

# Data Section

**Data Section** Outline of Japan's Immigration Control and  
Residency Management System

**Appendix** Major Developments since April 1, 2009

**Index**

## Data Section

# Outline of Japan's Immigration Control and Residency Management System

## Section 1 Purpose and Legal Basis

Article 1 of the Immigration Control Act stipulates that “the purpose of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act is to provide for fair management over the entry and departure procedures of all persons in Japan, residence of foreign nationals in Japan, as well as consolidate the recognition procedures of the refugee status.”

The meaning of “fair management over the entry and departure procedures of all persons in Japan, residence of foreign nationals in Japan” is to achieve a reasonable balance between smoothly accepting foreign nationals who follow the rules and preventing the entry and stay of foreign nationals who threaten safety and security in Japan. To achieve this purpose, on the one hand the Immigration Control Act provides for a status-of-residence system to enable the smooth acceptance of foreign nationals who have, for instance, advanced skills. On the other hand, the Immigration Control Act provides for deportation procedures so as to strictly deal with foreign nationals who have committed crimes in Japan.

According to the Amendment Act of the Immigration Control Act enforced in April 2019, “fair management over residence of foreign nationals in Japan” was added to the purpose of the above-mentioned law. It was added in order to clearly express that not only immigration control but also equitable control of the residence of foreign nationals residing in Japan is an important objective for us, because in addition to the growing number of foreign residents in recent years, the establishment of status of residence “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” have increased the importance of equitable control over residence of foreign nationals. Also, “to consolidate the recognition procedures of the refugee status” was added because Japan joined the Refugee Convention in 1981 and the refugee recognition system was included in immigration control and residency management administration.

Other major laws and regulations relating to the Immigration Control Act include, for example, the Special Act on the Immigration Control stipulating the special rules under the Immigration Control Act for special permanent residents; the Enforcement Order of the Immigration Control Act and the Enforcement Order of the Special Act on the Immigration Control stipulating the statutory administrative affairs entrusted to the local governments; the Regulation for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act and the Regulation for Enforcement of the Special Act on the Immigration Control specifically defining the procedures for implementation of the Immigration Control Act and the Special Act on the Immigration Control; the Ministerial Ordinance on Criteria stipulated taking possible effects on Japanese industry and people's lives and other circumstances into consideration.

## Section 2 Immigration Procedures for All Persons

### 1 Procedures for the Entry and Departure of Foreign Nationals<sup>(\*)1</sup>

When a foreign national who does not have Japanese nationality (including stateless individuals) wishes to enter Japan, he or she must, in principle, possess a valid passport with a visa<sup>(\*)2</sup> obtained at a Japanese embassy or consulate abroad, apply for landing with an immigration inspector at the port of entry and departure<sup>(\*)3</sup>, and receive a seal of verification for landing. Upon departure from Japan, the foreign national must receive confirmation of departure.

As a result of the landing examination, any foreign national who falls under any of the following cases will be denied permission to land in Japan in order to prevent the landing of foreign nationals who threaten safety and security in Japan: when the foreign national's passport or visa is found to be invalid, such as being counterfeit or altered; when the activities declared in the application as ones in which the foreign national intends to engage while in Japan are found to be false; or when the foreign national falls under any of the grounds for denial of landing enumerated in the Immigration Control Act (Article 5), such as having a past record of having been sentenced to a criminal punishment owing to a violation of any law or regulation relating to the control of narcotics, marijuana, opium, stimulants or psychotropic substances.

Other than these general immigration procedures for foreign nationals, the Immigration Control Act also provides for a simplified system of landing permission known as "special landing permission"<sup>(\*)4</sup>.

Entry requirements for foreign nationals

([https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/youken\\_00001.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/youken_00001.html))

### 2 Procedures for Entry (Landing) Examinations of Foreign Nationals<sup>(\*)5</sup>

The procedures for entry examinations of foreign nationals are structured as a three-step examination process so that the cases may be examined carefully and foreign nationals will have a sufficient chance to assert and prove that they comply with the conditions for landing (Reference 98).

(\*1) A foreign national is deemed to have "entered" Japan when he or she has entered the territorial sea or territorial airspace of Japan, and to have "landed" in Japan when he or she has set foot on Japanese land.

Therefore, the permission for entry or stay given to foreign nationals as a result of the immigration examination at the port of entry and departure is referred to as "landing permission."

For a country which borders a neighboring country, "entry" means a foreign national has crossed the border and proceeded into the land territory of another country. In this case, it is not necessary to distinguish the concept of "entry" from that of "landing." However, since Japan is surrounded by sea, a distinction is made between the two terms.

(\*2) A "visa" refers to a document that a Japanese consular officer issues under certain conditions to certify in a foreign national's passport, using a prescribed format, that the foreign national who seeks to land in Japan has a legitimate reason and qualifications based on his or her application.

(\*3) The "port of entry and departure" refers to certain seaports and airports where foreign nationals are allowed to enter into or depart from Japan (Article 2, item (viii) of the Immigration Control Act). Specific ports of entry and departure are stipulated in the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act. As of April 1, 2023, the number of ports of entry and departure was 127 seaports and 32 airports.

(\*4) For special landing permission, see Subsection 4.

(\*5) The "entry (landing) examination" by the immigration inspector and the "landing adjudication" after the hearing are jointly called the entry (landing) examination procedures in the wide sense of the term.

Landing procedures for foreign nationals

([https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/zyouriku\\_00001.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/zyouriku_00001.html))

Grounds for denial of landing

([https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/kyohi\\_00001.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/kyohi_00001.html))

## (1) Entry (Landing) Examination

If a foreign national has applied for landing and such foreign national (excluding special permanent residents) has fulfilled his or her obligation to submit biometric information (fingerprints and facial photographs) (Article 6, paragraph (3) of the Immigration Control Act), the immigration inspector will examine whether such foreign national meets with the conditions for landing in Japan or not ((i) the foreign national possesses a valid passport; (ii) a valid visa is attached to the passport, except in cases where the foreign national is eligible for a visa waiver; (iii) the activities the foreign national has applied for is not false and comes under one of the statuses of residence listed in one of the Appended Tables of the Immigration Control Act, and moreover, with regard to certain statuses of residence, meets the landing permission criteria given in the Ordinance on Criteria; (iv) the period of stay applied for conforms to the provisions of the Ordinance of the MOJ; and (v) the foreign national does not fall under any of the grounds for denial of landing) (Article 7, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act). When an immigration inspector finds that a foreign national conforms to the above-mentioned conditions, the immigration inspector will determine a status of residence and the period of stay, and affix a seal of verification for landing onto the foreign national's passport (Article 9, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act).

The provision of biometric information (fingerprints and a facial photograph) at the time of the entry (landing) examination became mandatory through the 2006 amendment of the Immigration Control Act (enforced on November 20, 2007).

## (2) Hearing

If a foreign national, who has filed an application for landing, does not provide his or her biometric information to the immigration officer at the port of entry or departure, or is found, as a result of the landing examination by the immigration inspector, not to conform to the conditions for landing, the case will be assigned to a special inquiry officer <sup>(\*)</sup>, who will hold a hearing (Article 7, paragraph (4), Article 9, paragraph (6), and Article 10, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act).

If the special inquiry officer finds, as a result of the hearing, that the foreign national conforms to the conditions for landing (limited to cases where the foreign national is found to come under foreign nationals who are exempt from the obligation of providing biometric information and cases where the foreign national provides his or her biometric information to the special inquiry officer with regard to cases assigned to the special inquiry officer owing to the foreign national refusing to provide his or her biometric information to the immigration inspector), the foreign national will immediately be granted landing permission (Article 10, paragraphs (8) of the Immigration Control Act).

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(\*) A "special inquiry officer" refers to a senior immigration officer appointed by the Commissioner of the ISA, who is authorized to hold hearings for landing examination procedures and deportation procedures.

### (3) Filing of an Objection

On the other hand, a foreign national who is found not to conform to the conditions for landing may either accept the finding or file an objection. In the case of the former, the foreign national will be ordered to depart from Japan. In the latter case, the foreign national may file an objection with the Minister of Justice within three days after receipt of the notice <sup>(\*1)</sup> (Article 10, paragraphs (10) and (11), and Article 11, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act).

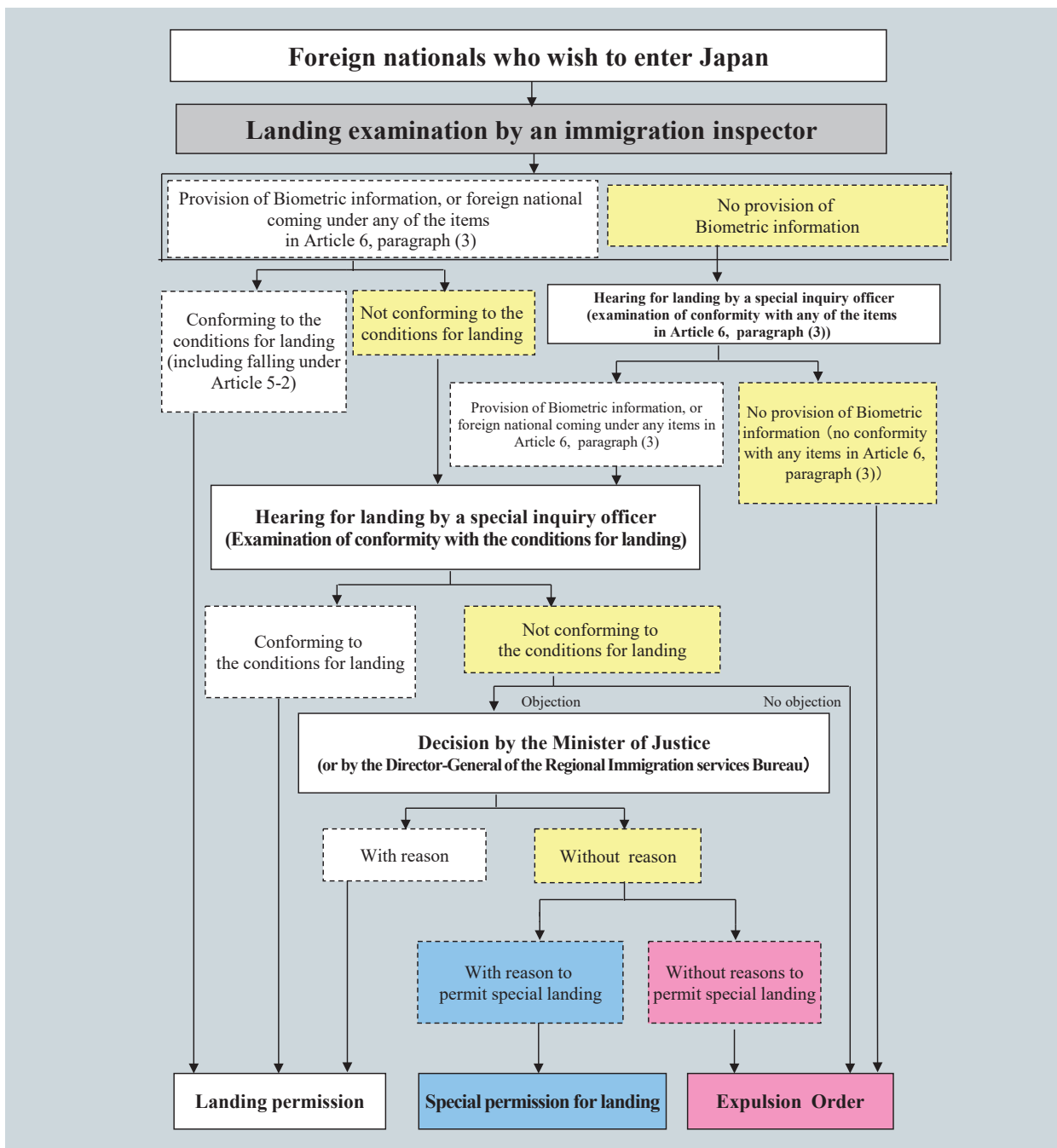
If there is an objection from a foreign national who has been found not to conform to the conditions for landing by the special inquiry officer, the Minister of Justice will decide whether or not the objection is with reason, that is, whether the foreign national conforms to the conditions for landing. If a decision is reached that the objection is with reason, such foreign national will immediately be granted permission for landing, and if a decision is reached that the objection is without reason, such foreign national will be ordered to depart from Japan (Article 11, paragraphs (3), (4) and (6) of the Immigration Control Act), but if the foreign national who has been ordered to depart from Japan does not depart from Japan without delay, the deportation procedure will be enforced (Article 24, item (v)-2 of the Immigration Control Act).

Even if the Minister of Justice finds that the objection filed is without reason, if such foreign national has been granted re-entry permission and entered Japan under the control of another due to trafficking in persons or the Minister of Justice finds that circumstances that warrant the granting of special permission for landing exist, the Minister of Justice may grant such foreign national special permission for landing (the “special permission for landing” provided for in Article 12 of the Immigration Control Act).

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(\*1) When the foreign nationals do not provide their biometric information and do not come under foreign nationals who are not exempt from an obligation of providing biometric information too, there are no procedure for a decision by the Minister of Justice. They will be ordered to depart from Japan at the hearing (Article 10, paragraph (7) of the Immigration Control Act).

**Reference 98** Flow of landing examination



**3 Pre-entry Examination**

**(1) Advance Consultation for Issuance of Visas**

Although the MOFA is the ministry, which has jurisdiction over the issuance of visas, since possessing a valid visa is one of the conditions for landing, the issuance of visas is strongly tied to immigration control and residency management administration.

For this reason, the MOFA, which has jurisdiction over the issuance of visas and the ISA, which has jurisdiction over immigration control and residency management, liaise and coordinate over the entry of foreign nationals, and the MOFA consults with the ISA on the individual visa applications where necessary. Accordingly, the ISA examines whether the activities which the foreign national intends to engage in while in Japan conforms to one of the statuses of residence described in the Appended Tables of the Immigration Control Act,

thorough examining the submitted documents, and hearing about the circumstances from a representative of the organization in Japan that plans to accept the foreign national. In addition, with regard to a foreign national who intends to engage in a particular activity, the ISA examines whether the foreign national complies with each of the conditions for landing stipulated in the Ministerial Ordinance on Criteria and subsequently provides an answer to the MOFA as to whether or not it is appropriate to issue a visa to the foreign national (**Reference 99-1**).

## (2) Certificate of Eligibility

In principle, a foreign national is required to obtain a visa at a Japanese embassy or consulate abroad before coming to Japan. The visa will not be issued unless the visa application documents submitted abroad have been sent to Japan, examined in Japan, and an opinion has been given to the embassy or consulate, except in cases where a visa may be issued solely upon a decision made by the embassy or consulate abroad such as in cases relating to the status of residence of “Temporary Visitor.” For this reason, a considerable amount of time is required from the time of the application being submitted to the time of a visa being issued.

Therefore, in order to simplify and facilitate the entry examination procedures, a system of certificates of eligibility was established through the amendment of the Immigration Control Act in 1990. When a foreign national him/herself or another agent, applies for a certificate of eligibility for a status of residence (except for “Temporary Visitor” and “Permanent Resident”) in Japan beforehand, the Director of the Regional Immigration Services Bureau examines in advance whether the foreign national is eligible for the applied status of residence. When the foreign national intends to engage in specific activities, the Director of the Regional Immigration Services Bureau examines whether or not he or she meets the conditions for landing stipulated in the Ordinance on Criteria. If he or she is judged to be eligible for the status of residence and meets the conditions for landing mentioned in Subsection 2 (1), the Director of the Regional Immigration Services Bureau issues a certificate of eligibility, which will enable the foreign national to smoothly acquire a visa and permission for landing through presenting the certificate (Article 7-2 of the Immigration Control Act).

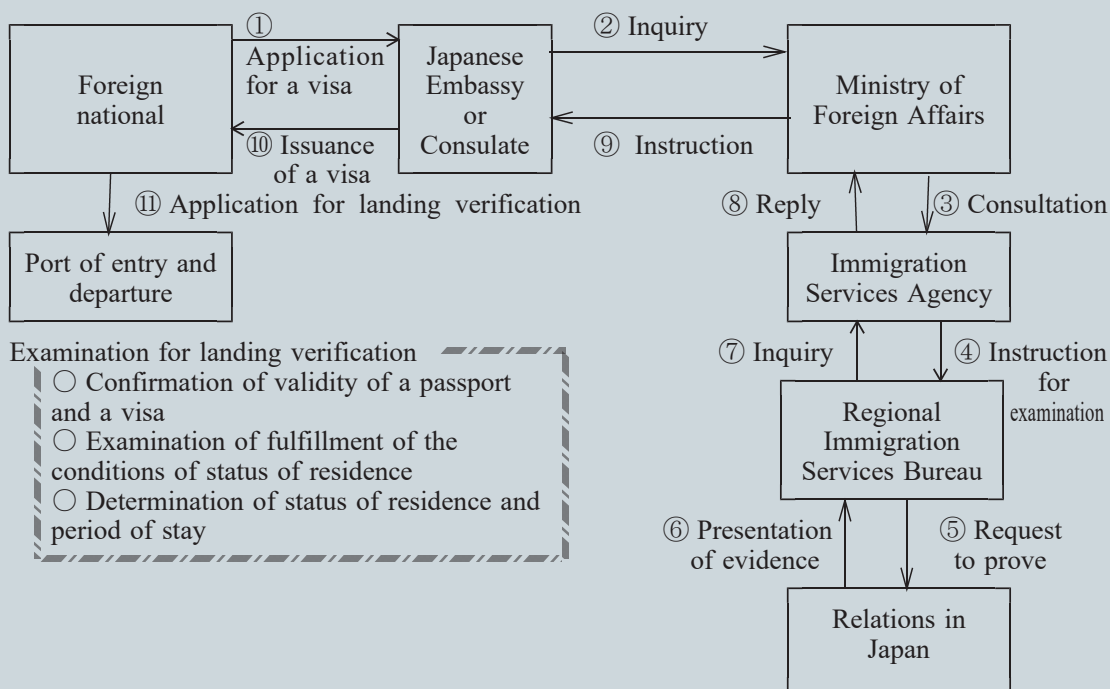
This procedure enables the saving of time needed for the sending of documents, and also enables speedy entry examination procedures, since all the procedures for pre-entry examination are carried out in Japan, unlike the system of advance consultation for issuance of visas (**Reference 99-2**).

In March 2023, the Japanese government started to electronically issue Certificates of Eligibility and allow foreign nationals to submit a copy of their Certificate of Eligibility for application for landing permission to improve their convenience.

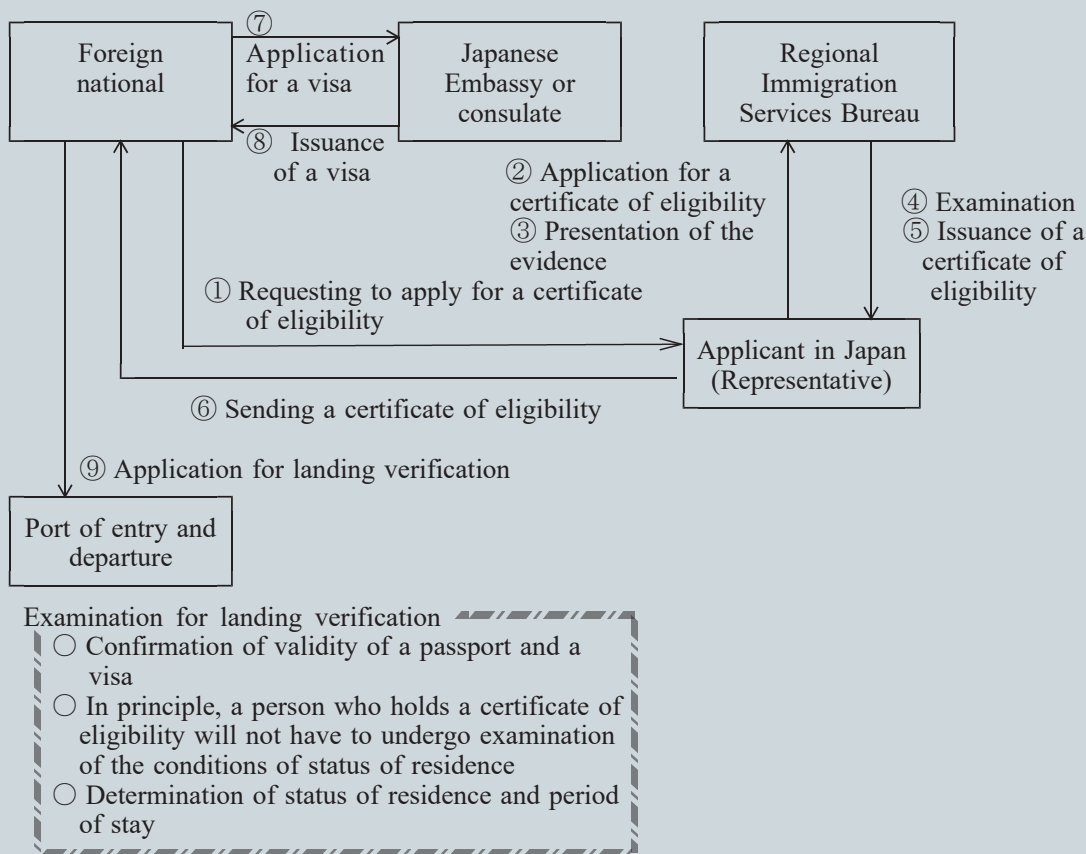
Application for issuance of a certificate of eligibility for a status of residence  
(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/16-1.html>)

**Reference 99** Procedures for advance consultation for issuance of visas and applications for certificates of eligibility

1 Advance consultation for issuance of a visa



2 Application for a certificate of eligibility





## 4 Special Landing Permission <sup>(\*)</sup>

In addition to being in possession of a passport and visa, in principle, the foreign national must meet the conditions for landing for the status of residence, and must have his or her status of residence determined by the Japanese government before being able to land in Japan. The following cases are the exceptions to this principle, and allow foreign crew members and passengers of vessels and aircraft to land temporarily through simple procedures provided that they meet particular requirements. The exceptions are intended to simplify the landing procedures for foreign nationals who intend to stay in Japan for a short term (or for a short time), but in order to secure their appropriate stay through these simple procedures, there are some restrictions, such as on the period of stay and area of movement.

### (1) Permission for Landing at a Port of Call

This permission reduces the burden imposed on foreign passengers changing vessels in Japan to get to other countries. It allows a foreign national who is to proceed via Japan to an area outside Japan to stay for a maximum of 72 hours in order to land temporarily for the purpose of making purchases or resting at a place in the vicinity of the port of call (airport or seaport). This permission will not be granted when Japan is the final destination and the vessel is not proceeding to a destination outside Japan (Article 14 of the Immigration Control Act).

### (2) Landing Permission for Cruise Ship Tourists

This landing permission for cruise ship tourists is intended to offer increased convenience to foreign passengers onboard cruise ships designated by the Commissioner of the ISA (designated passenger ships). If a foreign national onboard a designated passenger ship wishes to land for the purpose of sightseeing, he or she will be granted landing permission within a period not exceeding seven days or 30 days until the time of departure on the condition that such foreign national returns to the ship before the designated passenger ship leaves the port (Article 14-2 of the Immigration Control Act).

### (3) Permission for Landing in Transit

This permission improves convenience for foreign passengers aboard a vessel and aircraft. It allows a foreign national aboard a vessel calling at two or more ports of entry and departure to land temporarily for sightseeing purposes while the vessel is in Japan and to return to the vessel at another port of entry and departure at which the vessel is scheduled to call within 15 days, or allows a foreign national on board a vessel or aircraft who plans to proceed to an area outside Japan via Japan to make a transit stop and leave Japan from another port of entry and departure in the vicinity of the port at which he or she entered, within three days of his or her entry into Japan (Article 15 of the Immigration Control Act).

### (4) Landing Permission for Crew Members

This permission improves convenience for foreign crew members. It allows a foreign crew member aboard a vessel and aircraft to land temporarily at a port of call for the purpose of transferring to another vessel, making purchases or taking a rest within a limit of seven or

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(\*) For landing permission for temporary refuge, see Section 6, Subsection 4 below.

15 days.

For foreign crew members who frequently land at a Japanese port of entry and departure, there is also a system of multiple landing permission for crew members (Article 16 of the Immigration Control Act).

#### (5) Permission for Emergency Landing

The purpose of this provision is to respond quickly to emergency situations of foreign passengers and crew members aboard a vessel or an aircraft. If foreign nationals need to land in Japan urgently for medical treatment of a disease, injury or some other physical ailment, permission will be granted until the cause thereof ceases to exist (Article 17 of the Immigration Control Act).

#### (6) Landing Permission Due to Distress

This permission was established for the purpose of promptly dealing with vessels that are in distress. It is granted when it is necessary to carry out relief and protection of foreign victims aboard a vessel or aircraft in distress or in the event of a forced landing within a limit of 30 days (Article 18 of the Immigration Control Act).

### 5 Procedures for the Departure and Return of Japanese Nationals

Immigration control and residency management administration is responsible for ensuring equitable control of immigration for all people, so the Immigration Control Act also stipulates the procedures departure and return of Japanese nationals.

If a Japanese national departs from Japan, his or her departure must be confirmed by an immigration inspector at the port of entry and departure. In addition, if a Japanese national returns to Japan, his or her return must be confirmed by an immigration inspector (Articles 60 and 61 of the Immigration Control Act).

## Section 3 Examination of the Status of Residence of Foreign Nationals

### 1 Status of Residence System

In principle, foreign nationals who enter and reside as residents in Japan are required to be granted a status of residence designated by the Immigration Control Act. The status of residence categorizes a wide range of activities of foreign nationals, and clarifies whether they are permitted to enter and reside in Japan if they intend to engage in certain activities. This scheme is called the status of residence system and it forms the foundation of the immigration control and residency management administration of Japan (**Reference 100**).

The statuses can be broadly divided into two categories:

(i) Statuses of residence which focus on the authorized activities of the foreign national in Japan (one of the statuses of residence in the left-hand column of the Appended Table I of the Immigration Control Act (activity status))

(ii) Statuses of residence which focus on the personal status or position of the foreign national (one of the statuses of residence in the left-hand column of the Appended Table II

of the Immigration Control Act (residency status))

The basis of the former is “what the foreign national does,” while that of the latter is “what kind of status the foreign national has.”

In addition, as Japan adopts a policy of permitting foreign nationals who are to engage in occupational activities utilizing their professional techniques, skills or knowledge to enter and stay in Japan, but does not to permit other foreign workers to enter and stay in Japan, the statuses of residence which belong to the abovementioned category (i) are divided into the two subcategories of statuses of residence for which work activities are permitted (activities to operate income-earning businesses or activities to receive remuneration), and statuses of residence for which work activities are not permitted.

Although the original purpose of the statuses of residence which belong to the abovementioned category (ii) is not work, it is possible to engage in a work activity because there are no restrictions imposed what activities the foreign national does.

Furthermore, if an activity among the statuses of residence is likely to impact Japanese industry and people's lives, the foreign national will not be permitted to enter Japan unless such a foreign national meets the criteria for the landing permission stipulated by the Ministerial Ordinance on Criteria.

## Reference 100 List of Statuses of Residence (As of April 20, 2023)

Appended Table I

(1)

| Status of Residence  | Authorized activities  | Examples  | Period of Stay  |
|----------------------|--|---|---|
| Diplomat             | Activities on the part of constituent members of diplomatic missions or consular offices of foreign governments hosted by the Japanese Government; activities on the part of those who are provided with similar privileges and/or immunities as are granted to diplomatic missions pursuant to treaties or international customary practices; and activities on the part of their family members belonging to the same household. | Ambassador, minister, consulate general, or delegation member of a foreign government and their families  | Period during which diplomatic activities are performed |
| Official             | Activities on the part of those who engage in the official business of foreign governments or international organizations recognized by the Japanese Government; and activities on the part of their family members belonging to the same household (except for the activities listed in the "Diplomat" column of this Table).   | Employee of an embassy or consulate of a foreign government, individual assigned by an international institution for an official assignment, and their families | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year, 3 months, 30 days or 15 days  |
| Professor            | Activities for research, guidance of research or education at a university, an equivalent educational institutions or colleges of technology ("Kotosenmongakko").  | College professor   | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                    |
| Artist               | Artistic activities that produce income, including music, the fine arts, literature, etc. (except for the activities listed in the "Entertainer" column in Table I (2)).   | Composer, artist, or writer   | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                    |
| Religious Activities | Missionary and other religious activities conducted by foreign religious workers dispatched by a foreign religious organization.   | Missionary assigned by a foreign religious organization   | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                    |
| Journalist           | News coverage and other journalistic activities conducted based on a contract with a foreign journalistic organization.  | Reporter or photographer of foreign press   | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                    |

(2)

| Status of Residence         | Authorized activities   | Examples  | Period of Stay   |
|-----------------------------|---|---|--|
| Highly-Skilled Professional | <p>(i)</p> <p>Activities coming under any of the following items of "a" to "c" conducted by a person who meets the criteria specified by an Ordinance of the Ministry of Justice as a human resource with advanced highly-skilled capabilities, and who is expected to contribute to the development of academic research or the economy of Japan.</p> <p>(a) Activities of engaging in research, research guidance or education based on a contract entered into with a public or private organization in Japan designated by the Minister of Justice, or in conjunction with such activities, activities of a business managed personally by the highly-skilled professional associated with these activities or activities of research, research guidance or education based on a contract entered into a public or private organization in Japan other than said organization.</p> <p>(b) Activities of engaging in work requiring specialized knowledge or skills in the field of natural sciences or humanities based on a contract entered into with a public or private organization in Japan designated by the Minister of Justice, or in conjunction with such activities, activities of a business managed personally by the highly-skilled professional associated with these activities.</p> <p>(c) Activities of engaging in the operation of international trade or other business at a public or private organization in Japan designated by the Minister of Justice or to manage said business or, in conjunction with such activities, activities of a business personally managed by the highly-skilled professional associated with these activities.</p> <p>(ii)</p> <p>The following activities which meet the criteria specified by an Ordinance of the Ministry of Justice where the residence of</p> | <p>A foreign national within the scope eligible for a decision on the status for work who has earned points for each of the items of "academic background," "professional career" and "annual salary," etc., and whose total number of points reaches a certain score (70 points).</p> <p>(e.g.) When a foreign national has a master's degree (20 points), has 10 years of work experience as an engineer (20 points), is 36 years old (5 points), and is engaged in system development work with an annual salary of seven million yen (25 points).</p> | 5 years for Highly-Skilled Professional (i) and unlimited for Highly-Skilled Professional (ii) |

|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | <p>the person engaging in the activities given in the previous item contributes to the interests of Japan.</p> <p>(a) Activities of engaging in research, research guidance or education based on a contract entered into with a public or private organization in Japan.</p> <p>(b) Activities of engaging in work requiring specialized knowledge or skills in the field of natural sciences or humanities based on a contract entered into with a public or private organization in Japan.</p> <p>(c) Activities of engaging in the operation of international trade or other business at a public or private organization in Japan or to manage said business.</p> <p>(d) Activities (except for the activities corresponding to any of (a) through to (c)) listed in the column from "Professor" to "Journalist" as specified in Table I (1), or the activities listed in the column corresponding to the sections of "Legal/Accounting Services," "Medical Services," "Instructor," "Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services," "Entertainer," the section of "Skilled Labor" or the section of "Specified Skilled Worker (ii)" in this table in conjunction with any of the activities from (a) through to (c).</p> |  |  |
| Business Manager   | Activities to engage in the operation of international trade or other business in Japan or to manage said business (except for activities to engage in the operation or management of business which may not be legally conducted without the qualification given in the column of "Legal/Accounting Services").   | Manager or operator of a company, etc.   | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year, 6 months, 4 months or 3 months |
| Legal/Accounting Services                                | Activities to engage in legal or accounting business which may lawfully only be carried out by registered foreign lawyers (gaikokuhou-jimubengoshi), or certified public accountants (gaikokukoninkaikeishi) or those with other legal qualifications.   | Attorney or certified public accountant  | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                     |
| Medical Services   | Activities to engage in medical treatment services which may lawfully only be undertaken by physicians, dentists or those with other legal qualifications.   | Physician, dentist or registered nurse   | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                     |
| Researcher   | Activities to engage in research based on a contract with a public or private organization in Japan (except for the activities listed in the "Professor" column of Table I (1)).   | Researcher at a government-related institution or company  | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                     |
| Instructor   | Activities to engage in language instruction or other education at an elementary school, junior high school, compulsory education school, senior high school, school for secondary education (chutokyoikugakko), school for special needs education, vocational school (senshugakko), miscellaneous category school (kakushugakko) or other educational institution equivalent to a miscellaneous educational institution in facilities and curriculum.  | Language instructor at a high school or junior high school   | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                     |
| Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services | Activities to engage in services which require specialized skills or knowledge pertinent to the field of physical science, engineering or other natural science fields or to the field of jurisprudence, economics, sociology or other humanities fields or to engage in services which require specific ways of thinking or sensitivity acquired through experience with a foreign culture (except for the activities listed in the right-hand column of the "Professor," "Artist" and "Journalist" sections in Table (1), and the activities listed in the right-hand column of the "Business Manager" to "Instructor" sections, and the "Intra-company Transferee" section in this Table) based on a contract entered into with a public or private organization in Japan.  | Engineers such as of mechanical engineering, interpreters, designers, language teachers of private companies, and employees engaged in the marketing field, etc. | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                     |
| Intra-company Transferee                                 | Activities on the part of personnel who is transferred to a business office in Japan for a limited period of time from a business office established in a foreign country by a public or private organization which has head office, branch office or other business office in Japan, and who engages in the activities listed in the "Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services" column of this Table at the business office.  | Transferee from an office abroad   | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                     |
| Nursing Care   | Activities of a person qualified as a certified care worker to engage in nursing care or the instructions of nursing care based on a contract with a public or private organization in Japan   | Certified Care Worker  | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months                     |
| Entertainer  | Activities to engage in theatrical performances, musical performances, sports or any other show form of business (except for the activities listed in the "Business Manager" column of this Table).  | Actor, singer, dancer, or professional athlete   | 3 years, 1 year, 6 months, 3 months or 15days            |

|                           |  |   |   |
|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| Skilled Labor             | Activities to engage in services which require industrial techniques or skills belonging to special fields based on a contract with a public or private organization in Japan.   | Chef of foreign cuisine, sports instructor, aircraft pilot, or craftsman of precious metals   | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 3 months  |
| Specified Skilled Worker  | <p>(i) Activities to engage in work requiring skills that need a considerable degree of knowledge or experience provided for in the applicable Order for the Ministry of Justice belonging to a specified industrial field (meaning the specified industrial field designated in the applicable Order of the Ministry of Justice where the securing of human resources to supplement the shortage of labor by employing foreign nationals is required due to difficulty in securing human resources; hereinafter the same shall apply in the same item) designated by the Minister of Justice based on a contract (limited to those conforming to the provisions of Article 2-5, paragraph (1) through to paragraph (4); hereinafter the same shall apply in the following item) concerning employment entered into with a public or private organization in Japan designated by the Minister of Justice.</p> <p>(ii) Activities to engage in work requiring the proficient skills provided for in the applicable Order for the Ministry of Justice belonging to a specified industrial field designated by the Minister of Justice based on a contract concerning employment entered into with a public or private organization in Japan designated by the Minister of Justice.</p>   | <p>(i) Foreign nationals engaging in work requiring skills which need considerable knowledge or experience belonging to specified industrial fields.</p> <p>(ii) Foreign nationals engaging in work requiring proficient skills belonging to specified industrial fields.</p> | <p>(i) Period designated individually by the Minister of Justice (1 year or less)</p> <p>(ii) 3 years, 1 year or 6 months</p>   |
| Technical Intern Training | <p>(i) Activities that fall under either of the following items (a) or (b)</p> <p>(a) Activities to attend lectures and engage in work pertaining to skills, technologies or knowledge (hereinafter referred to as "skills, etc.") based on the technical intern training plan (limited to those pertaining to individual-enterprise-type technical intern training (i) provided for in Article 2, paragraph (2), item (i) of the Act on Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Intern Trainees (Act No. 89 of 2016; hereinafter referred to as "Technical Intern Training Act" ) ) prescribed in Article 8, paragraph (1) of the Technical Intern Training Act, having received the accreditation set forth under the same paragraph (if approval of the change has been given in accordance with the provisions of Article 11, paragraph (1) of the Technical Intern Training Act, even after such change; the same shall apply hereinafter).</p> <p>(b) Activities to attend lectures and engage in work pertaining to skills, etc. based on the Technical intern training plan (limited to those pertaining to supervising-organization-type technical intern training (i) provided for in Article 2, paragraph (4), item (i) of the Technical Intern Training Act) prescribed in Article 8, paragraph (1) of the Technical Intern Training Act, having received the accreditation set forth under the same paragraph.</p> <p>(ii) Activities that fall under either of the following items (a) or (b)</p> <p>(a) Activities to engage in work requiring the skills, etc. based on the technical intern training plan (limited to those pertaining to individual-enterprise-type technical intern training (ii) provided for in Article 2, paragraph (2), item (ii) of the Technical Intern Training Act) prescribed in Article 8, paragraph (1) of the Technical Intern Training Act, having received the accreditation set forth under the same paragraph.</p> <p>(b) Activities to engage in work requiring the skills, etc. based on the technical intern training plan (limited to those pertaining to supervising-organization-type technical intern training (ii) provided for in Article 2, paragraph (4), item (ii) of the Technical Intern Training Act) prescribed in Article 8, paragraph (1) of the Technical Intern Training Act, having received the accreditation set forth under the same paragraph.</p> <p>(iii) Activities that fall under either of the following items (a) or (b)</p> <p>(a) Activities to engage in work requiring the skills, etc. based on the technical intern training plan (limited to those pertaining to individual-enterprise-type technical intern training (iii) provided for in Article 2, paragraph (2), item (iii) of the Technical Intern Training Act) prescribed in Article 8, paragraph (1) of the Technical Intern Training Act, having received the accreditation</p> | Technical intern trainees   | <p>(i) Period designated individually by the Minister of Justice (1 year or less)</p> <p>(ii) and (iii) Period designated individually by the Minister of Justice (2 years or less)</p> |



|  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
|  | set forth under the same paragraph.<br>(b) Activities to engage in work requiring the skills, etc. based on the technical intern training plan (limited to those pertaining to supervising-organization-type technical intern training (iii) provided for in Article 2, paragraph (4), item (iii) of the Technical Intern Training Act) prescribed in Article 8, paragraph (1) of the Technical Intern Training Act, having received the accreditation set forth under the same paragraph. |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|

(3)

| Status of Residence | Authorized activities   | Examples                          | Period of Stay   |
|---------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|
| Cultural Activities | Academic or artistic activities that provide no income, or activities engaged in for the purpose of pursuing specific Japanese cultural or artistic studies, or for the purpose of learning and acquiring Japanese culture or arts under the guidance of experts (except for activities listed in the columns from "Student" to "Trainee" in this Table I (4)). | Researcher of Japanese culture    | 3 years, 1 year, 6 months or 3 months                    |
| Temporary Visitor   | Sightseeing, recreation, sports, visiting relatives, inspection tours, participating in lectures or meetings, business contact or other similar activities during a short period of stay in Japan.  | Tourist or conference participant | 90 days, 30 days, 15 days or period of less than 15 days |

(4)

| Status of Residence | Authorized activities  | Examples   | Period of Stay   |
|---------------------|--|--|--|
| Student             | Activities to receive education at a university, technical school (kotosenmongakko), senior high school (including the second half of a course of study at a school for secondary education (chutokyoikugakko)), senior high school course of a school for special needs education (tokubetsushiengakko), junior high school (including the second half of a course of a compulsory education school (gimukyoikugakko) and the first half of a course of study at a school for secondary education (chutokyoikugakko)) or a junior high school course of a school for special needs education (tokubetsushiengakko), elementary school (including the first half of a course of study in a compulsory education school (gimukyoikugakko)) or an elementary school course of a school for special needs education (tokubetsushiengakko), vocational school (senshugakko), miscellaneous category school (kakushugakko) or an equivalent educational institution in terms of facilities and organization in Japan. | A university student, a junior college student, a student at a college of technology (kotosenmongakko), a senior high school student, a junior high school student or an elementary school student | Period designated individually by the Minister of Justice (4 years and 3 months or less) |
| Trainee             | Activities to acquire skills at a public or a private organization in Japan (except for the activities listed in the "Technical Intern Training (i)" column of Table I (2) and "Student" column of this Table).  | Trainee  | 1 year, 6 months or 3 months   |
| Dependent           | Daily activities on the part of the spouse or unmarried minor supported by the foreign national staying in Japan with the status of residence referred to in the columns in Table I (1), (2) and (3) (except for "Diplomat," "Official," "Specified Skilled Worker (limited to those pertaining to "Specified Skilled Worker (i)" of Table I (2))," "Technical Intern Training" and "Temporary Visitor") or staying with the status of residence of "Student" in this Table.   | Spouse or child who is a dependent of a residing foreign national  | Period designated individually by the Minister of Justice (5 years or less)              |

(5)

| Status of Residence   | Authorized activities  | Examples  | Period of Stay   |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|
| Designated Activities | Activities which are specifically designated by the Minister of Justice for foreign individuals. | Domestic help for a diplomat, individual on a working holiday, or nurse and certified caretaker candidates under the Economic Partnership Agreement | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year, 6 months, 3 months or a term designated by the Minister of Justice (5 years or less) |

Appended Table II

| Status of Residence                   | Authorized activities  | Examples  | Period of Stay   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Permanent Resident                    | Those who are permitted permanent residence by the Minister of Justice.  | Individual who is permitted permanent residence by the Minister of Justice (except for special permanent residents of the Special Act on the Immigration Control)                     | Unlimited  |
| Spouse or Child of Japanese National  | The spouses of Japanese nationals, those born as the children of Japanese nationals or children adopted by Japanese nationals pursuant to the provisions of Article 817-2 of the Civil Code (Law No.89 of 1896). | Spouse or child of a Japanese national, or child adopted by a Japanese national in accordance with the provisions of Article 817-2 of the Civil Code                                  | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 6 months   |
| Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident | The spouses of permanent residents, etc. or those born as the children of permanent residents, etc. in Japan and who have continued to reside in Japan.  | Spouse of a permanent resident or Special Permanent Resident, or biological child of a permanent resident or Special Permanent Resident who was born and continues to reside in Japan | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year or 6 months   |
| Long-Term Resident                    | Those who are authorized to reside in Japan with a period of stay designated by the Minister of Justice in consideration of special circumstances.   | Refugees accepted for third-country resettlement, Japanese descent, etc.  | 5 years, 3 years, 1 year, 6 months or a term designated by the Minister of Justice (5 years or less) |

## 2 Examination of the Status of Residence

If a foreign national residing in Japan wishes to stay for a new purpose that differs from the initial purpose of residence or wishes to continue to stay in Japan even after the expiration of the initial period of stay granted for his or her status of residence, he or she is required to file an application in accordance with the Immigration Control Act, and to obtain permission. In detail, (1) permission for change of the status of residence; (2) permission for extension of the period of stay; (3) permission for permanent residence; (4) permission for acquisition of a status of residence; (5) re-entry permission; and (6) permission to engage in an activity other than that permitted under the status of residence previously granted; and the task of making these decisions is called examination of the status of residence.

The permission of (1) to (4) is decided by the Minister of Justice (the Commissioner of the ISA as commissioned by the Minister of Justice or the Director of the Regional Immigration Services Bureau as commissioned by the Commissioner of the ISA), and the permission of (5) and (6) is decided by the Commissioner of the ISA (the Director of the Regional Immigration Services Bureau as commissioned by the Commissioner of the ISA) (Article 69-2 of the Immigration Control Act).

### (1) Permission for Change of Status of Residence

If a foreign national staying in Japan wishes to change the activities in which he or she is to engage in Japan, he or she will need to apply for permission for change of the status of residence before engaging in any new activities and obtain permission for a change to



the status of residence corresponding to the new activities (Article 20 of the Immigration Control Act).

Application for permission to change the status of residence  
(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/16-2.html>)

## (2) Permission for Extension of the Period of Stay

If a foreign national residing in Japan wishes to continue to stay in Japan even after the expiration of his or her period of stay without changing the status of residence currently possessed by him or her, he or she will need to apply for permission to extend the period of stay before the expiration of his or her period of stay and obtain permission for extension of the period of stay (Article 21 of the Immigration Control Act).

Application for permission to extend the period of stay  
(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/16-3.html>)

## (3) Permission for Permanent Residence

The status of permanent residence is granted when certain conditions are met by a foreign national staying in Japan under some other status of residence, who applies for permanent residence permission, or by a foreign national who applies to acquire permanent residence due to birth or renouncement of Japanese nationality (Article 22 of the Immigration Control Act)<sup>(\*1,\*2)</sup>.

Application for permission for permanent residence  
(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/16-4.html>)

## (4) Permission for Acquisition of a Status of Residence

If a foreign national who was born in Japan or renounced Japanese nationality to obtain a foreign nationality, or lost his or her status as a member of the United States armed forces as defined in Article 1 of the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement who is not required to possess any status of residence, seeks to continue to stay in Japan beyond 60 days, he or she will need to apply for permission for acquisition of a status of residence within 30 days of the day on which such grounds occurred and to obtain permission for acquisition of a status of residence (Article 22-2 of the Immigration Control Act).

Application for permission to acquire a status of residence  
(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/16-10.html>)

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(\*1) In order to receive permission for permanent residence, the following requirements must be met: (i) the applicant's behavior and conduct must be good; and (ii) the applicant must have sufficient assets or skills to make an independent living, and (iii) the permanent residence of the foreign national must be deemed to be in accordance with the interests of Japan. However, a spouse or child of a Japanese national, a permanent resident or a special permanent resident does not need to satisfy requirements (i) and (ii).

(\*2) The ISA (formerly the Immigration Bureau) established its Guidelines for Contributions to Japan on March 31, 2005, and published them on the website of the ISA. In addition, the ISA has posted examples of the cases where contributions were recognized and permission for permanent residence was granted, as well as the cases where permission was not granted on its website. In addition, on March 31, 2006, the ISA laid down the "Guidelines on Permission for Permanent Residence" and published general requirements relating to permission for permanent residence as well as the standard relating to the length of residence. ([https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyukan\\_nyukan62-1.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyukan_nyukan62-1.html)).

## (5) Re-entry Permission

If a foreign national residing in Japan seeks to temporarily depart from Japan and re-enter Japan, he or she may depart from Japan and re-enter Japan with the status of residence and the period of stay currently possessed by him or her, without taking other steps to apply for a new visa as long as he or she receives permission for re-entry in advance (Article 26 of the Immigration Control Act).

In addition, from July 9, 2012, if a mid to long-term resident (see Section 4 Subsection 1 below) re-enters Japan within one year of departure in possession of a valid passport and residence card, or if a special permanent resident re-enters Japan within two years of departure in possession of a valid passport and special permanent resident certificate, in principle, he or she is not required to obtain permission for re-entry in advance (Article 26-2 of the Immigration Control Act, Article 23 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control).

Moreover, from January 1, 2015, if a foreign national who entered Japan on being granted the status of residence of "Temporary Visitor" re-enters Japan on a cruise ship (designated passenger ship) within 15 days of the departure of the designated passenger ship whose route takes it from Japan to another country and then back to Japan, he or she is not required, in principle, to receive permission for re-entry (Article 26-3 of the Immigration Control Act).

In addition, with regard to the Embarkation Cards for Foreign Nationals which previously had to be submitted at the time of departure, since it is possible to confirm the identity of the foreign national using the passport, etc. presented by the foreign national, a revision was made so that from April 1, 2016, the submission of the card is no longer required except for foreign nationals intending to re-enter the country, etc. (Article 27, etc. of the Regulation for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act).

Application for permission to re-enter Japan

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/16-5.html>)

## (6) Permission to Engage in an Activity other than those Permitted by the Status of Residence Previously Granted

A foreign national who is granted a status of residence according to the activities in which he or she is engaged must receive permission to engage in an activity other than those permitted by the status of residence previously granted in advance if he or she wishes to engage in activities "related to the management of business involving income or activities for which he or she receives remuneration, which are not included in those activities under his or her category of status of residence." A typical example is that of an international student who wishes to have a part-time job. The Minister of Justice will give permission to the extent that the extra activity does not interfere with the original activity that is the main purpose of his or her residence (Article 19, paragraph (2) of the Immigration Control Act).

Since July 9, 2012, it has become possible for any person who has been granted the status of residence of "Student" (except for foreign nationals who have been granted a period of stay of three months and foreign nationals who entered Japan with re-entry permission) at landing examination to apply for permission to engage in an activity other than that permitted under the status of residence previously granted immediately after the status is granted to him or her on the spot.

Application for permission to engage in an activity other than that permitted under the status of residence previously granted

(<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/procedures/16-8.html>).

## Section 4

# Residency Management System of Mid to Long-Term Residents, etc.

### 1 Residency Management System of Mid to Long-Term Residents

The residency management system for mid to long-term residents is a system enabling the Commissioner of the ISA to accurately and continuously keep track of the information necessary for the residency management of foreign nationals who are residing in Japan for a mid to long-term with a status of residence. Under this system, a residence card will be issued to mid to long-term residents accordance with the permission pertaining to the foreign national's status such as the permission for landing, permission for change of the status of residence and permission for extension of period of stay. Since important items of information kept by the Commissioner of the ISA are given on the residence card, notification of a change is required to be given in the event of a change arising in the described matters, and therefore the latest information is reflected at all times on the card.

In addition, in order to accurately and continuously keep track of the information necessary for residency management, mid to long-term residents are required to give notification of the organization of affiliation, etc. to which they belong, and notifications on information are also accepted from the organization of affiliation of the mid to long-term resident.

In further detail, mid to long-term residents refer to foreign nationals who do not come under any of the following items (i) through (vi) (Article 19-3 of the Immigration Control Act):

- (i) Persons granted permission to stay for three months or less,
- (ii) Persons granted the status of residence of "Temporary Visitor,"
- (iii) Persons granted the status of residence of "Diplomat" or "Official,"
- (iv) Persons recognized by the Ordinance of the MOJ as equivalent to the foreign nationals mentioned above (i) to (iii) (specifically, the staff of the Japanese office of the Association of Taiwan-Japan Relations (Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan, etc.) and the Permanent General Mission of Palestine in Japan who have the status of residence of "Designated Activities," and their families),
- (v) Special permanent residents,
- (vi) Persons with no status of residence.

#### (1) Residence Card

The residence card contains important information kept by the Commissioner of the ISA, such as the name, date of birth, sex, nationality/region, place of residence, status of residence, period of stay, whether the holder is restrictions on employment or not (and for those aged 16 or older, a facial image). As a measure to prevent forgery, the residence card embeds an IC chip in which all or some of the matters described on the face of the card are recorded (Article 19-4 of the Immigration Control Act).



tion at the office of the municipality where the new place of residence is located, bringing his or her residence card, etc., within 14 days of the day on which he or she moved into the new place of residence (Article 19-9 of the Immigration Control Act).

## **B. Notification of a Change of an Item on the Residence Card**

If a change occurs in the name, date of birth, sex or nationality/region, the mid to long-term resident is required to give notification of the change to the Commissioner of the ISA through the Regional Immigration Services Bureau within 14 days of the occurrence of the change (Article 19-10 of the Immigration Control Act).

## **C. Application to Extend the Valid Period of the Residence Card**

Foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Permanent Resident” or “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii),” or mid to long-term residents whose residence card is due to expire on the mid to long-term resident’s 16th birthday are required to submit an application for extension of the period of validity of the residence card to the Commissioner of the ISA at the Regional Immigration Services Bureau within the period for extension (the period from two months before the expiration date of the residence card to the expiration date (if the expiration date of the period of validity is the 16th birthday, the period from six months before the expiration date to the expiration date) (Article 19-11 of the Immigration Control Act).<sup>(\*)</sup>

If, however, it is difficult to apply for an extension of the valid period of the residence card within the extension application period for any unavoidable causes, such as long-term medical treatment or a long-term overseas business trip, an application for extension of the valid period of the residence card may be submitted even before the extension application period.

## **D. Application for Reissuance of a Residence Card Due to Loss or Other Causes**

If a mid to long-term resident is no longer in possession of a residence card due to loss, theft, damage or some other causes, he or she is required to submit an application for reissuance of the residence card to the Commissioner of the ISA through the Regional Immigration Services Bureau within 14 days of becoming aware of such fact (if the foreign national was away from Japan when he or she became aware of such fact, the first day of entry into Japan following such discovery) (Article 19-12 of the Immigration Control Act).

## **E. Application for Reissuance of a Residence Card Due to Damage or Soiling, etc.**

If the residence card in the possession of the foreign national has been substantially damaged or soiled, or the data in the IC chip of the residence card has been damaged, an application for reissuance of the residence card may be submitted to the Commissioner of the ISA at the Regional Immigration Services Bureau. However, in cases where a foreign national has received an order from the Commissioner of the ISA to file an application for reissuance of a residence card because his or her residence card has been substantially damaged or soiled, or the data in the IC chip embedded in his or her residence card has been damaged, he or she must file an application for reissuance of a residence card with the Commissioner of the

(\*) As for residence cards issued from November 1 2023 onwards, "16th birthday" has been replaced with "the day before 16th birthday".



ISA at the Regional Immigration Services Bureau, within 14 days of the day of receiving the order.

If the holder of the residence card wishes to exchange his or her residence card, he or she is able to apply for reissuance even if the residence card has not been damaged or otherwise soiled (Article 19-13 of the Immigration Control Act).

The payment of a fee of 1,600 yen is required, in this case, for issuance of the residence card.

### (3) ISA's Seiji Search System

The name given in the residence card and the special permanent resident certificate, in principle, should be given using the Roman letters, but in certain cases such as where a request is made by the foreign national, the name may be indicated in kanji together with or in place of the Roman letters.

With regard to the indication of names using kanji characters in the residence card and the special permanent resident certificate, in accordance with the Public Notice on the Indication of Kanji Character Names in the Residence Cards and Other Certificates (MOJ Public Notice No. 582 of 2011), the characters were specified as within the scope of seiji characters<sup>(\*)</sup>, while simplified characters (referring to Chinese simplified letters and Taiwanese traditional letters which do not match the seiji characters) may be used by replacing them with characters within the range of seiji characters.

Therefore, the ISA introduced "the ISA's Seiji Search System," which enables a simple search of kanji names given in the residence card, etc. based on the character codes of simplified characters on July 1, 2013, and made it available for use on the ISA's website (<http://lapse-immi.moj.go.jp:50122/>).

### (4) Notification Concerning the Organization of Affiliation or Concerning the Spouse (Reference 101)

#### A. Notification from a Mid to Long-Term Resident Concerning the Organization of Affiliation

##### (a) Notification Concerning the Organization Where the Foreign National is Engaging in Activities (public or private organizations in Japan at which the activities corresponding to the status of residence are carried out)

If a change occurs in the name or location of an organization where a mid to long-term resident who is residing in Japan with the status of residence of "Professor," "Highly-Skilled Professional (i)-(c)," "Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)" (in cases of engaging in the activities listed in item (ii)-(c) of the right-hand column corresponding to "Highly-Skilled Professional" as specified in the Appended Table I (2) of the Immigration Control Act), "Business Manager," "Legal/Accounting Services," "Medical Services," "Instructor," "Intra-company Transferee," "Technical Intern Training," "Student" or "Trainee," is engaging in activities or the organization where the mid to long-term resident is engaging activities is extinguished or the mid to long-term resident leaves the employment of the organization or moves to another organization, he or she is required to notify the Commissioner of the

(\*) Refers to the Japanese character repertoire part of X0221 of the Industrial Standardization Act (Act No. 185 of 1949) (subset specifying the characters commonly used in Japan) and the kanji characters of the Appended Table I of the MOJ Public Notice.

ISA of such changes within 14 days (Article 19-16, item (i) of the Immigration Control Act).

**(b) Notification Concerning the Contracting Organization (public or private organizations in Japan which are the other party to the contract)**

If a change arises in the name or location of a contracting organization, the contracting organization is extinguished, or the contract with the contracting organization ends or a new contract is entered into, the mid to long-term resident residing in Japan with the status of residence of “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)-(a),” “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)-(b),” “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)” (in cases of engaging in the activities listed in item (ii)-(a) or (b) of the right-hand column corresponding to “Highly-Skilled Professional” as specified in the Appended Table I (2) of the Immigration Control Act), “Researcher,” “Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services,” “Nursing Care,” “Entertainer” (limited to cases where the foreign national is engaging in activities based on a contract with a public or private organization in Japan), “Skilled Labor” or “Specified Skilled Worker” is required to notify the Commissioner of the ISA of such changes within 14 days (Article 19-16, item (ii) of the Immigration Control Act).

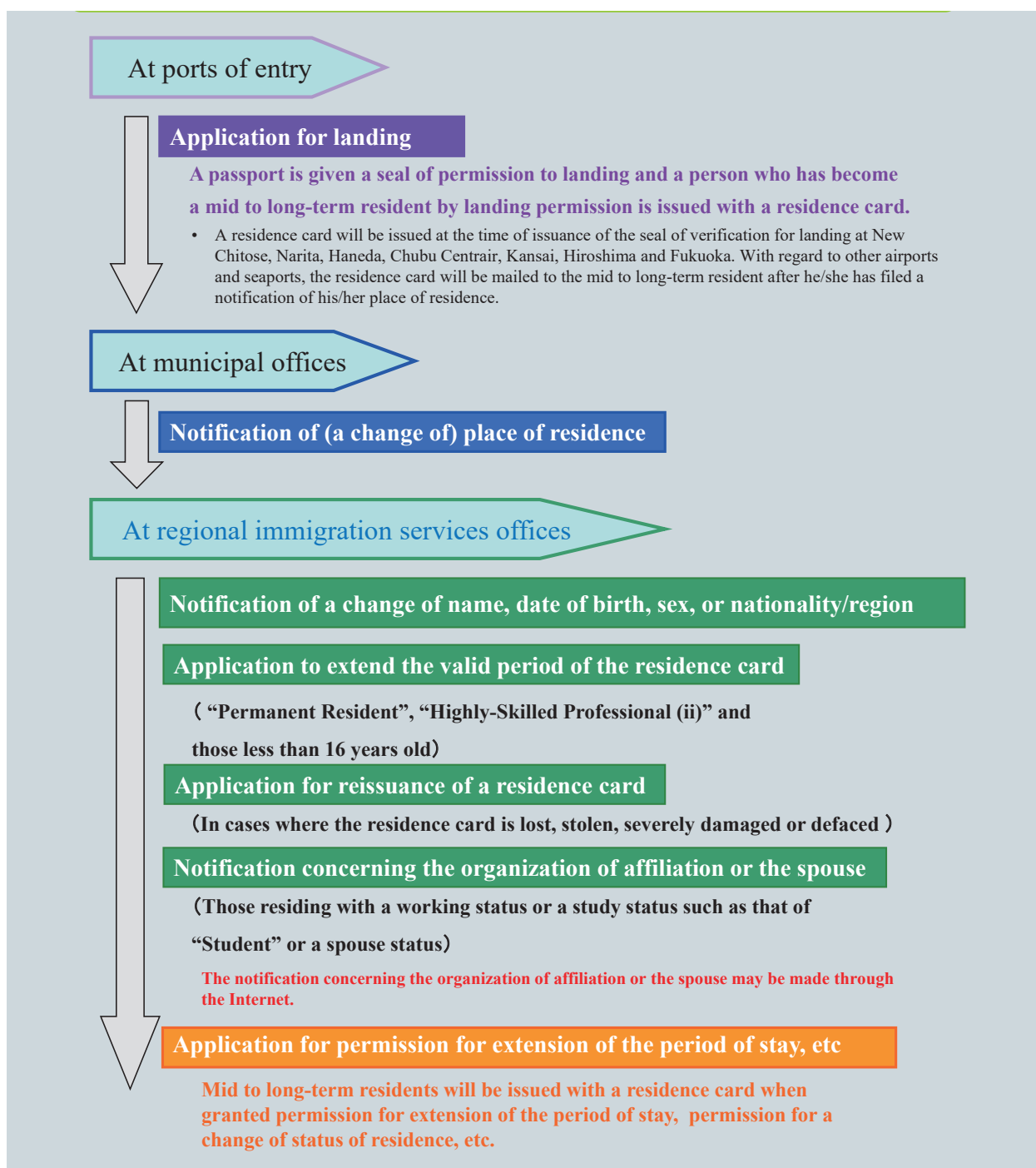
**(c) Notification Concerning the Spouse of the Foreign National**

If a mid to long-term resident residing in Japan with the status of residence of “Dependent,” “Spouse or Child of Japanese National” or “Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident,” who has the status of a spouse, is separated from his or her spouse due to divorce or death, he or she is required to notify the Commissioner of the ISA of such changes within 14 days (Article 19-16, item (iii) of the Immigration Control Act).

**B. Notification Concerning Mid to Long-Term Residents to be Given by the Organization of Affiliation**

Public and private organizations in Japan (except for those employers who are required to notify the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (1) of Article 28 of the Revised Employment Measures Act), which accept mid to long-term residents residing with the status of residence of “Professor,” “Highly-Skilled Professional,” “Business Manager,” “Legal/Accounting Services,” “Medical Services,” “Researcher,” “Instructor,” “Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services,” “Intra-company Transferee,” “Nursing Care,” “Entertainer,” “Skilled Labor,” “Student” or “Trainee” are required to endeavor to notify the Commissioner of the ISA of the commencement and end of the acceptance of the mid to long-term resident and other matters relating to the status of acceptance (Article 19-17 of the Immigration Control Act).

## Reference 101 Procedural flow of the residency management system of mid to long-term residents



### C. Notifications to be submitted by the organization of affiliation of specified skilled workers (public or private organizations in Japan that accept foreign nationals residing with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” or “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)”)

#### (a) Irregular notifications

In cases where the organization of affiliation of specified skilled workers changes or terminates the contract for employment of specified skilled workers or enters into a new procedural flow of the residency management system of mid to long-term residents contract for specified skilled workers, changes the contract for support of foreign nationals with



the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i),” enters into a contract entrusting all of the support plans for foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” to a registered support organization (described later) or changes or terminates such contract or it has become difficult to accept specified skilled workers or it has become aware of misconduct, it is required to notify the Commissioner of the ISA of the reason thereof within 14 days (Article 19-18, paragraph(1) of the Immigration Control Act).

#### **(b) Regular notifications**

The organization of affiliation of specified skilled workers is required to notify the Commissioner of the ISA of the matters relating to the situation of acceptance of specified skilled workers, the matters relating to the situation of implementation of the support plans for foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and the matter relating to the situation of activities once every quarter within 14 days of the first day of the following quarter (Article 19-18, paragraph (2) of the Immigration Control Act).

### **D. Notifications to be submitted by the registered support organization (a person who has registered as a person to perform all of the work of implementation of the support plans for foreign nationals with the status of residence of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” having been entrusted through a contract)**

#### **(a) Irregular notifications**

The registered support organization is required to notify the Commissioner of the ISA of the reason thereof within 14 days if any changes are made to its name or address, the name of the representative in the case of a juridical person, the location of the business office that performs the support services, the content of the support services, and implementation method, etc. or if the support services have been suspended or abolished. Also, it is required to notify the Commissioner of the ISA of the reason thereof in advance if the suspended support services are to be resumed (Article 19-27, paragraph (1), Article 19-29, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act; Article 19-23, paragraph (2) of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act).

#### **(b) Regular notifications**

The registered support organization is required to notify the Commissioner of the ISA of the situation of implementation of the support services, etc. once every quarter within 14 days of the first day of the following quarter (Article 19-30, paragraph (2) of the Immigration Control Act).

### **(5) Immigration Services Agency's Electronic Notification System**

The “Notification Concerning the Organization of Affiliation or Concerning the Spouse” (items of Article 19-16 of the Immigration Control Act) to be made by the mid to long-term resident, the “Notification by the Organization of Affiliation” (Article 19-17 of the Immigration Control Act) to be made by the organization of affiliation accepting the mid to long-term resident, “Notifications by an Organization of Affiliation of the Specified Skilled Worker” (Article 19-18 of the Immigration Control Act), “Notifications to be submitted by

the registered support organization” (Article 19-27, paragraph (1), Article 19-29, paragraph (1), Article 19-30, paragraph (2) of the Immigration Control Act ; Article 19-23, paragraph (2) of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act) and “Reports related to notification standards for Japanese language institutions” (Article 1, Paragraph (1), item (xxxviii) (xxxix) (xxxxiv) (xxxxv) and (xxxxvi) of the public notice criteria for the Japanese language education institutions) may be submitted directly to the Regional Immigration Services Bureau at the office or by mail, but in addition, it became possible to submit a notification via the Internet using the “Immigration Services Agency Electronic Notification System” ([https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/i-ens\\_index.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/i-ens_index.html)). Mid to long-term residents and the staff of the organizations of affiliation are able to access the electronic notification system using their own Internet environment and to make a notification and report by entering the necessary items. Furthermore, since this administrative services system is one which connects to outside users via the Internet, for the convenience of the user, a part of the screen is displayed in a variety of languages (Japanese, English, Chinese (simplified characters and traditional characters), Korean, Spanish, Portuguese and Tagalog).

Advantages of “the Immigration Services Agency’s Electronic Notification System” are as follows.

- (i) Foreign nationals do not have to go to the counter, but are able to make a notification using the Internet from their home or office and check the status of their notification.
- (ii) The use of the system is free of charge.
- (iii) A notification may be made 24 hours a day 365 days a year.
- (iv) Omissions of details will be checked automatically.
- (v) A bundled notification and report may be made for notifications and reports by the organization of affiliation, the Organization of Affiliation of the Specified Skilled Worker, registered support organization and the Japanese Language Education Institutions through use of the prescribed format.

The organization of affiliation which has registered the organization’s user information<sup>(\*)</sup> for using “the Immigration Services Agency’s Electronic Notification System” will be able to make a notification of a change in the name of the organization of affiliation or a change in the location in accordance with the provisions of Article 19-16 of the Immigration Control Act through use of the electronic notification system, upon a request being made by a mid to long-term resident who has also registered his or her user information, in place of such mid to long-term resident.

## (6) Inquiry into the Facts

The Commissioner of the ISA shall organize information relating to mid to long-term residents acquired in accordance with the provisions of the Immigration Control Act and other laws and shall keep the contents of the information accurate and up-to date in order to continuously keep track of the family relationships, residence-related matters and status of

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(\*) User information will have to be registered in order for a foreign national to be able to use “the Immigration Services Agency’s Electronic Notification System.” Mid to long-term residents will be able to acquire a user ID and password in order to log onto the system by entering and registering their identification details directly into the electronic notification system using their own Internet environment. In addition, by mailing or bringing an application of user information registration to the Regional Immigration Services Bureau with jurisdiction over the location of the organization of affiliation, the staff of the organization of affiliation will be able to obtain a user ID and password to log onto the system.

activities of the mid to long-term residents, etc., under the residency management system of mid to long-term residents. Therefore, the Commissioner of the ISA may, when necessary to continuously keep track of information relating to mid to long term residents, have his or her officers<sup>(\*)</sup> conduct an inquiry into the facts (Article 19-37 of the Immigration Control Act).

The inquiry into the facts provided for in Article 19-37 of the Immigration Control Act may be exercised within the extent necessary for the Commissioner of the ISA to be able to accurately keep track of the information necessary for the residency management of mid to long-term residents while bearing in mind the demands for protection of the personal information of mid to long-term residents such as restricting the scope of the investigation to the items of notification.

The inquiry of the facts uncovers imposter foreign residents through the compilation and analysis of the information on the Notified Foreign National Employment Status provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, etc. in addition to information reported by both mid to long-term residents and the organizations of affiliation and has led to effective countermeasures against imposter foreign residents.

## 2 The System of Special Permanent Residents

Persons who lost Japanese nationality at the time of effectuation of the Treaty of Peace with Japan but have been residing in Japan since before September 2, 1945 and persons who were born in Japan as their lineal descendants and have continued to reside in Japan are permitted to reside permanently in Japan as special permanent residents pursuant to the provisions of the Special Act on the Immigration Control, and special cases are permitted in the Immigration Control Act regarding the period of validity of the re-entry permission and the grounds for deportation.

### (1) Special Permanent Resident Certificate

The Commissioner of the ISA as a certificate to prove the foreign national's legal status as a special permanent resident, and the details to be described are restricted to the required minimum of the name, date of birth, sex, nationality/region, place of residence, number of the special permanent resident certificate, date of issuance and the expiration date of the period of validity (a facial photo will be given in the case of foreign nationals who are 16 years of age or above). In addition, an IC chip on which all or some of the matters described in the certificate are recorded is embedded in the special permanent resident certificate in order to prevent forgery (Article 8 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control).

(\*) "His or her officers" includes immigration inspectors, immigration control officers and other officers of the MOJ. However, the officers who are able to request the appearance of relevant persons and question them or who may request the presentation of documents are the immigration inspectors and the immigration control officers (Article 19-37, paragraph (2) of the Immigration Control Act), and the officers who are able to request necessary reports by making inquiries to public offices or private organizations are the Commissioner of the ISA, immigration inspectors and immigration control officers (paragraph (3) of the same Article).



Front of Special permanent resident certificate



Back of Special permanent resident certificate

## (2) Notifications and Applications Relating to Special Permanent Resident Certificates

### A. Notifications of the Place of Residence <sup>(\*1)</sup>

If a special permanent resident who has been issued with a special permanent resident certificate which does not describe the place of residence changes his or her place of residence, he or she is required to notify the Commissioner of the ISA of the place of residence upon submitting his or her special permanent resident certificate to the counter of the office of municipality with jurisdiction over the place of residence (if he or she has changed the place of the residence, the new one) within 14 days of the date of establishing the new place of residence (Article 10 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control).

### B. Notification of a Change of an Item on the Special Permanent Resident Certificate Other Than the Place of Residence

If a change has arisen in the name, date of birth, sex or nationality/region, the special permanent resident is required to submit a notification of the change to the Commissioner of the ISA at the counter of the municipality with jurisdiction over the residential place within 14 days of the occurrence of the change (Article 11 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control).

### C. Application to Extend the Valid Period of the Special Permanent Resident Certificate

The special permanent resident is required to submit an application for extension of the valid period of the special permanent resident certificate to the Commissioner of the ISA at the counter of the office of municipality with jurisdiction over the residential place within the application period (from two months (six months if the valid period is until the 16th birthday) prior to the expiry date of the valid period of the special permanent resident certificate until the expiry date of the valid period of the special permanent resident certificate) until the expiry date of the valid period. <sup>(\*2)</sup>

(\*1) If a special permanent resident has submitted a notification of moving in or a notification of transfer of residence pursuant to the Residential Basic Book Act, it is deemed that he or she submitted the "Notification of the place of residence" under the Special Act on the Immigration Control, and he or she is not required to give further notification of the place of residence.

(\*2) As for special permanent resident certificate issued from November 1 2023 onwards, "16th birthday" has been replaced with "the day before 16th birthday".

If, however, it is difficult to apply for an extension of the valid period of the residence card within the extension application period for any unavoidable causes, such as long-term medical treatment or a long-term overseas business trip, an application for extension of the valid period of the special permanent resident certificate may be submitted even before the extension application period (Article 12 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control).

#### **D. Application for Reissuance of a Special Permanent Resident Certificate Due to Loss or Other Causes**

If the special permanent resident is no longer in possession of the special permanent resident certificate due to loss, theft, destruction or some other causes, he or she is required to submit an application for reissuance of the special permanent resident certificate to the Commissioner of the ISA at the counter of the office of municipality with jurisdiction over the residential place within 14 days of becoming aware of such fact (if the foreign national was away from Japan when he or she became aware of such fact, the first day of entry into Japan following such discovery.) (Article 13 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control).

#### **E. Application for Reissuance of a Special Permanent Resident Certificate Due to Damage or Soiling, etc.**

If the special permanent resident certificate has been substantially damaged or soiled, or the data in the IC chip of the special permanent resident certificate have been damaged, the special permanent resident may submit an application for reissuance of the special permanent resident certificate to the Commissioner of the ISA at the counter of the office of municipality with jurisdiction over the residential place.

If the special permanent resident receives an order on an application for reissuance of the special permanent resident certificate from the Commissioner of the ISA owing to the special permanent resident certificate being substantially damaged or soiled, or the data in the IC chip of the special permanent resident certificate being damaged, he or she is required to submit an application for reissuance of the special permanent resident certificate to the Commissioner of the ISA at the counter of the office of municipality with jurisdiction over the residential place within 14 days of receiving such an order.

Moreover, if the special permanent resident wishes to exchange the special permanent resident certificate, he or she may submit an application for reissuance even if the special permanent resident certificate has not been damaged or otherwise soiled (Article 14 of the Special Act on the Immigration Control). The payment of a fee of 1,600 yen is required, in this case, for issuance of the special permanent resident certificate.

### **3 Information Linkage Between the ISA and the Municipalities**

On July 9, 2012, the Alien Registration Act was abolished and, at the same time, the Act for Partial Amendment (Act No. 77 of 2009) of the Residential Basic Book Act (Act No. 81 of 1967; hereinafter referred to as "Residential Basic Book Act") entered into force. Correspondingly, the Residential Basic Book Act came to be applied to foreign residents, and residence certificates are to be prepared for the foreign residents in the same manner as for Japanese residents by the office of municipality with jurisdiction over the residence of the foreign resident.

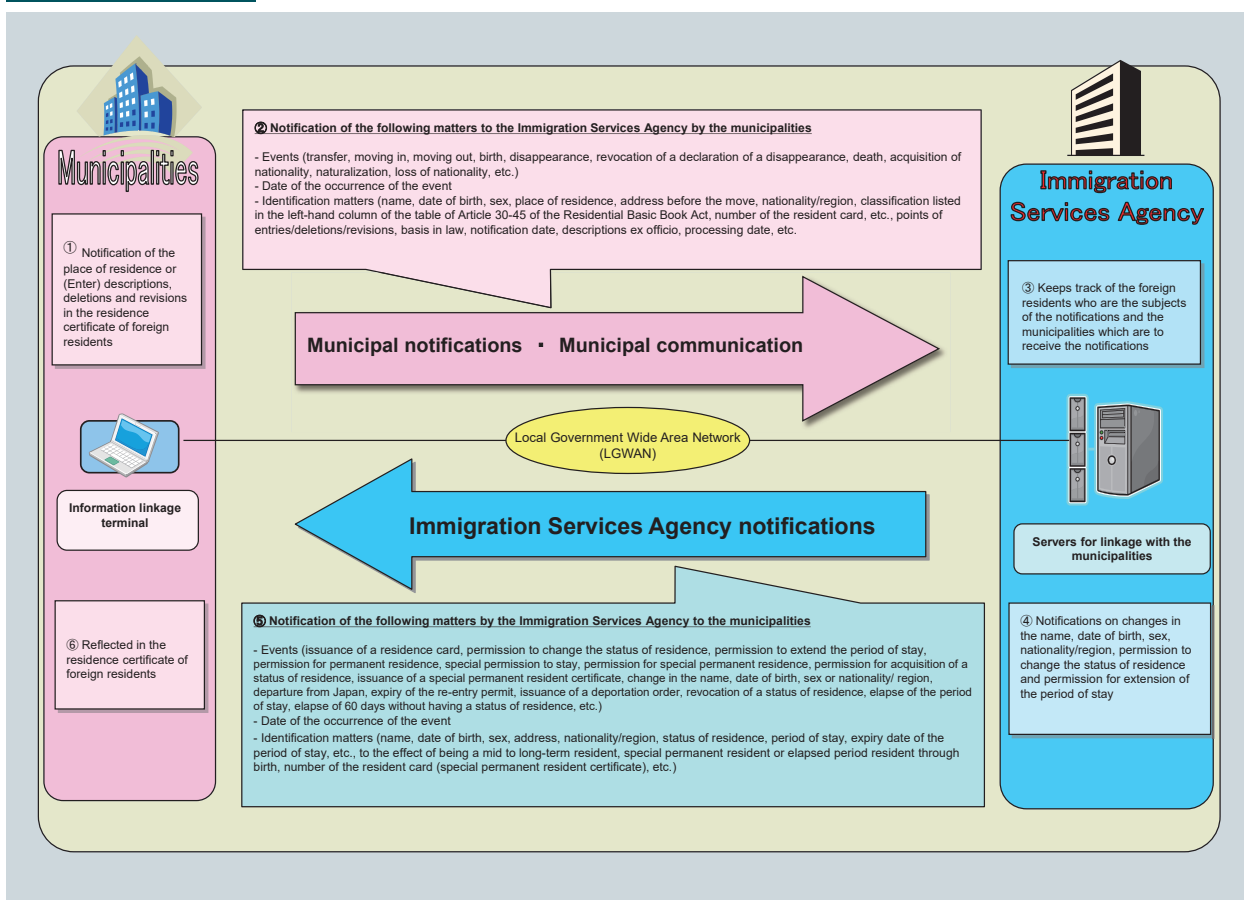
In order for the ISA to be able to continuously keep track of the information necessary



for fair residence management and for the municipal governments to be able to ensure that the records of the Residential Basic Books are accurate, linkage of information to be shared between them is carried out by using special-purpose terminals.

Specifically, if a change arises or an error comes to light in the prescribed items such as the matters of identification or status of residence with regard to a foreign resident, the ISA notifies the mayor of the municipality which is keeping the Residential Basic Books in which the foreign resident is recorded to such effect without delay, and if an entry, deletion or revision of a described matter is made in the residential certificate pertaining to the foreign resident, the municipality immediately notifies the Commissioner of the ISA to such effect. (Reference 102).

**Reference 102** Information Linkage between the ISA and the Municipalities



## Section 5 Deportation Procedures for Foreign Nationals

In administering immigration control and residency management, it is necessary to achieve a balance in order to promote the smooth acceptance of foreign nationals on the one hand, and to maintain security and order in Japanese society by taking strict action against foreign nationals who threaten safety and security in Japan.

The deportation procedures for foreign nationals constitute a powerful administrative action where a foreign national who threatens safety and security in Japan is deported even if deportation is against the foreign national's will. In international customary law, deportation is left to the discretion of the State. In Japan, the grounds for deportation and the deportation procedures are provided for in the Immigration Control Act, and deportation is carried out based on these provisions.

Deportation procedures begin with an immigration control officer conducting an investigation, and is composed of three steps: namely, an examination by an immigration inspector, a hearing by a special inquiry officer, and a decision rendered by the Minister of Justice for the objection filed by the foreign national in order to ensure that the foreign national who is undergoing the deportation procedures will be given ample opportunity to contest the facts of the case or to assert his or her side as to why he or she should be permitted to stay, and to ensure that a decision is made after a careful examination of the facts ([Reference 103](#)).





## 1 Investigation into Violations by an Immigration Control Officer

An investigation into the violation by an immigration control officer is the first step in the deportation procedures for foreign nationals. As stipulated in Article 27 of the Immigration Control Act, an immigration control officer will conduct an investigation into the violation of a foreign national who is thought to come under one of the ground for deportation stipulated in each item of Article 24 of the Act (hereinafter referred to as “suspect”). If the immigration control officer determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that the suspect falls under one of the grounds, he or she may detain the suspect in accordance with a written detention order issued by a supervising immigration inspector<sup>(\*)</sup> following which the suspect will be handed over to an immigration inspector (Article 39 and Article 44 of the Immigration Control Act).

## 2 Examination of Violations by an Immigration Inspector/Hearing by a Special Inquiry Officer

An immigration inspector, on receiving the delivery of the suspect and the case, examines whether the case falls under one of the grounds for deportation (examination of the violations provided for in Article 45, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act). If the immigration inspector finds that a person is subject to deportation, the suspect who has an objection to such findings may request a hearing by a special inquiry officer (Article 48, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act).

In addition, if the special inquiry officer judges that the above findings are correct, the suspect who has an objection to the judgment may file an objection with the Minister of Justice (Article 49, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act).

## 3 Determinations by the Minister of Justice

The Minister of Justice makes a decision as to whether or not the objection is with reasonable grounds after receiving it (Article 49, paragraph (3) of the Immigration Control Act).

## 4 Grant or Denial of Permission for Residence

### (1) Denial of Permission for Residence (Deportation)

As the result of the procedures from examination of the violation to the final decision of the Minister of Justice (violation adjudication), a supervising immigration inspector will issue a written deportation order in case below:

- (i) Where the immigration inspector found that the foreign national had fallen under one of the grounds for deportation, and the foreign national has submitted to the findings (Article 45, paragraph (1) and Article 47, paragraph (5) of the Immigration Control Act).
- (ii) Where a foreign national, who was found to have fallen under one of the grounds for deportation, objected to the findings and requested a hearing by a special inquiry officer and, as a result of the hearing, the special inquiry officer found that there was no error in the findings, and the foreign national submitted to the findings (Article 48, paragraphs (1) and

(\*) This refers to a senior immigration inspector designated by the Commissioner of the ISA, who has the authority to issue a written detention order or written deportation order, provisional release or revocation thereof.

(9) of the Immigration Control Act).

(iii) If a foreign national who has an objection to the result of the hearing files an objection with the Minister of Justice, and as a result, it is determined that the objection is without reason (Article 49, paragraphs (1) and (6) of the Immigration Control Act).

In the violation adjudication procedures, if a foreign national is found not to fall under one of the grounds for deportation, the foreign national will be released immediately. And if a foreign national is found to fall under one of the grounds for deportation but satisfies the requirements for a departure order, the foreign national will be released immediately after the foreign national has been ordered to depart from Japan.

## (2) Special Cases of Determinations by the Minister of Justice (Special Permission to Stay in Japan)

Even if the Minister of Justice finds that the objection filed is without reason in the determination on the objection, the Minister of Justice may grant special permission to stay to the foreign national if such foreign national has obtained permission for permanent residence; the person once had a registered domicile in Japan as a Japanese national in the past; the person is residing in Japan under the control of another person due to trafficking in persons; or the Minister of Justice otherwise finds circumstances warranting the granting of special permission to stay ("Special Permission to Stay" as provided for in Article 50, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act).

## 5 Departure Order System

The departure order system is a system under which a foreign national in violation of the Immigration Control Act who has illegally stayed beyond the authorized period of stay <sup>(\*)</sup> may be deported from Japan through simplified procedures without being physically detained, provided that he or she satisfies certain requirements; and moreover, the period of denial of entry of a foreign national who has been deported from Japan under the departure order is one year.

A foreign national who has stayed in Japan beyond the authorized period of stay and who also satisfies all of the following requirements may be ordered to depart from Japan (Article 24-3 of the Immigration Control Act):

- (i) The foreign national has voluntarily appeared at an immigration services office.
- (ii) The foreign national does not fall under any of the grounds for deportation other than overstaying the authorized period of stay.
- (iii) The foreign national has not been sentenced to imprisonment with or without work on the charge of theft or other prescribed crimes after entering Japan.
- (iv) The foreign national has neither past record of deportation, nor that of departure by a departure order.
- (v) The foreign national is definitely expected to promptly depart from Japan.

(\*) Including "foreign nationals in violation of the condition of return to the ship in the landing permission for cruise ship tourists"

## Section 6 Refugee Recognition Procedures

### 1 Accession of the Refugee Convention

Japan accessed the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (“Refugee Convention”) on October 3, 1981 and the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (“Protocol”) on January 1, 1982, and accordingly established the system required for the refugee recognition procedures.

The Refugee Convention and the Protocol provide for the definition of refugees, and stipulate the rights and protection to be granted to refugees by the state parties.

### 2 Refugee Recognition Procedures (Reference 104)

#### (1) Definitions

Under the Japanese refugee recognition procedures, a “refugee” refers to a refugee as defined in Article 1 of the Refugee Convention or in Article 1 of the Protocol (Article 2, item (iii)-2 of the Immigration Control Act). Generally, a refugee is defined as a person who is outside the country of his or her nationality owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country.

#### (2) Permission for Provisional Stay

When a foreign national without a status of residence such as a person who has illegally stayed beyond the authorized period of stay applies for refugee recognition, for the purpose of stabilizing his or her legal status, he or she is permitted to provisionally stay in Japan if he or she meets certain requirements (Article 61-2-4, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act), and the deportation procedures are suspended during the period of the permission for provisional stay (Article 61-2-6, paragraph (2) of the Immigration Control Act).

The period of provisional stay is, in principle, six months (Article 56-2, paragraph (2) of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act) and, if an application for extension is filed prior to the expiration of the period of the provisional stay, that period will be extended (Article 61-2-4, paragraph (4) of the Immigration Control Act). However, various conditions will be imposed on the permission for provisional stay, such as restrictions on the domicile and scope of activity and a ban on working (Article 61-2-4, paragraph (3) of the Immigration Control Act and Article 56-2, paragraph (3) of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act).

If a foreign national without a status of residence is not permitted to provisionally stay in Japan, the procedures for recognition of refugee status and the procedures for deportation will be taken in tandem. However, deportation will be suspended while the application for recognition of refugee status is being processed (Article 61-2-6, paragraph (3) of the Immigration Control Act).

#### (3) Inquiry into the Facts

The applicants are responsible for proving that they are refugees (Immigration Control

Act, Article 61-2, paragraph (1)), but due to the nature of the application for refugee recognition, it is not uncommon for people fleeing persecution not to have objective documentation, so it is not appropriate to refuse recognition of refugee status just because the applicant does not have adequate objective evidence of eligibility for refugee status. Therefore, when an accurate recognition of refugee status is not possible with only the data furnished by the applicant, a refugee inquirer will inquire into facts (Article 61-2-14 of the Immigration Control Act).

#### **(4) Recognition of Refugee Status by the Minister of Justice and Effects of Refugee Status**

When a foreign national has been recognized as a refugee, the Minister of Justice will issue a certificate of refugee status to the foreign national concerned. If the foreign national is denied recognition of refugee status, the foreign national will be notified in writing with the reason attached (Article 61-2, paragraph (2) of the Immigration Control Act).

In cases where a foreign national, who has been recognized as a refugee, is a foreign national who does not have a status of residence, if he or she meets certain requirements such as having filed an application for refugee recognition within six months of landing in Japan, such foreign national shall uniformly be granted the status of residence of "Long-Term Resident" (Article 61-2-2, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act). Even if the foreign national does not satisfy the requirements, the Minister of Justice may grant special permission to stay if there are any grounds to grant special permission to stay (Article 61-2-2, paragraph (2) of the Immigration Control Act).

A foreign national who has been recognized as a refugee may receive a refugee travel document as one of the effects under the Immigration Control Act (Article 61-2-12 of the Immigration Control Act), and some of the requirements to obtain permission for permanent residence will be eased (Article 61-2-11 of the Immigration Control Act).

### **3 Request for an Administrative Review**

#### **(1) Request for an Administrative Review**

If a foreign national has an objection to a disposition denying recognition of refugee status or revoking recognition of refugee status, or if there is failure to act pertaining to the application for refugee recognition, such foreign national may submit a request to the Minister of Justice for an administrative review (Article 61-2-9, paragraph (1) of the Immigration Control Act).

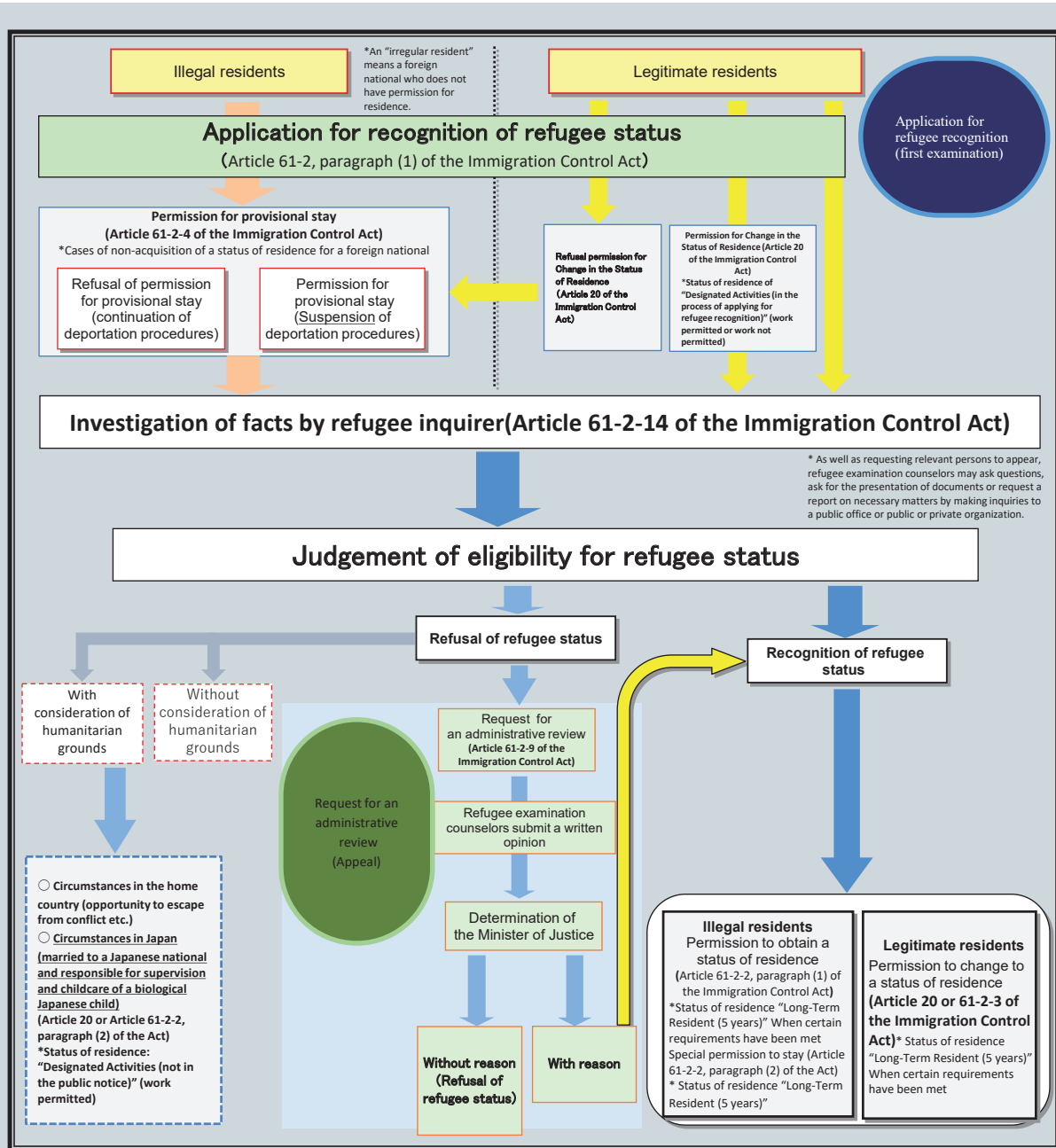
The Minister of Justice must hear the opinions of refugee examination counselors when making a determination on the request for an administrative review (paragraph (3) of the same Article). In addition, if the Minister of Justice makes the determination to deny or dismiss the request for an administrative review, the Minister of Justice must clearly state a summary of the opinions of the refugee examination counselors in the reasons to be attached to the determination (paragraph (4) of the same Article).

#### **(2) Refugee Examination Counselors System**

The refugee examination counselors' system was introduced in May 2005 in order to improve the fairness and neutrality of the procedures. After that, in April 2016, with the enforcement of the amended Administrative Complaint Review Act, the provisions of the

same Act came to be applied deeming the refugee examination counselors to be the review officers prescribed in the same Act (Article 61-2-9, paragraph (5) of the Immigration Control Act), and moreover, the refugee examination counselors' system also came to be applied to the procedures for requesting an administrative review in cases of failure to act pertaining to an application for recognition of refugee status (paragraphs (1) and (3) of the same Article). The refugee examination counselors are appointed by the Minister of Justice from the persons of reputable character who are capable of making a fair judgment on the administrative review of a disposition denying recognition of refugee status or revoking recognition of refugee status, or failure to act pertaining to the application for refugee recognition and who have an academic background in law or international affairs (Article 61-2-10, paragraph (2) of the Immigration Control Act), and have been recommended by the UNHCR, the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, NGOs and others. Three refugee examination counselors form one team, and three refugee examination counselors appointed by the Minister of Justice for each case carry out the prescribed administrative review procedures and submit a written opinion to the Minister of Justice.

Reference 104 Outline of Refugee Recognition Procedures



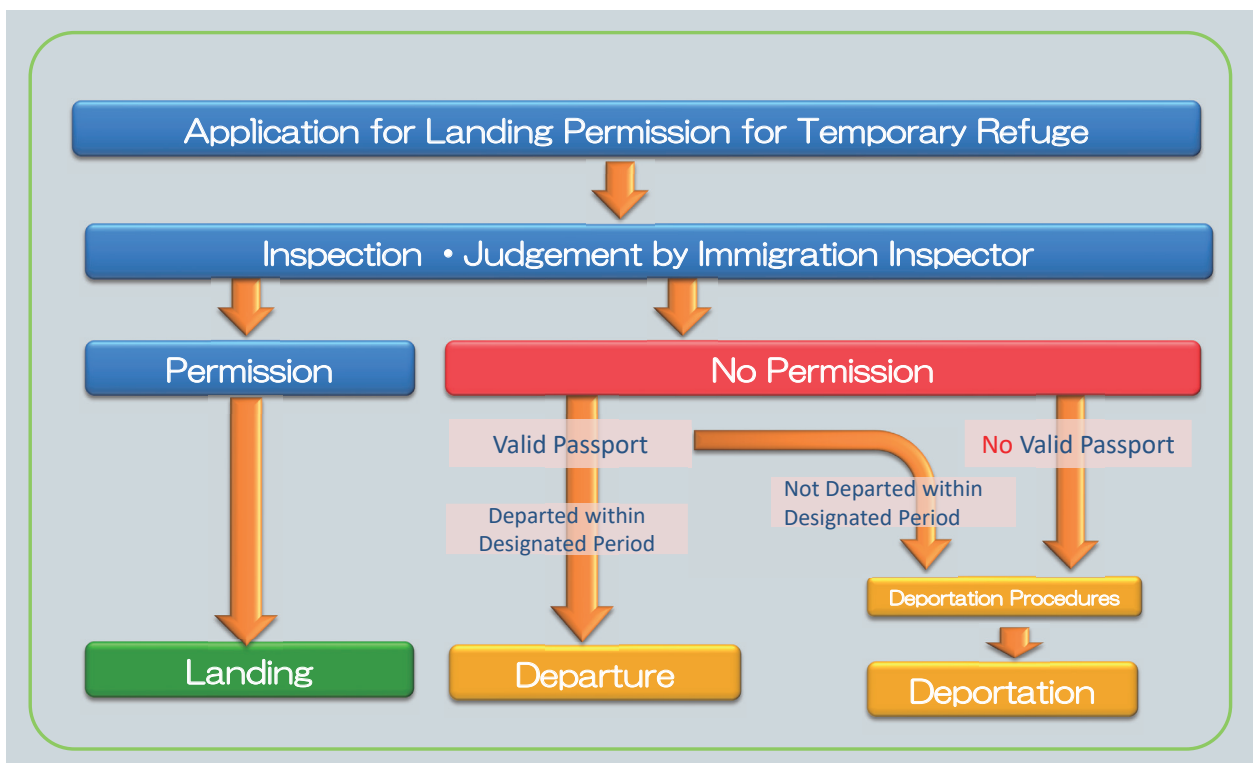
Requirements of permission for provisional stay

- (1) There is no probable cause to suspect that the applicant falls under any of the reasons for deportation.
- (2) The applicant has applied for permission within six months from the date of landing in Japan (the date when the resident knows the fact that he or she has become a refugee if any event that makes a foreign resident a refugee occurs during stay in Japan, ).
- (3) The applicant came to Japan directly from a region where there is a fear of persecution.
- (4) The applicant has never been sentenced to imprisonment with or without work for a certain criminal offense under the criminal law, etc. after entering Japan.
- (5) A deportation order has not been issued against the applicant.
- (6) There is no probable cause to suspect that the applicant may flee from the country.

#### 4 Landing Permission for Temporary Refuge

Landing permission for temporary refuge, prescribed as one of the types of special landing permission granted to foreign nationals (Article 18-2 of the Immigration Control Act), will be granted by an immigration inspector if a foreign national aboard a vessel or aircraft has fled from a territory where his or her life, body or physical freedom is likely to be endangered for the reasons prescribed in the Refugee Convention and other reasons equivalent thereto, and it is appropriate for permission for temporary landing to be granted to such foreign national. The period for landing is determined as a period not exceeding six months (Article 18-2, paragraph (4) of the Immigration Control Act; Article 18, paragraph (5) of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act) ([Reference 105](#)).

##### Reference 105 Flow of procedures of landing permission for temporary refuge





## Appendix

## Major Developments since April 1, 2009

(Since FY 2009)

| Date                        | Developments  | Description  |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| July 10, 2009               | Revision of "Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan"   | The "Guidelines on Special Permission to Stay in Japan" established in October 2006 were revised to further improve the transparency of decisions to grant or deny special permission for residence, and to create an environment in which it is easier for illegal aliens to turn themselves in.  |
| July 15, 2009               | Promulgation of the "Act for Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Special Act on the Immigration Control of, inter alia, Those Who Have Lost Japanese Nationality Pursuant to the Treaty of Peace with Japan" (Act No. 79 of 2009, hereinafter referred to as the "2009 Revision Act"). | In place of the Alien Registration System, the 2009 Revision Act was promulgated to introduce a new residency management system under which the Minister of Justice would continuously monitor information necessary for residency management and issue residence cards, etc., to foreign nationals residing in Japan for medium- to long-term stays with lawful resident status, and to extend the maximum period of stay, relax the re-entry permission system, and create the "Technical Intern Training" status of residence, etc. |
| December 14 to 15, 2009     | 23rd Immigration Seminar  | The Ministry of Justice held the Immigration Seminar, inviting officials from 20 Pacific Rim countries and regions, and three international organizations, to share information and exchange opinions on immigration administration issues.  |
| January 1, 2010             | Partial enforcement of the 2009 Revision Act  | (1) A provision requiring those who have received permission to land as a crew member to carry and present a passport or crew member's pocketbook, and (2) a provision allowing issuance of a certificate of eligibility for "Technical Intern Training (i)" status of residence, was enacted.   |
| January 19, 2010            | Report to the Minister of Justice on "The Future of Immigration Administration"   | The report, "The Future of Immigration Administration" compiled by the 5th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel, was submitted to the Minister of Justice.   |
| January 25, 2010            | Enforcement of the "Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Status Listed in the Lower Column of the Long-Term Resident Section of Appended Table 2 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act"                                 | As a pilot case for the acceptance of refugees through resettlement, Myanmar refugees who are asylum seekers temporarily in Thailand and meet certain requirements were accepted as "long-term residents."   |
| February 21, 2010           | The latest version of APIS began operating  | Operational use of the latest version of APIS, which adds the functionality of the landing permit application process for crew members, began at airports.   |
| March 30, 2010              | Formulation of the "Fourth Basic Plan for Immigration Control"  | In accordance with Article 61-10 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, the Minister of Justice formulated the "Fourth Basic Plan for Immigration Control."   |
|                             | Establishment of the Haneda Airport District Immigration Office of the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau  | The Haneda Airport Branch Office of the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau was abolished and the new Haneda Airport District Immigration Office was established.  |
| May 24 to November 15, 2010 | Establishment of the Enhanced Landing Examination Period  | In conjunction with the 2010 APEC meeting held in Japan, while implementing expedited immigration procedures for APEC-related personnel, a period of enhanced landing examination was established for all air and sea ports nationwide to prevent terrorists and anti-globalization groups from operating in Japan, and strict immigration examinations were carried out through the use of personal identification information in close cooperation with relevant agencies.   |



| Date                  | Developments  | Description   |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| July 1, 2010          | Partial enforcement of the 2009 Revision Act  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of the Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee<br/>The East Japan Region Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee in the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau and the West Japan Regional Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee in the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau were established.</li> <li>• Review of the Technical Intern Training System<br/>The “Technical Intern Training” status of residence was established, requiring the conclusion of an employment contract from the first year, which was previously covered by the “Training” status of residence, and allowing technical interns to receive protection under labor-related laws, such as the Labor Standards Act and the Minimum Wage Act, from their first year.</li> <li>• Unification of “College Student” and “Pre-college Student” Statuses of Residence<br/>To ensure a stable residence situation for foreign students, the distinction between “College Student” status for university students and “Pre-college Student” status for high school students was eliminated, and the two statuses were consolidated into a single “Student” status.</li> <li>• Establishment of Extraordinary Period of Stay<br/>If an application to extend the period of stay is filed before the expiry date of the period of stay, and no disposition is made on the application before such expiry date, the applicant may continue to reside in Japan with the applicable status of residence until either the disposition is made or two months have elapsed since the expiry date of the original period of stay, whichever comes earlier.</li> <li>• Creation of Special Exception for Prohibition to Land<br/>Even in cases falling under certain grounds for denial of landing, landing may not be denied in cases where re-entry permission is granted and in cases provided for by a Ministry of Justice ordinance.</li> </ul> |
| December 7 to 8, 2010 | 24th Immigration Seminar  | The Ministry of Justice held the Immigration Seminar inviting officials from 20 Pacific Rim countries and regions and four international organizations to share information and exchange opinions on immigration administration issues.   |
| January 1, 2011       | Enforcement of the “Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Activities Listed in the Lower Column (limited to the part pertaining to (d)) of Appended Table 1-5 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act,” etc. | Activities to stay in Japan for a considerable period to be hospitalized and receive medical attention and activities to take care of the daily life of a person under such situation have been added to the category of the “Designated Activities” status of residence.   |
| From March 11, 2011   | Responses to the Great East Japan Earthquake  | <p>Landing procedures were simplified and expedited for emergency relief teams from overseas by omitting the need for a landing permit stamp on the passport, by issuing a provisional landing permit prepared in advance by the immigration inspector.</p> <p>The expiry date of the period of stay for foreign nationals covered by the Ministry of Justice Notification (March 16, 2011, Ministry of Justice Notification No. 123) pursuant to the provisions of Article 3, Paragraph 2 of the Act on Special Measures concerning Preservation of Rights and Interests of Victims of Specified Disaster (Act No. 85 of 1996) was extended uniformly to August 31, 2011.</p>  |

| Date            | Developments  | Description  |
|-----------------|---|--|
|                 |   | Foreign students, trainees, and technical interns who left Japan without obtaining permission for re-entry were allowed to enter Japan through a simplified procedure after consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.   |
| July 1, 2011    | Revision of the "Ministerial Ordinance Providing for Criteria Pursuant to Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act," etc.  | Completion of a specialized training college course in Japan has been added to the academic background requirements for the "Engineer" and "Specialist in Humanities/International Services" residence statuses.   |
| August 26, 2011 | Revision of the "Enforcement Regulations of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act."   | Determination of period of stay of less than 15 days under the status of residence, "Temporary Visitor," became possible.  |
| April 1, 2012   | Establishment of the Tokyo Bay Chiba and Yokohama Mobile Teams  | To further strengthen the risk management system for ports of entry, the Tokyo Bay Chiba Mobile Team, which is in charge of patrolling seaports and coastal areas located on the Pacific Ocean side, as well as conducting on-site inspections of vessels entering ports and onboard searches, was established within the Chiba Branch Office of the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, and the Tokyo Bay Yokohama Mobile Team within the Yokohama District Immigration Office of the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau. |
| April 6, 2012   | Expansion of the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau, Kansai Airport District Immigration Office, Inspection Department   | In conjunction with the opening of the dedicated LCC terminal in fiscal 2012, the Inspection Department within the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau, Kansai Airport District Immigration Office, was expanded.  |
| May 7, 2012     | Enforcement of the "Specification of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act on the Activities Listed in the Lower Column (limited to the part pertaining to (d)) of Appended Table 1-5 of the said Act Pertaining to Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals, etc., Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act" | A preferential immigration control system based on a points system to promote the acceptance of highly-skilled professionals took effect.  |
| July 9, 2012    | Partial enforcement of the 2009 Revision Act  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of a New Residency Management System</li> </ul> A new residency management system was introduced under which the Ministry of Justice continuously keeps track of information necessary for residency management. In addition, the Alien Registration Act was abolished on the same day.  |
|                 | Appointment of the Director of the Immigration Control Information Division, and establishment of the Residency Management Office, Entry and Status Division, the Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice, and establishment of the Residency Management Information Department, Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau  | To handle the new residency management system, the Director of the Immigration Control Information Division and the Residency Management Office, Entry and Status Division, were established within the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice. (The Director of Registration Management and the Data Processing System Development Office, General Affairs Division were abolished.)<br>In addition, the Residency Management Information Department, Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, was established.        |
| August 17, 2012 | Repatriation of Senkaku Islands territorial claim activists, etc.   | On August 15, 2012, a case of illegal entry of 14 people to Japan on a protest ship, including activists claiming territorial rights to the Senkaku Islands, occurred. Police or the Japan Coast Guard arrested the 14 individuals and deported them by air or sea on August 17, 2012, after the Fukuoka Regional Immigration Bureau, Naha District Immigration Office took them into custody following completion of criminal proceedings.  |

| Date                             | Developments   | Description   |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| September 24 to October 14, 2012 | Special Reinforcement Period for Landing Examination   | In conjunction with hosting the 2012 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, smooth entry and exit procedures for government delegations and others were carried out, while stringent landing procedures were thoroughly implemented to ensure that foreigners with the risk of committing violations that would impede the safe and smooth conduct of the Annual Meetings were prevented from landing.  |
| September 28, 2012               | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance for Partial Amendment of the Regulations for Enforcement of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act,” etc.   | Following the Japan-Viet Nam Economic Partnership Agreement coming into force, the required provisions for entering and staying in Japan of prospective nurses and care workers covered by the said Agreement took effect.  |
| October 1, 2012                  | Establishment of the Kobe Mobile Team for Preventing Illegal Immigration in the Kinki Region   | To further strengthen the risk management system at ports of entry, the Kobe Mobile Team for Preventing Illegal Immigration in the Kinki Region was established within the Kobe District Immigration Office of the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau, which oversees coastal patrols at sea ports on the Sea of Japan side, where there are concerns about illegal incidents, as well as on-site inspections and onboard searches of vessels entering ports.  |
| November 1, 2012                 | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance Partially Revising Ministerial Ordinance Providing for Criteria Pursuant to Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act,” etc. | To enhance the protection of technical intern trainees and to ensure proper application of the technical intern training system, the following revisions were made: (1) the starting point for noncompliance with the standards due to misconduct was clarified; (2) acceptance of technical intern trainees would be denied if the supervising organization had been involved in making any false applications during the past five years; and (3) the obligation to report misconduct was imposed on organizations implementing the technical intern training, receiving organizations, and supervising organizations.                              |
| May 20, 2013                     | Report on results of the study on immigration management in the era of 25 million foreign nationals visiting Japan   | The 6th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel reported to the Minister of Justice on the results of a 1.5-year study on immigration management in the era of 25 million foreign nationals visiting Japan.  |
|                                  | Report on the results of the review of preferential treatment of highly skilled professionals based on a points-based system in terms of immigration control   | The study results on the direction of the review of the preferential immigration control system based on a points-based system for highly-skilled professionals were compiled and reported to the Minister of Justice by the 6th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel.  |
| June 24, 2013                    | Introduction of the Immigration Bureau's Electronic Notification System  | In addition to conventional notification in writing or by mail, “Notification Concerning the Organization of Affiliation” by mid to long-term residents and “Notification to be Given by the Organization of Affiliation” to be given by the accepting organizations which the mid to long-term resident belongs became available via the Internet using the “Immigration Bureau Electronic Notification System.”   |
| July 1, 2013                     | The Immigration Bureau's Seiji Search System entered service   | The “Public Notice on the Indication of Kanji Character Names on Residence Cards and Other Certificates” (Ministry of Justice Public Notice No. 582 of 2011) stipulates that the Chinese characters used on residence cards and special permanent resident certificates should be written in the scope of seiji characters, while simplified characters may be used by replacing them with characters within the range of seiji characters. The Immigration Bureau introduced a system on its website that allowed users to easily search for names in Chinese characters that appear on residence cards and special permanent resident certificates. |

| Date                  | Developments   | Description  |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| September 13, 2013    | Enforcement of the “Establishment of Measures Concerning Special Provisions for Notification Pertaining to the Regulation of Businesses Regulated by Cabinet Order, etc., as Provided for in Article 53 of the Comprehensive Special Zone Law Relating to the Ministry of Justice” | Foreign nationals became able to work and learn specific traditional Japanese cuisine in Comprehensive Special Zones for Regional Revitalization, based on the Comprehensive Special Zone Law.   |
| October 9 to 10, 2013 | 12th ASEM Conference of Directors General of Immigration and Management of Migratory Flows   | Hosted by the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice, the 12th ASEM Conference of Directors General of Immigration and Management of Migratory Flows was held in Tokyo, and opinions were exchanged among immigration officials from Asian and European countries with “Immigration Policy as Economic Policy” as the main theme of the conference.   |
| October 15, 2013      | Lifting of re-entry restrictions for people of Japanese descent who have returned to Japan through assistance  | While the prevailing decision was, for the time being, to not allow those who returned to their home countries after receiving a return allowance under the Return Assistance Program for Persons of Japanese Descent conducted in 2009 to re-enter Japan with the same status of residence, in light of the current economic and employment situation, it was decided that these people should be granted re-entry under certain conditions.  |
| December 24, 2013     | Enforcement of the Partial Revision of Relevant Public Notice Concerning the Points-Based Preferential Treatment for Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals  | Based on the report of the 6th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel and the Japan Revitalization Strategy 2016 (Cabinet Decision of June 14, 2013), the “Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Activities Listed in the Lower Column (limited to the part pertaining to (d)) of Appended Table 1-5 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act” and “Specification of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act on the Activities Listed in the Lower Column (limited to the part pertaining to (d)) of Appended Table 1-5 of the said Act Pertaining to Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals, etc., Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act, Guidelines for the Handling of Procedures for Residence of Persons Designated to Engage in Activities Listed in the Lower Column of the Table in Article 2” were enacted to review the requirements for certification and preferential measures for highly-skilled foreign professionals in order to accept more of these foreign workers. |
| January 24, 2014      | Cabinet approval of “Implementation of Acceptance of Refugees Through Resettlement”  | Regarding the acceptance of refugees through resettlement, the Cabinet approved the acceptance of Myanmar refugees temporarily staying in Malaysia and providing support to the accepted refugees beginning in fiscal 2015.  |
| June 13, 2014         | Promulgation of the “Act on the Establishment of Relevant Acts in Connection with the Administrative Complaint Review Act”   | In line with the revision of the Administrative Complaint Review Act, a new provision was established in the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to regard refugee appeal procedures as hearing procedures under the Administrative Complaint Review Act, with the refugee examination counselor considered as a review officer.   |
| June 18, 2014         | Promulgation of the “Act to Amend the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act” (Act No. 74 of 2014, hereinafter, referred to as the “2014 Revision Act”).  | The 2014 Revision Act was promulgated to create a Landing Permission System for Cruise Ship Tourists, expand the number of people eligible for special re-entry permissions, revise the status of residence of “Student,” obtain PNR, create the status of residence “Highly-Skilled Professional (i)” and “Highly-Skilled Professional (ii),” revise the status of residence from “Investor/Business Manager” to “Business Manager,” and consolidate the statuses of residence “Engineer” and “Specialist in Humanities/International Services.”  |

| Date              | Developments   | Description  |
|-------------------|--|--|
| June 30, 2014     | Report to the Minister of Justice on the "Study Results on the Direction of the Review of the Technical Intern Training Program"   | The report, "Study Results on the Direction of the Review of the Technical Intern Training Program," compiled by the Subcommittee for Review of the Foreign National Acceptance System under the 6th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel, was submitted to the Minister of Justice.   |
| July 1, 2014      | Enforcement of the "Ministerial Ordinance for Partial Amendment of the Regulations for Enforcement of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act"               | The re-entry and departure record format was revised so that it could be easily confirmed whether a foreign national is departing from Japan with a special re-entry permission or with a re-entry permission when he/she departs Japan.   |
| October 6, 2014   | Establishment of the Sapporo Regional Immigration Bureau, Asahikawa Branch Office  | The Sapporo Regional Immigration Bureau's Otaru Port Branch Office was abolished and Asahikawa Branch Office was established.  |
| December 26, 2014 | Report to the Minister of Justice on "The Future of Immigration Administration" and the "Study Results on the Direction of the Review of the Refugee Recognition System" | The report "The Future of Immigration Administration" compiled by the 6th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel, and the report, "Study Results on the Direction of the Review of the Refugee Recognition System," compiled by experts on the refugee recognition system established under the said panel, were submitted to the Minister of Justice.   |
| January 1, 2015   | Partial enforcement of the 2014 Revision Act.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="925 813 1444 947">• Creation of the Landing Permission System for Cruise Ship Tourists<br/>The Landing Permission System for Cruise Ship Tourists was created as a simplified landing procedure for foreign passengers on cruise ships designated by the Minister of Justice.</li> <li data-bbox="925 958 1444 1261">• Expansion of the Scope of Persons Eligible for Special Re-entry Permissions<br/>When a person who entered Japan by air and was granted "Temporary Visitor" status boards a cruise ship that starts at a port of entry and departure in Japan, calls at a foreign port, and then calls at a port of entry and departure in Japan again, if the person leaves Japan on the cruise ship having declared in advance his/her intention to re-enter Japan, the person shall be deemed to have obtained a re-entry permission. (However, the cruise ship must be a designated passenger ship.)</li> <li data-bbox="925 1272 1444 1395">• Revision Concerning "Student" Status of Residence<br/>Elementary and junior high schools were added to the list of institutions accepting the "Student" status of residence.</li> <li data-bbox="925 1406 1444 1473">• Commencement of PNR Acquisition<br/>Immigration inspectors gained the ability to require airlines to report PNRs.</li> </ul> |
| January 30, 2015  | Publication of "Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Joint Advisory Panel on the Review of the Technical Intern Training Program"              | "The Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Joint Advisory Panel on the Review of the Technical Intern Training Program," which was established as a panel meeting by the Ministry of Justice's Director-General of the Immigration Bureau and the Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare's Director-General of the Human Resource Development Bureau, released its report.   |
| April 1, 2015     | Partial enforcement of the 2014 Revision Act   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="925 1731 1444 1966">• Creation of the "Highly-Skilled Professional (i)" and "Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)" Statuses of Residence<br/>A new status of residence, "Highly-Skilled Professional (i)," was created for highly-skilled foreign professionals who had been granted "Designated Activities" status and given preferential treatment in immigration control, and "Highly-Skilled Professional (ii)" status was created for those who have already stayed for three years under the said status of residence.</li> </ul>  |



| Date               | Developments  | Description  |
|--------------------|---|--|
|                    |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revision of Status of Residence from “Investor/Business Manager” to “Business Manager”<br/>The investment requirement was removed from the “Investor/Business Manager” status of residence and the name was also changed to “Business Manager.”</li> <li>• Consolidation of “Engineer” and “Specialist in Humanities/International Services” Statuses of Residence<br/>The distinction in status of residence based on the field of knowledge required for work (liberal arts or science) was eliminated, and the new status of residence became “Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services,” a comprehensive status of residence.</li> </ul> <p>Commencement of the Project to Accept Foreign Construction and Shipbuilding Workers</p> <p>As an emergency and temporary measure in the construction sector related to accelerated reconstruction projects and construction projects for the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympic Games, as well as in the shipbuilding sector, for which there is a high mobility of workers between it and the construction sector, the utilization of foreign workers was initiated within the framework of the Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism’s involvement to ensure appropriate acceptance.</p> |
| June 23, 2015      | Enforcement of the “Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Activities Listed in the Lower Column of Appended Table 1-5 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act”                             | Affluent foreign nationals from visa-exempt countries became eligible to stay in Japan for up to one year for the purpose of tourism (so called “long-stay”) under the status of “Designated Activities.”  |
| July 2, 2015       | Enforcement of the “Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Status Listed in the Lower Column of the Long-Term Resident Section of Appended Table 2 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act” | In addition to Myanmar refugees staying in Malaysia, it became possible to bring in family members of resettled refugees from Thailand who had already been accepted.  |
| September 1, 2015  | Enforcement of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the Act on National Strategic Special Zones related to the Ministry of Justice (acceptance of entrepreneurs and foreign nationals for housekeeping services)  | It became possible to accept foreign nationals who conduct entrepreneurial activities and foreign nationals who provide housekeeping services in the National Strategic Special Zones.   |
| September 15, 2015 | Formulation of the “Fifth Basic Plan for Immigration Control”   | In accordance with Article 61-10 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, the Minister of Justice formulated the “Fifth Basic Plan for Immigration Control.”  |
|                    | Publication of “Overview of the Review of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System”  | Based on the recommendations of the report submitted in December 2014 by the 6th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel and the Experts on the Refugee Recognition System, the “Overview of the Review of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System” was published.  |
| October 1, 2015    | Closing of the Nishi-Nihon Immigration Center   | The Nishi-Nihon Immigration Center was closed.   |
|                    | Establishment of the Center of Collection and Analysis of Intelligence, Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice   | The Center of Collection and Analysis of Intelligence was established within the Ministry of Justice’s Immigration Bureau.   |
| November 20, 2015  | Enforcement of the “Order to Provide for Measures Concerning Special Provisions of the Ministerial Ordinances Pertaining to the Regulated Businesses of the Act on National Strategic Special Zones related to the Ministry of Justice, Article 26”   | Doctors, nurses, medical radiologists, and medical physicists who participate in particle irradiation device training in the National Strategic Special Zones became eligible to stay in Japan for a maximum of two years if they meet the necessary conditions, regardless of the training (“Trainee”) period of stay stipulated in the attached table of the Regulation for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act.  |



| Date                              | Developments   | Description  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| January 1, 2016                   | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance for Partial Amendment of Regulations for Enforcement of Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act” (Initiation of electronic acquisition of PNRs)  | It became possible to obtain PNRs electronically.  |
| February 26, 2016                 | Establishment of the Iseshima Summit Response Headquarters   | On the occasion of the Iseshima Summit and related ministerial meetings, the Iseshima Summit Response Headquarters was formed to prevent terrorists and foreign nationals who may attempt to carry out illegal acts that would hinder the safe and smooth progress of the summit meetings from landing in Japan, and to facilitate the smooth entry and exit of related personnel.   |
| February 29 to September 26, 2016 | Designation of the Enhanced Landing Examination Period and Special Enhanced Landing Examination Period in conjunction with the Iseshima Summit   | On the occasion of the Iseshima Summit and related ministerial meetings, in order to prevent terrorists and foreign nationals who may attempt to carry out illegal acts that would hinder the safe and smooth progress of the summit meetings from landing in Japan, and to facilitate the smooth entry and exit of related personnel, the period from February 29 to April 2 and from September 4 to September 26 were designated as periods for enhanced landing examinations. Furthermore, an Operation Room was established within the Ministry of Justice for the period between April 3 and May 28, and the same period was designated as the Special Intensified Period for Landing Examinations. |
| March 15, 2016                    | Enforcement of the “Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Activities Listed in the Lower Column of Appended Table 1-5 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act”  | A provision granting “Designated Activities” status of residence to foreign nationals who are eligible for this program was enacted to enable foreign employees of overseas subsidiaries of manufacturing companies to come to Japan, acquire specialized skills in new product development, etc., and transfer those skills to overseas sites, subject to certification by the Minister of Economy, Trade, and Industry.  |
| April 1, 2016                     | Enforcement of the “Administrative Complaint Review Act” and the “Act on the Establishment of Relevant Acts in Connection with Administrative Complaint Review Act” and the “Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Activities Listed in the Lower Column of Appended Table 1-5 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act” | With the enforcement of the new Administrative Complaint Review Act promulgated on June 13, 2014, the refugee appeal procedure was revised to a system in which refugee examination counselors are deemed to be review officers and the hearing procedures of the counselors are regarded as hearing procedures under the Administrative Complaint Review Act.   |
|                                   | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance for Partial Amendment of Regulations for Enforcement of Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act”   | For expedited examinations, the items on the disembarkation card for foreign nationals (ED Card) were simplified, and written submission upon departure was no longer required for foreigners other than those who planned to re-enter Japan.  |
|                                   | Establishment of the Naka-Nihon Mobile Team  | To further strengthen the risk management system at ports of entry and prevent illegal immigration at seaports, the Naka-Nihon Mobile Team was established within the Nagoya Regional Immigration Bureau to patrol seaports and coastal areas located on the Pacific and Sea of Japan sides, and to conduct on-site inspections and onboard searches of vessels entering ports.  |
| July 22, 2016                     | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance Partially Revising the Ministerial Ordinance Providing for Criteria Pursuant to Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act,” etc.   | Foreign ski instructors who do not possess a minimum of three years of work experience in sports instruction are now allowed to enter and stay in Japan if their skills are equivalent to those who do.  |
|                                   | Formulation and publication of “Public Notice Criteria for Japanese-Language Institutes”   | The “Public Notice Criteria for Japanese-Language Institutes” was developed and published as criteria for judging the eligibility of Japanese-language institutes to be designated by public notice.   |

| Date              | Developments   | Description   |
|-------------------|--|---|
| August 31, 2016   | Agreement on the “Memorandum of Cooperation on Strategic Border Cooperation between the Department of Immigration and Border Protection of Australia and the Immigration Bureau, Ministry of Justice of Japan” | The agreement was reached with the aims of promoting mutual cooperation between Japanese and Australian authorities and strengthening the immigration control capabilities of each authority through means such as information sharing related to immigration control and mutual visits by staff members between the two immigration authorities.   |
| October 1, 2016   | Introduction of Bio Carts  | To shorten the waiting time for immigration examinations, a device known as “Bio Carts” was introduced at Kansai, Takamatsu, and Naha airports to obtain personal identification information (fingerprints and facial image) in advance by utilizing the waiting time for landing examinations. (Trial operation started on October 1, 2016, and full-scale operation started on October 7, 2016)   |
| October 17, 2016  | Facial image matching during landing examination   | To hinder the entry of terrorists at ports of entry, the Immigration Bureau began matching the facial images of terrorists to those provided by foreign nationals during landing examination at air and sea ports nationwide.   |
| November 1, 2016  | Partial enforcement of the 2014 Revision Act   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commencement of the Trusted Traveler Program</li> </ul> To facilitate immigration procedures for trustworthy travelers, the scope of foreign nationals eligible to use Automated Gates during landing procedures was expanded.   |
|                   | Commencement of the “Bilateral Travel Facilitation Initiative”   | The Bilateral Travel Facilitation Initiative, which mutually joins Japan’s Trusted Traveler Program and the U.S. Global Entry Program (GEP), took effect.   |
| November 28, 2016 | Promulgation of the “Act to Amend the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act” (Act No. 88 of 2016, hereinafter referred to as the “2016 Revision Act”)  | The 2016 Revision Act was promulgated. This included the creation of the “Nursing Care” residence status and the reinforcement of measures against imposter foreign residents.  |
|                   | Promulgation of the “Act on Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Intern Trainees” (Act No. 89, 2016, hereinafter referred to as “Technical Intern Training Act”)                       | To ensure the proper implementation of technical intern training for foreign nationals and to protect technical intern trainees, the Technical Intern Training Act was promulgated, establishing a system of certification of technical intern training plans, a system for authorizing supervising organizations, and the establishment of the Organization for Technical Intern Training to manage administrative affairs related to these matters. |
|                   | Partial enforcement of the Technical Intern Training Act   | Regulations regarding the establishment of the Organization for Technical Intern Training came into effect simultaneously with the promulgation.  |
| January 1, 2017   | Partial enforcement of the 2016 Revision Act   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforced Measures Against Imposter Foreign Residents</li> </ul> Penalties for imposter foreign residents were strengthened, the grounds for revoking status of residence were expanded, and immigration control officers, in addition to immigration inspectors, could now conduct inquiries into facts related to revoking status of residence.   |
| April 15, 2017    | Expansion of the number of airports and seaports with Bio Carts capability   | The system was implemented at 12 airports, including Narita Airport.  |

| Date               | Developments   | Description  |
|--------------------|--|--|
| April 26, 2017     | Enforcement of the Partial Revision of the Relevant Ministerial Ordinance Concerning the Points-Based Preferential Treatment for Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals  | In response to including in the “Japan Revitalization Strategy 2016” (Cabinet Decision of June 2, 2016) a review of the requirements from the perspective of making the points-based system for highly-skilled foreign nationals easier to use, revision of the “Ministerial Ordinance to Provide for Criteria under the Highly-Skilled Professionals Section of the Appended Table 1-2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act” and the “Ministerial Ordinance to Provide for the Designation of the Act by the Minister of Justice in Accordance with the Provisions of the Special Addition Section of the Table in Each Item of Article 1, Paragraph 1 of the Ministerial Ordinance Establishing Standards Under the Highly-Skilled Professionals Section of the Table in Appended Table 1-2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act” were enforced. |
|                    | Partial revision of “Guidelines on Permission for Permanent Residence” and “Guidelines for Contributions to Japan”   | Revisions were made and announced, such as revising the minimum period of stay required to apply for a permanent residence status for highly-skilled foreign professionals to one year.  |
| June 1, 2017       | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance for Partial Amendment of Regulations for Enforcement of Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act”   | Authority pertaining to the recognition of refugees, which had been granted only to the Minister of Justice, was delegated to the Director of the Regional Immigration Bureau, and a new refugee recognition application form for repeat application was introduced.   |
| August 1, 2017     | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance Partially Revising Ministerial Ordinance Providing for Criteria Pursuant to Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act,” etc. | The “Public Notice Criteria for Japanese-Language Institutes” came into effect as criteria for judging the eligibility of Japanese-language institutes to be designated by public notice.  |
| September 1, 2017  | Partial enforcement of the 2016 Revision Act   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of the “Nursing Care” Status of Residence<br/>The “Nursing Care” status of residence was created to allow those who graduated from a nursing care worker training institution and obtained a nursing care worker’s license to engage in work providing nursing care or guidance based on a contract with a nursing care facility.</li> </ul>   |
| September 22, 2017 | Enforcement of the Act on National Strategic Special Zones (acceptance of foreign nationals conducting agricultural work and foreign nationals supporting overseas demand development)                             | It became possible to accept foreign nationals who engage in agricultural labor, etc., in the National Strategic Special Zones and those who promote Cool Japan Inbound.   |
| October 18, 2017   | Introduction of facial recognition Automated Gates   | To streamline the departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals by utilizing facial recognition technology, and to further facilitate the examination of foreign nationals while maintaining strict examination by assigning more immigration inspectors to screen foreign nationals, “Facial Recognition Automated Gates” were preliminarily introduced at landing areas at Haneda Airport.  |
| November 1, 2017   | Enforcement of the Technical Intern Training Act   | A new technical intern training program was introduced to ensure proper implementation of technical intern training for foreign nationals and to protect technical intern trainees. In addition, laws and regulations related to technical intern training, such as the Order for Enforcement of the Technical Intern Training Act and the Enforcement Regulations of the Technical Intern Training Act, came into effect.   |
| January 12, 2018   | Publication of “Further Review of the Operation of the Refugee Recognition System to Ensure its Appropriateness”   | To ensure that there are no obstacles to the prompt protection of genuine refugees, further review was conducted on the operations of the “Designated Activities” status of residence of those who have applied for refugee recognition during their legal residence.  |
| May 1, 2018        | Expansion in the number of airports and seaports equipped with Bio Carts capability  | Bio Carts also began operations at Kitakyushu Airport and Oita Airport.  |

| Date                         | Developments   | Description  |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| June 11 to November 28, 2018 | Expansion in the number of airports and seaports equipped with facial recognition Automated Gates  | Full-scale introduction of “Facial Recognition Automated Gates” for departure and return procedures for Japanese nationals at Narita, Haneda, Chubu, Kansai, and Fukuoka airports came into effect.  |
| July 24, 2018                | Cabinet decision on “Basic Policy on Operations for the Development of an Environment for Acceptance of Foreign Nationals”   | The Ministry of Justice became responsible for planning, drafting, and general coordination regarding the development of the environment for the acceptance of foreign nationals.  |
| December 14, 2018            | Promulgation and partial enforcement of the “Act for Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Justice” (Act No. 102 of 2018, hereinafter referred to as the “2018 Revision Act”) (The remainder of the Act came into effect on April 1, 2019) | The 2018 Revision Act was promulgated and partially enforced, creating the new residence statuses of “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii),” and establishing the Immigration Services Agency.   |
| December 25, 2018            | Formulation on the “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” (hereinafter referred to as “Comprehensive Measures”) (decision by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals)  | In order to achieve the purpose of contributing to the realization of a society where Japanese nationals and foreign nationals are able to live safely and comfortably together through the proper acceptance of foreign nationals and to realize a society of harmonious coexistence, the Comprehensive Measures has been meant to indicate the direction to be aimed for in relation to the acceptance and harmonious coexistence of foreign nationals.  |
| March 29, 2019               | Enforcement of the Partial Revision of the Relevant Public Notice Concerning the Points-Based Preferential Treatment of Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals   | In accordance with the “City, People, Work Creation Basic Policy 2018” (Cabinet Decision of June 15, 2018), in order to make the most of foreign nationals in local regions, the government reviewed the “Points-Based System for Highly-Skilled Foreign Nationals” by expanding the number of universities eligible for special additions so that foreign graduates of Japanese universities could fully demonstrate their professional abilities. In response to the decision, the Minister of Justice enacted the amendment, “To Provide for the Designation of the Act by the Minister of Justice in Accordance with the Provisions of the Special Addition Section of the Table in Each Item of Article 1, Paragraph 1 of the Ministerial Ordinance Establishing Standards Under the Highly-Skilled Professionals Section of the Table in Appended Table 1-2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act.” |
|                              | Beginning of acceptance of applications for online residence application procedures  | Acceptance of applications for use of online residence application began.  |
|                              | Publication of the “Report on the Results of Investigation and Review” by the Project Team on Operation of the Technical Intern Training Program   | A report was published as result of research and study by the project team.  |
| April 1, 2019                | Enforcement of the 2018 Revision Act   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of the “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” Statuses of Residence<br/>To accept foreign nationals with certain expertise and skills in industrial fields where it is difficult to secure workers, the “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” statuses of residence for foreign nationals were created.</li> <li>• Establishment of the Immigration Services Agency<br/>The Immigration Services Agency was established as an external bureau of the Ministry of Justice to be an organization that is able to promptly respond to the increase in the number of foreign nationals residing in Japan and work on new initiatives such as planning, drafting, and general coordination, to improve the environment for accepting foreign nationals in an integrated and efficient manner.</li> </ul>             |

| Date                         | Developments   | Description  |
|------------------------------|--|--|
|                              | Enforcement of the “Cabinet Order on the Establishment of Relevant Cabinet Orders with the Enforcement of the Act for Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Justice”                                       | The registration fee charges for registered support organizations and regulations on reasons for refusing registration of registered support organizations were defined.   |
|                              | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Order to Provide for Criteria for Employment Contracts for Specified Skilled Workers and Support Plans for Specified Skilled Foreign Nationals”  | Standards for the content of employment contracts, standards for receiving institutions, and the content of support plans for Specified Skilled Workers were stipulated.   |
|                              | Enforcement of the “Specification of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act on the Industrial Fields Listed in the Lower Column of Appended Table 1-2 of the said Act”  | “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” were defined in terms of the industry fields and skill levels to be accepted.   |
|                              | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance Concerning the Establishment of Ordinances of the Ministry of Justice Accompanying the Enforcement of the Act for Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Justice” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revision of the Landing Standards Ordinance<br/>The criteria for foreign nationals themselves concerning “Specified Skilled Worker (i)” and “Specified Skilled Worker (ii)” were stipulated.</li> <li>• Revision of the Regulation for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act<br/>Matters related to the registration of registered support organizations and notification matters to be submitted by receiving organizations were stipulated.</li> <li>• Others<br/>Necessary adjustments were made to the ministerial ordinances in accordance with implementation of the 2018 Revision Act.</li> </ul> |
|                              | Introduction of the “Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals Website”  | The website was established to provide useful information to foreign residences in Japan and their supporters.   |
| April 26, 2019               | Formulation of “Basic Plan for Immigration and Residency Management”   | The Minister of Justice formulated the “Basic Plan for Immigration and Residency Management” based on Article 61-10 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act.  |
| May 30, 2019                 | Enforcement of the “Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Activities Listed in the Lower Column of Appended Table 1-5 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act”                        | To help foreign students secure employment, graduates of Japanese universities are allowed to enter and stay in Japan with the “Designated Activities” status of residence if they are expected to use the knowledge and skills they acquired at university or graduate school to engage in work that makes use of their Japanese language skills, with a broad recognition of their work content.   |
| May 31, 2019                 | Amendment to the “Guidelines for Permanent Residence Permits”  | Revisions were made and published on handling the “Specified Skilled Worker” status of residence and specifying the content of official obligations.   |
| June 18, 2019                | Formulation on the “Enhancement of Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals” (hereinafter referred to as “Enhancement Measures”) (decision by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals)                                 | The report was compiled to enhance the contents of Comprehensive Measures, focusing on urgent issues surrounding improvement of the environment for accepting foreign nationals.   |
| June 28, 2019                | Partial revision of Cabinet Approval of “Implementation of Acceptance of Refugees Through Resettlement”  | Regarding the acceptance of refugees through resettlement, a partial revision was made to the Cabinet Approval regarding the acceptance of refugees temporarily staying in the Asian region and relatives of refugees accepted through resettlement from 2020 onward.  |
| July 24 to November 14, 2019 | Commencement of operation of facial recognition Automated Gates for foreign nationals’ departure procedures  | Starting with Haneda Airport on July 24, 2019, Narita, Kansai, Fukuoka, and Chubu airports began operating facial recognition Automated Gates for departure procedures of foreign nationals who entered Japan for tourism and other purposes.  |
|                              | Expansion in the number of airports and seaports equipped with facial recognition Automated Gates and commencement of operation of facial recognition Automated Gates for foreign nationals’ departure procedures  | Facial recognition Automated Gates were introduced at Shin-chitose Airport and began operating in departure procedures for foreign nationals.  |



| Date                                  | Developments  | Description   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| July 25, 2019                         | Acceptance of applications for online residence application procedures started  | Acceptance of applications from affiliated institutions that had been approved for use began.   |
| December 20, 2019 to January 31, 2020 | Expansion in the number of airports and seaports equipped with Bio Carts capability   | Use of Bio Carts was also launched at Haneda Airport, Hakata Port, and Hitakatsu Port.  |
| December 20, 2019                     | Formulation on the “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals (revised)” (decision by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals) | Comprehensive Measures (revised) was formulated in line with the direction of the Enhancement Measures.   |
| March 24, 2020                        | Types of applications and statuses of residence eligible for online residence application procedures expanded   | “Application for Certificates of Eligibility,” “Application for Permission to Change Status of Residence,” “Application for Permission to Acquire Status of Residence,” and “Application for Certificate of Eligibility for Employment” were added to the types of applications eligible for online application procedures for residence, and “Specified Skilled Worker” was newly added as a status of residence.  |
| From March 2020                       | Response to the COVID-19 pandemic   | <p>Foreign nationals who found it difficult to return to their home country were allowed to change their status of residence to “Designated Activities,” which allowed them to work. Also, those who were in Japan under “Temporary Visitor” status, which did not allow them to work, were allowed to engage in activities other than those permitted by their status of residence.</p> <p>Foreign nationals who had lost their permanent residency status because they had failed to re-enter Japan within the period of validity of their re-entry permission (including special re-entry permissions) were granted “Permanent Resident” status upon entry.</p> <p>After April 20, 2020, in order to maintain the employment in Japan of technical intern trainees and specified skilled workers who were dismissed due to the impact of COVID-19, and who found it difficult to continue their technical intern training, the ISA provided re-employment support in specific industrial fields and, under certain conditions, permitted “Designated Activities” status of residence and provided support to maintain employment in Japan. (After September 7 of the same year, of the technical intern trainees who completed their scheduled technical intern training, those who were deemed to have difficulty in securing a flight back to their home country or return to their place of residence in their home country were also covered by this measure.)</p> <p>At one-stop consulting counters established and operated by local governments, extraordinary measures were taken to allow the maximum amount of subsidies to establish an environment for accepting foreign nationals to be set twice as high as the subsidy limit along with operating costs (from March 10, 2020 to March 31, 2022).</p> <p>The FRESC Help Desk was set up to provide a free multilingual telephone consultation service for foreign nationals who were facing difficulties with their daily lives (from September 2020 to June 2022).</p> <p>The ISA established the FRESC Vaccination Reservation Help Line in order to offer multilingual consultation and provide information on documents necessary for making vaccination reservations and issuing vaccination vouchers at cooperating medical institutions. The ISA also provided multilingual interpreter support at vaccination centers of cooperating medical institutions (from October through December 2021).</p> |



| Date              | Developments  | Description  |
|-------------------|---|--|
| April 1, 2020     | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance Partially Revising the Ministerial Ordinance Providing for Criteria Pursuant to Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act”  | Regardless of the route by which care workers were certified, “Nursing Care” resident status would be honored.   |
| April 1, 2020     | Enforcement of the “Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Status Listed in the Lower Column of the Long-Term Resident Section of Appended Table 2 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act” | The scope of acceptance of refugees through resettlement, which had been limited to Thailand and Malaysia, was expanded to the Asian region.   |
| July 6, 2020      | Opening of the Foreign Residents Support Center (FRESC)   | The ISA, Japan Legal Support Center (Houterasu), Human Rights Department of the Tokyo Legal Affairs Bureau, and relevant ministries and agencies involved in the residence of foreign nationals were brought together in a building in front of Yotsuya Station in Shinjuku Ward to open a center for supporting the residence of foreign nationals.   |
| July 14, 2020     | Report to the Minister of Justice on “Proposals to Solve the Issues of Deportation Evasion and Long-Term Detention”   | The report, “Proposals to Solve the Issues of Deportation Evasion and Long-Term Detention,” compiled by the Special Subcommittee on Detention and Deportation established under the “7th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel,” was submitted to the Minister of Justice.  |
| July 14, 2020     | Formulation on the “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals (FY 2020 revised)” (decision by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals)   | Comprehensive Measures (FY 2020 revised) was formulated from the perspective of further improving and promoting the environment for accepting foreign nationals.   |
| August 18, 2020   | Expansion in the number of airports and seaports equipped with facial recognition Automated Gates   | Facial recognition Automated Gates entered service at Naha Airport.  |
| September 4, 2020 | Enforcement of the “Partial Amendment of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Activities Listed in the Lower Column of Appended Table 1-5 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act”                             | To accept new ski instructors who are able to provide instruction to beginner and novice foreign national skiers in foreign languages, the ISA made the decision to recognize the “Designated Activities” status of residence for activities in which people who meet certain requirements can engage in ski instruction.  |
| December 10, 2020 | Report to the Minister of Justice on “Future Administration of Immigration and Residency Management”  | The 7th Immigration Policy Discussions Panel discussed various topics and submitted to the Minister of Justice a report titled “Future Administration of Immigration and Residency Management,” which outlined measures for coexistence with foreign nationals, smooth acceptance of foreign workers into Japan, and countermeasures against COVID-19 infection in immigration and residence management.   |
| December 25, 2020 | Free distribution of an application for reading residence cards started   | Free distribution began of an application that reads the contents of the IC chip of a residence card. The application has a function to check whether the stored information has been forged or falsified.   |
| April 1, 2021     | Commencement of online acceptance of notifications concerning the system for specified skilled workers and reports based on the Notification Criteria for Japanese-Language Institutes  | In addition to the conventional over-the-counter method or by mail, notifications related to the specified skills system carried out by organizations of affiliation of specified skilled workers and registered support organizations as well as reports submitted by Japanese-language institutes based on the notification standards for Japanese-language institutes were now accepted via the Immigration Service Agency’s Electronic Notification System on the net. |
| April 26, 2021    | Enforcement of the “Ministerial Ordinance for Partial Amendment of Regulations for Enforcement of Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act” (start of digitization of disembarkation cards for foreign nationals)  | Electronic submission of a foreign national’s entry record became possible when applying to land.  |

| Date                | Developments  | Description  |
|---------------------|---|--|
| June 9, 2021        | Mandatory reporting in principle of API and PNR via the "Nippon Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System (NACCS)"   | Reporting by NACCS became a requirement for API and PNRs, in principle.  |
| June 15, 2021       | Formulation on the "Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals (FY 2021 revised )" (decision by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals)  | Based on issues revealed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Comprehensive Measures (FY 2021 revised ) was formulated from the perspective of further improving and promoting the environment for accepting foreign nationals.   |
| June 16, 2021       | Promulgation of the "Law for Partial Amendment of the Act for Controlling the Possession of Firearms or Swords and Other Such Weapons"  | With the amendment of the Act for Controlling the Possession of Firearms or Swords and Other Such Weapons, people illegally possessing cross-bows were added to the list of people subject to landing denial.  |
| October 28, 2021    | Promulgation of the "Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to Determine the Status Listed in the Lower Column of the Long-Term Resident Section of Appended Table 2 of the said Act Pursuant to the Provisions of Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the said Act" | In accordance with the revision of the Civil Code to lower the age of majority, the coverage of biological children of Japanese nationals remaining in China for whom "Long-Term Resident" status is determined was changed from under 20 to under 18 years of age.  |
| November 29, 2021   | Submission of "The Opinion —The Ideal Form of a Harmonious Coexistence Society and its Medium- to Long-term Issues— " to the Minister of Justice  | The opinion report compiled by the Advisory Panel of Experts for the Realization of Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals was submitted to the Minister of Justice, co-chair of the "Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals."  |
| January 14, 2022    | Formulation of the "Mission and Principles of ISA Staff"  | As one of the improvement measures indicated in the "Investigation Report on the Case of the Death of a Detainee at the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau" (released on August 10, 2021), the "Mission and Principles of ISA Staff" was formulated to raise the awareness of ISA staff members.  |
| February 28, 2022   | "Recommendations for Enhancing the Medical System at Immigration Detention Facilities" submitted to the Minister of Justice   | Based on the "Investigation Report on the Case of the Death of a Detainee at the Nagoya Regional Immigration Services Bureau," "the Advisory Panel on Enhancing the Medical System at ISA Detention Facilities" put together a report for the Minister of Justice with the recommendations compiled by the Advisory Panel.   |
| March 2 to 3, 2022  | The 1st Tokyo Immigration Forum   | Representatives of immigration authorities from 18 countries and regions participated in the meeting. Information and opinions on issues faced in their respective countries and regions were shared and exchanged.  |
| March 2, 2022       | Response to Evacuees from Ukraine   | The Prime Minister announced that Japan would accept Ukrainian refugees who were displaced by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The Prime Minister confirmed that the Government of Japan would provide necessary assistance to displaced people in Ukraine with the Ukraine Evacuees Countermeasures Liaison and Coordination Panel headed by the Chief Cabinet Secretary as the overseer. |
| March 9 to 16, 2022 | Promulgation and enforcement of the "Ministerial Ordinance for Partial Amendment of Regulations for Enforcement of Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act"   | In addition to adding foreign nationals themselves and their legal representatives as users of online residence application procedures, "Spouse or Child of Japanese National" and other statuses of residence eligible for application were also added.   |
| June 14, 2022       | Formulation on the "Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals" (decision by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals)  | The government formulated the Roadmap based on "The Opinion —The Ideal Form of a Harmonious Coexistence Society and its Medium- to Long-term Issues— ," which indicates three visions of a society of harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals and, medium -to long-term issues and concrete measures to realize these visions.   |
| June 14, 2022       | Formulation on the "Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals (FY 2022 revised )" (decision by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals)  | From the perspective of further improving the environment for accepting foreign residents, based on the Roadmap , Comprehensive Measures (FY 2022 revised ) were determined.   |

| Date                    | Developments   | Description   |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| December 8, 2022        | Agreement on “Memorandum of Cooperation between Immigration New Zealand, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment of New Zealand and the Immigration Services Agency of Japan regarding Information Sharing on Immigration Matters”   | The agreement was reached with the intention of promoting the exchange of information between the Japanese and New Zealand immigration and residency administration authorities.  |
| December 12 to 14, 2022 | The 2nd Tokyo Immigration Forum  | Representatives of immigration authorities from 18 countries and regions participated in the Forum . Information and opinions on issues faced in their respective countries and regions were shared and exchanged.  |
| March 24, 2023          | Formulation and publication of the “Guide to Eligibility Determination for Refugee Status”   | As part of effort to further optimize how the refugee status recognition system operates, a “Guide to Eligibility Determination for Refugee Status” was formulated and published. It outlines points to consider when judging refugee status.   |
| April 21, 2023          | Introduction of a new system for accepting highly-skilled foreign professionals  | Based on the Prime Minister’s directive at the 4th Council for the Creation of Future Education, the Japan System for Special Highly-Skilled Professionals “J-Skip” and the Japan System for Future Creation Individual Visa “J-Find” were introduced to further promote the acceptance of highly-skilled foreign professionals.  |
| May 31, 2023            | Promulgation of the “Ministerial Ordinance Partially Revising Ministerial Ordinance Providing for Criteria Pursuant to Article 7, Paragraph 1, Item 2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act”  | With regard to the landing criteria for the status of residence, “Entertainer,” in cases where the applicant is engaged in activities related to entertainment, such as theatrical performances, etc., the requirements were relaxed.   |
| June 2, 2023            | Promulgation of “Act on the Accreditation of Japanese-Language Institutes to Ensure Appropriate and Reliable Implementation of Japanese- Language Education” (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)  | A framework was established in which the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology accredits Japanese-language institutes that meet certain requirements, and qualifications for teachers who provide Japanese language education at accredited Japanese-language institutes.  |
| June 9, 2023            | Formulation on the “Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals (FY 2023 partly changed )” (decision by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals)   | The Roadmap (FY 2023 partly changed) was formulated based on the points raised and other feedback through the “Hearing Concerning the Roadmap for the Realization of a Society of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign Nationals.”   |
| June 9, 2023            | Formulation on the “Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals (FY 2023 revised )” (decision by the Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals)   | The Comprehensive Measures (FY 2023 revised) was formulated based on the Roadmap (FY 2023 partly changed) as well as on the perspective of further enhancing the environment for accepting foreign nationals .  |
| June 16, 2023           | Promulgation of the “Amendment ACT of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Special Act on the Immigration Control of, inter alia, Those Who Have Lost Japanese Nationality Pursuant to the Treaty of Peace with Japan” (Act No. 56 of 2023, hereinafter referred to as the “2023 Revision Act”) | Considering situation of deportation and detention in deportation procedures, the 2023 Amendment Act was promulgated including the following contents: in order to increase the propriety and effectiveness of deportation proceedings, establishing an application procedure for special permission for residence, establishing a new Alternative to Detention system under the support of a Sponsor, reviewing the provisions for suspension of deportation during refugee status recognition proceedings, setting up a system to issue a Removal Order with penalties, establishing a system to order an application for issuance of travel documents, establishing system for recognizing eligibility for complementary protection which would protect those who are not refugees under the Refugee Convention, such as displaced person from conflict, but who would be protected in the same manner as a refugee. |

# Index

## A

A Daily Life Support Portal for Foreign Nationals ..... 129, 130, 131, 227

Accepting Environmental Coordinators ... 125, ..... 126

Act on Proper Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Intern Trainees (Technical Intern Training Act) ..... 41, 42, ..... 115, 224, 225

Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims ..... 75, 76

Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons ..... 73, 74

Advance Consultation for Visa Issuance... 19

Advance Passenger Information (API) ... 97

Advance Passenger Inspection System (APIS) ..... 97

Advisory Panel of Experts on the Ideal Form of Technical Intern Training Program and Specified Skilled Worker System ..... 115, 116, 117

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) ..... 153, 216

Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) programs..... 142

Automated Gates ..... 91, 92, 93, 224

## B

Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform... 109, 115, 122, 173

Basic Survey on Foreign Residents ... 123, 124

Bio Carts ..... 90, 160, 224, 225, 228

## C

COVID-19 ... 12, 20, 47, 49, 87, 88, 89, 129, 228, ..... 229, 230

Certificate of Eligibility ..... 19, 183, 184, 228

Certificates of Evacuees from Ukraine ... 85

Committee on the Roles of Professionals Who Coordinate Comprehensive Support ..... 128

Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals ... 115, ..... 119, 122, 123, 124, 227, 229, 230, 231

Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention) ..... 69, 70, ..... 81, 144, 145, 146, 147, 178, 211, 215

Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) ..... 153

Council for the Promotion of Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons ..... 73

## D

Departure Orders ..... 50, 66, 67

Deportation Order ... 59, 60, 61, 64, 67, 71, 81, ..... 82, 209

Deportation Procedures ..... 50, 138, 207, 208, ..... 209, 210, 211, 231

Deportation at the expense of the Government of Japan ..... 63, 64, 65

Deportation evasion..... 80, 81, 82, 229

Deportation in accordance with Article 59 of the Immigration Control Act ..... 63, 64

Detention order ..... 61, 67, 209

Digital Government Execution Plan..... 104

Disembarkation Cards (ED cards) ..... 93

## E

Emergency Consultation Desk for Technical Intern Trainees ..... 44

Emergency Landing ..... 14, 186

## F

Facial Recognition Automated Gates ... 92, 93 ..... 225, 226, 227, 229

Field-Specific Operation Policy ... 111, 112, 113

Foreign National Support Coordinator ... 128,

..... 129  
 Foreign Nationals Denied Permission for  
 Landing ..... 17  
 Foreign Residents Support Center  
 (FRESC) ..... 84, 126, 127, 134, 228, 229  
 Forum for Refugees Japan ..... 150  
 Fourth-Generation Foreign Nationals of  
 Japanese Descent ..... 103, 104  
 Future Investment Strategy ..... 104

## G

Global Festa JAPAN ..... 160  
 Government's Basic Policy ..... 109, 110, 111, 113,  
 ..... 114  
 Guide to Eligibility Determination for  
 Refugee Status ..... 147, 231  
 Guidebook on Living and Working ..... 130

## H

Hearing ..... 15, 16, 37, 58, 59, 60, 180, 182, 207,  
 ..... 208, 209  
 Highly-Skilled Foreign Professionals ..... 99,  
 ..... 100, 101, 218, 219, 220, 221, 225, 226, 231

## I

Illegal Foreign Workers ..... 54, 55, 56, 57  
 Illegal entry ..... 50, 51, 52, 60, 62, 218  
 Illegal landing ..... 50, 53, 60, 62  
 Illegal remaining ..... 50, 53, 60, 62  
 Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting  
 Committee ..... 140, 217  
 Immigration Information Center ..... 127  
 Immigration Policy Discussions Panel ..... 80,  
 ..... 143, 216, 219, 220, 221, 222, 229  
 Immigration inspector ..... 170, 179, 180, 182, 203,  
 ..... 209  
 Implementing organizations ..... 32, 43, 44, 107  
 Imposter foreign residents ..... 137, 138, 224  
 Individual Number Card  
 (My Number Card) ..... 104, 132  
 Individual-enterprise-type technical  
 training plans ..... 43, 190

International Civil Aviation Organization  
 (ICAO) ..... 153  
 International Covenant on Civil and Political  
 Rights (ICCPR) ..... 153  
 International Covenant on Economic, Social  
 and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) ..... 153  
 Investigation Report on the Death of  
 a Detainee at the Nagoya Regional  
 Immigration Services Bureau ..... 139  
 Investigation into Violations ..... 66, 209  
 Irregular notifications ..... 104, 200, 201

## J

Japan Revitalization Strategy ..... 105, 173, 220,  
 ..... 225  
 Japan System for Future Creation Individual  
 Visa (J-Find) ..... 101, 231  
 Japan System for Special Highly-Skilled  
 Professional (J-Skip) ..... 100, 231

## L

Landing Permission Due to Distress ..... 186  
 Landing Permission for Cruise Ship  
 Tourists ..... 94, 185  
 Landing Permission for Temporary  
 Refuge ..... 72, 215  
 Landing at a Port of Call ..... 185  
 Landing in Transit ..... 185  
 Landing permission for crew members ..... 185,  
 ..... 186

## M

Manual for measures against COVID-19  
 infection at immigration facilities ..... 89  
 Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) ..... 108,  
 ..... 113, 114, 118, 147, 224, 231  
 Minister of Justice study sessions  
 concerning the Specified Skilled Worker  
 System and Technical Intern Training  
 Program ..... 115  
 Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and  
 Coexistence of Foreign Nationals ..... 119, 122,  
 ..... 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231



Ministerial Meeting Concerning Measures  
against Crime ..... 73

## N

National Strategic Special Zone Foreign  
Beautician Training Project ..... 103  
National Strategic Special Zones ..... 102, 103,  
..... 105, 222, 225  
Nippon Automated Cargo and Port  
Consolidated System (NACCS) ... 97, 230

## O

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and  
Development (OECD) ..... 153  
Organization for Technical Intern  
Training... 42, 43, 44, 107, 108, 109, 116, 118  
..... 224  
Organization of Affiliation of the Specified  
Skilled Worker ..... 104, 201, 202  
Overstaying the authorized period of  
stay ..... 48, 49, 53

## P

Passenger Name Record (PNR) ..... 97  
Permission for Extension of the Period of  
Stay ..... 35, 193, 200  
Permission for permanent residence ..... 35,  
..... 193, 225  
Permission to acquire a status of  
residence ..... 193  
Permission to change the status of  
residence ..... 192, 193  
Permission to engage in an activity other  
than that permitted under the status of  
residence previously granted ... 36, 194, 195  
Plain Japanese ..... 133, 158  
Plain Japanese Guidelines for Foreign  
Residents Support ..... 131  
Points-based system for highly-skilled  
professionals ..... 99, 101  
Pre-clearance Trial ..... 93, 94  
Pre-entry Examination ..... 19, 182, 183

Project Team on Operation of the Technical  
Intern Training Program ..... 107, 226  
Project for Facilitation of Acceptance  
of Foreign Entrepreneurs in National  
Strategic Special Zones ..... 102, 105  
Proposals to Solve the Issues of Deportation  
Evasion and Long-Term Detention... 80, 229  
Provisional Release ..... 61, 83  
Public Notice Relating to the Project to  
Promote Foreign National Entrepreneurial  
Activities ..... 105

## R

Re-entry Permission ..... 3, 12, 13, 36, 88, 194,  
..... 220, 221, 228  
Refugee Examination Counselors ..... 144, 212,  
..... 213, 223  
Refugee recognition system ..... 69, 143, 144,  
..... 145, 146, 147, 221, 222, 225  
Refugee travel document ..... 212  
Region (s) Subject to Denial of  
Landing ..... 87  
Registered Support Organizations ... 45, 227,  
..... 229  
Regular notifications ..... 104, 201  
Request for an Administrative Review ... 71,  
..... 212, 214  
Resettlement ..... 148, 149, 216, 220, 227, 229  
Residence Card ..... 39, 138, 139, 195, 196  
Residence card reading application ..... 139  
Review Meeting for the Promotion of  
Information Provision through the Use of  
Plain Japanese ..... 131  
Roadmap for the Realization of a Society  
of Harmonious Coexistence with Foreign  
Nationals ..... 119, 120, 121, 122, 230, 231

## S

Special Detection Officer Units ..... 136  
Special Equipment Exhibition & Conference  
for Anti-Terrorism (SEECAT) ... 160, 161  
Special Landing ..... 14, 182, 185  
Special Permanent Resident Certificates ... 40,  
..... 139, 203, 204, 205, 219



Special Permission to Stay in Japan ..... 62, 81,  
 ..... 82, 136, 137, 210, 216

Special Subcommittee on Detention and  
 Deportation ..... 80, 229

Special inquiry officer ..... 15, 58, 180, 181, 182,  
 ..... 209

Special permission for landing ..... 19, 181

Special re-entry permission ... 12, 13, 88, 220,  
 ..... 221, 228

Specified Skilled Worker System ... 45, 46, 109,  
 ..... 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117

Specified industrial field ..... 109, 110, 111, 112,  
 ..... 113, 114

Spousal Violence Counseling and Support  
 Center ..... 76

Status of residence revocation system ... 36, 37

Subsidies for preparations for an  
 environment for the acceptance of foreign  
 nationals ..... 125

Supervising organizations ..... 42, 43, 44, 107,  
 ..... 108, 109, 116, 118, 219, 224

Support website for the Specified Skilled  
 Worker Program ..... 114

Supporters Accepting Fourth-generation  
 Foreign National of Japanese Descent... 103

System for Permission for Provisional  
 Stay ..... 71

System of granting landing permission to  
 cruise ship tourists ..... 94

## T

Task Force for the Enforcement of Laws  
 and Regulations Relating to Trafficking in  
 Persons ..... 75

Taskforce for COVID-19 Countermeasures  
 in Immigration Facilities ..... 89

Technical Intern Trainee Handbook ..... 45

Technical Intern Training Program ..... 41, 42,  
 ..... 43, 107, 108, 115, 116, 117, 221, 225, 226

Tokyo Immigration Forum ... 154, 155, 230, 231

Tourism Vision Realization Program ... 90, 93

Tourism Vision to Support the Future of  
 Japan ..... 173

Training for local government staff on  
 measures for foreign nationals ..... 135

Trusted Traveler Program (TTP) ... 91, 224

## U

Ukrainian Evacuees Countermeasures  
 Liaison and Coordination Panel ..... 84

Ukrainian Evacuees Help Desk ..... 84

Ukrainian Evacuees Information  
 Registration Site ..... 86

Ukrainian Evacuees Reception Support  
 Staff ..... 84

Ukrainian Evacuees Support Website ..... 85

## V

Violation adjudication procedures ..... 210

Voluntary departure ..... 63, 64, 65, 82

## W

We love Yotsuya Festival ..... 134

## Y

Yurinoki Terrace ..... 161

## 1

1965 Convention on Facilitation of  
 International Maritime Traffic (FAL  
 Convention) ..... 153

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# 2023 Immigration Control and Residency Management

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Immigration Services Agency of Japan

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