

To all foreign
nationals residing
in Japan

Beginning on Monday, July 9, 2012,

Start of a new residency management system!

What exactly is the new residency management system?

Point 1 A resident card will be issued

Point 2 The period of stay will be extended to a maximum of 5 years

Point 3 The re-entry permit system will be changed

Point 4 The alien registration system will be abolished



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Who will be subject to the new residency management system?

The new residency management system will be applied to all foreign nationals residing legally in Japan for the mid- to long-term with resident status under the Immigration Control Act (hereinafter referred to as “mid- to long-term residents”) and, moreover, foreign nationals who do not come under any of the following 1 through to 6.

- (1) Persons granted permission to stay for 3 months or less**
- (2) Persons granted “Temporary Visitor” status**
- (3) Persons granted “Diplomat” or “Official” status**
- (4) Persons recognized by Ministry of Justice ordinance as equivalent to the foreign nationals in the aforementioned (1) to (3)***
- (5) Special permanent residents**
- (6) Persons with no resident status****

This new system will apply to mid- to long-term residents in Japan, such as those married to a Japanese national as well as Japanese descendants (“nikkei”), whose status of residence is “Spouse or Child of Japanese National,” “Long Term Resident,” etc., those working for an employer in Japan, whose status is “Engineer,” “Specialist in Humanities/International Services,” etc., as well as technical interns, students, and permanent residents. It will not apply to those visiting Japan for a short period of time as a tourist.

* The Ministry of Justice ordinance specifies staff of the Japanese office of the Association of East Asian Relations and the Permanent General Mission of Palestine in Japan who have “Designated Activities” status, and their families.

** While illegal residents can be registered under the present alien registration system, they cannot be registered under the new residency management system. Any foreign national illegally staying in Japan is advised to immediately visit the nearest Regional Immigration Office and follow the necessary procedures. For more details, please see the “Information on Procedures to Follow at Immigration Offices” on the Immigration Bureau of Japan’s website. (http://www.moj.go.jp/nyuukokukanri/kouhou/nyukan_nyukan87.html)



Point 7

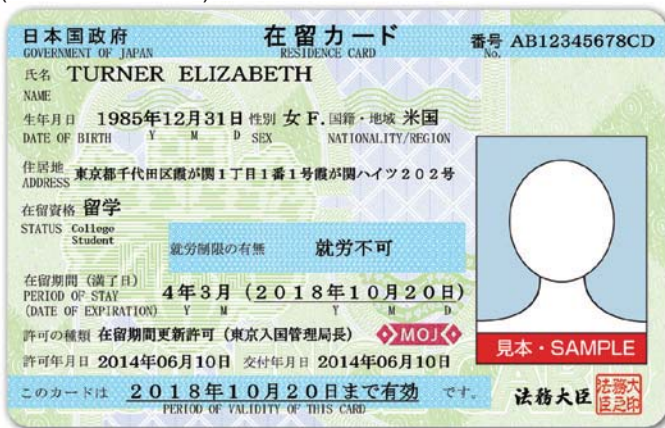
A resident card will be issued

What exactly is a resident card?

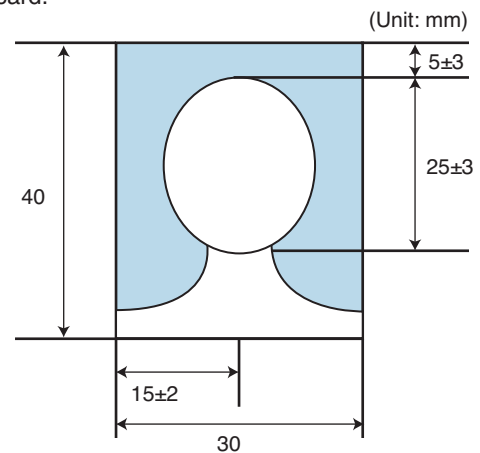
A resident card will be issued to mid- to a long-term residents when granted permission pertaining to residence, such as landing permission, permission for change of resident status and permission for extension of the period of stay.

Note: All or part of the information printed on the resident card will be recorded in an IC chip embedded for the purpose of preventing the resident cards from being forged or altered.

(Front of the card)



You need to submit a photo as specified below when you submit an application or report that involves issue of a resident card.



(Back of the card)



- 1 A photo that shows the applicant him/herself alone
- 2 A photo of the dimensions specified in the drawing above, excluding the photo's outer border (the dimension of the face refers to the portion from the top of the head [including the hair] to the lower end of the chin)
- 3 The person should face squarely to the front and remove hats, caps or head coverings.
- 4 No background or shadows
- 5 Must be clear.
- 6 Must be taken within three months prior to submission.

If a foreign national applies for an extension of the period of stay or applies for a change in resident status, this is the section where the fact that the application is pending will be entered.

Note: If permission for extension or change is granted following application, a new residence card will be issued.

The resident card has a "valid period"

The valid period of the resident card will be as follows:

Permanent resident:

16 years or older
 7 years from the date of issuance

Less than 16 years old
 Until the foreign national's 16th birthday

Persons other than permanent residents:

16 years or older
 The expiration date of the period of stay

Less than 16 years old
 Whichever comes earlier, the expiration date of the period of stay, or the individual's 16th birthday

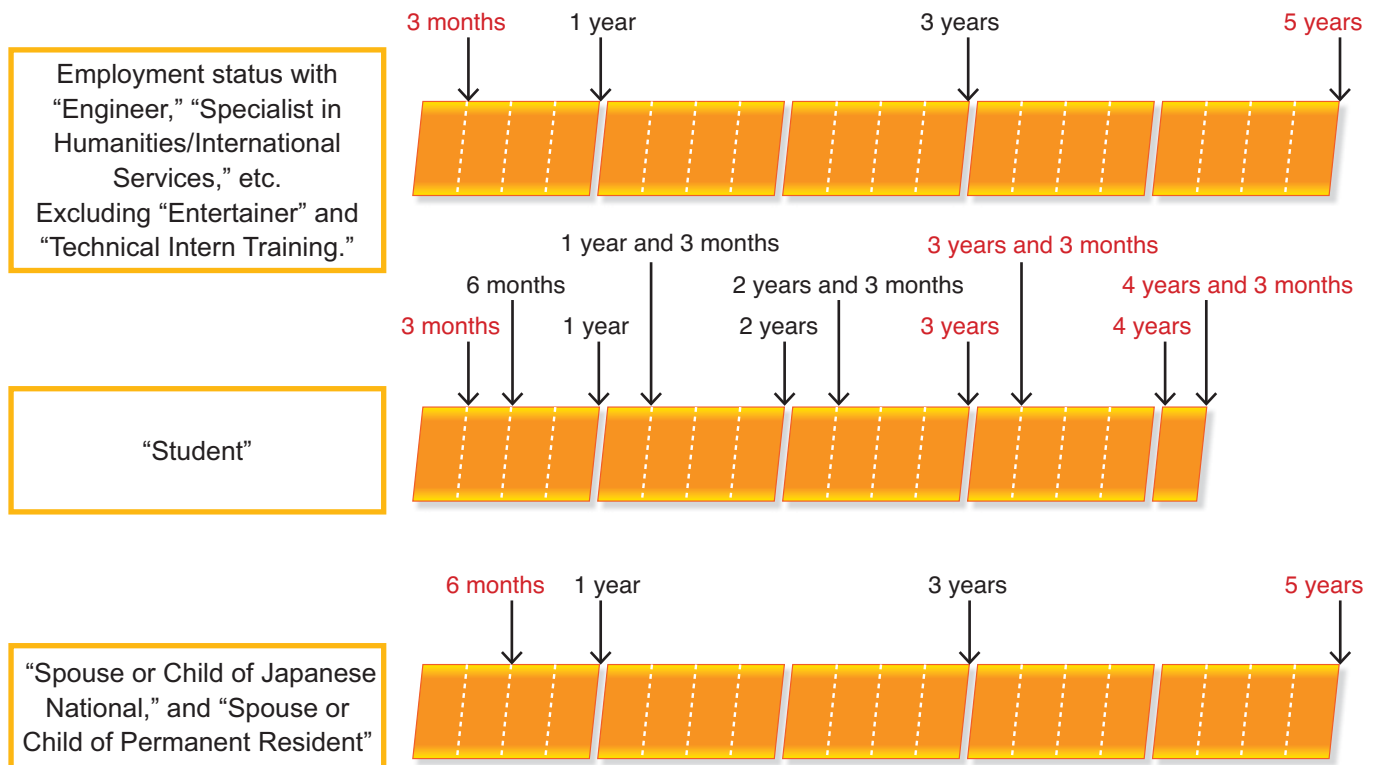
Point 2

The period of stay will be extended to a maximum of 5 years

By changing the maximum period of stay to “5 years,” the period of stay set for each resident status will be modified as shown below.

Major resident status	Period of stay (Those in red are new)
Employment status with “Engineer,” “Specialist in Humanities/International Services,” etc. Excluding “Entertainer” and “Technical Intern Training.”	5 years, 3 years, 1 year, 3 months *
“Student”	4 years and 3 months, 4 years, 3 years and 3 months, 3 years, 2 years and 3 months, 2 years, 1 year and 3 months, 1 year, 6 months, 3 months *
“Spouse or Child of Japanese National,” and “Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident”	5 years, 3 years, 1 year, 6 months

* The “3 months” period of stay was set for those who plan to stay in Japan for up to three months. In this case, the new residency management system does not apply and no resident card will be issued.



Point 3

The re-entry permit system will be changed

■ A special re-entry permit system will be introduced.

Foreign nationals in possession of a valid passport and resident card (*1) who will be re-entering Japan within 1 year of their departure to continue their activities in Japan (*2) will, in principle, not be required to apply for a re-entry permit.

(This is called a special re-entry permit.)

Be sure to present your resident card at departure.

Foreign nationals who have departed from Japan on a special re-entry permit will not be able to extend that permit while abroad. Please note that such foreign nationals will lose their resident status if they fail to re-enter Japan within 1 year of their departure (*2).

(*1) The special re-entry permit system also applies to those in possession of a passport stating “A resident card is to be issued later”, or an alien registration certificate deemed to be equivalent to the resident card (for more details, please see page 7).

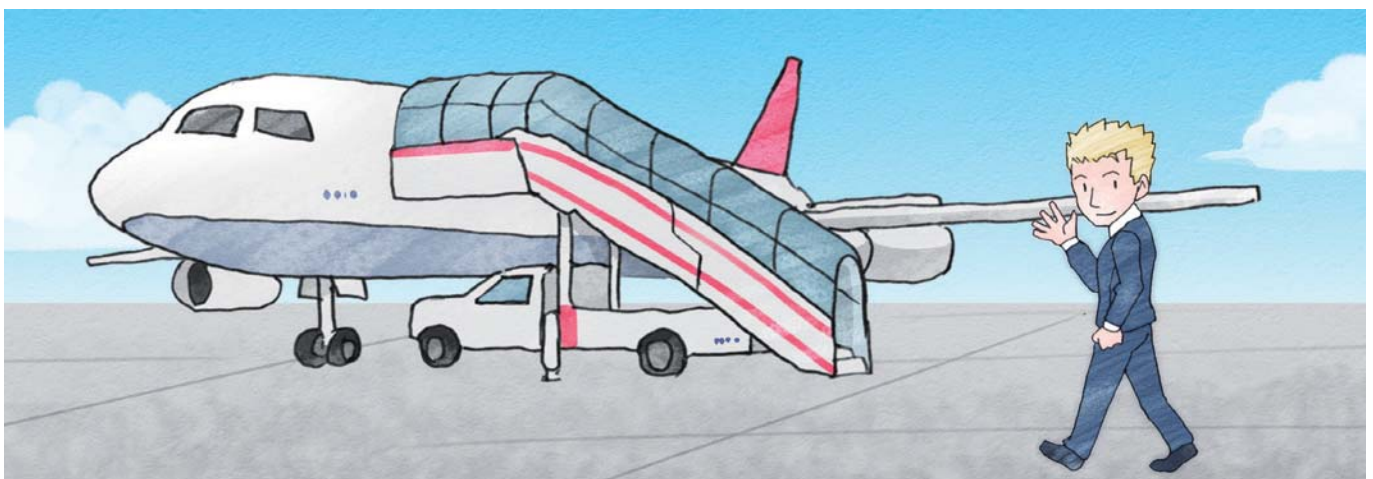
(*2) If your period of stay expires within 1 year after your departure, please ensure that you re-enter Japan before the expiration of your period of stay.

The special re-entry permit system does not apply to those falling under any of the following.

- Those whose resident status is in the process of revocation
- Those whose confirmation of departure is suspended
- Those who have received a written detention order
- Those who are in the process of a refugee application and staying with the resident status of “Designated Activities”
- Those who are specified by Japan’s Ministry of Justice to be a threat to Japan’s national interests or public order, or for other good reasons to be in need of a re-entry permit for the sake of fair control of entries and departures.

■ The maximum validity period of a re-entry permit is set at “5 years.”

The maximum validity period of a re-entry permit issued after implementation of the new system (July 9th, 2012) is to be “5 years,” instead of the current “3 years.”



Point 4

The alien registration system will be abolished

When the new residency management system goes into effect, the alien registration system will be abolished.

■ Alien registration certificates for mid- to long-term residents will be deemed, for a certain period, to be equivalent to the resident card.

Mid- to long-term residents are asked to keep their alien registration certificates until a resident card is issued since the alien registration certificate will be deemed, for a certain period, to be equivalent to the resident card in legal procedures at Regional Immigration Offices and residential procedures at municipal offices after implementation of the new residency management system. Mid- to long-term residents will be asked to exchange their alien registration certificates for a resident card when filing an application or notifications involving the issue of a new resident card at a Regional Immigration Office, or can exchange the certificates for a card at their own request at a Regional Immigration Office.

Period in which an alien registration certificate is deemed to be equivalent to the resident card

The period in which an alien registration certificate is deemed to be equivalent to the resident card depends on the resident status and age of the foreign national as of July 9, 2012.

Please take note that the period may end before the next confirmation date written in your alien registration certificate.

Permanent Resident

16 years or older	Until July 8, 2015
Less than 16 years old	Whichever comes earlier, July 8, 2015, or the individual's 16th birthday

Designated Activities *

*Applicable only to those granted permission to stay for 5 years for specified research activities, etc.

16 years or older	Whichever comes earlier, the expiration date of the period of stay, or July 8, 2015
Less than 16 years old	Whichever comes earlier, the expiration date of the period of stay, July 8, 2015, or the individual's 16th birthday

Other resident status

16 years or older	The expiration date of the period of stay
Less than 16 years old	Whichever comes earlier, the expiration date of the period of stay, or the individual's 16th birthday

Procedural flow of the new residency management system

At ports of entry/departure

Immigration examination

Besides having a seal of landing verification stamped in their passports, mid- to long-term residents will be issued a resident card.

* A resident card will be issued only at Narita, Haneda, Chubu, and Kansai Airports when the new system is enforced in July 2012. For more details, please see page 9.

At municipal offices

Notification (Change) of place of residence

At Regional Immigration Offices

Notification of (a change of) an item other than the place of residence

Notification of a change of name, date of birth, gender, or nationality/region

Application for updating the validity period of the resident card

(Permanent residents and those less than 16 years old)

Application for re-issuance of a resident card

(In case the resident card is lost, stolen, severely damaged or defaced)

Notification concerning the organization to which the applicant belongs, or the spouse

(Those who reside with a employment status or learning status such as "Student" status or with the status of spouse)

Examination of resident status

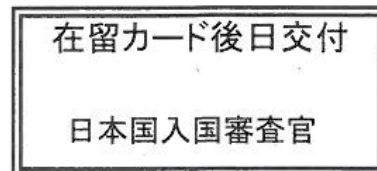
Mid- to long-term residents will be issued with a resident card when granted permission for extension of the period of stay or permission for a change to resident status.

Procedure at port of entry/departure

Immigration examination

At Narita, Haneda, Chubu, and Kansai Airports, besides having a seal of landing verification stamped in their passports, mid- to long-term residents will be issued a resident card.

At other ports of entry/departure, a seal of landing verification will be stamped in the passport and the following description will be made near the stamp. In this case, a resident card will be issued after a mid- to long-term resident follows the residency procedure at the municipal office of the city/town/village. (Basically, a resident card will be mailed by the Regional Immigration Office to the reported place of residence.)



■ Permission to engage in an activity other than that permitted under the resident status may be given at the port of entry or departure.

Permission to engage in an activity other than that permitted under the resident status may be given at the port of entry or departure, to persons for whom all of the followings apply:

- Persons entering Japan for the first time.
* Those entering Japan with a re-entry permit are not eligible.
- Those who are granted "Student" status with the permitted period of more than 3 months.



Procedure at a municipal office

Notification (Change) of place of residence

Those who have come to Japan for the first time

Those who have received a resident card at a port of entry/departure (*) are asked to visit the municipal office where they live with their resident card, and notify the Ministry of Justice where they live within 14 days of finding a place to settle down.

(*) This includes those in possession of a passport stating “A resident card will be issued later.” In such a case, please be sure to bring your passport to your municipality’s office and follow the necessary procedures.

Note: Similarly, new mid- to long-term residents who have changed their resident status must report where they live.

Those who have moved into a new residence

A mid- to long-term resident who has changed his/her place of residence is asked to bring his/her resident card to the municipal office of his/her new residence and notify the Ministry of Justice of the new residence within 14 days of moving to the new residence.

This procedure can be completed as part of filing a moving-in notification or a notice of change of address to the municipality!

Under the new residency management system, foreign residents are to be entered in Japan’s Basic Resident Registration System. More specifically, this Register will mainly include those foreign nationals who reside legally in Japan longer than three months, such as mid- to long-term residents.

Under the new residency management system, a notification of one’s residence can be done as part of filing a moving-in notification or a notice of change of address to the municipality in the Basic Resident Registration System.

These notifications should be basically completed by the applicant him/herself. However, if necessary, the applicant can ask an agent to file such a notification for him/her with a written letter of proxy.



Procedure at a Regional Immigration Office

Notification of (a change of) an item other than the place of residence

In case you file any of the following notifications or applications below at a Regional Immigration Office, please bring your passport, photo, and resident card. A new resident card will basically be issued on the day of notification or application.

Notification of a change of name, date of birth, gender, or nationality/region

In case you change your name, date of birth, gender, or nationality/region, for instance you change your name or your nationality/region because of marriage, be sure to notify the Ministry of Justice of the change at a Regional Immigration Office within 14 days of the change.

* Although names written in the Latin alphabet will basically be used, a name written in Chinese character notation (orthographic) can be added. Please make note that, in this case, any change in Chinese character notation needs to be reported.

Application for updating the validity period of the resident card

A permanent resident or a foreign resident in Japan younger than 16 years old whose resident card's validity expires on his/her 16th birthday is advised to apply for a renewal of the validity period of the resident card at a Regional Immigration Office before the expiration date.

A permanent resident can file an application for renewal of the validity period of his/her resident card within two months of the expiration date. A foreign resident younger than 16 years old whose resident card's validity expires on his/her 16th birthday can file such an application within six months of his/her 16th birthday.

Application for re-issuance of a resident card

In case your resident card is lost, stolen, severely damaged or defaced, please apply for reissuance at a Regional Immigration Office.

In case your resident card is lost or stolen, please apply for reissuance within 14 days of the day when you noticed this (or the day when you re-enter Japan in case you noticed it outside Japan).

(*) To apply for reissue, please bring with you a report of loss or a theft report certificate issued by the Police Department or a disaster victim certificate issued by the Fire Department in place of your resident card.

In case your resident card is severely damaged or defaced, be sure to apply for reissuance as soon as possible.

You can apply for a replacement resident card even if it is not severely damaged or defaced. In such a case, you are required to pay a reissuance fee.

Procedure at a Regional Immigration Office

Notifications and applications can be filed by proxies.

These notifications and applications (page 11), in principle, must be filed in person at a Regional Immigration Office by the individual him/herself, but if that person is under the age of 16 or unable to do so because of sickness, etc., a family member living with the said individual must file the notifications or application on their behalf.

If approved by the director of the Regional Immigration Office, a legal representative or the following persons requested by the individual may submit documents or complete other procedures related to the notifications and applications on behalf of the individual.

- Employees of a host institution or charitable corporations approved by the director of the Regional Immigration Office
- An attorney or a public notary who files a notification or an application by way of the bar association or specialist association he/she belongs to

Besides this, in certain cases, family members, cohabitants or persons equivalent to cohabitants of the individual, who are approved by the director of the Regional Immigration Office, may complete procedures related to the notifications and applications on behalf of the individual.

Notification concerning the organization to which the applicant belongs, or the spouse

When you file any of the following notifications at a Regional Immigration Office, be sure to bring your resident card. In case you file a notification via mail, please enclose a copy of your resident card. Please note that a new resident card will not be issued when a notification is filed in this way.

○ Notification of an affiliated organization

In case a mid- to long-term resident with “Engineer” or another employment status (excluding “Artist,” “Religious Activities,” and “Journalist”), or “Student” or another learning status, leaves an organization (employer or educational institution) he/she belongs to (due to termination of contract) or moves into another organization (on a new contract), or such an organization changes its name, location, or breaks up, the resident has to notify the incident to the Ministry of Justice by visiting a Regional Immigration Office or sending a notification to the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, within 14 days of the incident.

○ Notification about one’s spouse

A mid- to long-term resident who is married, has resident status of “Dependent,” “Designated Activities (C),” “Spouse or Child of Japanese National,” or “Spouse or Child of Permanent Resident” and who loses his/her spouse by death or divorce has to notify the Ministry of Justice of the event by visiting a Regional Immigration Office or sending a notification to the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, within 14 days of the event.



Procedure at a Regional Immigration Office

Examination of resident status

A new resident card will be issued to a mid- to long-term resident when a renewed period of stay, permission to change his/her resident status or a permanent resident permit is granted, or acquisition of resident status is admitted. (The passport will not be stamped).

Applications can be filed by proxies.

These applications, in principle, must be filed in person at a Regional Immigration Office by the individual him/herself or the attorney on behalf of the individual.

However, if approved by the director of the Regional Immigration Office, the following persons may submit documents or complete other procedures related to the applications on behalf of the individual.

- Employees of a host institution or charitable corporations approved by the director of the Regional Immigration Office
- An attorney or a public notary who files a notification or an application by way of the bar association or specialist association he/she belongs to

Besides this, in certain cases, legal representatives, family members, cohabitants or persons equivalent to cohabitants of the individual, who are approved by the director of the Regional Immigration Office, may complete procedures related to the applications on behalf of the individual.

Notice to organizations hosting foreign nationals

The new residency management system requires organizations hosting foreign nationals to file the following notifications.

Report of mid- to long-term residents with employment status

An organization hosting mid- to long-term residents with work-based resident status of such as “Engineer” (excluding “Artist,” “Religious Activities,” “Journalist,” and “Technical Intern Training”) should, when it begins hosting such residents (employing, hiring as a director, etc.) or terminates hosting (dismissal, retirement, etc.), notify the Ministry of Justice of the fact by visiting a Regional Immigration Office or sending a notification to the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, within 14 days of the event. (This does not apply to organizations obliged to report their employment of foreign nationals under the Employment Measures Act).

Notice about students

An educational organization hosting mid- to long-term residents with “Student” status should, when it begins hosting such students (admission, transfer, etc.) or terminates hosting (graduation, dismissal, etc.), notify the Ministry of Justice of the fact by visiting a Regional Immigration Office or sending a notification to the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, within 14 days of the event.

An educational organization hosting foreign students is also required to report its hosting situation with foreign students as of May 1st and November 1st of each year, within 14 days of each date, to the Ministry of Justice by visiting a Regional Immigration Office or sending a notification to the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau.

Please take note of the following!

In line with the introduction of the new residency management system, the following grounds have been established for revocation of resident status, deportation and penalties. Regarding the penalty on promoting illegal work prescribed in Article 73-2 of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, if an employer does not know by negligence that the employed person works illegally, the employer will be punished.

Revocation of resident status

- You have obtained special permission to stay by wrongful means.
- You are residing as a spouse with “Spouse or Child of Japanese National” or “Spouse of Child of Permanent Resident” status, but you have failed to engage in activities as a spouse for six months or more without a justifiable reason.*
- You have failed to give notification of your place of residence without a justifiable reason or have submitted a false notification.**

* In case a foreign resident is in the process of arbitration with his/her spouse over the custody of his/her child or having a divorce case holding his/her Japanese spouse culpable, the foreign resident is deemed to have “justifiable reasons,” even though the activities of such a resident as the status of spouse are not approved. Also, even if a foreign resident in Japan does not act as a spouse for six months or longer, the resident may be permitted to change his/her resident status to another one if he/she has any reason, such as taking care of and raising his/her biological child who has Japanese nationality.

** “Justifiable reasons” for failing to notify the change of address are applicable to the following cases: the company a foreign resident worked for went suddenly bankrupt and he/she lost his/her place to live as a result; a foreign resident was hospitalized for a long time and, therefore, was unable to notify the change of his/her address; or a foreign resident was a victim of domestic violence and hid the change of his/her address in order to avoid the assailant knowing the new address.

Grounds for deportation

- You have forged or altered your resident card.
- You have been sentenced to imprisonment with labor or a heavier punishment for submitting false notification or similar act.

Penalties

- You have submitted a false notification or have violated the obligation to submit a notification relating to any of the notifications required of mid- to long-term residents or have violated the obligation concerning receipt, carrying or mandatory presentation of your resident card.
- You have forged or altered your resident card.

Q & A

Q. Do I need to immediately replace my current alien registration certificate with a resident card?

A. You are not required to replace your alien registration certificate with a new resident card immediately after the start of the new residency management system (although you may do so if you so wish). The alien registration certificate that mid- to long-term residents currently possess will be deemed equivalent to a resident card for a certain period from the enforcement date of the amended act.

If you are a foreign national other than a permanent resident, you will generally receive your resident card when granted permission for an extension of the period of stay or other permission after the start of the new system.

If you are a permanent resident, you will be required to apply for a resident card, in principle, within three years from the start of the new residency management system. (For more details, please see page 7.)

Q. Will the holder's name be written in simplified Chinese characters or will nicknames be written on resident cards issued to foreign nationals in Japan, as on the alien registration certificate?

A. The name on the resident card will basically be written in the Latin alphabet, but the name in Chinese characters can be added. In this case, simplified characters will be converted into orthographic characters (*) when written on the card. Nicknames will not be written, as they are not necessary for residency management.

(*) The Notice on Notations of Names in Chinese Characters on Resident Cards, etc. stipulates the range of orthographic characters, basic regulations of notations, etc.

Q. After the introduction of the new residency management system, where can I obtain substitute certificates for description of an alien registration card, which are currently used in various procedures as equivalents to copies of a certificate of residence?

A. For every foreign resident eligible for issuance of a resident card, a certificate of residence will be prepared at the municipality where he/she resides in accordance with the amendment of the Basic Resident Registration Law. A copy of the certificate of residence can, therefore, be obtained at his/her municipality's office, just as for Japanese nationals today.

For further information or inquiries

Sapporo Regional Immigration Bureau	〒 060-0042	12 Odori-nishi, Chuo-ku, Sapporo-shi, Hokkaido	TEL 011-261-7502
Sendai Regional Immigration Bureau	〒 983-0842	1-3-20 Gorin, Miyagino-ku, Sendai-shi, Miyagi	TEL 022-256-6076
Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau	〒 108-8255	5-5-30 Konan, Minato-ku, Tokyo (Inspection Coordination Department (Re-entry)) (Employment Inspection Department) (Student Inspection Department) (Trainee and Temporary Visitor Inspection Department) (Permanent Residence Inspection Department)	TEL 03-5796-7111 TEL 03-5796-7251 TEL 03-5796-7252 TEL 03-5796-7253 TEL 03-5796-7254 TEL 03-5796-7255
Narita Airport District Immigration Office	〒 282-0004	1-1 Furugome, Narita-shi, Chiba	TEL 0476-34-2222
Haneda Airport District Immigration Office	〒 144-0041	2-6-4 Haneda-Kuko, Ota-ku, Tokyo	TEL 03-5708-3202
Yokohama District Immigration Office	〒 236-0002	10-7 Torihama-cho, Kanazawa-ku, Yokohama-shi, Kanagawa	TEL 045-769-1720
Nagoya Regional Immigration Bureau	〒 455-8601	5-18, Shoho-cho, Minato-ku, Nagoya-shi, Aichi	TEL 052-559-2150
Chubu Airport District Immigration Office	〒 479-0881	1-1 Centrair, Tokoname-shi, Aichi	TEL 0569-38-7410
Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau	〒 559-0034	1-29-53 Nankou Kita, Suminoe-ku, Osaka-shi, Osaka	TEL 06-4703-2100
Kansai Airport District Immigration Office	〒 549-0011	1 Senshu-Kuko-Naka, Tajiri-cho, Sennan-gun, Osaka	TEL 072-455-1453
Kobe District Immigration Office	〒 650-0024	29 Kaigan-dori, Chuo-ku, Kobe-shi, Hyogo	TEL 078-391-6377
Hiroshima Regional Immigration Bureau	〒 730-0012	2-31 Kami-hacchobori, Naka-ku, Hiroshima-shi, Hiroshima	TEL 082-221-4411
Takamatsu Regional Immigration Bureau	〒 760-0033	1-1 Marunouchi, Takamatsu-shi, Kagawa	TEL 087-822-5852
Fukuoka Regional Immigration Bureau	〒 812-0003	778-1 Shimo-usui, Hakata-ku, Fukuoka-shi, Fukuoka	TEL 092-623-2400
Naha District Immigration Office	〒 900-0022	1-15-15 Higawa, Naha-shi, Okinawa	TEL 098-832-4185

【For further information or inquiries:】

Immigration Information Center (Weekdays between 8:30 to 17:15)
0570-013904 (IP phone, PHS, International call : 03-5796-7112)

○ For information on a moving-in notification or a notice of change of address under the Basic Resident Registration Law, please consult the nearest municipal office.