

PLAZA NEWSLETTER (August 2026)

June saw many days of unsettled weather and situations, such as heavy rain and earthquakes, and I imagine many of you were startled by the emergency alerts in the middle of the night. Now that the rainy season has ended, we've finally entered the heart of summer. I expect you'll be going out more often, so be careful to avoid heatstroke.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup, which has been underway since last month, was broadcast on TV every day, so it really generated a lot of excitement, didn't it? I think many people were inspired by the outstanding performances of so many players.

The hot season is upon us, so I hope you all stay healthy this summer.

Now let us partially introduce the consultation details found in our plaza. We received 55 consultations in June and have shared below examples of questions and answers. Some content has been edited for privacy concerns.

Q : I'm visiting Kumamoto from overseas. I need a Japanese translation of the driver's license I obtained in my home country in order to drive in Japan. Where should I go?

A : JAF provides translation services. You can apply through the "Driver's License Translation Application Site (Online Application)" on the JAF website. Allow 1 week or 2 for processing, so be sure to apply well in advance. You can print and pick up your translated document at a convenience store in Japan.



How to apply
translation

Q : I want to throw away my electric fan. Tell me how.

A : If it fits in a garbage bag labeled "landfill waste," tie the bag closed and put it out on landfill waste collection day. If you are unable to tie it up, you must dispose of it as "bulky waste."

Call Gomi Zero call (0570-00-5374) to make a reservation. You can also bring it to the Ogida Environmental Center.



Kumamoto City Waste
Sorting Guide

Q : I want to get a moped license. Tell me the steps and required documents.

A : You must make an online reservation in advance for the moped training course and the written exam at the Driver's License Center. The process is as follows:

- ① Make an online reservation for your preferred date for the moped training course and take the course.
- ② Make an online reservation for your preferred date for the written exam and take the exam.
- ③ After passing the written exam, your driver's license will be issued on the same day.

The written exam is available in foreign languages (multilingual support).

If you wish to take the exam in a foreign language, inform the reception desk on the day of the exam. Check the Kumamoto prefectural Police's website for information on what is required for your application, the reservation form, and multilingual support.



Moped License (Kumamoto Prefectural Police Website)

New Disaster Prevention Weather Information

As of May 29, 2026, the “Disaster Prevention Weather Information” has changed. Previously, there were many different types of “alerts” and “advisories,” and it was complicated and difficult to understand how they corresponded to the “evacuation levels” issued by local governments such as Kumamoto City. However, now that the level number is included in the name of the alert, it has become easy to immediately understand what actions to take—such as when to evacuate.

The latest disaster prevention weather advisories are listed on the page right. If a Level 4 advisory is issued on TV or via a smartphone app etc, evacuate to a safe location immediately. Therefore, begin preparing to evacuate as soon as a Level 3 advisory is issued. For the elderly, children, and people with disabilities, begin preparing as soon as a Level 2 advisory is issued.

If you are in Kumamoto City, you can use your smartphone’s location data to check the “Kumamoto City Disaster Prevention Information Portal” and find open evacuation shelters near your current location in real time. The information is available in Japanese, English, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), and Korean.



Kumamoto City
Disaster Prevention
Information Portal

In addition, “Weather Disaster Prevention Alerts” and “Weather Explanatory Information” have been newly introduced to quickly convey sudden dangers and future outlooks that cannot be fully conveyed by alert levels alone.

“Weather Disaster Prevention Alerts” provide prefecture-level notifications regarding phenomena where the level of danger is rapidly increasing, such as the formation or rapid approach of “linear precipitation zones” (where heavy rain falls over the same area for an extended period), short-duration heavy snowfall, and tornadoes.

“Weather Explanatory Information” is issued about half a day before a typhoon approaches or heavy rain from a linear precipitation zone begins, helping people prepare early.

Disasters are bound to happen. To protect your life when a disaster actually strikes, be prepared in advance.



Earthquake



Torrential
Rain



Storm



Fire



Flooding



Effective
May 29
2026

Disaster Weather Information

Has Been Updated

Disaster risks are announced in **5** alert levels

Level 5 Emergency Warning	Evacuate immediately to any safer location! 	Disaster may already be occurring. Take the safest actions to protect your life.
▼ Make sure to evacuate before it reaches this level! ▼		
Level 4 Urgent Warning	Evacuate everyone from dangerous areas! 	A disaster could happen at any time. Evacuate immediately from dangerous areas.
Level 3 Warning	Evacuate early if you need extra time! 	The risk of disaster is increasing. People who take longer to evacuate (e.g. elderly) should start evacuating early.
Level 2 Advisory	Check your evacuation route! 	Weather conditions may worsen. Check identify how to evacuate safely and your evacuation route.
Level 1 Early Advisory	Pay attention to upcoming information! 	Please stay alert to upcoming weather information. Make sure you are ready for disasters.

Applicable hazards

River Flooding



Flooding may cover buildings and roads with water.

⊗ Near rivers

Heavy Rain



Place like underpasses and underground spaces may get flooded.

⊗ Low-lying areas

Landslide



Mountains and slopes may collapse, causing soil and sand to flow downward.

⊗ Near mountains and cliffs

Storm Surge



When typhoons approach, rising sea levels may extend onto land.

⊗ Coastal areas

Check the disaster risks in your areas!

KIKIKURU (Real-time risk map)

Check the current risk level with the **5 color** codes.
Learn if you need to evacuate.



Hazard Map

Check hazard areas and evacuation shelters near your home.
Learn which areas are dangerous.



Be prepared every day!



Evacuation site



Evacuation kit



Confirm how to connect your family



Evacuation becomes difficult once the danger level rises.
Start preparing by Level 3!

Save your address on your phone or in a notebook.



Scan the QR code to view the multilingual versions.

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.

August Schedule

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						01
02 • Vietnamese Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese	03	04 • Chinese Consultation	05 • Immigrational Consultation • Vietnamese Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation	06 • Korean Consultation	07 • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation • Spanish Consultation	08
09 • Life Consultation in Chinese • Educational Consultation	10 Mountain Day	11 closed	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 • Life Consultation in Chinese • Free Legal Consultation
16 • Immigrational Consultation • Vietnamese Consultation • Nepal Consultation	17	18 • Chinese Consultation	19 • Housing Consultation • Vietnamese Consultation • Life Consultation in Chinese • German Consultation • Life Consultation in	20 • Korean Consultation	21 • Life Consultation in Chinese • English Consultation	22
23 • Life Consultation in Chinese • Educational Consultation • Life Consultation in Taiwanese	24 closed	25 • Chinese Consultation	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	31	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 • 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.

