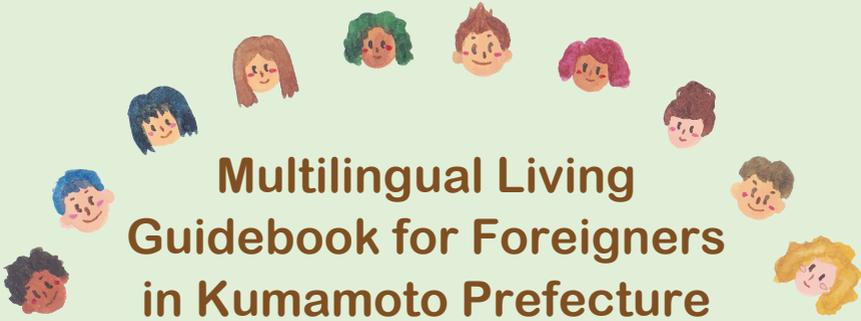


VERSION 2023



Multilingual Living Guidebook for Foreigners in Kumamoto Prefecture

にほんご
やさしい日本語

English

中文(簡体字)

中文(繁体字)

한국어

Tiếng Việt

Tagalog

Indonesia

नेपाली

ភាសាខ្មែរ

မြန်မာစာ

熊本県外国人サポートセンター

(Kumamoto Support Center for foreign residents)

Welcome to Kumamoto Prefecture



**Kumamoto Prefecture
Tourism Website**

<https://kumamoto.guide/>



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Upon arrival in Japan

Check and confirm.

Carry the Residence card at all times.

Issued to foreigners with a residence period of more than 3 months in Japan.

【Front】



【Back】



In order to update your period of stay, change your residency status, reissue a lost card, or any residency-related concerns such as temporary returns to your home country, please proceed with the necessary procedures at the Immigration and Residency Management Bureau.

Fukuoka Immigration Bureau Kumamoto Branch Phone: 096-362-1721

Register as a resident at the municipal office

When residing in Japan for more than 3 months, resident registration through a "Juminhyo" (residence certificate) is necessary. Report your address at the municipal office within 14 days. This is required for accessing administrative services.

【Changing residence】

① Before moving to a new address, visit the current municipal office and

submit a “Tenshutsu Todoke” (Moving Out Notification Form).

- ② A “Tenshutsu Shomeisho” (Certificate of Moving Out) will be issued.
- ③ After moving, visit the municipal office in your new location and submit a “Tenyu Todoke” (Moving In Notification Form). Complete this within 14 days, by bringing your residence card, certificate of moving out, and My Number card.

- ※ The procedures are free of charge.
- ※ If your passport states “Residence card will be issued later”, bring your passport when completing the procedures. The residence card will be sent to the reported address later.
- ※ To change the address on your driver's license, follow the procedures at the Driver's License Center.
- ※ When going abroad for more than a year or returning from abroad, complete the “Tenshutsu Todoke” (Moving Out Notification Form) procedure.



Creating a My Number (Individual Number) Card

This card contains a 12-digit number assigned to individuals with a resident record. Applying for it allows you to utilize it as a “Health Insurance Card” for medical purposes. It’s also essential for overseas money transfers, employment processes (such as salary management), and accessing administrative services. Aside from necessary procedures, this number must not be shared with others.



Documents for application will be sent to the municipal office where you reside. Complete the required details on the application form and send it via

mail or apply for card creation using a smartphone.

 About the My Number Card
<https://www.kojinbango-card.go.jp/>



National Health Insurance Enrollment

This is Japan's public medical insurance which is available for all. The insurance premiums vary based on the previous year's income.

Based on conditions, a “Maternity Allowance” is paid during childbirth as an insurance benefit.

 For details, please refer → <Diseases • Injuries> P.14

Pension Enrollment

Required for circumstances like disabilities resulting from accidents or illnesses and for post-retirement livelihood. All individuals residing in Japan (between the ages of 20 and 59) are obligated to enroll.

Type	Eligible Person (20 to 59 years old)	Amount of Payment
National Pension	Self-employed individuals Unemployed, Exchange student	Determined by household size and income. Payment notices will be sent.
Employees' Pension Insurance	Individuals employed by a company	Determined by income. Partially covered by the company.

- ※ For students or those whose income is below the criteria, exemptions or deferments for insurance premium payments are possible. Please consult your municipal “National Pension” office.
- ※ Foreign nationals who have paid into the pension for six months or more, and later undergo the “Withdrawal Lump-sum Payment” procedure upon returning to their home country might qualify for a partial premium refund, subject to conditions.

 Japan Pension Service Website
<https://www.nenkin.go.jp/international/index.html>



Types of Taxes

Resident Tax	Calculated from the previous year's income and paid in the subsequent year. It funds essential services for residents' lives, including education, welfare, emergency services, and waste disposal, managed by prefectures, cities, and municipalities.
Income Tax	Paid according to the income (salary) of current year.
Consumption Tax	Incurred each time you purchase goods or services. It's indicated on receipts.
Furthermore, there exists an annual automobile tax contingent on the vehicle type you utilize, such as cars or motorcycles.	

※ Resident tax and income tax may be exempted upon application based on the tax treaty between your home country and Japan.

What is a tax return

This process entails computing all income earned between January 1st and December 31st, annually reporting it to the government, and settling taxes.

① The process can be completed by submitting the necessary documents to the tax office, ② by sending them via mail, or ③ using online methods.

Employees who receive salaries undergo "year-end adjustments" at their workplaces, involving calculations of income tax and deductions for payment.

Certificates Regarding Taxes

When obtaining resident services like child allowances, you might occasionally need the following documents.

"Nozei Shomeisho" (Proof of Tax Payment): Available at the Local Development Bureau or Prefectural Office.

"Kazei Shomeisho" (Proof of Resident Tax Amount based on the previous year's income): Obtainable from your local municipal office.

For more details



National Tax Agency

<https://www.nta.go.jp/> (Japanese)

<https://www.nta.go.jp/english/index.htm> (English)



(Japanese)



(English)

Living

Community Gathering

In local areas, there are gatherings and activities such as joint cleanup events, hosting functions, and contributing to the local association fees. These gatherings are known as “*Jichikai*” or “*Chonakai*” (Neighborhood Association). Actively participating in such local activities offers an opportunity to establish connections within your community. If you have any questions, feel free to approach the “*Kaicho*” (Chairperson) of your Neighborhood Association.

Make sure to follow the “Contract” when renting

When renting, factors such as security deposit, key money, and additional expenses may arise. You might also require a guarantor and need to cover cleaning fees upon moving out. In apartment complexes, please avoid causing disturbances with friends late at night. Additionally, kindly refrain from leaving your belongings in the hallways and on staircases. Subletting is prohibited. It's your responsibility to arrange utility contracts for electricity, gas, water, and internet. When moving out, remember to cancel these contracts. Ensure to securely lock your bicycle, motorcycle, or car in designated areas.

Dispose of garbage at designated times and locations

The "Garbage Calendar" shows the schedule for collecting different types of garbage on specific days.

You can receive it for free at the municipal office.

For recycling, it's essential to separate various types of garbage. Follow the sorting guidelines of your municipality.

For Example)

Burnable garbage,



paper,



recyclables,



plastics,



PET bottles



Specified items.

Spray cans, lighters, dry cell batteries, etc.



- ※ Designated garbage bags may be required.
- ※ Avoid pouring cooking oil down the kitchen sink. Instead, dispose of it in burnable garbage after absorbing it with newspaper or paper, or solidifying it with powder.
- ※ Items that don't fit in garbage bags are considered "Bulky Waste". To dispose of them, either take them to a waste processing facility (fees may apply based on waste type) or contact the phone number on your municipal website. Buy a "Bulky Waste Collection Sticker" at convenience stores, attach it as instructed, and dispose of the waste.
- ※ For appliances like washing machines, refrigerators, or televisions, request a collection service (fees apply).

Transportation

Rules for riding a bicycle

① Ride on the left side of the road



② Obey to traffic signals and stop completely at intersections



③ Use lights when riding at night



④ Do not cycle under the influence of alcohol



⑤ Wear a helmet



- Avoid riding with another person on a bike.
- It is prohibited to use an umbrella or a smartphone while riding.
- Park only in designated areas or bicycle parking spaces.
In Kumamoto city, there are bicycle lots for parking at a cost.
- Do not leave your bicycle unattended.
- Please obtain bicycle insurance (It is mandatory in Kumamoto Prefecture).
This insurance covers bicycle-related accidents.
- Enroll in “Anti-theft Registration” (Registration fee: 660JPY).
Register your bicycle at a bike shop to establish ownership.

※ Paid rental bicycle services are offered at different locations across the prefecture.

Driver's License

In order to drive in Japan, any of these driver's licenses is required:

- ① Japanese driver's license
- ② International driver's license
- ③ Driver's license from a specified country/region

For those with a foreign driving license, converting it to a valid Japanese license at a License Center is necessary. Advance reservations are required.

Contact: Kumamoto Prefectural Police Headquarters, Driver's License Examination Division, 096-233-0116.

Individuals obtaining a license

There are subject exams in foreign languages (Chinese, English, Vietnamese). (As of July 2022)

Public Transportation

Utilizing IC cards and downloading transportation apps when using trains or buses is convenient.

Rules when riding trains or buses in Japan

- Line up in order and wait at designated locations before boarding
- Set your mobile phone to silent mode and refrain from making calls while on board
- Avoid speaking loudly
- Do not eat or drink while on board
- Refrain from leaving trash at stations, bus stops, or within vehicles

Employment

Working as expected of residency status

Engaging in employment that contradicts your residency status is against the law.

Under certain circumstances, individuals with qualifications that do not inherently authorize employment might be granted permission through an “Activities Outside of Qualifications” permit issued by the Immigration Bureau. However, there are restrictions on the allowable working hours.

Register with “Hello Work” for job hunting

Hello Work (Public Employment Security Office) facilitates cost-free procedures for job seeking and employment insurance.

When changing jobs, it's advisable to verify with the immigration office whether you can engage in the new employment under your current residency status. There are situations where applying for a “Certificate of Eligibility for Employment” is recommended. Within 14 days of changing jobs, you need to submit a “Notification of Contracting organization” form to the immigration office.

When starting a job, make sure to thoroughly understand the “Contract”

Once the job is secured, a contract is established with the employing company. The documents are named “Employment Labor Contract” or “Labor Conditions Notification”. Verify if the job details, workdays, holidays, leave, and salary are stated. Make sure to comprehend the content thoroughly, agree to it, and then sign.

Legally, a predetermined minimum hourly wage exists, and the hourly rate must not fall below the “minimum wage”. The “minimum wage” differs based on the prefecture and job type.



For more details

Search for “Kumamoto Prefecture Minimum Wage”

Fundamental rules for individuals employed in Japan

- In principle, working hours are stipulated.
Working more than 8 hours in a day or exceeding 40 hours in a week is not allowed.
 - Daily break time requirements
45 minutes or more (for working over 6 hours),
1 hour or more (for working over 8 hours)
 - Days off
Within a 4-week period, you can get 4 or more days
 - Overtime work is compensated with extra pay (varies based on job and residency status).
 - When an employer terminates an employee, a 30-day prior notice is obligatory. Failure to do so will result in the employer paying a severance allowance to the employee.
 - After working for 6 months and maintaining an attendance rate of over 80%, employees are eligible for 10 days of paid leave. The subsequent year, 11 days of paid leave will be provided.
Paid leave can be carried over to the next year, but it expires after 2 years.
- ※ Self-management of payslip records salary breakdown.
- ※ Diligent recording of work attendance (start and end times).
- ※ Personal responsibility for managing passport and residence card; avoiding long-term company custody.

Foreign Workers' Consultation Hotline

In Japan, existing laws provide protection for employees. If you encounter unjust treatment from your employer, like coerced resignation, wage cuts, bullying, or harassment, you can access free telephone consultations.

(Call charges will apply.)

<https://www.startup-roudou.mhlw.go.jp/foreigner.html>



The public insurance system for the unemployed

Types	Contents (Conditions apply for benefits)
Basic Allowance (Unemployment Benefit)	Payment for a certain period after leaving a job until finding the next one
Childcare Leave Benefit	Payment when taking extended time off work to raise a child
Caregivers Leave Benefit	Payment when taking extended time off work to care for a family member
Sickness and Injury Allowance	Payment when absent from work due to illness or injury

Diseases · Injuries

Every individual living in Japan must be a part of the public health insurance scheme and has the ability to utilize medical services. When you catch a disease, the initial action is to visit a nearby hospital.

There are two types of public health insurance required for hospital visits

	National Health Insurance	Social insurance
Details	Responsible for 30% of medical expenses	
Eligible Person	Self-employed Unemployed	Individuals employed by a company
Insurance Premium	Determined by income	
Maternity Lump Sum	Available	
Maternity Allowance Sickness Allowance	Not Available	Available
Inquiries	“National Health Insurance” division at municipal office	National Health Insurance Association

- ※ People from countries with social security agreements with Japan may be exempt from enrollment.
- ※ Part-time and temporary workers may enroll in National Health Insurance instead of Social Insurance.

Primary care physician

Refers to a physician located near your home, where you can consult about your everyday health condition.

Deciding on a primary care physician is advised especially for individuals with chronic illnesses.

While larger hospitals like university hospitals offer a wide range of medical departments, they might require a referral for appointments and could have higher fees.

As a common practice, the initial phase entails consulting the physician to secure a referral letter.

Visiting a medical institution

- Availability of initial appointment scheduling varies by the hospital. Contacting via phone is necessary.
- When visiting a hospital, you'll have to provide your health insurance card or My Number card.
- If there are any examinations, signing a consent form will be required.
- If you are unsure about the Japanese, it's advisable to go with someone who understands the language.
- Emergency medical care is available on Sundays, holidays, and during evenings. Please note consultation fees may be higher.

Pharmaceutical Handbook

Used to record personal medication history, including medication allergies and drugs taken.

Required when visiting hospitals or pharmacies.

Available at pharmacies. It's free of charge.

High-Cost Medical Expense Benefit

Any excess amount beyond a specific threshold in monthly out-of-pocket medical expenses can be reimbursed.

The maximum limit varies based on age and annual income.

An application is required, and the designated application address is indicated on the health insurance card.

Parenting

When there is a possibility of pregnancy, the first step is to visit an “ObGyn” hospital

Tests will be performed to confirm pregnancy status.

It's also possible to address any concerns or worries related to pregnancy and childbirth.

Submit a notification of pregnancy to the municipality

Obtain a Maternal and Child Health Handbook (free of charge). It serves as a record for pregnancy, childbirth, and the child's health and immunizations. It's required for pregnancy health checkups and childbirth.

Acquire a receipt for subsidized prenatal checkups.

- ※ When relocating to another city or town, switch the prenatal checkup receipt to the one provided by the new location.
- ※ Certain handbooks may also contain dental checkup receipts for pregnant women.

Pregnancy and childbirth for employed individuals (covered by the company health insurance and employee pension)

Upon pregnancy confirmation, it's advisable to promptly inform your employer. Japanese regulations prohibit companies from terminating employees due to pregnancy or childbirth. Discussing the possibility of taking time off for prenatal checkups with your employer, whether it's paid or not, depends on company policies. During pregnancy, requesting to avoid overtime and late-night shifts, and transitioning to lighter tasks, is an option. Leave that starts six weeks before the expected delivery date and continues for eight weeks after childbirth is available(subject to conditions). Applying through the company is mandatory. Childcare leave from the company can

be requested until the child reaches 1 year and 6 months old.

When the child is born

After childbirth at the ObGyn hospital, a “Certificate of Birth” will be provided. Within 14 days, it's necessary to present the birth certificate to the municipality. Given that the birth registration mandates the child's name, it's essential to finalize a name by this date. Upon submission of the birth certificate, acquiring a “Certificate of Acceptance” and a “Resident Certificate for the Child with My Number” (at a cost) is advisable. It's also suggested to ensure the child's enrollment in health insurance.



Irrespective of the parents' nationalities, if the child is born in Japan, these aforementioned notifications are obligatory.

In cases where both parents possess foreign nationalities, further notifications are necessary at the Embassy and the Immigration Bureau in Japan.

Regular Health Checkups

Children can receive free health checkups to assess their well-being at ages 1 month, 3-4 months, 6-7 months, 9-10 months, 1 year and 6 months, and 3 years old. These checkups involve measuring height and weight, along with consultations and medical examinations conducted by a doctor.

Certain municipalities also provide the option of home visit services by public health nurses.



Vaccination

Immunizations start at 2 months of age. Refer to the Maternal and Child Health Handbook to monitor the vaccination timetable. Although there could be certain expenses, regular vaccinations are provided free of charge (which is publicly funded).

For any childcare-related concerns, the Maternal and Child Health Office in

your municipality is available for consultation.

There are subsidies for individuals' raising children

The childbirth and Childcare Lump-Sum Grant: Approximately 500,000JPY per child for individuals who have given birth after being pregnant for 4 months or more

Child Allowance: Available for those raising children up to the age of 15. Both require application.

Support for Single Parents and guardians

Child Rearing Allowance: For parents and guardians raising children up to the age of 18.

Widow's Welfare Fund for Single parents: Provides loans for financial support.

Medical Expense Subsidy for Single-Parent Households: A system that subsidizes medical expenses.

 For more information, please consult with the ;
“Education and Health” division of your local municipality
National Health Insurance Association: Kyokai Kenpo

 Domestic Troubles Hotline
Kumamoto Prefecture Women's Consultation Center (Women's Counseling) 096-381-4454
Kumamoto Prefectural Women's Consultation Center (Domestic Violence Counseling) 096-381-7110
Pregnancy and Mental Health Telephone Counseling (Concerns of women regarding pregnancy, childbirth, and adolescent sexuality) 096-381-4340
Child Development, Parenting, and Care Counseling (Including abuse), delinquency, truancy, and other child-related concerns
Kumamoto Prefecture Central Child Consultation Center 096-381-4451

Education for Children

For children before entering elementary school

Daycare Center (Hoikuen)

Provides childcare services for children before entering elementary school, accommodating working parents. For details about enrollment applications, please contact the nursery school office in the municipality.

Certified Children's Facilities

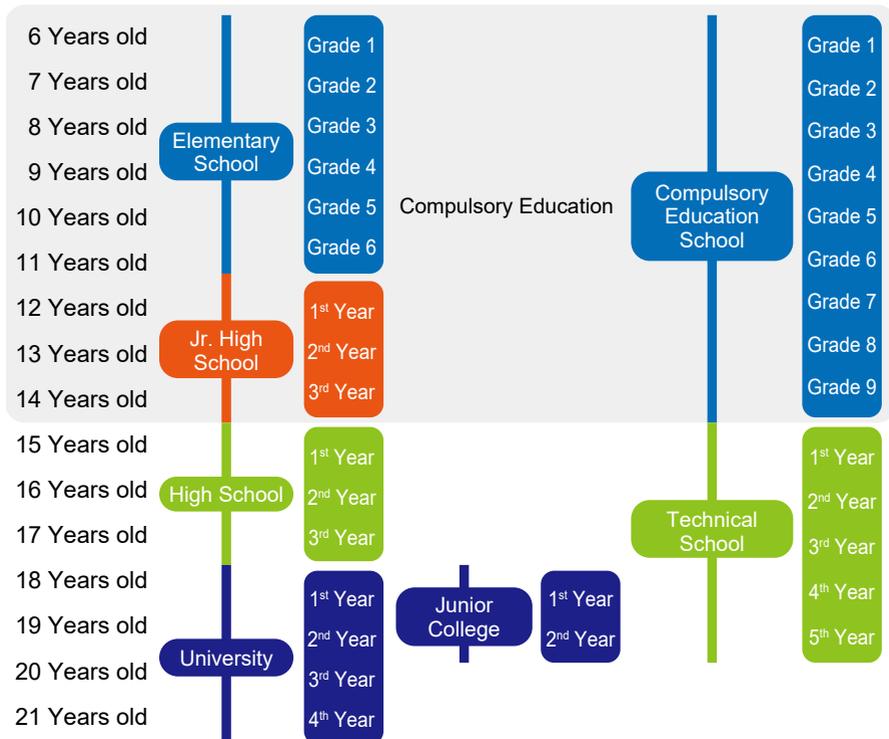
Provides childcare services for children before entering elementary school, regardless of the employment status of the parent or guardian.

Kindergarten (Yochien)

It is a school for children from aged 3 to 5 to receive education.

School Education

In Japan, parents are required to ensure that children aged 6 to 15 receive education.



※ There are "Special Needs Schools" that provide support for children with disabilities to foster their independence.

For those interested in enrolling their children in public kindergartens or daycare facilities, it's advisable to approach directly to the relevant municipalities.

For admission to elementary and junior high schools, it's advised to seek guidance from the respective city or town's board of education.

When considering national or private institutions, direct inquiries to the school are encouraged.

In order to enter a senior high school, it is necessary to pass the entrance exam.

Moreover, resources are available to provide Japanese language instruction for children who have limited proficiency in Japanese.

Please consult with the local board of education in your municipality prior to proceeding.

International school

Educational institutions catering to children of foreign nationalities.

The language and curriculum used within the school vary depending on the institution.

For more details, please inquire directly with the school.

Night classes

This is a school that offers classes held in the evening.

Foreign individuals who have not graduated from a Japanese junior high school can also attend.

Upon graduation, they can take the high school entrance examination.

For more details, please inquire with the Compulsory Education Division of Kumamoto Prefecture. (096-333-2689)

Disaster Preparedness

Disaster preparedness pamphlet for foreign residents

<https://www.pref.kumamoto.jp/soshiki/4/5195.html>



Earthquakes

Since earthquakes can occur suddenly, it's important to be prepared in advance.

- Ensure furniture is secured properly.
- Conduct tests to reinforce your home and be earthquake-proof.
- Familiarize the safe locations of nearby elementary schools, community centers (designated emergency shelters), relatives' homes or hotels, and evacuation routes.
- Engage in disaster preparedness drills.



When an earthquake occurs

Indoors measures

- If feeling the shaking, take cover under furniture like desks or tables.
- Until the shaking subsides, avoid rushing outside.
- After the shaking stops, give priority to extinguishing any fires.
- Move cautiously with slippers or shoes on to prevent injuries from broken glass or debris.



Outdoors measures

- Cover the head with bags or belongings and find refuge in safe areas without falling objects, such as parks or open spaces.

Measures while on a train or bus

- When seated, safeguard your head and lower your posture.
- While standing, grasp handrails firmly to prevent falling.

During an earthquake, making the appropriate decisions is vital.

Your safety comes first

- While assessing your environment, adhere to the three safety steps (lower yourself, protect your head, remain still), prioritizing the protection of your life and that of your family.

Typhoons

Kumamoto Prefecture experiences damage from typhoons and heavy rainfall. These events can be predicted ahead of time, so it's important to gather information and evacuate promptly.

Gathering Disaster Information

- Stay informed about landslide and flooding alerts issued by the Meteorological Agency
<https://www.jma-net.go.jp/kumamoto/>
- Keep track of evacuation information provided by municipalities

Identifying Hazardous Areas and Evacuation Routes in the Area:

- Refer to hazard maps (disaster maps) prepared by local municipalities to understand and confirm evacuation routes beforehand.

Evacuate earlier in Preparation for Heavy Rainfall!

- If heavy rainfall is expected, consider evacuating proactively during daylight hours before the heavy rain begins!

- Create a “My Timeline” (personal disaster action plan) outlining the appropriate timing and evacuation actions based on the alert level.

Actions During Disasters

Precautions for Evacuation

- Extinguish flames from stoves and gas appliances.
- Turn off the electrical circuit breaker.
- Close the main gas valve.
- When evacuating, leave a note to inform your location to your family, and lock up.
- Anticipate that phone lines might not work; use Disaster Emergency Message lines and social media to communicate.



Evacuation Shelters

In times of disasters, evacuation shelters serve as temporary facilities to house individuals who cannot remain in their residences due to the ongoing crisis. Municipalities establish designated evacuation shelters where essential supplies are available. Notifications regarding where shelters are broadcasted by local authorities through the website, social media, TV, and radios. If there's a sense of imminent danger, like potential home damage, it's advisable to promptly head to the nearest evacuation shelter. In addition to using evacuation shelters, seeking refuge in the homes of relatives, friends, or secure locations such as company buildings is also an option.

Shelters designated by municipalities also offer information.

If there are people you can't contact, please inquire for assistance through your local municipality.

In Case of Emergency

Accidents

In case of fires, injuries, sudden illnesses, or traffic accidents (when someone is injured)

Dial 119 on the phone.

- ① Please inform whether it's a fire or a medical emergency.
- ② Describe the situation (unconsciousness, injuries, etc.)
- ③ Tell your location such as landmarks or nearby buildings, and contact information.

Police

Dial 110 on the phone, when police is required for the following situations:

- Incidents involving robbery, burglary, or mugging
 - Witnessing a traffic accident
 - Roads blocked due to a landslide
- ① Communicate whether it's an incident or an accident and explain the situation.
 - ② Share the time of occurrence
 - ③ Tell your location such as landmarks or nearby buildings, and contact information.

For Consultation

**Kumamoto Support Center
for foreign residents**

 080-4275-4489

 @KumamotoSupportCenterforForeignResidents



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