

1. About Income Tax

If you work in Japan and receive a salary, there is a tax you pay to the government called income tax. How much you pay depends on the wages and other income you received during the year from January 1 to December 31.

Each month, your company may deduct the tax from your paycheck before paying you. This method of payment is called withholding.

In December, the company calculates whether the taxes paid from January through December are too much or too little. This is called year-end adjustments. If the tax is too much, it is added to your December or January paycheck and returned to you.

The amount of tax you paid will be shown on the monthly pay stub you receive from your company or on the "Wage and Salary Tax Withholding Certificate" you receive by January 31 of the following year.

Those who receive salaries from two or more companies, make more than 200,000 yen in addition to their salaries, have not had their taxes withheld or have not had year-end adjustments made by their companies or other sources are required to submit their own documents. This is called a tax return.

Tax returns are submitted to the tax office between February 16 and March 15 of the year following the year of work and paid at a convenience store, bank or post office. Those returning to their home country must file their tax return before leaving Japan. Please contact the tax office for details.

In addition, if you have a family member such as a spouse with a low salary, a child over the age of 16, or an elderly parent, and if you have paid money for various types of insurance such as life insurance or long-term care medical insurance, or if you or your family members have paid more than 100,000 yen for illness or injury during the year, you should inform your company or the tax office when you file your year-end adjustment or tax return. You may be eligible to receive a tax refund.

2. Notice from Tochigi Tax Office

Tax return consultation and acceptance for fiscal year 2023 will be held from February 16 to March 15, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays. The venue is the Main Hall of the Tochigi Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Katayanagi-cho, Tochigi City.

Numbered tickets are required to enter the venue. To obtain a numbered ticket, please register as a friend on the National Tax Agency's official LINE account and obtain a numbered ticket in advance, or pick up a numbered ticket distributed at the venue on the day of the event.

You can also conveniently use e-Tax, which allows you to use the "Tax Return Preparation Corner" on the National Tax Agency website from your own smartphone or computer without going to the tax return filing site.

If you are supporting a relative and meet certain requirements, such as the total income of the dependent being 480,000 yen or less, you may be entitled to a tax deduction.

If the dependent relative does not reside in Japan, the taxpayer must submit a document showing that the person is a relative, a copy of the family register, and a document showing that the person is a dependent and receiving remittance from a financial institution with the tax return. If the documents are in a foreign language, a translation is required.

After 2023, if your dependent relative is a non-resident between the ages of 30 and 70, and you have made payments of 380,000 yen or more to that relative for living expenses

or education expenses in that year, you will not be eligible for the earned income tax credit.

Before February 15, tax return consultations will be available at the Tochigi Tax Office Building. If you have any questions, please contact the tax office.

3. Health Effects of Tobacco

Cigarette smoke contains about 5,300 chemicals, about 70 of which are carcinogens. Therefore, smoking makes you susceptible to various diseases.

The three most harmful substances in tobacco are nicotine, tar, and carbon monoxide when smoked in excess.

Over-consumption of nicotine via smoking may have vasoconstrictive effects which may increase the risk of heart disease, stroke, and other diseases.

The health risk increases with the number of years and number of cigarettes smoked, and gradually decreases with time after quitting.

It is never too late to stop smoking at any age. Take the first step for yourself and your loved ones.

4. About Watarase Hot Air Balloon Day

Watarase Hot Air Balloon Day is a hot air ballooning event held on the third Sunday of every month. Participants can experience a tethered hot air balloon flight, in which the hot air balloon is connected to a weight on the ground by a rope, and the balloon rises 20 to 30 meters into the air.

This event has received a lot of positive feedback from those who have participated, as they can easily experience the excitement of hot air ballooning.

Future dates and times are January 21, February 18, and March 17 from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. It will be held on the third Sunday of each month after April.

The venue is Fujioka Watarase Athletic Park in Watarase Yusuichi, the largest water playground in Japan.

The number of participants is limited to 200 per session on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration is required in advance. A special application form for Watarase Hot Air Balloon Day will be posted on the Tochigi City website each month. Please apply using the application form during the application period. The application will be closed once it reaches capacity.

Fees vary according to age: it is free for children ages 1 to 2; 500 yen for children ages 3 to elementary school; 1,000 yen for elementary school students; and 2,000 yen for junior high school students and older.

Children up to elementary school age must be accompanied by a parent or guardian of junior high school age or older.

Watarase hot air balloons are available for tethered flights in all seasons, so please come enjoy the view from the sky.