

PLAZA NEWSLETTER(November 2025)

This summer was extremely hot again. While October has brought more comfortable weather, there's a significant temperature difference between daytime and mornings/evenings, so please take care of your health. Also, it seems the flu season started earlier than usual this year, around September. Reasons include reduced immunity from summer fatigue due to the heat, and dry air from using air conditioning all day. Make sure to ventilate regularly and practice basic infection control measures like handwashing, gargling, and wearing masks! Getting a flu vaccine can also help prevent infection and severe illness.

Now allow us to partially introduce the consultation details found in our plaza. We received 47 consultations in September and have shared below examples of questions and answers. Some content has been edited for privacy concerns.

Q : My residence status is "Dependent". I am pregnant and I was told by my doctor that due to a pre-existing condition, there is a risk of fetal death, so I should take a temporary leave from my part-time job until delivery. I explained this to my employer, requested leave, and submitted a medical certificate, but I was dismissed. I would like to consult whether this response is appropriate. Additionally, my 4-year-old child attends a nursery. To continue this enrollment, both parents must be employed and requires a leave of absence certificate from the employers, I am in a very difficult situation.

A : This dismissal may be problematic. We recommend consulting the Kumamoto Labor Standards Inspection Office. If you require an interpreter, advance reservations are necessary. Please call the Kumamoto General Labor Consultation Corner (096-206-9829). For legal consultations with attorneys, the Plaza holds "Free Legal Consultations" on the third Saturday of every month. ※Advance reservations are required. Regarding nursery for children, if a parent requires medical treatment and submits a medical certificate stating the reason, the child can be stayed in the nursery even if the parent is not working. Additionally, the month of the expected delivery date plus the two months before and after it—a total of five months—are recognized as a valid reason for needing childcare due to "pregnancy and childbirth," allowing enrollment during this period.

Q : I would like to convert my driver's license. Please tell me what documents are required.

A : Common required documents: ① Valid foreign driver's license ② Japanese translation of foreign license (translated only by designated agencies ※Check designated agencies via the QR code for Kumamoto prefectural police below) ③ Japanese driver's license (if you have one, regardless of validity status) ④ Residence certificate(JUMINHYO) issued within the last 6 months showing registered domicile (nationality, etc.) ⑤ Passport ⑥ International Driving Permit (if you have one) ⑦ Photograph ⑧Residence Card ⑨Fee (cash only)

The required documents vary depending on the country where your foreign driver's license was issued and your license status. Please check the list of required documents by country.



List of required documents by country



Changes from foreign license to Japanese (Kumamoto Pref. Police website)



Required document checklist (Japanese only)

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

Traffic Rules for Bicycles

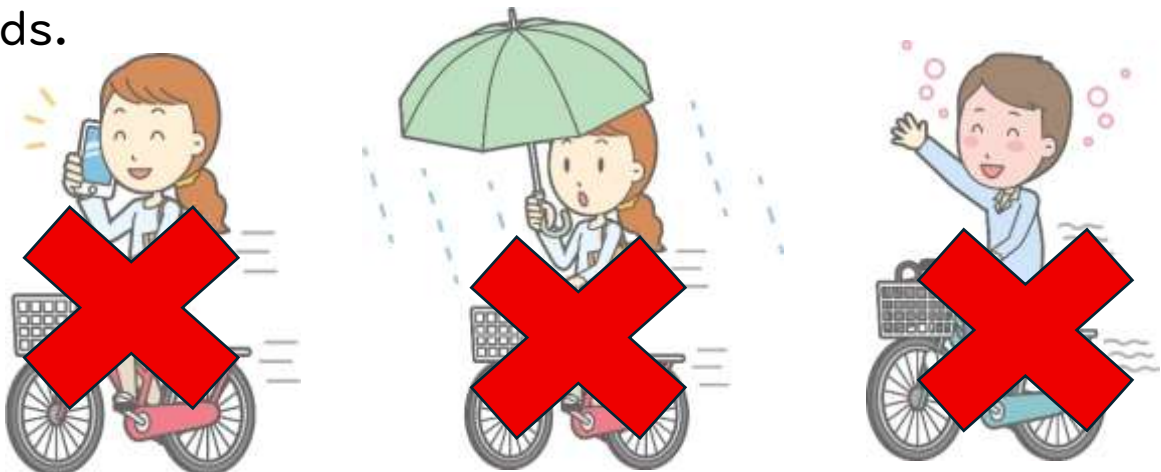
In November 2024, new penalties for bicycle traffic violations were established. This is due to the increasing number of traffic accidents involving bicycles. Examples of specific traffic rule violations include:

- Running a red light (proceeding when the light is not green)
- Not stopping at locations marked with a “Stop” sign.
- Cycle on the right side of roads
- Cycling on the sidewalk in a manner that obstructs pedestrians
- Using cell phones or smartphones while cycling
- Cycling while holding an umbrella
- Cycling after drinking alcohol, cycling while intoxicated

(Providing alcohol to cyclists or lending bicycles to those who have consumed alcohol also violates traffic rules.)

Violators will be required to pay fines starting January 1, 2026.

Let's follow traffic rules so everyone can travel safely on the roads.



The 4th Free Consultation session for foreign residents

We will be holding free consultation session for foreign residents again!
The 4th event will be held this year on Sunday, November 16 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Specialized consultations such as residence status, employment, housing, mental health, and legal advice are possible. Those wishing to consult about residency status and employment can be done in one day. Additionally, this year we will be offering pension consultations for the first time.

If you are concerned about consulting in Japanese, you can reserve an interpreter in advance. (Depending on the language and number of reservations, telephone interpretation may be provided.)

Additionally, those who cannot come to the plaza on this day due to reasons such as living far away can also consult online.

For those who need interpretation services, seek legal consultation, and wish to consult online must make an appointment.

If you have other matters to discuss, making an appointment will allow you to be seen without waiting, so make an appointment whenever possible.

We will always keep your consultation confidential. Feel free to come in for a consultation with peace of mind.

Reservation ↓



Are you struggling alone?

- ☑ Searching for employment
- ☑ Housing/lifestyle troubles
- ☑ Residential status
- ☑ Child's school/preschool
- ☑ Marriage, divorce

Reservation Priority

Please consult!

Overview

- Unlike regular consultation sessions, various experts will be available to help on the same day!
- Please reserve by phone call or by applying through the QR code below.

The 4th Free Consultation Session for Foreign Residents

Date: Monday, November 16, 2025

Time: 10:00~16:00

Location: The Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents (International Center 2F)

① Offered in a variety of languages! ② Online consultation as well!

21 languages (w/ interpreter support)
Japanese speaking ability not required!

- English
- Chinese
- Tiếng Việt Vietnamese
- Tagalog
- नेपाली Nepali... and more
- 한국어 Korean

Recommended for these people!

- Cannot visit in person
- Those who live far away

※Prior reservation required for online consultation.

(Contact/Reserve) Inquiries/Reservations (JP/ENG)

The Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents (International Center 2F)

Tel: 096-359-4995

4-18 Hanabata-cho, Chuo-ku, Kumamoto City 860-0806

Email: soudan@kumamoto-if.or.jp

QR code for reservation

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.

November Schedule

Monday 27	Tuesday 28	Wednesday 29	Thursday 30	Friday 31	Saturday 01	Sunday 02
						• Vietnamese Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese
03 Culture Day	04 • Chinese Consultation	05 • Immigrational Consultation • Vietnamese Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation	06 • Korean Consultation	07 • Spanish Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation	08	09 • Life Consultation in Chinese • Educational Consultation • Immigrational Consultation
10 closed	11 • Chinese Consultation	12 • Mental Health Counseling • Tagalog Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation • Job Consultation	13 • Korean Consultation	14 • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation	15 • Free Legal Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese	16 The 4th Free consultation session for foreign residents
17	18 • Chinese Consultation	19 • Housing Consultation • Vietnamese Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation • Life Consultation in Taiwanese	20 • Korean Consultation	21 • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation	22	23 Labour Thanksgiving Day • Life Consultation in Chinese • Educational Consultation • Life Consultation in Taiwanese
24 substitute holiday	25 closed	26 • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation • One-stop Consultation Service for International Students	27 • Korean Consultation	28 • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation	29	30 • Life Consultation in Chinese
01	02	Note: Consultations 1:00pm~5:00pm (apart from the ones below) • Life Consultation in Chinese 1:00pm ~ 6:00pm • Immigrational Consultation 1:00pm~4:00pm • 3:30pm~5:30pm • Free Legal Consultation 2:00pm~4:00pm (Reservation required) • One-stop Consultation Service for International Students 1:00pm~4:00pm • Mental Health Counseling • 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.

