as soon as you receive your Notice on Payment of the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment. You do not need to wait until January 1 of the following year in order to file for this refund, as you would with other tax refunds.

Some Important Things to Keep in Mind:

- Tax refund applications must be made within 5 years of leaving Japan.
- All JET participants, whether they pay Japanese taxes or not, will be subject to the 20% taxation on their Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment.
- The refund can take up to 3 – 6 months to process (provided the application was in order).

Summary of Procedures

	Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment	Tax refund on the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment	
	JET participant	JET participant	Tax Representative
Before leaving Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Obtain Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment application form 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Specify a tax representative using the Notification of Tax Agent Form 	
After leaving Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Send application to Japan Pension Service (within 2 years after leaving Japan) ● Receive Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment in your home country's bank account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Send original copy of the Notice of the Lump-sum Withdrawal Payment (Entitlement) to tax representative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Apply for the tax refund at tax office in Japan ● Receive tax refund in the Japanese account ● Send tax refund to JET participant overseas

4. INSURANCE AND STATUS OF RESIDENCE

Employees' Health Insurance

Your Employees' Health Insurance coverage ends on the last day of your contract. Your Employees' Health Insurance card must be returned to your CO on your last day at work. If you will be staying in Japan as a resident, you will need to re-enroll in Employees' Health Insurance either through your next employer or at the municipal office.

JET Accident Insurance

Your JET Accident Insurance covers you until the day you return to your home country or August 31st, whichever comes first. Refer to the JET Programme Accident Insurance Policy Guide online for more details.

Status of Residence (VISA)

It is your responsibility to organize changes to your Status of Residence.

- If you are planning on staying in Japan, you must update your Residence Card to show your current visa, employment and address within 14 days of any changes.
- If you try to leave the country after your status of residence has expired, you will be classified as an illegal alien and deported. This means that you will be detained, questioned, deported at your own expense, and possibly not allowed to re-enter Japan.
- If you stay in Japan for over one month from the day your contract ends, your CO does not have to pay for your flight home.

I) Status of Residence Is Due to Expire

A) If your Status of Residence expires before your contract ends:

Until 3 months before your Visa expires, you can apply for an Extension of Period of Stay (在留期間更新, zairyū kikan kōshin). This generally extends the visa from 6 months to one year.

B) If your Status of Residence expires on the same day that your contract ends:

Before your Status of Residence expires, you must apply to change to a Temporary Visitor Status (短期滞在, tanki taizai) beginning from the day after your current Status of Residence expires. See below for information on Temporary Visitor status.

C) If your Status of Residence expires after your contract ends but before you leave Japan:

Before your Status of Residence expires, you must apply to change to a Temporary Visitor Status beginning from the day after your current Status of Residence expires. See below for information on Temporary Visitor status.

II) Status of Residence Is Not Due to Expire

A) *Your Status of Residence continues after your contract expires and you stay in Japan:*

If your Status of Residence is not set to expire when you finish JET (i.e. you have a 3-year visa but only did 1 or 2 years of JET), you need to apply to change your Status of Residence to Temporary Visitor before it expires.

* Your Status of Residence may be revoked in the case where a foreign resident staying in Japan has failed to continue to engage in the primary activity corresponding to the status for three months or more.

B) *Your Status of Residence continues after your contract expires and you stay in Japan to work:*

Working under your current Status of Residence is illegal as it is outside of the contract for which the Status of Residence was granted. If your new contract is in the same field of your current Status of Residence, but you have a different employer, you must apply for a change of Status of Residence (在留資格変更, zairyū shikaku henkō).

Applying for a Temporary Visitor Status (短期滞在, tanki taizai)

If your current Status of Residence is set to expire but you want to stay in Japan for a bit longer, and if your CO gives you permission, then you can apply to change to a Temporary Visitor Status. Applications must be made before your current Status of Residence expires. The Temporary Visitor status can be valid for 15, 30, or 90 days. You must apply for the Temporary Visitor status even if you will only be using one of the 90 days. If you do not, you may be subject to a fine or deportation under Japanese immigration laws.

Q & A

1. My Status of Residence is valid for two more years after my contract ends in July. I wish to receive the return airfare from my Contracting Organization, and then return to Japan to find employment. What happens to my Status of Residence?

- To receive the return airfare to your home country, you must leave the country within one month of your contract expiring. You will not receive monetary compensation for the flight home if another company in Japan employs you within one month of your contract expiring. If you do find employment at a company in Japan after returning home you will need to apply for a new VISA through the Japanese embassy in your country.

Immigration Services Agency of Japan

Sendai Regional Immigration Bureau
Sendai Second Legal Affairs Joint Government Bldg.,
1-3-20 Gorin, Miyagino-ku, Sendai City, Miyagi Pref.
TEL: 022-256-6076

Koriyama Branch
Koriyama Second Legal Affairs Joint Government Bldg.,
31-26 Kibougaoka, Koriyama City, Fukushima Pref.
TEL: 024-962-7221

5. EMPLOYMENT AFTER JET

Reference Letters (推薦書, suisensho)

Your supervisor or one of your English teachers are ideal candidates to write a reference letter for you.

Indicate the main purpose of the reference letter

Are you applying to graduate school? What program? What kind of a job are you looking for? Will you continue to teach English? It's important to give whoever is writing your letter as much information as possible on the focus.

Provide the person writing your letter with the proper format

Provide the reference letter format of the home country to the writer of the reference letter.

Offer your assistance in any way possible

Maybe they'd like you to check the spelling or grammar. They are doing you a favour so make their task as easy as possible.

Specify the points you want to highlight

If there are any activities, achievements, etc. that you would particularly like to see written about, inform the writer

Examples:

- Day-to-day school and office duties – elementary/nursery school visits, exam writing
- Extracurricular Activities
- Study groups/English classes/ speech contest coaching
- Articles about you in local papers
- Public speaking events
- Participation in festivals and events
- School visits
- Proofreading or translating/interpreting
- Projects you have helped with or executed
- Your Japanese skills (proficiency exams)
- Participation in JET conferences as a speaker/moderator
- Your relationships with your co-workers and/or students

Working in Japan

Some JETs stay in Japan after the end of their contract. There are many work possibilities in Japan other than teaching. Possible industries include international business development, finance, legal, marketing, journalism, etc. Here are a few things to consider if you want to work

in Japan.

First off, you need to prepare a Japanese style resume. It goes without saying that you should have a Western style CV done up as well. Business cards are another important item. Networking is also an important way to build business relationships and find possible future jobs.

If you are thinking about staying in Japan, here is some information on jobs for foreigners.

Writing a Japanese Resume: <http://resume.meieki.com> (Japanese)

Gaijinpot Jobs: <https://jobs.gaijinpot.com/>

JET Job Guide Website (unofficial): <http://jetwit.com/wordpress/>

Don't forget! To work in Japan, a foreigner definitely needs the following:

1. A passport
2. Residence Card
3. A contract, stating duties, rate of pay and period of employment
4. Tax payment certificate
5. Letter of guarantee
6. Statement from employer saying why you are needed
7. An appropriate Status of Residence

*If your would-be employer won't provide you with numbers 3 to 6, then it is recommended you look elsewhere for a job.

Notification of Employment (辞令, jirei)

For proof of employment, make sure you have a *jirei* for each year of employment before you leave. You should have received a new *jirei* each time you recontracted. It states the beginning and ending date of that year's contract.

Certificate of Participation (在職証明書, zaishoku shōmeisho)

You might also consider asking your CO for a Certificate of Participation. Samples of these can be found in the CO Manual (although they are listed as a 'certificate of employment, 'these are different from your *jirei*.) A certificate of participation is useful, as you can request multiple copies on official letterhead to use in the future. In addition, it will state your participation on the JET Programme, whereas the *jirei* will only state your employment at your CO.

6. LIFE AFTER JET

Reverse Culture Shock

Reverse Culture Shock is the term used for the difficulties encountered after returning home from an extended time abroad. This adjustment period is similar to regular culture shock, but may be long and more severe. We do not expect to have to adapt to our home country, overlooking that both ourselves and our home country have changed during our stay abroad. Expect things to seem foreign. Your attitude and opinions may have changed while in Japan, so be aware that the same may not have happened to those at home.

Since most people are inclined to believe Reverse Culture Shock is something that happens to other people, the best way to get an idea of how it may affect you is to read about the experiences of others. Remember that you have a support network here in Japan. Talk to your friends about what you are going through. The chances are they are thinking similar things. You can always contact your ASL or the PA, if you want to talk over anything, or you can contact the AJET Peer Support Group.

Coping Strategies

Before you leave Japan

- Explore how you feel about leaving Japan. Are you optimistic or pessimistic about returning?
- Anticipate that you, your family and friends have changed.
- Think about how your time in Japan will make life in your home country different from before.
- Try to make long-term goals to help motivate you in your work and enhance your relationships.
- Keep up on what is happening in your home country.

When you return home

- Keep in touch with friends you made in Japan.
- Explore the area around your next place of residence, just like you did when you were in the JET Programme.
- Maintain similar hobbies and activities you had in Japan.
- Make new personal and work goals.

There is a positive side to keep in mind; you become aware of what you have learned about foreign cultures, your own culture and yourself. This information should help you re-adjust, so that your home country can once again feel like "home".

JET Alumni Association

JETAA consists of former JET Programme participants and exists as a forum for them to share activities and experiences with other alumni JETs internationally. The purpose of JETAA is to provide support for people after leaving the JET Programme and to help them maintain contact with Japan, the JET Programme and other JET participants.

Many JETAA chapters organize an employment referral service, career fairs and maintain contact with the Japanese business community and other business organizations. They also organize social events, often in conjunction with the local Embassy/Consulate-General of Japan and CLAIR offices overseas. JETAA provides a supportive atmosphere for former JETs readjusting to life (reverse culture shock) in their home countries and an opportunity for networking with JET Alumni. Lastly, they assist the local Embassy or Consulate-General of Japan with the recruitment, selection process and pre-departure orientations of new JET participants.

Joining the JETAA

All JET participants returning to their home countries are encouraged to join JETAA. In the summer, CLAIR will send out membership forms to all returning JETs. Please take the time to fill out these forms and return them to CLAIR.

Former JET participants will then be eligible to receive the official CLAIR JETAA newsletter, *JET Streams*, published once a year. Those interested in being a part of JETAA activities at home should also contact their local Alumni Association chapter. Each JETAA chapter, together with the Japanese Consulate, often hosts a “Welcome Back Reception” for returning JETs. The reception provides a great opportunity for former JETs to meet people and make contacts after coming home.

Feel free to contact us at
kokusai@pref.fukushima.lg.jp
If you have any questions. 😊