

Opening a business location in Japan will help you establish new relationships and enter a previously untapped market. However, an expansion also means you need to hire a full staff or transfer some of your parent company's employees to Japan. You also need to learn how to get a work visa in Japan for every single foreign employee.

## Types of Work Visas in Japan

Japan has close to 30 different work permits and long-term visas based on an expatriates' job and reason for moving to Japan. There are specific work visas for occupation, including options for artists, instructors, journalists, professors, skilled laborers, and more. The type of permit an employee applies for will determine how long they can remain in Japan. Typically, the length ranges from three months to five years.

In addition to the work permits for occupations, Japan recently introduced specific skills visas, including:

- **Specified Skilled Worker Visa:** This visa is for foreign workers coming to Japan to fill employment gaps in certain labor sectors. Japan hopes it will bring approximately 500,000 new foreign workers to the country by 2025.
- **Specified Skills Visa 1-SSV1:** Only skilled workers in specific industries, such as shipbuilding, agriculture, nursing care, and some others, can apply for this visa. It requires Japanese language tests and technical exams. The visa is valid for one year and renewable for up to five years. If an applicant wants to stay longer than five years, they will need to apply for the visa 2-SSV2.
- **Specified Skills Visa 2-SSV2:** Applicants can renew this visa indefinitely and bring their family members to Japan. Individuals currently living and working in Japan under a Visa 1-SSV1 can apply for this specific visa only after they get a higher level of specialization in their field.

## Requirements to Obtain Japan Work Visas

Individuals coming to Japan for any other reason besides tourism must get a Certificate of Eligibility (COE) before obtaining a work permit or visa. The COE will state that an applicant is legally able to come to Japan for work, family, or another qualifying reason. The visa

application process requires this certificate, so employees must have it before taking any further steps.

Remember that specific requirements can vary from visa to visa. For example, individuals may need to provide a CV and original university degree or certificate to obtain a work visa in Japan. Other common requirements include a:

- Job offer from a Japanese company
- Passport
- Visa application form
- Photograph

### **Application Process**

The first step to applying for a work permit in Japan is finding a sponsor, which is typically an employer. The individual or local sponsoring organization must apply to the Regional Immigration Bureau to get the COE. The application process for the COE includes:

- Submitting a completed application form
- Submitting a 4cm x 3cm photograph
- Providing a return mail envelope with a 392-yen stamp
- Putting together all supporting documents
- Submitting a letter of guarantee

If your employee is applying for a specified skills visa, they must submit a points calculation as well. The points system will rate applicants based on their skills, and they'll need more than 70 points to be considered for a visa. As an employer, you also need to prepare certain documents for the visa application process, including:

- Letter of guarantee
- Invitation letter
- List of visa applicants
- Details of your company or organization
- Itinerary in Japan

## Other Important Considerations

Applicants must pay a fee for the type of Japanese working visa they're applying for. The fee depends on the type of visa, the applicant's nationality, and whether they want a single- or multiple-entry process. Usually, a single-entry visa is about 3,000 JPY, or \$30, and a multiple-entry visa is 6,000 JPY, or about \$60.

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