

# Kocoforre News

Issue 5: Winter 2024

"Kocoforre" is the nickname for the Kochi Consultation Center for Foreign Residents



With the fresh aroma of plum blossoms in the air, has everyone been keeping well? In Kocoforre News, we introduce our Kocoforre's activities and useful information for foreign residents of Kochi, those who are connected with foreigners, and people interested in multiculturalism.

## Topics

### Obtaining Permanent Residency in Japan

Written using the following article: "Guidelines for Permission for Permanent Residence (Revised December 1st, 2023)" by the Immigration Services Agency of Japan [https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyukan\\_nyukan50.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyukan_nyukan50.html)

## Legal Requirements for the residential status of "Permanent Resident"

Being a "Permanent Resident" provides significantly more relaxed residency management than other residential statuses, in that there are no restrictions on either residence activity or period of stay. Therefore, applications for becoming a permanent resident are examined more carefully than the other residential statuses. There are three main requirements in order to obtain the status of "Permanent Resident".

### 1 Be of good conduct

The applicant observes Japanese laws, and their daily living as a resident does not invite any social criticism.



Obey the law and live an honest life.

### 2 Have sufficient assets or skills to earn an independent living

Without being a burden on the public, the applicant is expected to lead a stable life in the future based on their assets or skills.

Have the income and assets to live in Japan. Income is determined on a household basis, so even if the person applying has no income but the household has a certain level of income and assets, the requirements can still be met.

### 3 The applicant's permanent residence be regarded to be in accordance with the interests of Japan

- (a) In principle, the applicant has stayed in Japan for more than 10 years consecutively. It is also required that during this period they have continued staying for more than 5 years consecutively with a work-based residential status (excluding "Technical Intern Training" and "Specified Skilled Worker (i)") or a status-based residential status.
- (b) The applicant has been never sentenced to a fine or imprisonment. They adequately fulfil public obligations such as tax payment, public pension payment and public health insurance premium payment, as well as notifying in accordance with the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act.
- (c) The applicant is continuing to stay in Japan holding the effective residential status with the maximum period of stay specified in the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act.
- (d) There is no risk that the applicant could do harm from a public health perspective.

For example, if you study at a university as an international student for 4 years out of 10 years and then work for 6 years after graduation, you will meet the requirements because you will have been in Japan with a work-based residential status for 5 years or more. But if you study for 6 years and then work for 4 years, you will not meet the requirements. Time spent working in Japan as Technical Intern Trainee or Specified Skilled Worker (i) is not counted as the part of 10 years.

You are required to pay your taxes, pension, and health insurance premiums properly.

Have the maximum period of stay for your current residential status. Currently, a period of stay of three years is considered the maximum.

Have no public health issues, such as not having an infectious disease.

### Special provisions regarding 10-year residence in principle

Under certain special provisions, you may be able to apply for permanent residency even if you have not stayed in Japan for 10 years. Some of them are as follows.



#### For those with the residential status of "Spouse or Child of Japanese National", etc.

The applicant who is a spouse of Japanese National, Permanent Resident, or Special Permanent Resident, has been in a real marital relationship for more than 3 years consecutively and has stayed in Japan for more than 1 year consecutively. Also, the applicant who is a child of Japanese National, Permanent Resident, or Special Permanent Resident has stayed in Japan for more than 1 year consecutively.

#### For those with the residential status of "Long-Term Resident"

The applicant has stayed in Japan for more than 5 years consecutively.

## For those with the residential status of “Highly-Skilled Professional”

- The applicant has a total score of **70 points or more** based on the points calculation criteria specified in the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, and meets one of the following requirements:
  - (a) The applicant has maintained the required score as a “Highly-Skilled Foreign Professional” and has stayed in Japan for more than 3 years consecutively.
  - (b) The applicant has continuously stayed in Japan for more than 3 years having kept 70 points or more since the date, 3 years before the date of application, when they were deemed to have 70 points or more at the time.
- The applicant has a total score of **80 points or more** based on the points calculation criteria specified in the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, and meets one of the following requirements:
  - (a) The applicant has maintained the required score as a “Highly-Skilled Foreign Professional” and has stayed in Japan for more than 1 year consecutively.
  - (b) The applicant has continuously stayed in Japan for more than 1 year having kept 80 points or more since the date, 1 year before the date of application, when they were deemed to have 80 points or more at the time.

There are other special provisions in addition to those listed above. For more information, please refer to the Immigration Services Agency website. [https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyukan\\_nyukan50.html](https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/publications/materials/nyukan_nyukan50.html)



## Announcements from Kocoforre

Free



### Legal Consultations Now Available at Kocoforre

Legal consultations held at Houterasu can now be conducted at Kocoforre, too. Consultations are available for foreign nationals and naturalized citizens living in Kochi Prefecture whose income and assets are below the designated threshold. Lawyers from the Kochi Bar Association will provide legal consultations (excluding consultations regarding criminal cases).

**By holding your legal consultation at Kocoforre, you can rest easy about two things:**

If you don't meet the criteria, we can still refer you to a lawyer who can offer assistance to foreigners. Please note that in such cases, there may be a consultation fee.

#### 1. No pesky language barrier!

You can consult with lawyers in your native language. Interpretation will be provided by consultants or interpreters at Kocoforre or a three-party telephone interpretation service.

#### 2. We're with you every step of the way!

If you hold your consultation at Kocoforre, we can continue to follow up with you about your case, and we can also advise you on non-legal matters.

■ For more information, check Kocoforre's website <https://kccfr.jp/en/shiteisoudanbashi-20221215/>



## Company Visits



Kocoforre staff visits companies to meet with foreign employees and introduce them to Kochi Prefecture and the foreigner community here, and give them useful information about life in Kochi from a foreigner's perspective. We also hold get-togethers (with interpretation available) where participants can ask questions or express worries about their life in Japan in an informal setting. For more information, please contact Kocoforre.



## Kocoforre Volunteers Wanted!

Kocoforre is looking for volunteers to help provide support for foreigners living in Kochi. Duties include administration or interpreting at the town hall and other related facilities. There have been many requests for interpreters who can speak English. Recently there were also some requests for Vietnamese, Burmese, and Nepali. When registering as a supporter, you will need to attend a one-hour guidance session. You can register even if you do not speak a foreign language, so please contact Kocoforre if you are interested.

## Kocoforre Consultation Sessions with Specialists

\*For more information, please refer to Kocoforre's website and social media

February 18th, 2024 (Sun)	Tosa City On-site Consultation & Mini Seminar	Tosa City Cultural Complex "Tsunade" (Address: 3451-1 Otsu, Takaoka-cho, Tosa-shi)	Consultations on status of residence and general concerns about life in Japan will be held. There will also be a seminar conducted by members of the Takamatsu Regional Immigration Services Bureau outlining fundamental information regarding residential status.
February 26th (Mon) – March 2nd, 2024 (Sat)	Free Legal Consultation Week for Foreigners	Kocoforre (Address: 4-1-37 Honmachi, Kochi-shi)	Lawyers will be giving free consultations to all clients regardless of financial means (excluding corporations).

### Website



Available in Japanese, English, Chinese, Korean, Indonesian, and Vietnamese.

### Instagram



Useful information on living in Japan is posted in simple Japanese and foreign languages.

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