

PLAZA NEWSLETTER (May 2025)

We have had a series of cold days in April. Thanks to that, we were able to enjoy the cherry blossom season a little longer than usual. However, this year, the cherry blossom viewing must have been done in the cold....

Spring has passed the halfway point, and the days have become warm and fluffy with spring weather, but there are still days when the lowest temperatures make you shiver, so please be careful of temperature extremes.

Now then, allow us to partially introduce the consultation details found in our plaza. We received 76 consultations in March and have shared below examples of questions and answers. Some content has been edited for privacy concerns.

Q : I would like to apply for municipal housing.

A : Municipal housing has regular openings (around May, September, and January) and year-round openings, and this time of year is for year-round openings.

You can choose a property at the Municipal Housing Management Center on the 9th floor of the main building of Kumamoto City Hall and apply for it if it is available. If you like, you can even borrow a key and see the apartment for yourself. You can also check out the properties on their website.



Q : I currently live in a municipal housing. Can I move to another municipal housing?

A : Those who already live in public housing such as municipal or prefectural housing are not eligible to apply. *Except for people living together (with city approval) who are separated from their households, or people who need elevators, etc. due to disability or old age.

Q : My status of residence is "Engineer/Humanities/International Services". I plan to marry a permanent resident, but when I change my status of residence to "spouse of a permanent resident" or "permanent resident," there is a possibility that I will not be allowed to change my status of residence because I was one month in arrears of civil tax when I moved to Kumamoto from another prefecture.

A : The administrative scrivener advised that if there is a reason for the delinquency, explaining it is not likely to result in a denial on its own.

Q : I am currently living abroad. I plan to return to Japan this summer with my 15-year-old child. Is the high school tuition support fund (practically free for private schools) also being implemented in Kumamoto? Can my child transfer to a junior high school in Kumamoto City after graduating from a junior high school overseas?

A : We confirmed this with the Kumamoto Prefectural Board of Education. Kumamoto Prefecture also has a high school tuition support fund system.



Kumamoto Pref.
High School Tuition Support Fund



About High School
Tuition Support Fund

In addition, students who have graduated from an overseas junior high school can transfer to a junior high school in Japan if they are 15 or under, but not if they turn 16 during the fiscal year.

If you have any problems, please contact the Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents.

Orugatta Kids

“Orugatta Kids” is a Japanese language class for children(age 5–8), parents (or guardians) from foreign countries.

Children will learn proper Japanese pronunciation and usage through crafts, games and picture book reading. Parents can ask about anything you may not understand what’s written in newsletters from kindergarten and elementary school. They can also consult any troubles or concerns you may have.

**In FY 2025, it will take place at
Kumamoto City International Center(Chuo–ku) and
Prefectural University of Kumamoto(Higashi–ku).**

**Observation before you decide whether to join
can be booked, please contact Plaza.
We look forward to seeing many of you there!**

Flier / Inquiry



Application



Boys' festival

May 5th is “Children’s day”. It’s also known as “Boys’ Festival”. Boys’ Festival is an event to celebrate the birth and growth of a boy. This is an old event that has continued since the Nara period (710-794), and doll warriors and carp streamers are displayed.

Boys' Festival began in ancient China.

The strong fragrance was thought to ward off misfortune, so people would hang “irises” or “artemisia” on the eaves (edge of the roof) or take a bath in iris water and hope for good health and no illness.



Iris



artemisia



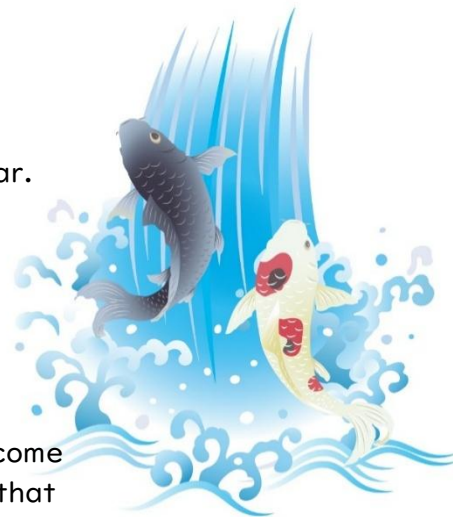
doll warrior



carp streamer

In Japan, Boys’ Festival spread from the imperial palace to samurai society during the Kamakura period (around 1180-1333). Eventually, during the Edo period (1603-1868), May 5 was designated as the day to hold ceremonies at the Imperial Palace. Also, when a boy was born in a samurai family, a flag and other symbols were placed in front of the entrance to celebrate the birth. The custom then spread to ordinary people. However, it is believed that common people were not allowed to display banners like the samurai, so they started to decorate carp streamers. The carp is thought to be a fish that will rise to become a dragon, and it is said that the carp streamer was created in the hope of achieving success in life.

It is customary to eat “Chimaki (rice cakes wrapped in bamboo leaves)” to celebrate the first Boys' Festival after the birth of a boy and “Kashiwa Mochi (rice cakes wrapped in Oak leaves)” from the second year. Chimaki came from China. According to an old Chinese tale, it was a memorial service for the death of a poet named Qu Yuan. Since he died on May 5, people who were saddened by his death would throw bamboo tubes filled with rice into the river and offer them to his spirit. However, the dragon living in the river would eat them, so they began to wrap rice in bamboo leaves, which the dragon dislikes, and bind them with five-colored threads. Kashiwa Mochi is said to have come to be eaten with the hope that the family lineage will not be broken and that the family will prosper, since the old oak leaves do not fall off until new leaves sprout.



Kashiwa Mochi



Chimaki

Information on Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents

The Plaza offers professional consultations including legal affairs, residence status issues, housing and life affairs support in multiple languages. Consultants who speak English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Spanish, Nepali and Taiwanese are available at the Plaza as the schedule below.

May Schedule

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|---|--|
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 01 • Korean Consultation | 02 • Spanish Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation | 03 Constitution Memorial Day | 04 Greenery day • Vietnamese Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese |
| 05 Children's day | 06 substitute holiday | 07 • Immigrational Consultation • Vietnamese Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation | 08 • Korean Consultation | 09 • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation | 10 | 11 • Life Consultation in Chinese • Educational Consultation • Immigrational Consultation |
| 12 closed | 13 • Chinese Consultation | 14 • Mental Health Counseling • Tagalog Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation • Job Consultation | 15 • Korean Consultation | 16 • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation | 17 • Free Legal Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese | 18 • Immigrational Consultation • Vietnamese Consultation • Nepal Consultation |
| 19 | 20 • Chinese Consultation | 21 • Housing Consultation • Vietnamese Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation • Life Consultation in Taiwanese | 22 • Korean Consultation | 23 • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation | 24 | 25 • Life Consultation in Chinese • Educational Consultation • Life Consultation in Taiwanese |
| 26 closed | 27 • Chinese Consultation | 28 • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation • One-stop Consultation Service for International Students | 29 • Korean Consultation | 30 • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation | 31 | 01 |
| 02 | 03 | note: Consultations 1:00p.m~5:00p.m (apart from the ones below) • Life Consultation in Chinese 1:00pm ~ 6:00pm • Immigrational Consultation 1:00pm~4:00pm • Free Legal Consultation 2:00pm~4:00pm (Reservation required) • One-stop Consultation Service for International Students 1:00pm~4:00pm • Mental Health Counseling 3:30pm~5:30pm • Educational Consultation 10:00am~3:00pm | | | | |

※ Consultation service could be cancelled due to consultant's personal reasons. Please e-mail or call us beforehand to check if the consultant is available.

Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents' Facebook

We regularly update information useful to you.

Follow us and be one of the first one to be informed!



Plaza's FB

We are offering variety of information useful to your life. Please check us!



Our website



Our Life affairs guidance

Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents

Location: 2nd floor of Kumamoto City International Center

Address: 4-18 Hanabata-Cho, Chuo-Ku, Kumamoto City, 860-0806

Tel: 096-359-4995

E-mail: soudan@kumamoto-if.or.jp

Opening hours: Between 10 am and 6 pm

Closed on second and fourth Mondays and between December 29 and January 3

★ If second or fourth Monday is a national holiday, the plaza will be closed the following day instead.

