

PLAZA NEWSLETTER (July 2026)

We've entered the season when rainy days seem to go on and on. How are you all spending your time during the rainy season? These days, there's a wide variety of stylish raincoats—including ones that keep your face dry—as well as plenty of other rain gear. There are more and more items available that can lift your spirits even on rainy days. Just having one favorite piece of rain gear can make going out a little more enjoyable, can't it?

Effective June 14, the "Specific Residence Card"—which combines the Residence Card and the My Number Card into a single card—has been introduced. Those who wish to obtain one can apply at a Regional Immigration Bureau or at a municipal office.

Now let us partially introduce the consultation details found in our plaza. We received 42 consultations in May and have shared below examples of questions and answers. Some content has been edited for privacy concerns.

Q : I would like to apply for public housing. Please tell me how to go about it.

A : There are two types of public housing: prefectural housing and municipal housing.

Applications are accepted through both periodic and ongoing applications.

Periodic application takes place several times a year. Please check the website for application procedures and eligibility requirements.



Regular Application Period
for Prefectural Public Housing



Prefectural Public Housing
Management Center



Municipal (Higashi & Minami Ward)
Housing Management Center



Municipal (Chuo, Kita & Nishi Ward)
Housing Management Center

Q : Please provide information on food banks in Kumamoto Prefecture.

A : Check the website listed on the right for information on food banks in Kumamoto Prefecture.

To receive food assistance from a food bank, first consult with the welfare office in your area (such as your city, ward, town's social welfare council or the consultation and support office for people in financial need).



Information About Food Banks

Q : I plan to stay in Kumamoto for about a month. I just arrived Japan, so I don't know how to dispose of household trash.

A : The Kumamoto city has created guides on waste separation in English, Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese. They also provide videos explaining the basic rules for waste disposal and recycling methods. Since waste disposal methods vary by neighborhood, we understand this can be confusing. These resources are available in multiple languages (Japanese, Chinese (Traditional and Simplified), English, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Nepali), so be sure to check them out.

They are also offering a waste collection calendar app—available in multiple languages (Japanese, English, and Chinese (Traditional and Simplified))—that allows you to check the schedule for your neighborhood.



[Multilingual Edition]
Waste Sorting Guide



[Multilingual Version]
Rules for Trash Collection
& Recycling Videos



[Multilingual Version]
Trash Collection Calendar App

The 21st Course Guidance in Kumamoto

For foreign students and their parents

This year's event will again be geared toward students and parents preparing to enter high school, and will be full of all the information you need to know about the school, tuition fees, special measures for entrance examinations, and more.

There will also be a presentation on the experiences of senior high school students.

Individual consultations are also available. Interpreters will be available to help those who are not comfortable with Japanese. Participation is free.



Date & Time : Sunday, July 5, 2026

13:00-14:40 For Chinese and Korean Speakers

15:00-16:40 For English and other languages speakers

Venue : Meeting room 3, 4F,

Kumamoto City International Center

Flier & Application



Bui Trung Kien is a new member of Plaza from April as a Vietnamese consultant. Let us introduce him!

Where are you from?

I am from Bắc Kạn Province, located in northeastern Vietnam. It is about 160 km from the capital, Hanoi. Approximately 80% of the province's area is mountainous terrain covered in forests, and it is home to one of the world's largest karst lakes, "Bà Bể Lake," making it a region rich in pristine natural beauty. Ethnic minorities such as the Thai and Zao live peacefully in harmony with nature.



What is the province of Bac Kan like?

While some Vietnamese people may not be familiar with the name "Bac Kan Province," "Bà Bể Lake" is a famous destination that everyone knows. Surrounded by pristine natural beauty, visitors can experience the culture of ethnic minorities, including their way of life and traditional markets. In particular, ethnic minority festivals and boat tours on the lake are very popular.

What sparked your interest in Japan or the Japanese language?

It wasn't as if I had originally decided, "I absolutely have to go to Japan." I've always loved TV shows that introduce different parts of the world, and after graduating from high school, I wanted to leave Vietnam and see all sorts of places. While searching for information on studying abroad, I happened to come across a scholarship program for Japan, and passing the exam and interview led me to come here. As I actually lived here, I found myself falling in love with Japan before I knew it.

Do you have a favourite Japanese phrase?

It's "a once-in-a-lifetime encounter." According to one study, it is said that the average person meets about 80,000 people in their lifetime. With a global population of 8.2 billion, I feel there is a deep "connection" in any interaction—whether we merely pass each other by or become close friends. That is why I make a conscious effort to cherish every single encounter with an open heart.

What do you like most about Japan?

I absolutely love Japan's "Hanami" and "festival" cultures.

Things that surprised you when you came to Kumamoto (Japan)

What surprised me the most was the driving etiquette. While traffic signals and rules are strictly followed in Japan, they are relatively lax in Vietnam. I was also surprised by the difference in how horns are used; whereas they are rarely honked in Japan, in Vietnam they are used routinely as a way of signalling, "I'm here!"

A message for foreign residents in Kumamoto

I'm sure you're feeling a bit overwhelmed by the language barrier and cultural differences, and that you're facing many challenges in your daily life. However, if you take the initiative to open up and try to fit in with those around you, I'm sure you'll come to enjoy life in Japan. Please feel free to reach out to us anytime you need help.

【Kien's Vietnamese consultation: 1st and 3rd Sundays of every month】

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.

July Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			01 •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation	02 •Korean Consultation	03 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation •Spanish Consultation	04
05 •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese	06	07 •Chinese Consultation	08 •Mental Health Counseling •Tagalog Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation	09 •Korean Consultation	10 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	11
12 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Educational Consultation •Orugatta Kids	13 closed	14 •Chinese Consultation	15 •Housing Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation •Life Consultation in	16 •Korean Consultation	17 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	18 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Free Legal Consultation
19 •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Nepal Consultation •Orugatta Kids	20 Marine Day	21 •Chinese Consultation	22 •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation •One-stop Consultation Service for International Students	23 •Korean Consultation	24 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	25
26 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Educational Consultation •Orugatta Kids •Life Consultation in	27 closed	28 •Chinese Consultation	29 •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation	30 •Korean Consultation	31 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	
			<p>Note: Consultations 1:00pm~5:00pm(apart from the ones below)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Life Consultation in Chinese 1:00pm ~ 6:00pm •Immigrational Consultation 1:00pm~4:00pm •Free Legal Consultation 2:00pm~4:00pm (Reservation required) •Educational Consultation 10:00am~3:00pm •One-stop Consultation Service for International Students 1:00pm~4:00pm •Job Consultation 10:00am~6:00pm •Mental Health Counseling 3:30pm~5:30pm 			

※ 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 ones to be informed!



Plaza's FB

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



Our website



Life orientation videos by Immigration Services Agency

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.

