


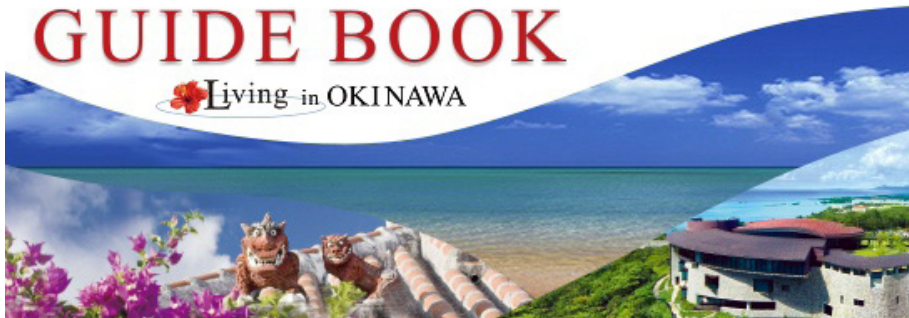


OIST

LIVING IN OKINAWA

# GUIDE BOOK

 Living in OKINAWA



This guide book contains basic information to help you start your new life in Okinawa. It tells you those things you will need to know from the time of your relocation up through your arrival and residence in Okinawa. The contents are constantly updated to reflect the opinions of our viewers.

## Frequent OIST

- 24hrs Emergency OIST Campus Security 098-966-8989
  - Health Center 098-966-8945 (Ext. 18945) [health@oist.jp](mailto:health@oist.jp)
  - Security (Safty Control Center) 098-966-8861 (Ext. 18861)
  - Resource Center 098-966-8929 [resourcecenter@oist.jp](mailto:resourcecenter@oist.jp)
  - Child Development Center 098-966-1502 (Ext. 11502)
  - Housing Office 080-6342-6500
  - Jimmy's 098-911-4934
  - Relocation Support 098-966-8854 (Ext. 18854) [relocation@oist.jp](mailto:relocation@oist.jp)
- 
- Police 110
  - Fire Department (Fire / Anbulance) 119

Last Updated : July 30, 2015

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**Phase I**  
**Prior to Coming to OIST**

# 1. Prior to Coming to OIST

## Applying for Certificate of Eligibility and Visa



### **1. For Yourself**

Upon closure of the employee agreement, OIST will contact you to prepare a Certificate of Eligibility (CoE) application. This certificate is a requirement when applying for a visa in Japan. We will send you the two-page application form via email. Fill in the application form and send it back to us with all other necessary documents. The CoE application procedure might differ depending on your country and situation. Please follow the instructions from the Relocation Team to complete the form.

#### Necessary documents

- An application form
- 1 standard photo (4cm×3cm): white background, no head covering; must be taken not more than 6 months before the application.
- 1 photocopy of your valid passport photo page.

When your CoE is ready, we will send it to you via FedEx or EMS. After receiving it, you need to go to the Japanese Embassy or Consulate in your country to apply for a visa to work in Japan.

The visa application can take up to 4 weeks, and fees may vary depending on the country in which you live. If you have further inquiries, please contact the OIST Relocation Team or the Japanese Embassy/Consulate in the country of your residence.

### **2. For Dependents**

Spouses and children of OIST employees also need to apply for the Certificate of Eligibility to obtain an appropriate visa to stay in Japan. There is a specific application form for dependents to apply.

Depending on your nationality and situation, other documents might be required. Please consult the Japanese Embassy/Consulate in your country.

### 3. For an Unmarried Partner/Parents/Relatives

The unmarried partner/parents/relatives of an OIST employee may only apply for a “Temporary Visitor” Visa. The Japanese government does not allow unmarried partners/parents/relatives to obtain a visa to live in Japan. The “Temporary Visitor” Visa doesn’t require a Certificate of Eligibility, but it allows the individual to stay in Japan for a maximum of 90 days. Please contact the Immigration Office in Japan or the Japanese Embassy/Consulate in your home country for further information.



### Arranging a Moving Company to Transfer Household Goods

A moving company will be assigned after receiving competitive quotes from two movers. The moving companies we normally use are Santa Fe Relocation Services, Asian Tigers Mobility, Yamato Logistics and Nittsu. OIST will only pay for one move, from your home to your residence in Okinawa. OIST does not pay for two moves. In addition OIST does not pay for moving your household goods when you leave OIST and Okinawa.

For transporting household goods, OIST will pay no more than ¥1,000,000 for overseas moves, and no more than ¥700,000 for domestic moves. Actual costs include packing, unpacking and moving of your household goods. This includes any labor costs. However, some items considered unreasonable will not be covered. These include items listed on the CITES\* list (also known as the Washington Convention); items and dangerous goods that cannot be handled as household goods; antiques and any other valuable goods that require additional packing, special insurance or additional shipping fees. If you are unclear about what items are not considered reasonable, please contact the Relocation Team. The cost of bringing pets to Okinawa is not covered by the OIST moving allowance.

Insurance for moving household goods is included, with a maximum coverage of ¥3 million.

The mover will send us the invoice, and we will pay the moving cost directly. The mover will contact you directly to provide on-site quotations and make arrangements to pick up and deliver your things. If you wish to transport items not covered by OIST, please inform the movers so that they can separate the estimates.

\*CITE: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

## **Logistics/Air Tickets/Transportation to Local Airport**

### **Air Tickets**

OIST will bear the cost of a direct, one-way flight from the airport closest to your current home or work place to Naha-shi, Okinawa. OIST will purchase the air ticket from the assigned travel agency. Inform the Relocation Team of your preferred dates of departure and arrival.



### **Transportation to a Local Airport**

OIST will reimburse transportation expenses from current home/work place to a local airport. This includes train, bus and ship costs. Please keep all receipts and submit them to the Relocation Team. Please note that normally OIST will not cover the cost of a taxi. However, depending on circumstances, this cost may be considered.

## **Housing Information**

OIST has on-campus housing for professors, researchers, technicians, and students. If you are interested in campus housing, please contact the OIST Facility Management Section for further information.

If you are planning to live in an apartment off campus, the Relocation Team will assist you with searching for a residence in Okinawa. We will contact agencies to gather information according to your requirements. We will later ask you about your housing needs.

Depending upon your needs, we can also arrange temporary housing until you find a permanent place.

### **Finding a Residence**

After being informed of your preferences, the Relocation Team will contact local agencies and start looking for a place for you. We will send you information via e-mail. We will then arrange a date for you to visit the selected places. Most Japanese residences are unfurnished. Some furnished apartments are available, but they are generally intended for



short-term stays. Such places could be quite costly for a long-term stay.

### Temporary Housing

As you search for a permanent residence, the Relocation Team will arrange for temporary housing. The Relocation Team has arrangements with several "monthly studio apartment" management companies. These monthly apartments are generally furnished and the complex generally has a common laundry facility. You can stay there while you are searching for a permanent residence. Please



keep in mind that you will have to pay the cost of these temporary residences. Depending on the arrangements made, these costs will be deducted from your relocation allowance.

If you need temporary accommodations while you are looking for a house/apartment, we have lists of places that offer discounts for OIST employees.

#### **Kafuu Resort Fuchaku Condo Hotel** カフー・リゾート富着・コンド・ホテル

Price: ¥11,100 per person per night, excluding breakfast.

Location: 5-10 minute drive from OIST Campus

Address: 246-1 Shirifukuchihara Aza Fuchaku, Onna-son, Kunigami-gun, 904-0413

URL: <http://www.kafuu-okinawa.jp/en/>

Resort hotel located 5 minute drive from the OIST Campus.

#### **Moon Villa** ムーンヴィラ

Price: Starts from ¥7,000 per person per night, including breakfast.

Location: 5-10 minute drive from the OIST Campus

Address: 1006-2 Maeganeku Onna-son, 904-0414

URL: <http://moon-villa.com/index.shtml> (Japanese only)

#### **AJ Onna Biru Resort Hotel AJ** 恩納ビルリゾートホテル

Price: ¥11,100 per person per night, including breakfast.

Location: 15-20 minute drive from OIST campus

Address: 1888 Maeda Onna-son, 904-0417

URL: <http://www.aj-hotels.com/onna/> (Japanese only)

#### **Ocean Resort Onna** オーシャン・リゾート・恩納

Weekly/Monthly apartment; ¥17,000 to ¥29,000/week, ¥70,000 to ¥90,000/month, depending on season.

Location: 10-15 minute drive from OIST campus.

Address: 571-1 Maeganeku, Onna-son

URL: <http://www.weem.jp/> (Japanese only)

### **Prince Purajyu Okinawa Onna プリンスプーラージュ沖縄恩納**

Daily rate ¥7,000 /monthly rate ¥105,000 including utilities up to ¥15,000, with house cleaning 3 to 4 times per month.

Location: 10-15 minute drive from OIST campus.

Address: 554-1 Fuchaku, Onna-son

### **Permanent Housing**

Prior to your arrival and while you stay at the temporary housing, we will provide you with information and web sites about apartments or houses for rent. Once you are here, the relocation staff will accompany you as you look at housing. Please be aware that the real estate market is very fluid, and what is currently available on a website seen while overseas may not be available when you arrive in Okinawa. Conversely, new listings continually become available.

In many countries apartments or houses are described by the number of bedrooms (1 bedroom apartment, etc.). In Japan, housing is usually designated by L, D, K (living, dining, kitchen) plus the number of other rooms (1 LDK, one room plus living, dining and kitchen areas). Toilets and baths – usually two separate rooms – are generally not included in the description.

The cost of housing varies with type, location, size, convenience, and other factors. Please see the numbers below as references on typical costs:

Apartments: 1 - 3 bedrooms (1 – 3 LDK): ¥40,000 – ¥100,000 per month

There is generally a shared facility charge of about ¥2,000 per month.

Apartments generally have sufficient parking available. Some charge for parking, some do not. Typical costs are between ¥1,000 to ¥3,240 per month, per parking spot.



Single-family houses are more expensive than apartments: Houses: 1 - 3 bedrooms (1 – 3 LDK): ¥100,000 to ¥200,000 per month

With single-family houses, there is usually no shared facility charge or parking fee.

Renting an apartment or a house generally requires payment, almost always in cash, of a considerable amount of money. Depending on the apartment, this can be up to five month's rent. Payment is due when you close (sign) the contract. Credit cards cannot be used.

## Housing Allowance

A housing allowance will be paid monthly in accordance with OIST regulations. To claim the allowance, you need to submit a copy of the housing contract to the HR office as soon as you receive the housing contract. The Relocation Team will contact you with further information after you start the relocation procedure.

## Relocation Allowance

A relocation allowance will be paid to cover miscellaneous expenditures incurred during your relocation period. The amount paid is determined by a number of factors, chiefly whether the move is domestic or international, coming alone or coming with spouse or family, and employment status.

Payment will be made after you sign a housing contract or lease agreement.

## House Hunting Expenses

If you would like to make a house-hunting trip to Okinawa before your assignment starts, OIST will purchase your round-trip flights.

## School Registration for Children

To enroll your child in a local public school, you need to submit an enrollment application. The application form can be obtained from the Town/City Hall or local school. Please ask the relocation staff for assistance. The following documents are likely to be requested when applying:

- Residence card or equivalent ID
- Medical records and shot records/vaccination records
- Transcript from current/previous school

Please refer to **Phase II Education system, p.26** for a list of schools which provide English-language education. You can also find information about OIST's on-campus kindergarten/pre-school and after-school facilities.





**Phase II**  
**Upon Arrival**

# Upon Arrival



## Arrival at Naha Airport

For your arrival at Naha Airport ( 那覇空港 ), we can arrange someone to pick you up ( a member of the Relocation Team, a taxi driver, etc.) You can also use public transportation, such as a taxi, to get to your accommodation. The taxi charge will be reimbursed along with your travel expenses and relocation allowance, so please be sure to get a receipt (Ryoshusho 領収書) from the driver. Keep the receipt and give it to the relocation staff after your arrival.

## **Renting a House/Apartment**

When you rent a house/apartment in Japan, most agencies/landlords require you to have a guarantor (a co-signer to the rental agreement). In this case, OIST can act as your guarantor.



\*Even though OIST is your guarantor, some agencies will ask you to sign for a Guarantor Service Company which offers guarantor services for a fee. This is usually 60% to 80% of the monthly rent, depending on the guarantor company.

Move-in expenses may vary depending on what you rent and on housing agencies. These are the typical initial charges when you sign the lease.

- **Agency Fees** (Usually equivalent to 1 month's rent + consumer tax(8%))  
The agency fee is nonrefundable. The fee is an administration charge and is used to defray the costs incurred in handling a unit for rent, such as preparing documentation, showing the unit, arranging for inspection, collecting rent, etc.
- **Advanced Rent**  
This is the amount of money charged on a monthly basis for the use of the facility excluding utilities, trash, and telephone. Rent varies depending on the size of the unit, location and agency.
- **Security Deposit** (\*Usually equivalent to 1 months' rent)  
This is the amount of money paid to ensure that the property will be maintained in good condition and to ensure compliance with the terms of the lease. The deposit is refundable when you vacate, provided that the specified period of occupancy has been completed, advance notification in writing to vacate was given, proof of all final bills paid has been obtained, and the condition of the property is acceptable to the agency.
- **Utility Deposit**  
Utility deposits vary among landlords, servicing utility companies, and the location of the apartment/house. All deposits are refundable upon payment of your final bill. Gas deposit is usually 10,000 yen and paid when opening.
- **Pet Deposit**  
The majority of units do not accept pets. If you locate one that does, expect to pay ¥10,000 to ¥50,000 for a pet deposit.

### **List of Furnished Apartment:**

#### **Prince Purajyu Okinawa**

Monthly rent: ¥105,000 (includes weekly cleaning, change of linens and utilities up to ¥15,000, internet included). Deposit: ¥20,000. The room may or may not have an ocean view.

One room: (32m<sup>2</sup> to 44m<sup>2</sup>, depending on the room) Close to the Tiger Beach OIST shuttle bus stop.

Address: 554-1, Fuchaku, Onna-son 904-0414

### **Ocean Resort Onna, Maeganeku, Onna**

One room (10m<sup>2</sup>), ¥70,000 to ¥90,000 /month, depends on season. (A/C, washing machine, T.V., refrigerator, microwave, vacuum cleaner, bed, kitchen supplies, internet, and utilities up to ¥15,000 included.) Located close to convenience stores and the Moon Beach OIST shuttle bus stop.

Address: 571-1, Maeganeku, Onna-son

### **Ocean Terrace Kiyoshima, Fuchaku, Onna**

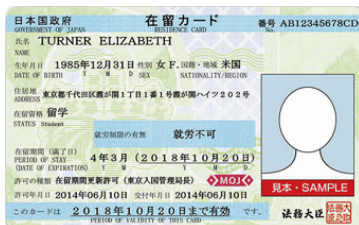
One room (13.2m<sup>2</sup>)with a small kitchen area, ¥78,000 to ¥108,000/month, depending on the season. (A/C, washing machine, T.V., refrigerator, microwave, vacuum cleaner, bed, kitchen supplies, internet, and utilities up to ¥15,000 included), ocean view. Within walking distance to the Fuchaku OIST shuttle bus stop.

Address: 267-1, Fuchaku, Onna-son 904-0413

## **Residence Card and Visa**

### **Residence Card**

If you are entering Japan through Narita, Haneda, Chubu, or Kansai airports, your residence card will be issued at immigration. At other ports of entry, a seal of landing verification will be stamped in your passport and the description “Residence card will be issued at a later date” will be made near the stamp. In this case, a residence card will be issued after completing the residency procedure at the local government office. The card will be delivered via registered postal mail to your residence.



For further details, please visit the immigration bureau web site:  
[http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact\\_1/en/point\\_1-2.html](http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_1/en/point_1-2.html)

### **Inability/Eligibility to Apply in Person**

A parent or other relative must visit the local government office to register any children under the age of 16. Individuals of any age who cannot register in person due to illness or



other physical disability may designate a spouse, child over the age of 16, parent or other relative living with them to visit the local government offices in their place.

### **Exempt from Residence Registration**

- Those who depart within 90 days of arrival in Japan.
- Members, dependents, and civilian employees of the United Nation's Forces, or US Armed Forces.
- Individuals granted a Provisional Landing Permit.
- Individuals granted a Port of Call Landing Permit, Landing in Transit, Landing for Crew Member, Emergency Landing, or Landing due to Disaster Permit.
- Those with the status of residence of a diplomat or government official.
- Those who depart within 60 days after renouncing Japanese nationality.

If you move to a different address, you must report that to the Citizens' Affairs Section of your local government office within 14 days from the date of change. Changes in name, nationality, occupation, status of residence, period of stay, or name/location of employer, must be reported to the regional immigration office within 14 days from the date of the change.

Individuals who were under 16 years of age when they registered must apply for confirmation of their alien registration within 30 days after their 16th birthday. The procedure is the same as the initial registration.

### **Re-entry Permits**

If you have a valid passport and a residence card and will be reentering Japan within one year of your departure to continue your activities in Japan, you will, in principle, not be required to apply for a re-entry permit (Special re-entry permit at departure.).

For further details, please visit the immigration bureau web sites:  
[http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact\\_1/en/point\\_3-4.html](http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_1/en/point_3-4.html)

If you wish to use a special re-entry permit, please be sure to present your residence card and check the box for "special re-entry permit" on the "embarkation card for re-entrant" 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 one year of their departure.

If you will leave Japan for more than one year and come back to Japan with the same visa, you need to obtain a re-entry permit. Leaving Japan without a re-entry permit for over one year will void your current visa.

**There are two types of re-entry permits:**

- Single re-entry permit (only one time re-entry, ¥3,000)
- Multiple re-entry permit (unlimited re-entry for 3 years or until your visa expires, whichever comes first, ¥6,000)

\*The Immigration office only takes revenue stamps (収入印紙 shunyu inshi) for a payment. Please purchase the stamp at a post office.

**Necessary Documents:**

- Passport
- Residence Card
- Completed Application Form (available at the Immigration Bureau)

**Permission to Engage in Activities Not Specified By Your Visa**

Individuals in Japan on a dependent visa who wish to work part-time must get permission to do so. Such individuals are limited to working no more than 28 hours a week. Therefore, if your dependent wants to work full-time, he/she must obtain a working visa from his/her employer. (The employer has to sponsor the work visa application.)

**Necessary Documents**

- Application Form (along with a duplicate)
- Materials explaining the nature of the activity in which you will be engaged. For example: the contract of employment, etc.
- Materials explaining the nature of your current activities, such as an enrollment certificate, etc.
- Residence Card

**Extension of period of stay**

If you want to extend your period of stay while continuing the same activities, you must apply for an extension. Applications can be made prior to the expiry of your period of stay (from 2 months prior to expiry for people whose period of stay is 6 months or more.) The necessary documents vary depending on your residence status and period of stay. Please inquire at the regional immigration bureau.

**Immigration Office****Naha Immigration Branch Office**

1-15-15 Higawa Dai-ichi Chiho-Godochosha, Naha-shi 900-0022  
Tel 098-832-4185

**Kadena Immigration Branch Office**

Rotary Building Number 1, 290-9 Kadena-cho 904-0203  
Tel 098-957-5252

## **Opening a Bank Account**

The Bank of Okinawa and the Bank of the Ryukyus are the two largest banks in Okinawa. They both have a wide network of branches and ATMs in the prefecture. ATMs can be found in convenience stores or shopping malls. Unfortunately, these banks do not have branches outside of Okinawa. Even so, you can use your ATM card at the ATM of other banks, paying a small service charge.

In addition to these two banks, The Japan Post Office has a bank, Japan Post Bank, where you can set up a bank account. The Japan Post Bank has a nationwide bank network. You can withdraw cash from your account at a Post Office ATM anywhere in Japan.

Withdrawal of cash at non-business hours, on weekends or public holidays requires payment of a fee, usually ¥105, for each withdrawal. In addition, there are some restrictions on the hours of operation of the ATMS. They differ slightly among the banks.

## **Opening an Account**

There are various kinds of accounts available, but for most people, a general savings account is best for daily transactions and bill payments.

### **Necessary Documents**

- Passport
- Residence card
- Inkan (personal seal) if you have one
- Application form (available at the bank)

Bank Names and Addresses Around OIST:

#### **Bank of Okinawa (沖縄銀行)**

Address: 2491-1 Onna, Onna-son

TEL: 098-966-8438

#### **Bank of the Ryukyus (琉球銀行)**

Address: 2-23-6 Ishikawa, Uruma-shi

TEL: 098-965-1212

#### **Japan Post Bank (ゆうちょ銀行)**

Nakadomari Branch :

Address: 107 Nakadomari, Onna-son

TEL: 098-964-3096

#### **Onna Branch:**

Address: 2583-1 Aza Onna, Onna-son



TEL: 098-966-8327

After opening an account, you will receive a bank book. A cash card (ATM card) will be sent to your home approximately two weeks after the account is opened.

### **Other Banking Options:**

#### **Citibank**

TEL: 0120-50-4189 (24 hours/ 365 days)

You can also open an account at US-based Citibank in mainland Japan. Please call to inquire further about opening an account with them.

<http://www.citibank.co.jp/en/index.html>

#### **HSBC Japan**

For HSBC Japan, there are a few conditions for opening an account in Japan. These might be negotiable if you have an HSBC account in a foreign country. Please contact HSBC for further information.

<http://www.hsbc.co.jp/1/2/about>

### **Online banking**

Most banks in Okinawa do not offer online banking services in English. If you would like to use online banking, please open an account with Citibank.

Please refer to **Phase III Banking Service, p.42** for information on credit cards in Okinawa.

## **Telephone, Cell Phone, and Internet**

### **Telephone**

#### **-Home phone**

To install a telephone at your residence in Japan, first call NTT (dial 116, Information for foreigners: 0120-064-337) to apply. You will need your passport and Residence Card or Certificate of Alien Registration.

There are two phone service plans. The first entails a contract fee of ¥840 and a line facilities charge of ¥37,800. The second is called the “Light Plan,” in which you pay an installation fee (¥2,100) and a contract fee (¥840) with an additional ¥262.5 for the monthly basic charge, instead of the line facilities charge (prices include tax). There are

two types of phone lines: analog and digital. To connect to the Internet, you can use either the analog or the digital type.

#### -IP phone

When you sign up for internet service, ask if you can obtain an IP phone number. Please ask your provider for further assistance. Note: Remember that IP phone users cannot make calls during power outages.

### **Cell Phone**

There are 3 major cell phone companies in Japan: NTT Docomo (Blackberry, Galaxy, iPhone), Softbank (iPhone, prepaid phone) and AU (iPhone, Android). Fees vary based on the company, the type of services, and the type of phone. Many cell phones come equipped with bilingual displays, basic email, and voice-mail services.



- NTT Docomo: <http://www.nttdocomo.co.jp/english/>
- Softbank: <https://mb.softbank.jp/en/>
- AU: [http://www.au.kddi.com/english/?bid=au\\_gn\\_0002](http://www.au.kddi.com/english/?bid=au_gn_0002)

### **Internet**

You can get broadband internet service through NTT, Yahoo BB, OCN cable connection, or other smaller companies. Most large electronics stores such as Yamada Denki have booths for broadband providers.

#### **NTT West (NTT 西日本)**

TEL: 0120-064-337 (English and other languages)

URL: <http://flets-w.com/english/>

#### **Yahoo! BB**

TEL: 0800-1111-130 (English toll free line)

URL: <http://yahoobb.ojaru.jp/index.html> (unofficial site)

They don't have an official English site available. Please call them for more information.

#### **OCN cable connection**

TEL: 098-863-4141

URL: <http://www.nirai.ne.jp/english/>

They have English speaking staff available occasionally.

#### **AU Hikari Chura**

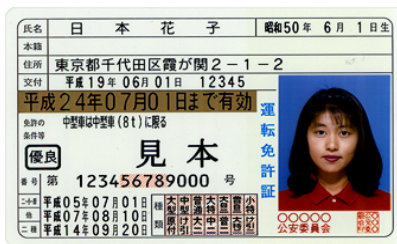
TEL: 0120-994-778

URL: <http://www.au-hikari.ne.jp/en/>

## Driver's License

### Driving a Car/Motorcycle

You must have a valid driver's license to drive in Japan. If your license is from a member country of the 1949 Geneva Convention, you can drive in Japan with an International Driver's Permit (IDP) from your country, as long as both your license and the IDP are valid. The IDP is good for one year.



(c) National Police Agency

Anyone holding a German, French, Slovenian, Monacan, Belgian, Taiwanese or Swiss driving license with an official Japanese translation of the license can drive a vehicle for one year in Japan.

**If you do not have a license from your home country** and wish to get a Japanese license, you have to go through the same licensing process as a Japanese national. This includes attending driving school (the cost is around ¥300,000), taking written exams, a road test, etc.

**If you already have a valid driving license from another country**, have been in the country of issue for at least 3 months since receiving the license, and have a clean driving record since coming to Japan, you can obtain a Japanese license without attending driving school.

**If you have an International Driver's Permit/a valid driver's license from Germany, France, Slovenia, Monaco, Belgium, Taiwan and Switzerland with an official translation, and wish to obtain a Japanese license**, you need to start the process well before your license expires. It may take a couple months to change over your license to a Japanese driver's license (depends on the issuing country.) Please note that you will switch your valid driving license from your home country. You cannot switch the International Driver's Permit to a Japanese license.

The procedure and required documents for conversion depends on the country of issuance. Below, we have outlined the procedures to get a Japanese driver's license with a valid driver's license from your country.

#### 1. Get Your License Translated

Your foreign driver's license must be officially translated at **JAF (Japan Automobile Federation)**. There are no branches which can offer the translation service in Okinawa. You need to apply to the nearest JAF branch, Fukuoka branch by mail.

#### JAF (Japan Automobile Federation)

Address: 1-48-7 Maeda, Urasoe-shi  
TEL: 098-877-9225

URL: <http://www.jaf.or.jp/e/index.htm>

Map: [http://www.jaf.or.jp/e/list/okinawa\\_map.htm](http://www.jaf.or.jp/e/list/okinawa_map.htm)

Please go to their link ( [http://www.jaf.or.jp/inter/translation/index\\_e.htm](http://www.jaf.or.jp/inter/translation/index_e.htm) ) and find "Application by mail" to know how to obtain the translation by mail.

### **Necessary Documents:**

- A clear color copy of your valid foreign driver's license (full copy of both sides)
- A copy of your Residence Card or Alien Registration Card (front and back sides)
- Translation fee of ¥3,000 and return postage of ¥392 by registered postal cash envelope which is ¥430.

Some foreign driving licenses do not contain all the information needed (e.g. date of issue). You may need to provide supporting documentation from your home country in this case. If everything goes smoothly, the translation should be delivered to you within four business days.

Also, if you have violation points on your foreign license, you might not be able to get a translation straight away. Please confirm with the officer at JAF for the procedure.

### **2. Get a Certificate of Residence**

Obtain a Certificate of Residence (住民票抄本) from the Citizens' Affairs Section at your local government office. There is a nominal fee for the certificate.

### **3. Complete Paperwork at the License Center**

After you have your translation and Certificate of Residence, the next step is to visit the License Center in Naha. You must bring the following items with you to the license center:

- Your foreign license and a photocopy (full copy) of the license
- JAF translation of your license
- Residence Card/Alien Registration Card
- Passport: The passport is to prove that you were in the country where your license was issued for at least 90 days after issue. If this documentation is insufficient, you must also bring your expired passport or other necessary documents (such as tax returns) which can serve as proof of the 90 days stay.
- 2 standard small-size ID photographs (3cm x 2.4cm)
- Certificate of Residence
- Application fee of about ¥5,000. The actual fee depends on your nationality.

Please visit the License Center between 8:30 am and 11:00 am on a weekday to submit your paperwork. Paperwork should be submitted at window #10. Processing your paperwork may take several hours.

\*If your driver's license is issued from one of the following countries, you are only required to pass the aptitude test and are exempted from the written test on Japanese traffic rules as well as the practical driving skills test: Iceland, Ireland, United Kingdom,

Italy, Austria, Australia, Netherlands, Canada, Greece, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Korea, Taiwan, Denmark, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, Finland, France, Portugal, and Luxemburg.

### **Written Test**

If you have a license that requires the written test, you need to make an appointment for the written test after the aforementioned paper work is processed and verified.

### **Road Test**

After you have passed the written test, you will have to schedule a road test. The road test schedule is quite crowded, so it is likely that you will have to wait 1-2 weeks to take it. The road test costs around ¥3,500.

The License Center recommends that before you take the road test, you take at least one hour of driving instruction at a local driving school to familiarize yourself with the test course and standards. One hour of instruction costs around ¥6,000. This may save you the hassle of retaking the actual test again and again. There are two driving schools near Onna-son:

#### **Kitaoka Jidosha Gakko (北丘自動車学校)**

Address: 1841-22 Konbu, Uruma-shi

TEL: toll-free 0120-390-249 (Japanese only)

If you would like to have a practice session, you need to visit them and ask if you can take a lesson from the instructor on the day as they don't accept advanced booking. A practice session costs ¥5250 per hour.

#### **Agena Jidousha Gakko (安慶名自動車学校)**

Address: 30 Oota, Uruma-shi

TEL: toll-free 0120-928-186 (Japanese only)

Agena Jidousha Gakko offers a ride from OIST or your home for an additional fee. Please contact the owner, Mr. Yagi (Japanese/English) at [agena-ds@gamma.ocn.ne.jp](mailto:agena-ds@gamma.ocn.ne.jp) for further details.

If you pass your road test at the License Center, your Japanese license will be issued on the same day. You might be asked to contribute ¥1000 to a prefectural "safe driving fund." This fee is voluntary.

### **Moped and Motorcycle Licensing**

#### **Mopeds**

A Japanese driver's license allows you to drive mopeds (2-wheeled vehicles under 50cc) without any special certification. However, you cannot drive a moped with an



International Driving Permit unless you are specifically certified for 2-wheeled mopeds in your home country. (Some countries, such as the USA, automatically certify you when you get your regular license. Check the driving laws of your country.) If you want to drive a moped and do not have the appropriate license, visit the License Center.

### **License Center**

Address: 3-22 Toyohashi, Tomigusuku-shi  
TEL: 098-851-1000

### **Necessary Documents**

- Residence Card
- Certificate of Residence
- 1 standard small-size photo (3cm x 2.4cm, white background, no head covering)
- 1 Application form (available at the License Center)

You will need to bring these documents and take a written test. The test is offered at 13:00 every weekday. The test costs ¥1,650, which you must pay beforehand. Because the License Center is closed from 12:00 to 13:00 for lunch, you must arrive before 11:30 in order to turn in your paperwork and pay in time. A grade of 90% or over is passing, and it is a tricky test, so many people take it more than once. If you pass the test, you need to make an appointment for a riding course, and you must complete the course to receive your license. You must wear closed-toe, low-heeled shoes for the training course.

### **Motorcycles**

If you already have a motorcycle license from a foreign country, you may apply for a Japanese license at the License Center in Naha. If you are from the one of the countries that requires both the written and practical test, you need to pass the written test in order to apply for the riding test at the License Center. It costs about ¥5,000. If you pass, you will have to sign up for a supplementary training course to receive your license. This costs ¥15,000. Even if you already know how to ride a motorcycle, it is advisable to take a few hours of lessons at a driving school. These lessons cost around ¥5,000 per hour and will prepare you for the test course and requirements. If you do not know how to ride a motorcycle, you will have to enroll in a training course at a driving school. Training courses last 2 to 3 months and cost around ¥100,000. Upon completion of the course, you will take the road test at the driving school, rather than at the License Center.

If you have a driving license for a car and a motorcycle in a foreign country, you can apply for a Japanese driving license for both cars and motorcycles at the same time. Please refer to the required documents detailed in “**3. Complete Paperwork at the License Center, p.19**”.

### **1. Renewing your License**

The period of your vehicle license depends on the length of stay of your visa. Licenses for all vehicles (moped, motorcycle and automobiles) should be renewed before they expire. If the license expires, you will have to take the lecture/driver's test again to get a new license.

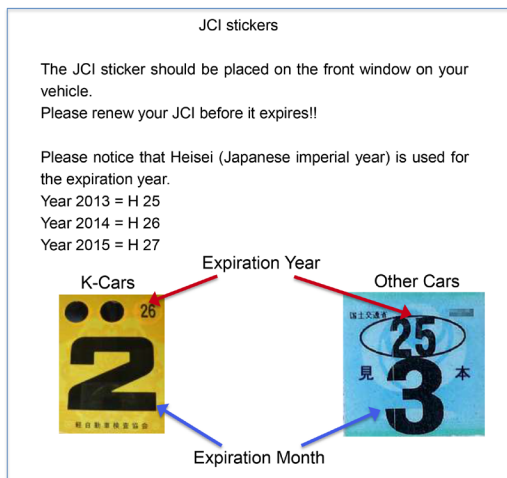
## 2. Applying for International driving permit

To apply for an International Driving Permit in Japan, you can apply at the license center in Tomigusuku-shi (TEL: 098-851-1000). The permit will be issued within an hour or two if you submitted all the required documents upon application.

Please note that you can only apply for the permit with your Japanese driving license, but not with licenses of foreign countries.

### Necessary Documents

- Japanese Driving License
- Passport
- A photo (H5cm x W4cm)
- ¥2,650



	Total emissio n	Weight of car	Annual Road Tax 自動車税	Automobile weight tax 重量税	Compulsory Insurance 自賠責保険	Voluntary Automobile Insurance 任意保険	Vehicle Inspection 車検	Total Costs
Kei	0.66		7,200	4,400	13,980		From 60,000	145,580
	Less than 1.0	Less than 1.0t	29,500	12,600	16,560		From 60,000	198,660
Small to Normal	1.0-1.5	Less than 1.5t	34,500	12,600	16,560		From 60,000	203,660
	1.5-2.0	Less than 1.5t	39,500	18,900	16,560		From 60,000	214,960
	2.0-2.5	Less than 1.5t	4,5000	18,900	16,560		From 60,000	220,460

**As of October 2010**

## **Finding a Car**

In order to purchase a car, you need to have the following documents.

- The certificate of registered Inkan\* (Not required for a 660cc K-car)
- The certificate of parking space\* (Not required for residents of villages)
- Inkan (for more information: **Phase VI What is an Inkan?**, p.88)

### **Buying a Vehicle**

If you wish to purchase a car, motorcycle, or moped, **you will need an inkan (Seal) and the certificate of Inkan**. If you are buying a white plate car, you will also need a proof of parking space called “shako shomeisho (車庫証明書)”. To get a shako shomeisho, you must get a document from your landlord or housing agency showing your parking space. Your landlord may charge you a hefty sum for this document. Once you have the document from your landlord, bring it to the police station. The police will verify that it is correct, and prepare a shako shomeisho.

You do not need to get a proof of parking space if your residence is in Onna- son/ Yomitan-son.

There are many English-speaking car dealers around U.S. military bases. However, their prices are much higher than regular “Japanese” car dealers. You can find Japanese car dealers on almost every highway. Usually, they leave the price sign on the front window of cars they are selling. Most cases, the price is only for a “vehicle”, and the dealer will charge you for tuning, etc. Please do not hesitate to ask the dealer questions such as Japanese Compulsory Insurance expiration date, if the car has been in an accident before, the actual price you need to pay, etc.

Please refer to the following for average prices for second hand cars. The price may vary depending on which year the car was made, the condition, and the mileage

#### **Kei car (660 cc engine) Yellow license plate**

- Suzuki Wagon R: ¥200,000 to ¥700,000
- Daihatsu Move: ¥200,000 to ¥700,000

#### **Small car (around 1.3 to 1.8 Liters)**

- Toyota Vitz: ¥300,000 to ¥800,000
- Toyota Corolla: ¥300,000 to ¥800,000

#### **Regular (around 2 Liters)**

- Nissan Skyline ¥500,000 to ¥800,000
- Honda Step Wagon ¥400,000 to ¥1,000,000

## **Other Necessary Things to Remember:**

### **1. Automobile Acquisition Tax**

When an automobile is purchased, regardless of whether it is new or used, the purchaser must pay an acquisition tax.

### **2. Disposition Fee**

You have to pay a one-time disposition fee if you buy a new car/used car that has not yet had a disposition fee paid. If you purchase a car through an auto dealer, they will take care of the paperwork for you.

### **3. Voluntary Insurance**

When you purchase a car in Japan, you have to subscribe to the Japanese Compulsory Insurance (JCI) which is a mandatory insurance that only covers a limited amount for injury to a third party. This insurance's coverage is limited and doesn't cover property damage liability, which means it doesn't cover your injury or the damage to your car. It is highly recommended that you get the Voluntary Automobile Insurance from a private insurance company. The following



insurance company has a branch office in Okinawa and an English-speaking agent.

### **ACE Insurance** (English speaking agents: WILTEC)

Address: 368 Sunabe, Chatan-cho, Nakagami-gun, Okinawa

TEL: 098-936-2710

E-mail: [info@wiltec-insurance.com](mailto:info@wiltec-insurance.com)

URL: <http://www.ace-insurance.co.jp/en/sda-2.html>

Blog: <http://www.wiltec-insurance.blogspot.jp>

### **4. Annual Road Tax**

In Japan, passenger cars are classified into three categories: regular cars (more than 2,000cc), compact cars (660cc – 2,000cc) and mini cars (less than 660cc) based on their air volume displacement. Regular cars have a white license plate with a 3-series number. Compact cars are white plates with a 5-series number, and mini cars have yellow plate. Official vehicles of the Self-Defense Forces, foreign diplomats, and the U.S. military are required to display other plates. Plates that have a Roman letter (usually 'Y') are exclusively used for U.S. Forces personnel and their families.

All automobiles are charged an Annual Road Tax. The Annual Road tax is based upon the car's engine displacement. Please see the following chart for the fees and examples of the tax and JCI and road tax costs for cars in Japan.

For more information: Tax (p.22)

### Road Tax (Car tax)

Annual road taxes are due each May. You should receive a notice in the mail telling you when and where to pay your taxes. Without paying the tax by the due date, you will not be able to drive legally. The amount of the tax depends on the type of your vehicle. For yellow-plate cars, light motorcycles, and mopeds, this is under ¥10,000, and the tax is collected by the city, town, or village you live in. The tax for white-plate cars and large motorcycles are depending on the engine size (ranges from ¥30,000 to ¥100,000) and is collected by the prefecture.

### Selling a Vehicle

If you wish to sell your vehicle individually, you must change the name on the vehicle registration. Visit the Land Transportation Office together with the buyer of your vehicle. Bring both the seller's and buyer's inkans, insurance documentation, proof of vehicle inspection, proof that you have paid the yearly road tax, and both people's registration cards and licenses. If you are selling a white plate car, you will also need both person's Inkan Registration Certificates, and the buyer's proof of parking space (shako shomeisho 車庫証明証), if required.

### Disposing of Vehicles

If you want to get rid of your vehicle, you must contact a private vehicle disposal company. Vehicle disposal is called “**haisha**” (廃車).

### Vehicle Inspection & Insurance

Every 2 years, vehicles must pass a Government of Japan inspection that usually costs around ¥100,000. (For new automobiles, the initial period is 3 years) This cost should include the Japanese Compulsory Insurance (JCI), which is required by Japanese law and covers death and serious injury up to ¥30,000,000 per person, and hospitalization for up to ¥1,200,000. The inspection date is located on the windshield sticker and the color tells the year of expiration, and the number indicates the month. The date of the expiration is located on the back of the sticker. Car inspection is carried out by private companies, and you can easily find a provider. Motorcycles of 400cc and above also require the inspection. You must keep your JCI (p.22) certificate in the vehicle along with other vehicle documents.

## **The Education System**

The Japanese education system consists of kindergarten, six years of elementary school (shogakko 小学校), three years of junior high school (chugakko 中学校), and three years of high school (kotogakko 高等学校). Only elementary and junior high schools are compulsory, but many children also attend kindergarten and nearly all students complete high school. The school year runs from April until March of the following year, and is divided into two or three terms, with a holiday at the end of each term.



Any child who has reached the age of 5 by April 1 is eligible to sign up for public kindergarten for the school year beginning in April. A limited number of 4 year-old children are admitted based on an interview at the public kindergarten. Children are generally assigned to the school in the school district in which they live. However, parents may apply to send their child to another school nearer to their place of work or a private

school which accepts students from K3 (3 years old). Because kindergarten is not part of compulsory education, there are one-time entrance and monthly fees for the public kindergarten. There are additional small fees for materials and snacks. Kindergartens also provide afternoon daycare until late afternoon (around 6 pm.) If you want to send your child to a public school, please visit your local government office.

### **OIST Child Development Center, TEDAKO**

OIST's TEDAKO Child Development Center offers the following services for children of OIST employees and students:

- Tedako Pre-School: Full-time care for children 2 months to 6 years of age and part-time care for children attending local kindergartens. Hours are from 08:00 to 18:00, Monday through Friday.
- After-School: Part-time care for children 6 years of age and above. Hours are from 15:00 to 18:00, Monday through Friday.
- Holiday Program: Full-time care for children on OIST workdays during school holidays.
- Buses: OIST will provide transportation for children from local schools and kindergartens to the CDC where possible.

More information can be found at <http://groups.oist.jp/cdc> (partly accessible after receiving your OIST password.) or look at the OIST news center on the OIST public web site.

### **International Classroom in Onna Elementary and Junior High School**

In response to OIST's request, these schools have an "International Classroom (Kokusai Kyoshitsu)". A bilingual teacher teaches core subjects such as Mathematics and Science

in English, in addition to Japanese as a foreign language. This program is designed to be an affordable way to maintain children's academic development in English and is highly recommended for families who wish to enjoy integration with the local community.

Eligibility: Onna-son residents; students age 6-14 and whose first language is not Japanese.

Cost: Free tuition. Other fees such as school lunches, supply fees, and PTA membership fee cost less than ¥10,000 per month.

For further information, please contact the Relocation Team.

### **International Schools in Okinawa**

#### **Okinawa AMICUS International School**

Address: 1212-1 Enobi, Uruma-shi, Okinawa, 904-2205

Tel 81-98-894-4912, Fax: 81-98-972-6777

<http://www.amicus.ed.jp/en/>

Okinawa AMICUS International School is a new international school that opened on 2011. The school campus is located in the suburb of Uruma-shi; about a 20-minute drive from the OIST Campus. It is located in a natural environment. The preschool program began in May 2010, and children from around Okinawa commute to the school. AMICUS covers pre-school, kindergarten, elementary school, and junior high school.

#### **Okinawa Christian School International**

Address: 1835 Zakimi, Yomitan-son, Okinawa, 904-0301

Tel: 81-98-958-3000, Fax: 81-98-958-6279

<http://www.ocsi.org/>

OCSI provides a comprehensive pre-kindergarten through 12th Grade educational curriculum in English for the international community in Okinawa. The school was established in 1957 and has provided education to those living in Okinawa since then. Test and educational materials are based on those used by schools in America. The school is located in Yomitan-son, about a 20-minute drive from the OIST Campus.

There are other options for an international or English education for your children. Please contact the Relocation Team for more information.

## **Taxation and Pension**

As a foreign resident of Japan, your tax status varies depending on the tax treaties between your country and Japan, and on your Residence Status. Check your embassy or consulate regarding tax matters specific to your country.

In general, if you are liable for taxes in Japan, you must pay two types of income tax: "Personal Income Tax" which is collected by the national government and "Residence Tax" which is collected by the local municipal governments.



The National Tax Agency publishes a comprehensive guide to Personal Income Tax in English. Please refer to it if you have further question.

[http://www.nta.go.jp/foreign\\_language/index.htm](http://www.nta.go.jp/foreign_language/index.htm)

Everyone in Japan, 20 to 60 years of age, must also pay into the National Pension Program. Please refer to the site: Japan Pension Service.

<http://www.nenkin.go.jp/n/www/english/index.jsp>

### **Tax advisory**

OIST has a contract with a professional tax accountant who speaks fluent English and also has a mastery of taxation in Japan and tax treaties. If you have any question related to tax issues, please contact at [hr@oist.jp](mailto:hr@oist.jp). HR will refer you to or seek advice from a tax accountant, if needed.



**Phase III**  
**Life in Okinawa**

# Life in Okinawa

## OIST Facilities

### Facilities

#### 1. Health Center

The OIST Health Center provides health services and wellness programs for the OIST community. Health services include health consultation, counseling, physician referral, and fitness programs that are essential for health care. It is open to employees and family members, students, and visiting faculty members.

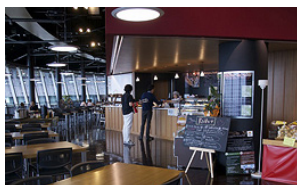
- Health Services
- Health Consultation with occupational physician
- Counseling services (by appointment)
- Physician referral for primary care, specialty care
- Wellness programs for health related topics
- Consultation for health exams, screenings, diagnostic tests, in-patient/out-patient procedures
- Emergency support – transport assistance to emergency rooms

#### OIST Health Center

Onna Campus Centre Bldg. Level B,  
Tel: (External) 098-966-8945 or ext. 18945  
E-mail: [health@oist.jp](mailto:health@oist.jp)

#### 2. Gym

Authorized OIST students, employees, their family members, and OIST guests can use the OIST Graduate University Gymnasium after completing registration. No person under the age of 20 is allowed into the facility. The gym is located on the ground level of the Village Center Building. It offers 26 pieces of assorted cardio equipment and strength training equipment.



#### 3. Café “Yanbaru Harusaa’s Table Kaito+”

Café Kaito+ strives to offer deliciously prepared local foods --- island fresh vegetables, meat, salt, spices --- with the hope that our efforts contribute to your good health. Everyone is welcome to use the café!!

- Open : 09:00 ~ 17:00 (Lunch: 11:00 ~ 14:00)
- Holidays : Sundays, Year End & New Year's (Dec. 29 ~ Jan. 3)
- OPEN on Saturday & Holidays 11:00-16:00 (Lunch: 11:00 ~ 14:30)  
<https://groups.oist.jp/cafe>

Located: Center Court, C floor

Tel: (External) 098-966-8413 or ext. 18413

#### **4. Child Development Center**

OIST Tedako Pre-School - a part of the OIST Child Development Center (CDC) offers full-day pre-school for children of OIST students and employees. For further information, please visit TIDA and click “Child Development Center” under “campus” on the left side of the page.

#### **5. Resource Center**

OIST has a Resource Center located in the Village Center next to the Campus Gym. The Center is open to all members of the OIST community. It provides ongoing support for staff, students, and family members who need further information about life in Okinawa or OIST, or who face challenges that may be difficult to resolve alone.



The Resource Center can be your first point of contact for any issue, such as understanding a document, contacting a Japanese establishment, finding directions to official offices, or booking a reservation or appointment. Any matter or question is welcomed, and the staff will strive to resolve them in a timely manner.

In addition to the previously mentioned services, the Resource Center also has facilities free for public use such as wi-fi and desktop computers, a kitchen area, sofas and tables, a children's play area, and a printer. Visitors to the center can also find information about OIST clubs and various on-campus events, as well as receive free publications such as Okinawa Living and Japan Update. Special offers from local restaurants and businesses are also routinely available, as is information about local schools, hospitals and clinics, tourist attractions, and much more.

Any issue or question is welcomed, and the staff will strive to resolve them in a timely manner.

#### **Resource Center Contact information:**

Location: Village Center, next to the Campus Gym

Email: [Resourcecenter@oist.jp](mailto:Resourcecenter@oist.jp)

Phone: 098-966-8929

<https://groups.oist.jp/resource-center>

## **6. Jimmy's**

Jimmy's, founded in Okinawa in 1956, is an American-style bakery that also offers a deli, imported food, and housekeeping goods.

Jimmy's is located on the first floor of the Village Center Building.

Tel: 098-911-4934

Hours: 10:00 – 19:00, Closed Sundays and Japanese Holidays

## **7. Laundry**

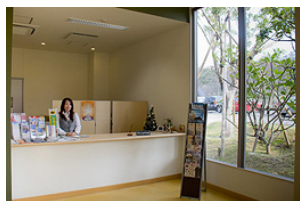
The Village Center includes a 24-hour coin laundry with washers and dryers or use by residents of the Village. Dry cleaning pickup and delivery is also available in the Village Office.



## **8. Bikes**

Bikes are available for use by OIST members. They can be reserved through the outlook reservation system and picked up at the OIST Seaside House.

## **9. Village Office**



The Village Office staff supports residents with issues related to their housing at OIST, as well as assistance with dry cleaning pickup and delivery.

Hours: 9:00-18:00 Monday through Friday, 9:00-17:00 Saturday and Sunday, closed on national holidays.

Contact: 080-6342-6500 or 080-6342-6501

## **10. Village Center Meeting Room**

The Meeting Room in the Village Center is a multipurpose area with hardwood floors used for everything from Japanese calligraphy classes to kickboxing to birthday parties.

## **11. Village Center Lounge**

With a foosball table, TV, sofa, and dart boards, the lounge is a good place to refresh and socialize. There is also a community library of used books shared by residents.

## **12. Village Center Kitchen**

Any OIST member or their family can use the Village Center Kitchen; It is particularly suited for making big meals for parties and cultural events to bring together Village residents.

## **13. Seaside House**

The multi-functional building hosts a research laboratory, and serves as a venue for international workshops and seminars. There are meeting rooms and halls which can be booked by OIST members; Chura Hall and the Seaside House deck in particular are a popular place to host larger events on campus.

## **14. Shuttle Bus Service**

OIST offers a shuttle bus service. If you use it for commuting, you must register before you start taking the bus. For further information, please contact the Building and Facilities Management Division: [bfm@oist.jp](mailto:bfm@oist.jp)

## **15. OIST Rental Car**

OIST offers small company cars for personal use to OIST students, employees, researchers, and faculty. Please see the site below for further details.

<https://groups.oist.jp/bfm/useful-information>

## **Using OIST Facilities**

While family members are free to use many of the facilities on OIST, they are required, like other OIST members, to reserve them in advance using the Outlook Reservation System. The booking process differs slightly depending on whether you are using Windows or Mac, so please refer to the guide created by the IT section:

<https://groups.oist.jp/it/calendar-meeting-rooms-equipment-reservation>

## **Regular Campus Activities**

### **1. OIST Language Classes**

OIST offers internal language training to OIST employees and spouses. For further details, please visit the TIDA intranet once you obtain access.

### **2. Tea Time**

Every Thursday at 4pm, OIST holds a campus teatime. Here, you can look forward to an enjoyable hour filled with free tea, coffee, delicious desserts from the Kaito Café, and fun, casual conversation with OIST members and their families. There is no reservation required, so those wishing to join can do so freely and at their convenience.



### **3. Seminars**

OIST holds a number of seminars on any given day, which family members as well as the OIST community are permitted to join. Information about the seminars is usually posted on TIDA and posters advertising the events are displayed around campus and in the Resource Center. Attending seminars can be a wonderful way to stay connected with the University's mission engage in thoughtful discussions about emerging research, and learn about a variety of topics.

### **4. Clubs**

OIST has a number of different clubs on Campus, which help bring together people

with similar interests. The clubs are diverse, ranging from dance and sporting groups, to calligraphy and film circles. Family members are permitted and encouraged to join a club on campus, or even start one of their own. To start a club, a proposal outlining the purpose of the club and its financial model must be submitted to the Vice President of Communications, Neil Calder. The Resource Center can offer support to those wishing to start a club on campus.

## **5. Family Badges**

Facilities management can issue special badges that allow family members of OIST employees to avoid signing in each time they wish to go on campus. To obtain the family badge, please contact (Japanese or English) Chinatsu Yamagishi [chinatsu.yamagishi@oist.jp](mailto:chinatsu.yamagishi@oist.jp).

## **Other**

Some hotels and other facilities on the island offer special discounts for OIST employees. Please see “Extra Benefits” on the Internal HR website for further information.

# Health Care and support

## Health Insurance Card

Through its health provider, OIST provides a health card to all employees and their dependent family members. With the health insurance card, you will pay 30% of the actual cost for visiting a doctor/dentist and for prescription drugs. There are some exceptions, such as health screening, orthodontistry, and childbirth expenses. OIST will issue your Health Insurance Card about 4 weeks after you submit all necessary documents. Please pick up the card from the HR office.

Although language and culture differences can make it challenging to navigate the medical system, health care in Japan is widely available, efficient, and affordable. Please save all your receipts for doctor visits and prescription medicine. If you have out-of-pocket medical expenses of more than ¥100,000 per year, you can deduct a portion of those expenses from your taxes.

### \* Getting Private Medical Insurance

If you are thinking of getting private medical insurance, contact ACE Insurance., In addition to auto insurance, they provide a wide range of insurance policies. They are an English-speaking agency.

### **ACE Insurance**

TEL: 098-936-2710 (English speaking agents: WILTEC)

E-mail: [info@wiltec-insurance.com](mailto:info@wiltec-insurance.com)

URL: <http://www.ace-insurance.co.jp/en/sda-2.html>

## **Doctor**

### **Visiting a Doctor**

Many hospitals and clinics do not accept appointments, and service is provided on a first come, first served basis. It is therefore recommended that you go early in order to avoid a long wait. However, it is a good idea to call in advance to ask whether the hospital operates on an appointment-based system. Most specialists at major hospitals do require an appointment.

- If you need assistance, the OIST Health Center ([health@oist.jp](mailto:health@oist.jp)) can make suggestions or help you contact a hospital or clinic or make an appointment.
- Please be aware that an initial visit to a clinic or hospital requires an additional initial visit fee.

### **Choosing a Doctor**

Employees may choose between large, general hospitals and small specialty clinics. This means that if you are having a serious medical problem of uncertain causes, it is best to visit a larger hospital, where they will have a wider variety of specialties. If you have a good idea of what your medical complaint is, you may visit a specialist (either at a hospital or at a clinic) without a referral. For example, if you are having a skin problem, you can go straight to a dermatologist. However, some hospitals will charge higher fees if you arrive without a referral from a smaller clinic.

### **List of Clinic/Hospitals You Might Visit Most:**

#### **Onna Clinic 恩納クリニック**

10 min drive from OIST

Dr. Norimitsu Tamaki

TEL: 098-966-8115

Hour: Mon. Wed. Fri. Sat. 09:00 to 17:30

Closed between 12:30 to 14:00

Tue. & Thurs.: 09:00 to 12:30

Closed on Sundays and Holidays

Dr. Tamaki speaks English.



#### **Okinawa Prefectural Chubu Hospital 沖縄県立中部病院**

40 min drive from OIST

TEL: 098-973-4111

Outpatient hours: Mon thru Fri 08:30 to 11:00

Hours vary depending on the department.

An appointment is needed for an afternoon visit.

Most doctors speak English



24 hr emergency center

<http://www.hosp.pref.okinawa.jp/chubu/> (Japanese only)

**Chibana Clinic/Nakagami Hospital 中頭病院ちばなクリニック**

40 min drive from OIST

TEL: 098-939-1300 (Chibana Clinic) 098-939-1301 (Nakagami Hospital)

Outpatient hours: Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri, Sat: 08:00 to 11:30, 13:30 to 17:00. Wed: 08:00 to 11:30

24 hr emergency (Nakagami Hospital 098-939-1300 Call in advance)

<http://www.nakagami.or.jp/chibana/> <http://www.nakagami.or.jp/nakagami/>  
(Japanese only)

**Urasoe Sogo Hospital 浦添総合病院**

45 min drive from OIST

TEL: 098-878-0231

Outpatient hours: Mon thru Fri 08:20 to 11:00

Hours vary depending on the department.

An appointment is needed for an afternoon visit.

Most doctors speak English.

24 hr Emergency center

<http://jin-aikai.com/urasoe-sogo/> (Japanese only)

**Adventist Medical Center アドベンチスト・メディカルセンター**

50 min drive from OIST

TEL: 098-966-8115

Hours vary depending on the individual department but are usually 09:00 to 16:30. Please check the hours prior to visiting.

Closed on Friday afternoon and Saturdays

No 24 hr emergency center is available

<http://www.amc.gr.jp/english/>

**University Hospital, University of the Ryukyus 琉球大学医学部付属病院**

45 min drive from OIST

Tel: 098-895-3331

Outpatient hours: Mon thru Fri 08:00 to 11:00

Hours vary depending on the department.

An appointment is needed for an afternoon visit.

Most doctors speak English.

24 hr emergency center

<http://www.hosp.u-ryukyu.ac.jp/> (Japanese only)

**Chubu Tokusyukai Hospital 中部徳州会病院**

35 min drive from OIST

TEL: 098-937-1110

Hours: Mon thru Fri 08:30 to 12:00, 14:00 to 19:00

Sat 08:30 to 12:00

Some doctors speak English

24 hr emergency center

An appointment is needed to visit an English speaking doctor

<http://www.cyutoku.or.jp/> (Japanese only)

**REMEMBER to bring the following items when you visit a hospital or doctor:**

- Health Insurance Card (If you forget the card, you have to pay 100% of the cost and will get 70% returned when you bring your card at your next visit.)
- Hospital or clinic card (This card will be given to you the first time you visit a clinic or hospital. Please bring this card on subsequent visits. Some places will charge you a re-issue fee if you lose the card.)
- Residence Card or Alien Registration Card
- Documentation of any medication you are taking. Be sure to discuss this with the doctor.
- Cash to pay the hospital bill (most smaller places will not accept a credit card, though most larger hospitals will accept credit cards. Still, it is best to have sufficient cash on hand!)

**Childbirth**

Having a baby in any situation is generally an exciting, yet stressful experience, and of course, being in a new country can add to the latter. However, there are a few hospitals and clinics that offer support for foreign mothers, and mothers looking for alternative childbirth options:

**Yui Clinic** supports natural childbirth in a home-like atmosphere. They offer both physical and mental support during delivery, and allow family members to be present at childbirth.  
<http://www.yuiclinic.com/e5989111.html>

**Adventist Medical Center** offers full support for the mother's delivery wishes in the safety of a large hospital environment, and many of the doctors and nurses are able to speak English. AMC also procedures such as epidurals and circumcises which are not performed in Japan.  
<http://www.amc.gr.jp/english/>

## Immunization

Children who are registered at their local government office will receive letters from the local government office on vaccinations. These vaccinations may be charged depending on the child's age. The vaccination for Japanese Encephalitis will be charged to residents in some municipalities.



\*For further information, please check with the local government office. (Rules on immunizations change regularly. Check with the Health Center beforehand.)

Schedule and Types of Vaccination			
Vaccine	Target age group	Schedule	Frequency and Intervals
BCG+	3 months to 6 months old	year-round	Once.
Polio	3 months to 7 and half yrs.	May and September	Twice/Spring and Fall (6 months intervals)
DPT (Diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus)	3 months to 7 and half yrs.	year-round	1st stage: 3 times at 3-8 week intervals. (Booster) One time 12-18 months after the third injection.
DT (Diphtheria and tetanus)	6th grade	July and August	2nd stage: once.
MR (Measles & Rubella)	1st stage: 1-2 years old. 2nd stage: Before entering elementary school	year-round	1st stage: once 2nd Stage: once Child who already has had measles or rubella cannot receive the vaccine shot.
Measles	1 yr to 7 and half yrs	year-round	Once
Rubella	1 yr to 7 and half yrs.	year-round	Once
Japanese encephalitis	3 yrs old	April to June	1st stage: 2 times at 1-4 week interval.
	4 yrs old		Booster: One time year after the last injection.
	4th grade		2nd stage: once.

Please remember, the BCG vaccination is not given in many countries. With the BCG vaccination, the TB (tuberculosis) test will always show a positive test result for TB.

People who have a positive result must take a chest X-ray to prove that they are TB free, or they will be asked in many countries to take medications for TB. Please check with the immunization schedule in your country to determine if BCG is given there. If you do not wish your child to have a BCG vaccination, please consult with your physician.

for more information: **Phase III Child Care, p.54**

## **Gyms and Swimming Pools**

### **Private Gyms/Swimming pools**

#### **Moon Beach Hotel**

1203 Maeganeku, Onna-son

098-965-1020

Sports gym and 25 m pool. Please refer to the HR website-(Benefits/Facility) for information on employee discounts.

### **Village/City Owned Gyms/Swimming Pools**

There are village or town-run sports gyms and swimming pools available about 20- to 30-minute drive from OIST. Facility fees tend to be less than those of private gyms and swimming pools, and a discount will be applied if you are a resident. Please confirm the price in advance as most of them have a variety of pricing systems.

#### **Yomitan-son Kenkou Zousin (Health Promotion) Center**

読谷村健康増進センター

Address: 2901 Aza Zakimi, Nakagami-gun, Okinawa

Telephone: 098-982-9100

Hours: Weekdays 09:00 ~18:30

Weekends & National Holidays 10:00 ~18:30

Facilities and Price: Pool ¥700

Training gym: ¥400

Studio ¥2,000/2h

Grass playground 4,000/1h

#### **Kin-town General Health and Welfare Center**

金武町総合福祉保健センター

Address: 1842 Aza Kin, Kin-cho, Okinawa

Telephone: 098-968-5932

Hours: Tue to Fri 15:00 ~20:00

Weekends & National Holiday 12:00 ~22:00

Mon and 12/29~1/3 Regular holiday

Facilities and Price: General public bath including a sauna ¥600/per person

### **Uruma-shi Ishikawa Swimming Pool**

うるま市石川市民プール

Address: 2-7 Ishizaki, Ishikawa, Uruma-shi, Okinawa

Telephone: 098-965-3939

Hours Mon to Sat

(1) 10:00 ~11:40

(2) 13:00 ~14:40

(3) 15:00 ~16:40

(4) 17:00 ~18:40

(5) 19:00 ~20:40\*

\* (5) not open on Saturdays at this time

\*English speaking staff are available

Facilities and Price: General Swimming Pool ¥200/per 2 hour

Other Uruma-shi athletic facilities

<http://www.city.uruma.lg.jp/1/32.html> (English)



# Daily Life

## Banking Services

### Nearest Banks and ATMs from OIST

- **Bank of Okinawa (沖縄銀行)**  
Address: 2491-1 Onna, Onna-son  
TEL: 098-966-8438
- **Bank of the Ryukyus (琉球銀行)**  
Address:: 2-23-6 Ishikawa, Uruma-shi  
TEL: 098-965-1212
- **Japan Post Bank (ゆうちょ銀行)**  
Address:: 107 Nakadomari, Onna-son  
TEL: 098-964-3096
- **ATMs**
  - Bank of Okinawa (沖縄銀行)  
Level C, OIST Center Building
  - Family Mart (ファミリーマート)  
Address:: 1917 Tancha, Onna-son  
TEL: 098- 965-6550
  - Lawson (ローソン)  
Address:: 2581 Onna, Onna-son  
TEL: 098-966-8058



### ATMs in Japan

ATM machines are not open 24 hours in Japan. Some ATMs are open only during business hours. Some ATMs have extended hours evenings and on weekends. It depends upon the location. During business hours withdrawals are free. After 18:00, weekends, and Japanese holidays, you will be charged ¥105 for withdrawing money. Depositing money has no charge.

Also you will be charged a fee when you use your bank's ATM card in another bank's ATM machine and when you transfer funds.

## Bill Payment

You can pay most bills by taking the invoice to a bank or convenience store (Lawson, FamilyMart, etc.) and paying in cash. Or, you can set up an automatic bank payment at your bank. To set up an automatic bill payment for rent and water, please check with your

landlord/realtor. For electricity and gas, you need to bring an invoice, ID, and your inkman to your bank. Phone (cell phone) bills can be arranged at the time you apply for your line.

If there is not enough money in your account at the time of automatic payment, usually the company will send out a notice stating that it tried unsuccessfully to withdraw money from your account, and will make a second attempt later. You may need to pay directly at the bank in cases of insufficient funds or overdue bills.

## **Loans and Credit Cards**

### **1. Bank Loans**

It is difficult, though possible, to get a bank loan in Japan as a foreigner. You must be employed in Japan, and you will need to bring such documents as your passport, Residence Card or Alien Registration Card, and proof of employment (consult your bank to find out what is necessary). You must also find a guarantor. The bank may ask to see a permanent residence permit. Some banks offer loans to foreigners more readily than others. Please check with the various banks for requirements.

### **2. Credit Cards**

Japan is very much a cash-based society and credit cards are not used as widely as in the West. This is especially true in Okinawa. It is very difficult for non-Japanese to obtain a credit card from a Japanese bank or credit company. You can still use your credit card from your country. However, some places will not accept a credit card issued outside of Japan.

For business expenses and business related purchases, OIST offers the American Express Corporate Card as our corporate card program. Private use is not allowed. Please see the OIST Internal HR website “**Credit Card**” for further information.

## **Sending Money Overseas**

### **1. GoLloyds Remittance**

GoLloyds is offered by Lloyds TSB Japan (a UK-based bank). You must send at least ¥150,000 every time you send money. The money will be deposited by Lloyds in a foreign bank account that you specify. Lloyds charges ¥2000 for handling your money. Your bank in Japan will charge a small fee (around ¥500) to transfer the money to Lloyds, and the bank where you are sending the money may also charge a fee. The total can be ¥3000 to ¥4000. This is similar to other remittance services, but GoLloyds offers very competitive exchange rates. Therefore, on the whole, it may be the cheapest option. The money should arrive in the bank account that you specify one business day after you transfer the money to Lloyds.

To use GoLloyds, visit their website, download and print out the application, and send it to the Lloyds TSB office in Tokyo. GoLloyds will send you a reply letter with instructions on making transfers from your bank's ATM. The instructions are written in English and Japanese, so you

can simply show these to a bank employee if you are not able to operate the ATM yourself.

## **2. Bank Remittance Checks**

Bank Remittances vary from bank to bank. This method is safe but slow, and requires the cooperation of a friend or relative in the country you are sending the money to if you want to deposit the money in your own account. At the Japanese bank, yen or foreign currency is written as a check that you can mail to anyone. It may take 4 to 5 days for the bank to prepare the check. The recipient can then cash the check at a bank you specify, and deposit it as per your instructions. On the Japanese side, you may be charged fees of ¥2500 to ¥5000. There may be additional fees at the bank where the check is deposited.

## **3. Telegraphic Transfer**

Japanese banks can also send money directly to an account you specify. The Japanese bank will take a commission of ¥4000 to ¥5000 (or more depending on the connections between banks), and you will have to exchange currencies at the bank's exchange rate. Your bank, or other intermediary banks, may charge additional fees. Telegraphic transfers should get your money to the recipient account quite quickly. If you have a Japanese bank account, applying for online banking may give you access to a slightly less expensive way to send funds overseas (around ¥3,000 per transfer, depending on the destination country).

## **4. International Postal Money Order**

The post office can write postal money orders that can be cashed at foreign post offices. You must exchange yen for the appropriate foreign currency. One postal money order is limited to a set amount (for example USD 700.00.) The post office will send the postal money order for you by registered mail. Still this method can take approximately 5 to 14 days to reach its destination. (However, it has been known to take up to six weeks for some countries). However, you can send as many money orders as you want. Each money order costs ¥2500, and further charges may be deducted from the money you send.

## **Exchange currency**

You can exchange foreign currencies at banks and exchange shops. Also there is an exchange machine at AEON for U.S. dollars to Yen. Exchange shops offer better rates than banks. Edoya, one of the major exchange shops in Okinawa, deals with 32 currencies.

### **Edoya (江戸屋両替センター):**

1-3-4 Mihama, Chatan-cho 098-987-5280

1-22-18 Chuo, Okinawa-shi 098-937-1333

<http://edoya-exchange.com/enindex.html>

\*Please call ahead and confirm they have the currencies you would like to exchange in stock.



## Postal Services/Express Courier Services (Takkyu bin 宅急便)

Postal Service Information in English: (0570) 046-111  
Mon thru Fri, 08:00 to 22:00, Sat & Sun 09:00 to 19:00

Post Offices and stamps vendors are marked by the symbol: 〒

You can identify your local Post Office by looking for the post office sign on the building.

Here are some nearby locations:

- Onna-son Central Post Office (恩納郵便局)  
Address: 2583-1 Aza Onna, Onnna-son, 904-0411  
TEL: 098-966-8327
- Nakadomari Post Office (仲泊郵便局)  
Address:: 107 Aza Nakadomari, Onna-son, 904-0415  
TEL : 098-964-3096
- Kin Post Office (金武郵便局)  
Address: 57-2 Aza Kin, Kin-cho, 904-1201  
TEL: 098-968-2601
- Ishikawa Higashionna Post Office (東恩納郵便局)  
Address: 594-3 Ishikawa Higashionna, Uruma-shi, 904-1111  
TEL: 098-964-2529
- Irumina Post Office (伊良皆郵便局)  
Address: 373-6 Aza Irumina, Yomitan-son, 904-0303  
TEL: 098-956-1241

Stamps can also be purchased at most convenience stores.

### Domestic Mail

#### 1. Letters

Postage is ¥80 for a standard domestic letter (up to 25 g) and ¥50 for a standard domestic postcard. Letters which are heavy or oversized cost considerably more.



#### 2. Parcels

You can send packages of up to 30 kg. The postal rate is slightly lower if you are sending printed material (e.g. books, magazines, newsletters, calendars, etc.) If you want this rate, tell the postal worker your package is printed material.

#### 3. Registered Mail

With registered mail, you can track the progress of your letter or parcel. It is also possible to send cash via this service. To send cash, you must also purchase a cash registration envelop from the post office for ¥20. The cost of postage is higher for this service.

## **International Mail**

Sending letters parcels and registered mail internationally is nearly the same as sending them domestically. Rates vary based on the destination, and as with domestic mail, there is a discount for packages containing only printed matter. However, when sending something overseas, you must choose between several different ways of posting the letter or parcel. They are listed here in order of speed.

### **1. EMS**

EMS is the speediest way to send packages and documents abroad. EMS can be sent to over 120 countries and areas worldwide. Computerized tracking is also available for 40 countries and regions for a fee, as is insurance. Delivery speed differs among regions, but generally it takes only 2 - 4 days. You will need to fill out a special EMS envelope or label for your letter or package. These are available at the post office.

### **2. Air mail**

Airmail is the standard way to send overseas mail. Delivery speed depends on mail conditions in the destination country, but mail will generally arrive in 3 to 6 days. To send something by airmail, simply write "Airmail" on the packaging, or ask the post office staff for an airmail sticker.

### **3. Economy Air (SAL: space available)**

Economy Air is a method by which parcels and printed matter are air transported abroad using open space on airplanes. This is less expensive than airmail and faster than surface mail. Delivery generally takes 6 to 13 days. To use this service, write "SAL" on the package or ask the post office staff for an SAL sticker.

### **4. Surface Mail**

Surface mail is significantly cheaper than other methods. However, surface mail takes 1 to 3 months to reach its destination. Write "surface" on the package if you wish to use this method.

If you will send something important or valuable, or using surface, having it insured is recommended.

## **Express Courier Service**

### **Yamato Takkyu Bin ヤマト宅急便 (Yamato Transport)**

Offers both domestic and international express courier service. Please visit the web site for further assistance.

<http://www.kuronekoyamato.co.jp/en/>

### **Sagawa Express 佐川急便**

Also offers the same services; its Naha branch is the drop off point (commissioned business) for DHL.

<http://www.sagawa-exp.co.jp/english>

## **Transportation**

### **Public Buses**

There are four main bus companies in Okinawa. Ordinary buses have route numbers, which are coordinated between companies (i.e. there is only one #86 bus line), so if you know the route number, you do not need to worry about getting on the wrong bus. The bus system may seem confusing at first, but once you get used to the bus lines, they can be quite convenient.

#### **1. How to Ride the Bus**

- (1) Stand visibly by the bus stop, or the bus driver may not see you.
- (2) Take a ticket upon entering the bus. The number printed on your ticket corresponds to the stop where you got on, and will determine the fare you pay when you get off.
- (3) Press the "stop" button by your seat when you are approaching your stop. This will cause a sign at the front of the bus to become illuminated if it is not already.
- (4) When you get off the bus, put your fare (exact change) into the fare box by the driver along with your ticket. If you do not have change, use the change machine below the fare box.



Bus stops will be announced, so you can listen for your stop. If you are not sure when to press the stop button for your stop, you should tell to the bus driver where you would like get off when you board. A book of all the bus routes in Okinawa, and timetables for all the routes is available from the bus information counter in Naha Airport.

#### **2. Bus Companies in Okinawa**

Ryukyu Bus (098) 863-2821

Okinawa Bus (098) 861-0385

Naha Bus (098) 868-7149

Toyo Bus (098) 867-2313

Further information on buses and bus routes can be found at:

<http://www.kotsu-okinawa.org/en/index.html>

(The public buses which stop at OIST are #20 and #120. It runs between Naha Airport and Nago-shi in the north. Also the Airport limousine bus “Basho/Cattleya” comes to the OIST campus.) For further information, please check:

<http://www.oist.jp/limousine-bus>

## **OIST Shuttle Bus**

OIST provides a free shuttle bus service between AEON (Gushikawa Jusco) and Onna Campus. If you would like to take the shuttle bus, you need to register in advance with the Facility Management Section. Please check the following bus schedule and route: Look at Shuttle Bus Schedule for the most up-to-date schedule.

[https://groups.oist.jp/sites/default/files/imce/u650/OIST\\_Shuttle\\_Bus\\_Schedules\\_0.pdf](https://groups.oist.jp/sites/default/files/imce/u650/OIST_Shuttle_Bus_Schedules_0.pdf)

for more information is : <https://groups.oist.jp/bfm/useful-information>

## **Taxi**

Using a taxi is a convenient, but expensive way to get around in Okinawa. The initial fee is ¥500 for the first 1800 meters. Taxis can be easily found in resort or city areas. You can hail a taxi on the street or at a taxi stand. Please remember, the rear passenger doors are opened by the driver, and they will close automatically. It is not necessary to tip taxi drivers in Japan.

### **OkitoH Kotsu ( 沖縄交通 )**

Taxi company with English speaking drivers

1730 Seragaki, Onna-son, Kunigami, Okinwa, Japan

TEL 098-966-2861; FAX 098-966-8141

English operator: Toll free 0120-23-5477

## **Daiko Service**

Daiko service is a substitute driving service. Drinking and driving is prohibited in Japan. If you drink and need a ride to take your car home, use this service. Two drivers with a car will come to pick you up. One of them drives you home in your car, and the other driver follows behind to pick up the first driver when you get to your destination.

You will see a Daiko Service list at restaurants which offer alcoholic drinks and at pubs. Please ask the establishments staff to call Daiko Service for you or have a Japanese friend to do so. Remember, the punishment for drinking and driving is strict in Japan! If you drink, don't drive; if you drive, don't drink!

## **Living in a Japanese House/Apartment**

### **Front door**

When you open the front door, you will enter an area that is on a slightly lower level than the rest of the house. This is the place you take your shoes off. Japanese generally do not

wear outside shoes inside their homes.

### **Tatami mats**

Tatami mats are made of straw and used in a traditional Japanese room. These mats are extremely easy to damage. They easily get moldy when they get wet; also they are easily get dented by placing and dragging heavy furniture on them. If you have tatami mats in your place, please be careful not to damage them! To clean them, use a broom or a vacuum without using any chemicals or cleaning agents, unless they are specifically made for tatami mats.

### **Mold**

Okinawa is humid throughout the year, particularly in the warmest months. If you do not take care to ventilate your house or apartment, mold WILL form in dark, moist places. De-moisturizing agents can be purchased at stores and placed around the house where mold is likely to form. Leather materials, clothing and books are particularly susceptible to mold. A mold remover can be used for bathrooms. Use of an air-conditioner/dehumidifier can be really helpful, though costly. Even in the winter it is very important that you leave the windows open as often as possible in order to prevent mold from forming.

#### **Mosquitos in Okinawa**

As Okinawa is a breeding ground for mosquitos, it is quite common to use insect repellent spray (虫よけスプレー), vaporizing repellent (ベープ) or incense called Katori Senko (蚊取り線香). You can buy them from super markets and drug stores. Wearing clothes that cover your arms and legs when you are going somewhere near bushes and standing water is recommended. Mosquito are quite active in the morning and evening. Some people get a severe irritation and swelling, and it is recommended that you take necessary preventive measures to not get bitten by mosquitos.



### **Insects and other creatures**

Though you see ants, mosquitoes and roaches year-around, they are more active in summer time. Termites are also active during summer. Repellents and insecticides are available in various forms at local stores.

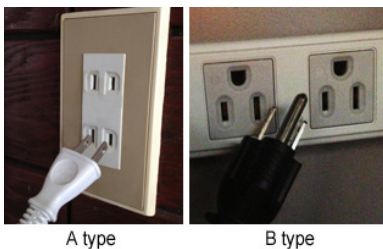
### **Drinking Water**

You may notice that the water here tastes different from the water in your home country.

And probably you see a lot of bottled water for sale here. However, Japan's water supply system is extremely well monitored, and there is no danger in consuming water taken directly from a water supply outlet, such as a household tap or faucet. Please note that fluoride and other chemicals are not added to the water here. Water quality may deteriorate due to typhoons. You should either boil your water or buy bottled water when such reports are made.

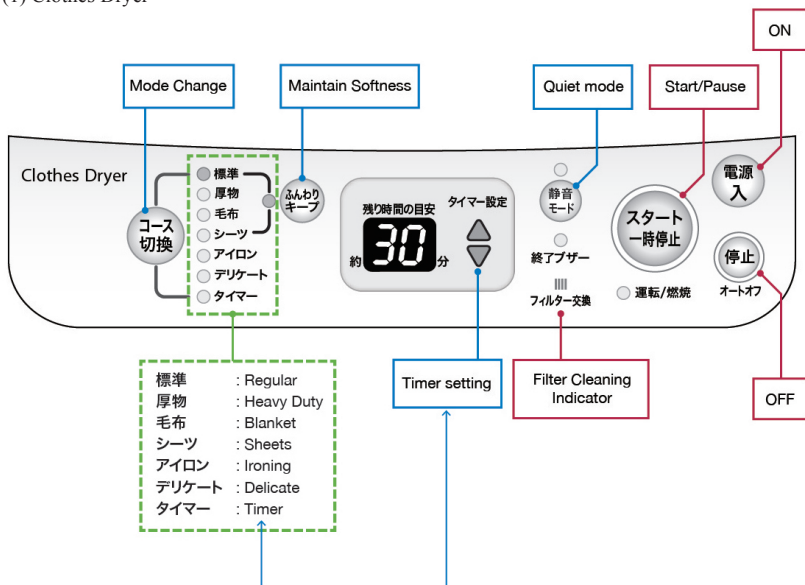
## Electric outlets

The voltage in Japan is 100 Volts, which is different from North America (110V), much of Europe (230V) and many other regions of the world. The majority of Japanese power outlets are identical to ungrounded (2-pin) “A type” outlets, but “B type outlets” can be found in some places. Older buildings have non-polarized sockets, in which case polarized plugs (one prong wider than the other) would not fit. Most buildings do not have the ground pin. If you need to use a B type and outlets in your place are A type, you can purchase an extension cord/tap with A type plug and B type socket at an electronics store.

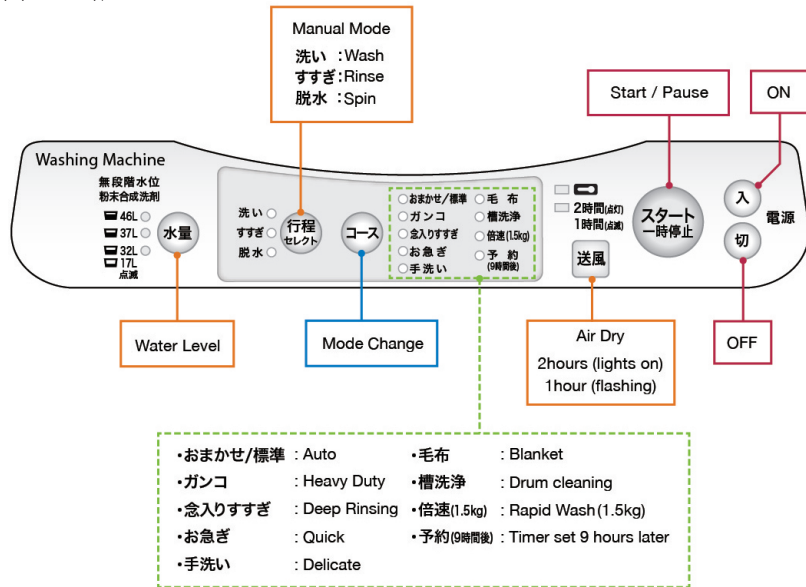


## Translation for Electric Appliances (Some Examples)

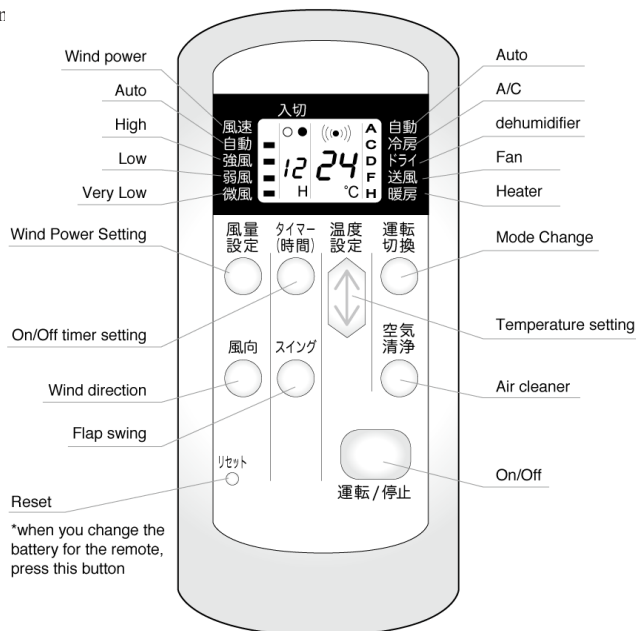
### (1) Clothes Dryer



(2) Washing Machine



(3) A/C remote



## **Communications, TV, Radio**

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### **Communications**

#### **(1) Making Phone Calls**

NTT is most widely used for domestic phone calls. You do not need to dial area code (098) for local phone calls, if the telephone number starts with 8 or 9, (e.g., 833-3333/933-3333). Telephone numbers starting with 0, (e.g., 055-5555), require the area code first (098-055-5555)

#### **(2) How to Make an Overseas Call**

From your home phone, dial your telephone company prefix + 010 + Country Code + Area Code (without the initial 0) + Telephone Number in that order.

Prefix for NTT: 0033, KDDI/au: 001, Softbank Telecom: 0061

#### **(3) Calling Cards**

These allow the cost of your calls to be charged to the card. Usually a calling card has a better rate for international phone call.

### **Television**

The transmission system for Japan is NTSC, the same as is used in most of North America, South America, and around Asia. The region code is 1, which is different from Europe or some other areas of the world. If you bring a Video/DVD player or other forms of media from your country, please check beforehand to see if it will work in Japan.

#### **Digital television**

ANKH (Japanese Broadcasting Company)

OTV (Okinawa Television)

RBC (Ryukyu Broadcasting Company)

NHK

NHK Educational

#### **(1) English Television Programming**

If you have a bilingual TV, you will be able to receive foreign language programming on selected shows. Bilingual programs are marked in the newspaper with the Japanese symbol for 2 ("二"). These programs include a few foreign films, RBC news at 18:00, and NHK news translated into English that is broadcast during the week from 19:00 to 19:20. Some news programs are not translated over the weekend. To listen to NHK and RBC English language broadcasts, a converter is required or a television with bilingual capabilities is required.



## **(2) Cable T.V.**

### **Hikari Chura**

The au cellphone company provides an internet service along with cable T.V.

Please see further details and the service area on the link below.

<http://www.au-hikari.ne.jp/en/>

## **(3) Satellite Television (Sky Perfect TV)**

Satellite Television is available in Okinawa. In order to use satellite television, you must either rent or buy a small satellite dish and a decoder. These are available at several electronics shops in Okinawa. There is an array of different channels, including BBC World, CNN International, MTV, FOX news, ESPN, Discovery Channel, and Pay per View. There are programs in several different languages including Japanese, Korean, Portuguese, English, Chinese, and Spanish.

Sky Perfect TV web site: <http://www.skyperfectv.co.jp/eng/> (English)

## **(4) Public Television Fee**

NHK offers commercial-free television by covering its expenses through subscription. Residents in Japan with TVs are expected, but not obliged, to pay this fee in accordance with the Broadcasting Law. However, residents who do not speak Japanese might not be asked to pay. If you do not wish to pay, you can explain to the collector that you cannot understand Japanese, and therefore you do not watch NHK. NHK bill collectors visit houses and apartment complexes once in a while. (The fee is approximately ¥2,000/month.)

\*There are local internet providers which provide services and support in English. You can apply for internet, satellite TV, phone, etc. at the same time.

- Sunny Net: [www.sunny-net.ne.jp](http://www.sunny-net.ne.jp) 098- 983-7557
- GL Broad Band: [www.glbb.jp](http://www.glbb.jp) 098-894-4279

## **Radio**

### **Radio Stations in Okinawa**

AM	FM
NHK1 549 kHz NHK2 1125 kHz Radio Okinawa 738 kHz AFN 648 kHz (US Military radio)	FM Okinawa 87.3 MHz NHKFM 88.1 MHz AFN 89.1 MHz (US Military radio)

Digital Radio is also available. Digital Radio offers additional radio broadcasts for a small fee. Please contact OCN for details.

## **Child Care**

### **Child Services and Support from Your Local Government Office**

Infants and children are entitled to free medical check-ups at your local municipality. Also standard vaccinations are free, but you must visit a designated medical provider. You should receive a letter on the check-up/vaccination from your local government office. Your local municipality offers several different kinds of financial assistance for families with young children. Benefits are limited to families with an income under a certain amount.

#### **(1) Child Welfare Allowance (Jidou Teate 児童手当)**

This is an allowance for anyone raising children. If you are eligible for this allowance, you will receive payments of ¥5,000-¥15,000, depending on certain requirements, per month for each child up to 15 years of age. Please see more information below, "**Child Allowance**".

#### **(2) Medical Expense Allowance for Infants and Young Children**

(Nyūyōji Iryōhi Jyosei 乳幼児医療助成)

This is an allowance to pay for medical visits of children ages 3 and under and for hospitalization of any child who has not yet entered elementary school.

#### **(3) Child Support Allowance (Jidō Fuyō Teate 児童扶養手当)**

This is an allowance for children who are living apart from their fathers due to divorce or death.

#### **(4) Medical Expense Allowance for Children in Single Parent Homes**

(Boshi oyobi Fushi Katei nado Iryōhi Jyosei 母子および父子家庭など医療助成)

This is an allowance to pay for medical expenses of children ages 18 and under in single-parent homes.

### **Child Allowance: (Jidou teate 児童手当)**

Responsible Organization: Children's Welfare Section at your local government office.

A child allowance is paid by local government to all residents who have eligible children.

A child allowance can be received in the following situations:

- You have registered as residents in Japan.
- You have completed your resident card registration process.
- You are raising children who meet the requirements to receive a child allowance.

Requirements to receive the child allowance

- Children from 0 years old to those in their last year of junior high school (9th grade) (the first March 31 after becoming 15 years old) meet the requirements.
- In principle, children living abroad (except those studying abroad\*) are not covered by the system.

\* Children who live abroad receive the allowance if they are studying overseas and fulfill all of

the conditions stated below, provided that the required documents for studying abroad meet the requirements.

- \* The child had an Address: in Japan continuously for 3 years up to the day before they no longer had an Address: in Japan.
- \* The purpose for living abroad is to receive an education, and the child does not live with their parents (or the child's guardian, if the child is under guardianship)
- \* Less than 3 years have passed since the day the child no longer had an Address: in Japan.

## **(1) Allowance amount**

The amount of the allowance paid per child is as below.

Age classification	Amount of allowance per month
Age 0 - under age 3	¥15,000 for all children
Age 3 - until before entering Junior High School	¥10,000 first/second child ¥15,000 third child and above
Junior High School students	¥10,000 for all children
When income limit is exceeded*	¥5,000 for all children

\*The income limit varies depending on the number of dependents and various deductions. For details, please contact your local government office.

## **(2) Time and method of payment**

Payment is made three times per year (June, October, and February) in lump sum payments for the 4 months up to the month prior to payment. Payment is made by bank transfer to the account of the person raising the child.

People who wish to receive payment of the child allowance must apply.

- An application must be made in order to receive a child allowance payment to their city, town, or village office. Those who wish to receive a child allowance must fill in a Child Allowance Authorization Application Form (Jido Teate Nintei Shinsei Sho). The office will then review the application. If the application is approved, the applicant will receive payment.
- Documents to be presented with the “Jido Teate Nintei Shinsei Sho” application form when submitting an application:
  - Copy of the Residence Card of the applicant
  - Copy of the Health Insurance Certificate of the applicant (if they subscribe to a health insurance plan)
  - Copy of the bank pass book of the account to which the child allowance is to be transferred to (must be the account of the applicant)
  - Other documents may be required if deemed necessary

- Payment begins accumulating one month after the application is made.

Since payment of the allowance for children born after April 1st (or people who arrived

in Japan after that date) begins with the sum for the month after an application is made, people in such circumstances are asked to fill out their application as soon as possible after the birth of their child or arriving in Japan.

**(3) Notification procedures are required in the following circumstances:**

- When there is a change of Address: (If an applicant [recipient] moves to a different city, ward, town or village, a new Child Allowance application is required at the office for the new Address:.)
- When the applicant or the child for whom the allowance is being received leaves Japan
- When the applicant (recipient) no longer takes care of the child
- When the applicant (recipient) and child live separately
- When, due to birth or death, the number of children for whom the allowance applies changes
- When the bank account to which the allowance is transferred changes (A new transfer can be made only to the account of the applicant.)

**Contact Phone number at City Office for "New Child Allowance"**

City /Cho/Son Office	Direct	Operator	Ext.No	Section	
Onna Son	098-966-1207	—	—	Fukushi Kenkou Ka	福祉健康課
Nago City	0980-53-6024	—	—	Jido Katei Ka	児童家庭課
Yomitan Son	098-982-9240	—	—	Kodomo Mirai Ka	こども未来課
Chatan Cho	—	098-936-1234	254	Kodomo Katei Ka	こども家庭課
Kadena Cho	—	098-956-1111	123	Jido Fukushi Ka	児童福祉課
Uruma City	098-973-4983	—	—	Jido Katei Ka	児童家庭課
Okinawa City	—	098-939-1212	3194	Kodomo Katei Ka	こども家庭課
Kita Nakagusuku Son	—	098-935-2233	253	Fukushi Ka	福祉課
Ginowan City	—	098-893-4411	181,283,294	Jido Katei Ka	児童家庭課
Urasoe City	—	098-876-1234	3618	Jido Katei Ka	児童家庭課
Naha City	—	098-867-0111	257,325,876	Kosodate Ouen Ka	子育て応援課
Nanjo City	098-946-8995	098-948-7111	—	Jido Katei Ka	児童家庭課
Yaese Cho	098-998-7163	098-998-7163	—	Jido Katei Ka	児童家庭課
Nishihara Cho	098-945-5311	—	—	Fukushi Ka	福祉課

## Day Care Centers (Hoikusho 保育所)

- OIST Child Development center  
Please refer to Child Development Center.
- Kibougaoka Angel Hoikuen  
Bilingual staff, hourly service \1000/hour  
Kibougaoka, Onna-shi  
<http://angelhoiku.jimdo.com/> (in Japanese)
- Okinawa International School  
They have various classes for children from 1 year to elementary school age.  
2-34-22 Sobe, Naha-shi  
<http://www.ois-edu.com/english/>
- East West Montessori  
Classes start from 3 years old.  
465-2 Ihei, Chatan-cho  
<http://www.eastwestms.com/english/>
- Okinawa Montessori School International  
(2.5 years to 6 years)  
B5 1-348 Miyagi, Chatan-cho  
<http://www.okinawamontessori.com/>

## Shopping

### Grocery Stores

#### (1) Super Market

The store signs you are most likely to see are **San-A** サンエー, which has three large “A”s on a yellow background; **Kanehide** かねひで which has two orange birds on a green background; **AEON** イオン, located in Uruma-shi, and other larger municipalities; **MaxValu** マックスバリュ (operated by AEON group), and **Union** ユニオン.



Large stores such as AEON, San-A (San-A Main City in Uruma-shi, San-A Ginowan Convention City in Ginowan-shi, and San-A Main Place in Naha) not only have foodstuffs, but household goods, electronics, clothing, and over-the-counter drugs. The large stores are usually part of a shopping mall.

#### The closest stores:

**San-A** サンエー Ishikawa 石川店

<http://www.san-a.co.jp/store/shopping-center/post-5.html> (Japanese only)

**Kanehide** かねひで 石川店

<http://kanehideshj.com/viewshop.php?ID=69> (Japanese only)

**AEON** イオン

<http://www.aeon-ryukyu.jp/> (Japanese only)

**MaxValu** マックスバリュ 石川店

<http://www.aeon-ryukyu.jp/store/#headerMaxvalu> (Japanese only)

**Union** ユニオン 北谷店

Address: 517-1 Kuwae, Chatan-cho, Phone: 098-936-1238

<http://www.nodake.co.jp/storelist4.html#cyatan> (Japanese only)

**(2) Coffee and imported products**

**Kaldi Coffee Farm**

Address: San-A Ginowan Convention City 1F, 558-10 Uchidomari, Ginowan-shi

<http://www.kaldi.co.jp/english/>

**(3) Fresh fish & seafood**

You can find fresh fish and other seafood at fish markets in fishing ports. Some markets have restaurants.

**Nago** fishing port Address: 3-5-16 Gusuku, Nago-shi

**Ishikawa** fishing port Address: 2-1 Ishikawa Ishizaki, Uruma-shi

\*Closed on Monday

**Yomitan** Toya fish port Address: 33 Toya, Yomitan-son)

**Gushikawa** Payao Address: 225-2 Aza Akano, Uruma-shi

**Payao awase** Address: 1-11-25 Awase, Okinawa-shi

**(4) Wholesale Foods & Products**

**A Price** Address: 3-28-6 Yamauchi, Okinawa-shi, 7-1-56 Miyazato, Nago-shi

**Gyomu Super** Address: 2-1-31 Ishikawa-Akebono, Uruma-shi, 6-9-1 Takahara Okinawa-shi

<http://www.kobebussan.co.jp/english/>

**Drug stores and Pharmacy**

You can purchase over-the-counter (OTC) drugs at drug stores such as **Drug Eleven** ( ドラッグイレブン ) or **Drugstore Mori** ( ドラッグストア モリ ) and in some grocery stores such as **MaxValue**, **AEON** and the general store, **Dilex**. The majority of Japanese drug stores do not have prescription departments. Drug stores carry OTC drugs, beauty aids, cleaning, and sanitary supplies.

You will find a pharmacist/certified drug seller at the cash register. Please do not hesitate to ask for assistance. Even though you may not understand Japanese, you can write your symptoms in English on a piece of paper and show it to them.

\*Please note that some Japanese OTC cough suppressant solutions contain methyl ephedrine, dihydrocodeine (known as codeine), which can cause dependence.

Many clinics and hospitals do not have prescription departments. If your doctor writes you prescription, you have to go to a pharmacy which is located close by the clinic/hospital you visited. At the pharmacy, please submit the prescription along with your health insurance card. Pharmacy in Japanese is called Yak-kyoku.



### **The closest stores:**

**Drug Eleven** Address: 4-14-11 Midorino, Uruma-shi

<http://dgm.jp/SHOPLIST.html?&mode=areaGr&id=9> (Japanese only)

**Dilex** Address: 1-44-8 Ishikawa Uruma-shi

<http://www.sundrug.co.jp/store/store.php?id=7172&gid=2&keyword=沖縄県> (Japanese only)

## **Electronics**

### **(1) Electronic Shops**

There are several major electronic stores on Okinawa: **Yamada Denki** ヤマダ電機, **EDION** エディオン, **Best Denki** ベスト電器, and **Kojima** コジマ.

Yamada Denki is on the corner near the AEON intersection. EDION is in the San-A Main City shopping mall. Best Denki is on Rt. 330 in Okinawa-shi, in the Yomitan MaxValue Shopping Center and in the American Village AEON. Kojima is on Rt. 58 in Naha-shi.

### **(2) Imported Appliances & other home products**

**Kyowa Denki** 協和デンキ sells American GE appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines, etc. They also have other home products.

Address: 1-46 Shuri-taira-cho, Naha-shi, Phone: 098-887-1302

### **(3) Computer Supply and Repair Shop**

**GoodWill** グッドウィル on Rt. 58 in Chatan is one of the specialized computer stores on the island.

Address: 3-1-6 Mihama, Chatan-cho

11:00 to 21:00

[http://www.goodwill.jp/contents/shop\\_chatan\\_entrance.php](http://www.goodwill.jp/contents/shop_chatan_entrance.php) (Japanese only)

## **Furniture Stores**

**Square Awase** is one of the biggest retailers for interior items. There are three stores in the mall: **The Grace** which carries luxury interior items, **Maxplus**, which has a variety of household goods and some food items, and **Today O!K** which offers discount and outlet

furniture. On weekends, they open a free nursery (“Kid’s House”) which you can use for up to 2 hours while you are shopping. There are also two eating places in the mall.

Address: 716-1 Yogi, Okinawa-shi

10:30 to 20:00, Open 365 days

<http://www.square-awase.jp/en>

**Yellow Box Furniture** is an English speaking home furnishings store located close to San A Main City on Rt. 85. They carry western style furniture.

Address: 807 Matsumoto, Okinawa-shi

11:00 to 19:00 /7 days a week

<http://www.yellowboxfurniture.com/shop/index.php?route=common/home/>

**Nitori ニトリ** is a national furniture and interior chain store which carries 5,000 items at reasonable prices. They conduct virtually all their business activities in-house, from product development to manufacturing, importing, sales, and delivery to customers.

Address: 360 Maehara Tokumori-hara, Uruma-shi

11:00 to 21:00 Mon thru Fri, 10:00 to 21:00 on weekends and holidays

<http://www.nitori.co.jp/en>

## General Stores

**Makeman メイクマン** (Home improvement/DIY) the “Monkey sign store” is a major home improvement store. You can find anything from tools to small animals! They will fix bicycles, too.

[http://www.makeman.co.jp/modules/pico/index.php?content\\_id=3](http://www.makeman.co.jp/modules/pico/index.php?content_id=3) (Japanese only)

The closest **Makeman** is on Rt. 85 in Uruma-shi, going towards AEON from San-A Main City, or in the American Village, Mihama, Chatan-cho.



**Tabata タバタ** is a combination general store-home center and michino-eki.

Address: 2-1-1 Ishikawa-Akasaki, Uruma-shi

09:00 to 12:00

Address: 372-2 Naval Kadena 1F, Kanekushimohara, Kadena Town

09:00 to 12:00

<http://batabata.jp/shop> (Japanese only)

**Direx ダイレックス** has over-the-counter drugs, food, appliances, etc.

Address: 1-44-8 Ishikawa, Uruma-shi

Address: 7-7-12 Ooyama Ginowan-shi

09:00 to 23:00

<http://www.sundrug.co.jp/store/store.php?id=7172&gid=2&keyword=沖縄県> (Japanese only)



### **Mega Don Quijote** メガ ドン・キホーテ

Address: 7-7-12 Ooyama Ginowan-shi

Address: 502-1 Shioya-Hamahara, Uruma-shi

10:00 to 05:00

One of Japan's largest discount stores, Don Quijote offers international luxury brand items, cosmetics, and beauty care items at exceptional prices. There is also a selection of electrical appliances, foods, daily goods, toys, and souvenirs.

[http://www.donki.com/search/shop\\_detail\\_en.php?st\\_store\\_id=302](http://www.donki.com/search/shop_detail_en.php?st_store_id=302)

### **Tokyu Hands**

San-A Ginowan Convention City 1F,

Address: 558-10 Uchidomari, Ginowan-shi

09:00 to 12:00

Tokyu Hands is a national chain store that carries a very wide variety of items used in daily life. Items cover home maintenance, hobbies, home decoration, stationary, housewares, and health and beauty products.

<http://www.tokyu-hands.co.jp/en/index.html>

### **Book Store**

Books in English and other foreign languages are relatively difficult to come by in Okinawa. Although some bookstores (such as Oenen on Rt. 330 in Ginowan) have a limited selection of English novels, the best places to shop are stores that specialize in foreign books.

### **Junku Do**

Offers the largest selection of English books on island, located in Naha.

[http://www.junkudo.co.jp/mj/store/store\\_detail.php?store\\_id=72](http://www.junkudo.co.jp/mj/store/store_detail.php?store_id=72)(Japanese only)

### **Tuttle Books**

The biggest foreign-language children bookstore in Okinawa, Tuttle is located in the Plaza House shopping area on Route 330 in Okinawa-shi.

(plazahouse.net/shop)

<http://www.tuttle-bookstore.com/> (Japanese only)

### **Amazon online shop**

You can also order foreign books through the online book store Amazon

<http://www.amazon.co.jp/> (choose 'in English')

### **Sporting Goods Store**

**Sports Depo** offers a wide variety of sporting goods such as shoes, rackets, bats, outdoor goods, etc.

Address: 360 Maehara Tokumori-hara, Uruma-shi (Next to Nitōri)  
10:00 to 21:00  
<http://www.alpen-group.jp/english/shop/index.html>

Water Sports Supply:

**Marine Sports SEASER**

Address: 9 Mihama Chatan-cho (inside of MakeMan)

**Benthos Divers**

Address: 475 Seragaki, Onna-son

**Toys**

**Toys”R”us**

Address: 1F Apple Town, 3-3 Omoro-machi, Naha-shi

10:00 to 22:00

[http://www2.toysrus.co.jp/store/storeinfo/list\\_area.php?area=kyushu&local\\_id=47](http://www2.toysrus.co.jp/store/storeinfo/list_area.php?area=kyushu&local_id=47)  
(Japanese only)

**Pet Shops**

**Pet Box**

Address: 2-2-5 Mihama, Chatan-cho

10:00 to 20:00

<http://www.petbox.co.jp/> (Japanese only)

**OPF**

Address: 1-5-12 Chatan, Chatan-cho

10:00 to 20:00

Located on Route 58 between the American Village and Araha Beach.

<http://opf.co.jp/hpgen/HPB/entries/1.html> (Japanese only)

Makeman also has a pet shop inside its stores.

**Farmer’s Markets / Michi no Eki ( 道の駅・Roadside Station)**

**(1) Farmer’s Markets**

Many vegetable (and flower) growers are members of a farmer support group called the Japanese Agriculture Cooperatives (JA). JA organizes several “farmers’ markets” throughout the island.

One of the big JA farmer’s markets is called “JA Okinawa Farmer’s Market Chanpuru” located near the intersection of Route 26 and Highway 329 in Noborikawa, Okinawa-shi.

### **Farmers' Market Chanpuru Ichiba** ちゃんぶるー市場

Address: 2697-2 Noborikawa, Okinawa-shi

09:00 to 19:00 Mon. to Sun.

### **Yunta Farmer' Market** ゆんた市場

Another large farmer's market is Yunta Market. This fresh vegetable and gardening market is located in Yomitan-son, about 1 km from the Iramina Intersection.

Address: 2346-11 Kina, Yomitan-son

09:00 to 19:00

### **(2) Michi no Eki (道の駅・Roadside Station)**

“Michi no Eki” is a government-designated rest area found along roads and highways in Japan. In addition to providing places for travelers to rest, they are also intended to promote local tourism and trade. You can often find shops selling local produce, snacks, souvenirs, and other goods.



There is one close to the OIST Campus: **Onna no Eki (おんなの駅)**; located 10 min south of OIST on Rt. 58.

## **COOP**

Though there are some Coop (pronounced “Kohpu” stores on the island, Coop is popular for catalog orders and delivering to your door.

You will receive a weekly magazine full of pictures of food, beverages, toiletries, cleaning products, etc. You leave your order outside the front door on a designated day and the following week, your order is delivered. Everything is in Japanese, although this should not be a major problem since each picture is numbered, and you just need to match the number on the picture with the number on the order form. Once a week, a small fee will be charged for delivery if your order is under certain amount.

For further information, please visit a Coop store near your place and pick up the flyers/magazines. The first time you order, you might want to ask a Japanese friend for help.

## **Convenience Stores** コンビニ

Convenience stores are open 24/7 and you can find one on almost every street. The most common convenience stores on the island are **Family Mart, Lawson, and Coco!**

Not only can you purchase small snacks and drinks, but you can also pay bills, complete online purchases, withdraw money, and order event tickets. Please note, you can only pay bills at convenience stores if they have a barcode, and if the due date has not passed. Otherwise, you will have to pay them at the bank or the organization issuing the bill.



## 100-Yen (one coin) Stores

100-yen stores are commonly known as "hyakki". **DAISO** ダイソー is a major player in the 100-yen shop industry not only in Japan, but also around the world. You will be amazed what you can buy with ¥100 (¥105 with tax).

The closest stores:

**DAISO** ダイソー

Address: 2-4-1-7 Higashi-yamamoto-cho, Uruma-shi

<http://www.daiso-sangyo.co.jp/english/index.html>

**Can Do** キャンドウ is another 100-yen store you can find on the Island.

<http://www.cando-web.co.jp/e/>

## Ashibinaa

Ashibinaa is Okinawa's first ever outlet mall, with 70 world brands gathered in one location. On the ground floor, maker directly managed shops and official branches are standing next to each other, offering goods at 30-80% of their regular price. On the second floor, the food corner gourmet zone has 6 restaurants and a 600-seat capacity.

<http://www.ashibinaa.com/index.html?lang=en&PSID=ukvsth2hems3fpv8a9eo8682o2>

## Kokusai Street

Kokusai Street in Naha is one of the largest shopping districts on Okinawa. The area is lined with shops, department stores, restaurants and the famed Heiwa-Dori, a maze of stalls that peddle fresh fish, flowers, produce, handcrafts and more. Head south on Highway 58 to the airport. Once in Naha, turn left at the Kumoji intersection and straight until you see the Palette Kumoji Ryubo Department Store on the right. The entrance to Kokusai Street is directly to the left. Look for a parking garage or paid lot, usually marked by a blue international "P" sign.

<http://www.kokusaidori.net/> (Japanese only)

## DFS Galleria Okinawa

If you love brand-name items, this is the premiere destination in Okinawa. The collection of famous names includes Gucci, Fendi, Mont Blanc, Louis Vuitton, Prada and many more. Because it is a "Duty Free" shop, residents of Okinawa are not eligible to purchase from every shop, but there are still several shops available.

<http://www.dfs.com/en/tgalleria-okinawa>

## **Pets**

Here is a list of veterinary clinics. If you have any concerns about your pet, please call the veterinary clinic first.

### **Iwasaka Pet Clinic**

Dr. Iwasaka (English Speaking)

Address: 77 Yamada, Onna-son, Phone: 098-979-7787

Mon, Tues, Fri, Sat, Sun: 09:00 to 12:00, 16:00 to 17:00

Wed and Thur 09:00 to 12:00, Japanese holidays: closed



### **NOAH Animal Hospital**

Dr. Yoshihide Jahana (English Speaking)

Near Southeast Botanical Gardens

Address: 4-44-3 Chibana, Okinawa-shi, Phone: 098-934-4477

Clinic hours: Mon – Sat 09:30 – 11:30, Tue, Wed & Fri – Sat 15:00– 18:00 Closed on Japanese holidays

<http://www.noahanimalhospital.com>

### **Animal Hospital 22**

Dr. Ichiro Gushiken (English Speaking)

Address: 1-2 Yogi, Okinawa-shi, Phone: 098-983-8822

Animal Hospital 22 offers competitive rates and has home delivery and pick up service. Clinic is open every day until 22:00. English translators are available. 24 hour emergency service is available.

<http://animalhospital22.jp/about/tyu-bu/> (Japanese only)

### **Friends Animal Hospital**

Dr. Ikehara (Some English)

Address: 1-11-12 Kitame, Chatan-cho, Phone: 098-926-2033

Clinic hours: Mon-Fri 09:00 ~12:00 & 15:00 ~19:00, Sat 09:00 ~12:00 & 14:00 ~17:00, and Sun 10:00 ~ 12:00 (Appointment only on Sundays.) Closed on Wednesdays and Japanese holidays.

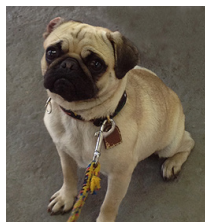
### **CoCo Animal Hospital**

Dr. Chisa Yamashita (Some English)

Address: 88 Zakimi, Yomitan-son, Phone 098-958-3311

Clinic hours: Mon – Sat 9:30– 12:00; Mon & Tue, Thur – Sat 15:00– 18:00; Japanese holidays, 15:00– 18:00

<http://cocoanimal.com/> (Japanese only)



## Others

### **Police Stations/Police Boxes**

In Japan, police operate out of large police stations as well as smaller police boxes called “**koban**”. If you want to report an accident, need directions, or have other emergency related questions, you can go to the “**koban**” for guidance. You can also report a loss or theft of an item, but some “**koban**”s are too small to obtain the necessary seals, so going to a regular police station is recommended. Police stations are also where you will need to go to update changes in Address: on a driver’s license or change a name after you are married.



### **Parks**

There are many outdoor recreational facilities near OIST. **Onna Seaside Civil Park**, **Nabee Beach** features barbeque pits and beaches; **Akama Sports Park** holds multi-purpose sports grounds; **Kenmin no Mori** offers a playground, tennis courts, camping grounds, art gallery.

**Onna Seaside Civil Park, Nabee Beach:** <http://www.nabee.info/> (Japanese only)

**Akama Sports Park :** <http://www.vill.onna.okinawa.jp/Default40f6.html> (Japanese only)

**Kenmin no Mori :** <http://www.vill.onna.okinawa.jp/Default99ac.html>

**Phase IV**  
**Leaving Okinawa**

# Leaving Okinawa

OIST does not provide the same level of support when you leave as when you arrive. However, the relocation team will provide you with information that will help you to leave Okinawa and move on to your next challenge.

When your time at OIST comes to a close, the following procedures should be completed. Some of these are HR- or OIST-related and some are procedures required when you leave your residence.



## Human Resource Related

### 1. Returning your ID and related documents to OIST

Please return the following items to the HR Operation Team. These should be returned on your last day of work on campus.

\*If you take leave during your last few days at OIST and will not come back to campus, return these items on your last day at OIST.

- Employee ID Card
- Health Insurance Card
- OIST Security Card
- Amex Cooperate Card (please return by the 10th of month; prior to leaving OIST.)

You need to send a cancellation form to Amex via postal mail before you return your card. Please obtain the form from the Welfare Services Team.

## Housing Related

### Closing Contracts

As you prepare to depart OIST and Okinawa, you will need to close out the contracts related to your residence, utilities, and other services.

#### 1. Housing

You need to give your estate agency/Village Center housing office notice at least one month prior to your leaving your residence.

#### 2. NTT (Telephone), Internet access, and mobile phone

#### 3. Utilities (Water, Electricity, and Gas)





4. Bank account (It is possible to keep your account open if you are planning to return to Japan soon.)
5. Cancel fire insurance

## **Selling Your Car and Cancelling Car Insurance**

You can sell your car to a used car dealer or to an individual. It is also possible to sell the car via TIDA. Cancel your liability insurance if you purchased it.

## **Claiming back National Pension / Employees' Pension Insurance**

### **1. Lump Sum Withdrawal Payment for foreigners**

If you were enrolled in the pension scheme in Japan, you are entitled to claim a lump-sum withdrawal payment. However, there are conditions for this payment to be granted. Please refer to the Social Insurance Agency's website for details.

#### **Japan Pension Service**

<http://www.nenkin.go.jp/n/www/english/index.jsp>

Information on Lump-sum Withdrawal Payments

<http://www.nenkin.go.jp/n/www/english/detail.jsp?id=10>

#### **The Promotion and Mutual Aid Corporation for Private Schools of Japan**

<http://www.shigakukyosai.jp/en/index.html>

Information about Private School Mutual Aid

[http://www.shigakukyosai.jp/en/l\\_term/l\\_term10.html](http://www.shigakukyosai.jp/en/l_term/l_term10.html)

Document of Private School Mutual Aid

[http://www.shigakukyosai.jp/konna/dl/detail/cyouki/cyouki12\\_01.html](http://www.shigakukyosai.jp/konna/dl/detail/cyouki/cyouki12_01.html)

### **2. Pension system subject to totalization agreement**

Japan has concluded treaty agreements with a number of countries in an effort to rationalize social security payments. Please see the link below for more information.

<http://www.nenkin.go.jp/n/www/english/detail.jsp?id=37>

<http://www.nenkin.go.jp/n/www/english/detail.jsp?id=46>

Information is available in English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Indonesian, Filipino/Tagalog, Thai, and Vietnamese.

### **3. Others**

This site below was developed by a different prefecture, but the content is relevant to all foreign residents. It explains in detail the process for claiming the lump-sum payment along with an estimate of how much you will receive.

<http://osaka-foreigner.jsite.mhlw.go.jp/library/osaka-foreigner/nenkin/english.pdf>

## **Arranging a Mover; Return Flights/Transportation**



OIST does not pay for outbound moves or return tickets. This is either your responsibility or that of your next institution. You will need to arrange a mover. The Relocation Team can provide you with the contact information of either domestic or international movers.

You must also arrange your own flights to your next destination. If you would like a travel agent to assist you, the Relocation Team can give you information on travel agencies.

## **Returning your Residence Card**

When you are leaving Japan permanently, you need to return your Residence Card to Immigration at the airport at the time of your departure.

**Phase V**  
**Emergency**

# Emergency

## Emergency Procedures

In an emergency situation, such as a fire, traffic accident or a crime such as robbery, stay calm, do not panic, and call for help.

**Police: 110**

**Fire department (fire/ambulance): 119**

**Coast Guard: 118**

**OIST 24hrs Emergency Help Line**

**(OIST Campus Security): 098-966-8989**

**\*the number is on the OIST emergency card**

### 1. Information in Japanese

The police, fire department, and coast guard emergency operators might not speak English, so please have your information in Japanese.

Your information:

My name is: わたしのなまえは desu.

My address is: じゅうしょは desu.

My telephone # is: でんわばんごうは desu.

(1) Emergency Japanese:

I can't speak Japanese.

にほんごがはなせません  
Nipongo ga hanase masen.

Help me.

たすけてください  
Tasuke te kudasai.

There has been an accident	じこ です Jiko desu.
Someone's sick	びょう にん です byo nin desu.
Please call an ambulance.	きゅう きゅう しゃ を よん で く だ さ い kyu kyu sha wo yonde kudasai.
I don't understand	わ か り ま せ ん wakari masen
Thief.	どろぼう です Dorobou desu.
Fire.	かじ です Kaji desu.

(2) How to say numbers in Japanese

0.....ぜ ろ <b>zero</b>	6.....ろ く <b>roku</b>
1.....いち <b>ichi</b>	7.....な な <b>nana</b>
2.....に <b>ni</b>	8.....は ち <b>hachi</b>
3.....さん <b>sun</b>	9.....きゅう <b>Kyu</b>
4.....よん <b>yon</b>	10.....じゅう <b>jyū</b>
5.....ご <b>go</b>	

e.g.) 987-6543 is きゅう はち なな の ろく ごう よん さん  
Kyu hachi nana "no" roku go yon sun

\*the dash (-) between parts of a phone number is pronounced "no"

## 2. KOBAN (small neighborhood police station)

Your best resource for contacting the police, getting directions if you are lost, or for reporting a lost or stolen item, is your nearest KOBAN (交番) .



\* about Police Stations/Police Boxes

In Japan, police operate out of large police stations as well as smaller police boxes called “**koban**”. If you want to report an accident, need directions, or have other emergency related questions, you can go to the “**koban**” for guidance. You can also report a loss or theft of an item, but some “**koban**”s are too small to obtain the necessary seals, so going to a regular police station is recommended. Police stations are also where you will need to go

to update changes in address on a driver’s license or change a name after you are married.

## ER Hospital Lists

Hospitals with accident and emergency department with English speaking staff are limited too. Hospitals which have staff who speak English are listed below. Nevertheless, English speaking staff are not always available 24 hours a day. Please call in advance to confirm availability.

If English speaking staff are not available, please call the OIST Emergency Hot Line.



### **Okinawa Prefectural Chubu Hospital ( 沖縄県立中部病院 )**

Address: 281 Miyazato, Uruma shi (city), Okinawa, 904-2293

TEL: 098-973-4111

Located in central Okinawa, about 10min drive from the expressway Okinawa Kita IC. This prefectural general hospital has great facilities and about 19 specialized departments.

### **University Hospital, University of the Ryukyus ( 琉球大学医学部付属病院 )**

Address: 207 Uehara, Nishihara-cho (Town), Nakagami-gun, Okinawa 903-0215

TEL: 098-895-3331

Located in Nishihara town, in the southern part of Okinawa, about 50min drive from OIST campus.

## **Home Safety**

### **Gas Leaks**

What to do when a gas leak occurs:

- Close the main gas valve and unplug utensils.
- Extinguish all open flames and sources of combustion.
- Open doors and windows to vent the gas out of the room.
- Do not turn on any electrical appliances. (This includes ventilation fans.)
- Call the Gas Company, housing agency, or landlord immediately for inspection.
- Do not attempt to fix a gas problem yourself. LP gas can be extremely dangerous if someone inexperienced tries to fix it.

\* If the gas is used over 2hours, it may automatically shut off for safety reasons. To use the gas again, wait a few minutes and then open the plastic lid beside the gas meter and reset it. Keep pressing the button until it restarts.

Please see the link below for further details.

[http://www.nichigas.co.jp/en/support/pdf/kani\\_2011.pdf](http://www.nichigas.co.jp/en/support/pdf/kani_2011.pdf)

<http://www.lpg.or.jp/download/download01.html>



### **Fire**

#### **Fire extinguishers**

When you buy a fire extinguisher, select a reinforced solution type effective for oil fire (油火災用消火器) . If you already have one, please make sure the expiration date hasn't passed yet.

#### **Smoke Detectors**

Some houses and apartments do not have smoke detectors. If you want to have smoke/ carbon monoxide detector ( 煙感知器 / 二酸化炭素検知器 ), you will have to purchase one on your own.

## **Natural Disaster**

### **Typhoons**

The typhoon season is usually August to October. Typhoon conditions of readiness are broadcasted on Japanese T.V. and radio.

And also on the US Armed Forces Network AFN FM 89.1 and AM 648.

<http://weather.kadenaforcesupport.com/>

<http://www.jma.go.jp/en/typh/>

<http://okinawa-crisis-mgt.info/en/>

<http://itunes.apple.com/app/okinawa-disaster-information/id529084427?mt=8>

Typhoons are severe weather conditions with heavy rain and strong winds. Tree branches are broken; power poles are blown over. Power outages are quite common. Below are some hits on how to be ready when a typhoon passes by or over Okinawa.

### **Preparing for a Typhoon**

- Four-day supply of food and water
- Bottled water, canned foods, and other non-perishables.
- Flashlights with extra batteries, candles, lighter /matches.
- Ample supply of food for pets.
- First aid kit
- Radio with extra batteries
- Loose objects outside secured
- Pets inside.

### **During a Typhoon**

- Avoid going outdoors
- Be prepared for power outages.
- Listen to the radio for information and updates.





## **OIST Typhoon guidelines:**

### **Suspension of work**

VPHR will determine when work is to be suspended, considering the following conditions:

- 1) When it is anticipated that a “strong wind warning” will be issued within 3 hours.
- 2) When public transportation has been suspended or is expected to be suspended.
- 3) When VPHR deems it necessary.

During Work Hours: Check Email, TIDA, SECOM announcements, leave the campus and return home.

Before Work Hours: Check Email, TIDA, SECOM announcements, remain at home.

If you are not able to access the information, please contact;

People Development and Services Section, or  
OIST Help Line (Bousai Center)

### **Resumption of work**

Employees are asked to come to work within 2 hours after strong wind warnings have been lifted and after public transportation has resumed. Please exercise, care regarding hazards on the road (debris, downed power lines, etc.).

## **Earthquakes**

Okinawa is not known to have damaging earthquakes, but you might experience some small (scale 1 to 3) earthquakes.

### **During an Earthquake**

- Make moves to ensure your safety. e.g.) crawling under a table.
- As the shaking subsides, quickly turn off any heat sources.
- Ensure your exit by opening the door.
- Avoid going outdoors
- Do not use elevators

### **Japanese Seismic Activity Scale**

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 0.....        | Not felt   |
| 1.....        | Slight. Felt by some                               |
| 2.....        | Weak. Felt by most                                 |
| 3.....        | Rather strong. Slight shaking of house.            |
| 4.....        | Strong. Strong shaking of houses.                  |
| Weak 5.....   | Very strong. Objects fall; windows crack.          |
| Strong 5..... | Walls crack and tumble.                            |
| Weak 6.....   | Wooden houses may collapse; landslides occur.      |
| Strong 6..... | Concrete structures may collapse; landslides occur |
| 7.....        | Major Disaster                                     |

## Tsunami (tidal waves)

Tsunamis can occur after earthquakes, not only when the earthquake occurs in Okinawa, but also from earthquakes in different countries. When you feel shaking or if there is a tsunami warning, move away from the coastline immediately and evacuate speedily to a safe place, such as somewhere on high ground. Sometimes tsunamis occur multiple times. Even after one tsunami has come, stay away from the coastline until the warnings and advisories have been withdrawn.

\*SECOM emergency message service

OIST has adopted an emergency message service, SECOM, which enables us to confirm your safety by checking your reply when natural disasters happen. For further information, please contact the HR office.

## Vehicle Safety

- Seatbelts for all passengers are mandatory in Japan.
- Children under 6 are required to use a child car seat.
- If you see Japanese children put their hand in the air, palm toward the traffic, this means they will across the street. Please prepare to stop.
- Do not drink and drive!

### If an accident happened

- Call the **OIST** Emergency Help line at **098-966-8989**
- Give the responder the following information (slowly and clearly!)
  - Driver's name, contact details (eg. Cellphone number) and OIST Unit or Section
  - Location of the accident
  - Nature of the accident
- The helpline will call the police, and arrange for someone from OIST to assist if necessary (eg. To interpret with the police)
- Never leave the scene of an accident until the police have authorized you to do so. Leaving the scene of an accident is a serious crime for which you may be prosecuted.
- Notify your insurance company of the accident immediately. Their telephone number should be on the policy.



## **Water safety**

Please check sea conditions before visiting the beach!

How to Identify a Rip Current (Rip Tide)

- An area of calm or rippled water in between even-breaking surf
- Discolored water due to sand being stirred off the bottom.
- Darker colored water (deeper because the current dredges the bottom)
- Foam on the surface extending beyond the surf line.
- Debris floating seaward
- Lower, choppy wave heights
- Relax and stay calm. If you get caught in a rip current, float with the current or swim across the current, not against it.
- Raise an arm to signal for help



## **Dangerous Creatures**

Okinawa is a tropical island and has its share of dangerous animals, particularly sea animals. On land, there are poisonous snakes.

### **Habu Snakes**

#### **(1) about Habu Snakes**

The Habu is a venomous and dangerous snake on Okinawa. The snake is dark green and yellow with a triangular head, whitish thick belly, firm tail, measuring up to 2M (6.5ft). Habus are often found in isolated rural areas, around tombs, sugar cane fields, caves, and stone walls.



## **(2) Treatment**

If bitten, remember to bind the limb so that the poison cannot spread as quickly without totally cutting off blood circulation.

Call 119 for an ambulance immediately.

There is no danger in sucking the venom out of the wound with your mouth. You can spit it out if you accidentally swallow the venom it will simply be digested in your stomach you will experience irritation only if you have open sores in your mouth.

Please stay calm. If your heart rate increases, circulation of the poison will increase.

## **Box Jellyfish (Habu Kurage)**

### **(1) about Box Jellyfish (Habu Kurage)**

The peak of the “jellyfish season” is June to September. Box jelly fish are 12cm (4.5 inches) in diameter, and 1.5m (5 feet) long (including their tentacles.)

### **(2) Treatment**

- If stung, leave the water immediately.
- Do not rub/wash with freshwater.
- Pour lots of vinegar onto the wound to dilute the poison and remove any pieces of tentacles from your skin.
- Cool off with some ice or cold water. Seek medical attention immediately.

There are other dangerous creatures in Okinawa mostly in the ocean. If you are not sure they are venomous, it is safe to keep a safe distance and make sure not to touch them. Please refer to following web-site for more information.

[http://www.eikanken-okinawa.jp/english/leaflet\\_English.pdf](http://www.eikanken-okinawa.jp/english/leaflet_English.pdf)

## **Other venomous ocean creatures**

Other venomous ocean creatures

- Luna lionfish (Mino kasago)
- Sea snake (Erabu Umi hebi or Irabuu in Okinawan dialect)
- Geography Cone (anbo inagai or habu gai)

**Phase VI**  
**Important things to know**

# Important things to know

## Drugs in Japan

Importing or bringing medicines from overseas is controlled by the Pharmaceutical Affairs Law and by the Customs Law to prevent health hazards caused by defective products.

Some products that are available over the counter in other countries, such as cold and flu remedies, are banned, and possession of even small amounts of them is punishable by lengthy imprisonment.

Please visit The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare for further information if you wish to bring medicines for personal use into Japan.

<http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/health-medical/pharmaceuticals/01.html>

## Prohibited Drugs

You cannot bring or possess prohibited medications in Japan, even if the medication is legally obtained outside of Japan.

- Stimulants (Amphetamine, Methamphetamine, etc.): Prohibited by the Stimulants Control Law.

Use, possession, transfer, or receipt of stimulants is punishable by imprisonment with work for up to 10 years (for non-commercial possession) or 20 years plus a fine of up to JPY 5 million (for commercial intent). Import, export, or production of stimulants for commercial purposes is punishable by imprisonment for life plus a fine of up to JPY 10 million.

- Cannabis: Prohibited by the Cannabis Control Law.

Possession, transfer, or receipt of Cannabis (marijuana) is punishable by imprisonment with work for up to 5 years



(for non-commercial purposes) or 7 years plus a fine of up to JPY 2 million (for commercial purposes).

Cultivation, export or import of Cannabis is punishable by imprisonment with work for up to 7 years (for non-commercial purposes) or 10 years plus a fine of up to JPY 3 million (for commercial purposes).

## **Restricted Drugs**

- In accordance with the Narcotics and Psychotropic Control Law, an importer of narcotics or psychotropic drugs must have a license from the Director-General of the Regional Bureau of Health and Welfare.

Use, possession, transfer, or receipt of narcotics or psychotropic drugs without a license is punishable by imprisonment with work for up to 10 years (for non-commercial purposes) or 20 years plus a fine of up to JPY 5 million (for commercial purposes).

## **Driving While Intoxicated and Under the Influence**

Drinking and driving in Japan carries severe penalties. At an alcohol level of 0.15 mg per 1L of breath, a motorist is considered to be Driving Under the Influence (DUI), which is punishable by imprisonment with work for up to 3 years plus a fine of JPY 500,000. Driving While intoxicated (DWI) is punishable by imprisonment with work for up to 5 years plus a fine of JPY 1 million. Please note that anyone who provides a vehicle, knowing that the borrower is intoxicated, and passengers in a vehicle driven by one who is intoxicated, may also be subject to imprisonment with work for up to 5 years plus a fine of JPY 1 million.

If a DUI or DWI incident results in an accident, consequences are more severe. A person who causes the death or injury of another person while driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or because of health impairment, is punishable by imprisonment with work for up to 20 years (in the case of a death) or 15 years (in the case of an injury).

**DO NOT DRINK AND DRIVE!!**

## **Weapons**

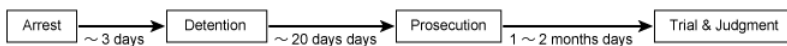
Carrying knives, firearms, etc. is controlled by the “Swords and Firearms Control Law”.

It is illegal to carry a blade of any kind exceeding 6 cm, without a legitimate reason. Persons violating this law face imprisonment of up to 2 years or fines of up to 300,000 yen. Carrying such a blade for self-protection is not recognized as “justifiable grounds”.

Carrying blades less than 6 cm could be considered a breach of the “Minor Offences Act.” If the police determine that you are carrying a weapon of this sort, you could be prosecuted.

Possessing or carrying most kinds of guns without proper authorization is prohibited. 3D-printed guns are considered weapons as well.

## **Criminal/Deport Procedure in Japan**



- With sufficient evidence, a person suspected of committing a crime may be arrested for up to 3 days.
- After arrest, the person may be detained for as much as 10 days. This term may be extended up to 10 more days, if warranted.
- If visitation is not prohibited, people may visit the defendant to deliver clothes, books, letters, etc. Upon visitation, the visitor and the suspect or defendant may only use Japanese. For people who do not speak Japanese, an interpreter can assist. Ask the police for details.
- By the end of the detention period, the prosecutor must decide whether to prosecute the defendant.
- In addition to prosecution, OIST may take disciplinary action, including dismissal,



based on PRP 38.3.2 (employee commission of criminal acts).

- After prosecution, the trial usually begins in 1-2 months. During this period, the accused may apply for bail, which the court may grant at its discretion. The defendant needs to deposit guarantee money and procure someone who can guarantee custody until conclusion of the trial.
- The length of trial depends on the content of the case, as well as on the schedule of the court.
- From arrest until judgment, the accused may be detained at a police station or a detention center.
- Even after judgment, in cases where imprisonment was not imposed (i.e. probationary judgment), the defendant will be forcefully deported if (a) his visa expired before judgment, or (b) he was convicted of a drug-related crime, and the drug conviction judgment had been finalized. In drug-related cases, a person receiving a guilty verdict will be denied permission to re-enter Japan.



**Phase VII**  
**Additional Information**

# Additional Information

## What is an Inkan?

In Japan, inkan (also called “hanko”) are used instead of signatures to close contracts and as an acknowledgement of understanding between different parties. Signatures are accepted occasionally, but many major purchases, such as cars, will require you to have one. There are two types of Inkans: One is a casual inkan, called a “Mitome-in,” which you can use for banking, work, and city-related documents. The other is a formal inkan called a “Jitsu-in,” which is registered at City Hall. There are several inkan stores in Okinawa, and some shops, such as Tabata have a designated corner where inkans can be created.

**In order to register the inkan, the following materials are necessary:**

- Inkan
- Application form (available at City Hall)
- Proof that the name on the inkan matches. (You can bring your bank book, ATM card, health insurance card, mail addressed to you, etc.)
- Personal Seals can be registered by and to no more than one per person.



## About Okinawa

### Location

Okinawa Prefecture is Japan's southern-most prefecture, and it consists of hundreds of the Ryukyu Islands in a chain over 1,000 km long. These islands extend southwest from Kyushu (the southwestern most of Japan's main four islands) almost to Taiwan.

- Capital: Naha
- Region: Kyushu
- Island: Okinawa
- Governor: Hirokazu Nakaima
- Population (Mar. 31. 2013): Total 1,413,482 (Male: 693,541 Female: 719,941)
- Website: [www.pref.okinawa.jp/english/](http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/english/)
- Prefectural symbols:
  - Flower: Deigo (*Erythrina variegata*)
  - Tree: Pines *Pinus luchuensis* (*Ryukyumatsu*)
  - Bird: Okinawa woodpecker (*Sapheopipo noguchii*) (*Noguchigera*)
  - Fish: Banana Fish (*Pterocaesio digramma*) (*Takasago* or *Gurukun*)



## History

Since prehistoric times, groups centered on race or kinship were built in many parts of the island during the 10th century. Soon, struggles for power were followed by three kingdoms in Okinawa: Hokuzan in the northern part of the island; Chuzan in the center; and Nanzan in the south. In 1429, these were brought under unified control. Afterward, the history of the Ryukyu Kingdom commenced. The Ryukyu Kingdom had a strong relationship with China. Envoys called “Sappushi” were received from the Chinese emperor to certify royal succession. The kingdom was a transit-trading hub and enjoyed great prosperity from commerce with the Japanese mainland and Southeast Asia. Then, in the beginning of the 17th century, the Satsuma fiefdom in Southern Kyusyu invaded and conquered the Ryukyu Kingdom. From then on, although the kingdom maintained the “Sappu” relationship with China, control by Satsuma was tightened.

In 1879, the 450-year history of the kingdom was ended by the Meiji government, and Okinawa Prefecture was born. In the final battles of WWII, Okinawa was the only land engagement of the war in Japan. After the war, Okinawa remained under American military occupation for 27 years. In 1972, reversion to Japanese sovereignty finally came. In recent years, riding the crest of an Okinawan boom, the numbers of tourists are continuously rising, and it has become the most popular resort area in Japan.



## Industrial Arts and Crafts of Okinawa

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### Pottery

The technique employed in the Ryukyu Yachimun pottery was imported from China around the middle of the 14th century and was later influenced by Japanese and Korean ceramics. Ryukyu pottery can be found at Tsuboya in Naha-shi and Yachimun no Sato in Yomitan-son.



### Lacquer ware

Okinawan lacquer ware possesses a unique beauty and a proud history that was greatly influenced by China. Ryukyu lacquerware is produced using sophisticated techniques, is highly valued, and was once used as a premium object of commerce.



### Textiles

Okinawan textiles have always been inspired by natural phenomena such as sun, wind, vegetation, and soil. One of Okinawa's most famous textiles, Bingata, is representative of Okinawa dyed work. There is also a wide variety of hand-woven textiles influenced by Southeast Asia, China and Japan such as Basho-fu and Ryukyu-kasuri. The rich variety and technique of

Okinawan textiles are beyond compare, even with those produced in mainland Japan.

### Ryukyu Glassware

Ryukyu glassware, popular with locals and tourists alike, was created from discarded soft drink bottles after WWII. The glassware is continually evolving through intensive research and development with expanded usage and the introduction of new materials to create unique designs and colors.



## **Okinawan Food**

### **Okinawan Soba**

This typical Okinawan dish is made from 100% white flour, unlike mainland soba which is made from buckwheat. It is served in a bowl of broth made with bonito and pork and is topped with thick slices of soki (spareribs) or sanmainiku (three-layered pork), a fish paste called kamaboko, and various spices.



### **Goya Champuru**

Goya champuru is the best known among several champuru dishes. Goya, Okinawa's distinctive bitter cucumber, is rich in vitamins and minerals and is consumed to ward off the suffering brought on by the summer heat.

### **Saataa Andagi**

This is a traditional Okinawan doughnut that is shaped like a tulip. Flour, sugar, and eggs are its main ingredients.



### **Taco Rice**

An icon of Okinawa's "champuru," or mixed, culture, taco rice was derived from the Mexican tacos introduced by the American military. Tacos didn't take off with Okinawans, but they gave birth to taco rice. It is made by placing taco fillings on steamed rice, combining the best of both worlds.

### **Tebichi**

Tebichi, or boiled pig's feet, is a delicacy peculiar to Okinawa. The pig's feet are simmered for several hours on low heat, which makes them soft, gelatinous, and easy to eat.



## Okinawan Culture

Okinawa has a blended culture that has developed under the influence of China, Southeast Asia, and mainland Japan.

### Shi-sa (Shi-shi dog)

Shi-sa is a traditional Okinawan decoration, often in pairs, resembling a cross between a lion and a dog, from Okinawan mythology. People place pairs of shi-sa on their rooftops or flanking the gates to their houses. Shi-sa are believed to protect from certain kinds of evils. When in pairs, the left shi-sa traditionally has a closed mouth (female), the right one an open mouth (male). The open mouth wards off evil spirits, and the closed mouth retains good spirits.



### Ishiganto

Ishiganto are also used to ward off evil spirits, negative energy or bad luck. The use of these talismans spread from China. They are always positioned in the corner of a forked road or at the head of a T-shaped intersection, due to the belief that if a spirit finds a house at an intersection, it is more inclined to enter the house than to make a turn.

### Karate

Karate has a long history in Okinawa. In fact, the island is considered the birthplace of this martial art. Several schools of Karate and many dojos can be found here.



### Eisa and Kacha-shi

Eisa is a dance performed by large groups of young men and women dressed in traditional outfits during Obon, a summer event, to honor the spirits one's of ancestors. The principal musical instruments used in Eisa include the \*sanshin (a three-stringed instrument), large barrel drums as well as medium and small sized drums.





## Sanshin

Sanshin is a three-stringed instrument and likened to a banjo; it consists of a python (originally, Habu) skin-covered body, a neck, and three strings.

## Tombs

Okinawa people build huge tombs to show respect for their ancestors. You will see two types of tombs everywhere on the island: the turtleback tomb and the gable type. The turtleback tomb is easy to spot due to its distinctive shape (resembling the back of a turtle's shell).

## About Onna-Son

### Location

Onna-son on the main Okinawa Island is located on the central part of the west coast side. The area is 50.83 square kilometers. It is the longest and most slender village on the main Okinawa island. As one resort claims, Onna-son is the "West Coast" of the main Okinawa island.

### Summary of Onna-son

- Population: 10457 (Feb. 28, 2013)
- Area: 50.83km<sup>2</sup> (50.8000ha)
- Foreign Nationals: 311 (Feb. 28, 2013.)
- Mayor: Mr. Fumiyasu Shikiya
- Flower: Yuuna
- Tree: Fukugi



## Places to Go

### (1) Maeda Misaki (Cape), Blue Cave

Maeda Misaki is known as a mecca for diving and fishing. Rocks of awesome shapes line up on the up against the coral reef, and the tip of the cape is a steep cliff shaped like a saw. It is a splendid diving point where tropical fish swim in the clear, transparent sea. It is ideal for beginning divers since they can get reach the sea from shore.



### (2) Manzamo

The raging waves that surge up to the cliff and the view of the emerald sea offer a magistic scene for visitors. The name “Manzamo” originated from King Shokei of the Ryukyus, who visited this land in the 18th century and praised it as “a ‘mo’, spacious enough to have all people take a seat”. “Mo” in the Ryukyuan dialect means field. As its

name suggests, natural turf extends across the whole surface.

### (3) Ryukyu Mura

Ryukyu Mura is an authentic re-creation of an ancient Okinawan village. Old Ryukyuan homes were brought from all over the islands and reassembled here in the village to preserve the heritage of the Ryukyu Kingdom. The park was created in the hope that this unique heritage could be shared by all who visit.

Some of the staff wear traditional Okinawan folk costumes, providing the perfect photo opportunity. Inside the village you'll find examples of Okinawan crafts on display and for sale, including bingata, pottery, and sugarcane products. These are all made using traditional methods, handed down from generation to generation. Music and dancing are also showcased throughout the day. The Sugar House still makes brown sugar the old-fashioned way with the help of a few powerful water buffalo to turn the sugarcane press.



#### **(4) Forest Adventure**

"Forest Adventure" is a high rope/zip-line course across an Okinawan forest. It originated in France. Participants climb up a tree, cross a bridge, then begin a long and exciting slide down to the ground.

You can feel at harmony with nature here.

Reservations are required. Please call in advance!

1525 Maeda, Onna-son

TEL: 098-963-0088

FAX: 098-963-0087

<http://www.forest-adventure-onna.jp/information/65.html>

#### **(5) Kenmin no mori Forest Park**

This prefectural park has 181 hectors of land area and is designed as a beautiful multiple-use facility with activities such as tennis, grass skiing, hiking and camping.

2028 Afuso, Onna-son

TEL: 098-967-8092

<http://www.okinawa-information.com/content/kenminnomori-forest-park>

<http://www.pref.okinawa.jp/linmu/site/kenminnomori/map.html>

#### **Produce of Onna-son**



**Passion Fruit**



**Mango**



**Atemoya**



**Sea Grapes**



**Ahsa Seaweed**



**Mozuku Seaweed**



**Awamori Liquor**







