

Basics / II. Daily life / 1. Housing

●Renting housing●

When you rent a house or an apartment, normally you begin by visiting a real estate agent. Your employer or school may also provide you with information about residences for rent. You can also find information on residences for rent in free pamphlets distributed at places such as train stations and supermarkets.

●What you need to sign a rental contract●

① Show proof of ID	Bring proof of ID such as your residence card or passport
② Complete and stamp the rental agreement	Fill in the real estate agent's contract with your name, and stamp it with your personal seal (see page 18 for details). In some cases your signature may suffice.
③ Guarantor	You will need a Japanese person to act as your guarantor in the event that you become unable to pay your rent. Recently, there has been a rise in people using the 'Rent Debt Guarantee System'.
④ Security deposit	This is a fee paid to the landlord equivalent to two to three months' rent. It is set aside in case you are ever late in paying your rent. If you do not have any unpaid rent at the time you move out, this fee will be refunded to you. If you have broken or dirtied anything in the residence, its cost may be deducted from the amount.
⑤ Key money	This is a fee paid to the landlord equivalent to approximately one month's rent. This fee is not refunded. Some properties do not require this fee.
⑥ Broker's fee	This is a fee paid to the real estate agent, stated to be less than or equivalent to one month's rent in the Building Lots and Buildings Transactions Business Act.
⑦ Rent	This is a monthly rental fee. Normally each month's rent is paid before the end of the previous month.
⑧ Administration fee (utility fee)	The maintenance costs for elevators, corridors, and any other places whose use is shared between residents. This is normally paid monthly in addition to your rent.
⑨ Damage insurance fee	It is necessary for you to take out damage insurance while you are living in your residence in case of the unlikely event of a fire, or water leakage. Be sure to check the insurance coverage thoroughly.

●Renewing your contract●

Rental contracts are normally two years. When you renew your contract, you may need to pay an administrative fee to the real estate agent.

●Terminating your contract●

When you want to terminate your contract, notify your landlord or real estate agent in advance

in accordance with the terms of your contract (usually one month's advance notice is required). If you move out without notification or on short notice, you will be required to pay a penalty for breach of contract. Please also pay your utility fees (water, gas, electricity) when you move. Leave the residence clean and in the same condition as when you moved in. Do not leave behind any furniture or appliances that you bought. Return the key to the landlord.

【Useful words for renting an apartment】

◎**Chintai bukken** A property (house, apartment, room, etc.) available for rent. Also called a *bukken*.

◎**Yanushi** Landlord

◎**Kanri-hi, Kyoeiki-hi** . . . Fee for maintenance and cleaning of areas and equipment shared by all residents of a building (elevators, hallways, etc.). Paid separately from rent.

◎**Songai hoken-ryo** . . . Fee for damage insurance for your household belongings (you may be enrolled when you sign your contract).

◎**Kuriiningu-dai** Fee to have the residence professionally cleaned after you move out. Even if you cleaned the residence yourself, you may still incur this fee.

※ **Once you have an address, report to your ward office to complete the necessary procedures.** For details, see page 8.

●What is public housing?●

Public housing is intended for those who have difficulty finding housing on their own. The rent is less expensive than private rental housing, but there are criteria for who can apply. For more information, please see the websites of Miyagi Prefecture and Sendai City.

Application Section, Sendai City Construction Public Corporation	TEL: 022-214- 3604	Applications for Sendai City Municipal Housing, open four times a year (June, September, December, and March). There are also application periods for single parent households, families raising children, households with multiple children, as well as rolling applications. Inquiries about municipal housing.
Miyagi Public Housing Section, Moving in Management Department, Moving in Subsection	TEL: 022-224- 0014	Applications for Prefectural Public Housing, open four times a year (June, September, December, and March). Inquiries about prefectural housing.

Multilingual Guide for Applying to Municipal Housing

The International Relations Department section of SenTIA's website [Top>Information in Foreign Languages>Daily Life>Application Guide for Sendai City Municipal Housing](#) (J, E, C, K)

Sendai Multicultural Center Interpretation Support Hotline (TEL: 022-224-1919)

Basics / II. Daily life / 2. Water, electricity, and gas

You must submit applications for water, electricity and gas when you would like to begin to use them, as well as when you would like to terminate these services.

	Water	Electricity	Gas
Contact	Sendai City Waterworks Bureau Call Center	Private companies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sendai City Gas Bureau • Private companies (propane gas)
When to apply	As soon as your place of residence is decided		
How to apply	Please contact the call center.	Contact the relevant call center or apply online.	Call the Gas Bureau or gas company. An employee will come to your residence to turn on the gas. You must be present at the time.
Payment	Every two months	Every month	Every month
Payment method	<p>You are required to pay the water, electricity, and gas fees. Please pay via one of the following payment methods:</p> <p>① Bring the bill that you received in the mail and pay it at a bank or a convenience store</p> <p>② Apply to have the funds automatically deducted from your bank account</p> <p>*Application required in advance. (For information on opening a bank account, see page 17.)</p> <p>③ Pay by credit card. *Application required in advance.</p>		
Stopping a service when You move out	You must contact the water, electricity, and gas services prior to moving out (including if you were to go back to your home country). Contact each utility at least five days in advance to when you would like to terminate the services.		
Notes	Tap water in Sendai is safe to drink.	Sendai's electricity is 100 volts, 50 hertz.	There are two types of gas: city gas and propane gas. Please use appliances built for the type of gas you have.

【Water】 Sendai City Waterworks Bureau Call Center

TEL: 022-748-1111 (Weekdays 8:30 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Saturdays 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m.)

https://www.suidou.city.sendai.jp/nx_html/06-madoguchi/06-301.html

【Electricity】 Please contact each individual electricity company.

【Gas】 The contact number varies depending on your place of residence

City Gas (Sendai City Gas Bureau)	Special line for moving TEL: 0800-800-8978 or 022-256-2111 https://www.gas.city.sendai.jp/ (J, E, C, K)
Propane Gas	Ask your landlord or real estate agent for contact information.

Basics / II. Daily life / 3. Telephone

Sendai's area code is 022. An area code is required when calling from a mobile phone.

●Buying a mobile phone or SIM card●

You can buy a mobile phone at a phone company's store or at an electronics store.

【What to bring (Items may vary depending on the company)】

Proof of ID, documents that show your Japanese address, bank account number, etc. (For information on opening a bank account, see page 17.)

●Calling from a public telephone●

Most Japanese public telephones accept 10 yen and 100 yen coins and telephone cards. You will not receive change for a 100 yen coin.

●International phone calls●

Dial the telephone company's identification number (0033 or 001)+010+country code+area code+telephone number.

Basics / II. Daily life / 4. Internet

●Using the internet from your home computer●

You can apply to an internet service provider at an electronics store or apply online. There are many different providers with various packages and plans.

※ When applying to a provider at an electronics store, you will need proof of ID (residence card, etc.). You will also need to check whether your apartment building is connected to the network provided by a certain provider.

Some post offices also offer international remittances.

**For
information on
postal services
in English**

Weekends and holidays 9:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m.

※ The holding period of your mail or Yu-Pack (parcel) will be written on the notice of non-delivery. If you do not contact the post office during this period, the mail or parcel will be returned to the sender.

Reverse of notice of non-delivery

[illegible]

Basics / II. Daily life / 6. Money

●How to open a bank account●

You will need a bank account for purposes such as receiving payments from work. You can create an account by going to the bank, or in some cases, you can open a bank account via the bank's designated smartphone application. Please check the website of each bank.

※ Procedures carried out at the bank will be conducted in Japanese, so make sure you are accompanied by someone who speaks Japanese.

In addition, some financial institutions require making reservations ahead of time, and some procedures might take longer to complete.

[What to bring]

- Proof of ID (residence card, etc.)

※ Except for diplomats, permanent residents, and those who have not yet received their residence card, you must present your residence card at banks. You cannot establish a bank account if your status of residence expires within a 3 month period starting on the day when you applied for a bank account. Please apply once you have finished the procedures to renew your residence period. If you have a “student” or “technical intern training” visa, please also bring your student or employee identification with you.

- Personal seal (some banks will accept signatures of foreign residents)

●How to close a bank account ●

You are required to close your bank account before moving out of the country, etc. Take the following items with you to the bank/Japan Post Bank.

[What to bring]

- Cash card (and bank book if you have one), personal seal (not needed if you used a signature), identifying documents (residence card), etc.

※ It is a crime to buy, sell, lend or give your bank account to another person. In order to avoid getting wrapped up in any illegal activities, make sure to close your account before leaving the country.

※ When your residence card is updated due to a period of stay extension or change in status of residence, please present your updated residence card to the bank's service counter after it has been updated.

●ATMs●

ATMs are machines that allow you to deposit or withdraw money from your bank account. Most ATMs at banks can be used without a fee on weekdays from around 9:00 a.m. to around 6:00 p.m. if using a card from the corresponding bank. Outside these hours and on holidays, you will be charged a fee. It is also possible to use the ATMs located within convenience stores, etc.

※ Some ATMs have languages other than Japanese available

Basics / II. Daily life / 7. Personal seals

●Purchasing a personal seal●

In Japan, personal seals are used in place of signatures. Your first or last name is carved on your seal. You can have a personal seal made at a specialty shop.

●Registering a personal seal●

When buying a car or signing a contract, you have to have your personal seal registered at your ward office. You can only register a seal if you are aged 15 or over, and are registered as a resident. Only one seal per person may be registered. You cannot register your seal if it does not have the same name as your resident record engraved on it. You may not register a seal with your nickname. For details, please contact each ward office.

Basics / II. Daily life / 8. Waste disposal

●Putting out household waste●

Please put out garbage bags in the designated area before 8:30 a.m. on the morning of the appropriate collection day (day to throw out garbage). Please put out household waste and recyclable plastic containers and packaging in their respective designated bags. These designated bags can be bought at supermarkets and convenience stores.

Household waste

Put household waste such as food scraps from the kitchen in a designated green bag and tie it closed so the contents do not fall out.



Plastic containers and packaging

Put items that are 100% made out of plastic materials in the designated red bag and tie it closed so the contents do not fall out.



Cans, bottles, PET bottles

Put cans and glass and plastic bottles directly into the yellow collection boxes in the collection area. Put cylindrical batteries, mobile batteries, and mercury medical thermometers in clear bags before placing them in the boxes.



Paper materials

Sort paper into 4 types (newspaper and folded leaflets, cardboard, cartons, magazines and other paper materials) and tie the bundle up with a string before putting it out. You can also put magazines and other paper materials into plastic bags or paper boxes when you dispose of them.



For details, please see the International Relations Department section of SenTIA's website:

[Top>Information in Foreign Languages>Daily Life>Guide to Sorting Recyclables](#) (J, E, C, K, V, N)

"The Sendai City Guide for Sorting Recyclables and Waste, and How to Put Them Out For Collection" pamphlet is distributed at City Hall, ward offices, and the Sendai Multicultural Center. There is also a video explaining how to put out your garbage on YouTube.

[Sendai Waste Disposal Video](#)

[Search keywords](#) 

●Disposing of bulky waste●

Tables, dressers, and other items which longest dimension is over 30cm are considered bulky waste. There is a fee to dispose of these items. You must apply to the Bulky Waste Information Center to have oversized garbage collected and thrown away.

【Application procedure for disposing of bulky waste】

① Call the Bulky Waste Reception Center in Japanese (TEL: 022-716-5301)

Hours of operation: Weekdays 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. (Open on (national) holidays)

※ The dates on which bulky waste can be disposed of are predetermined. Make sure to apply early.

Tell the phone operator what kind of item you would like to dispose of and its size. You will be told your reception number, the price, and what day to dispose of it.

② Buy a payment ticket

Buy a payment ticket for the amount you were quoted at a convenience store. Write your reception number on the ticket and attach it to the item in a visible spot.

③ Put the item where you are told to by the Bulky Waste Reception Center by 8:30 a.m. on the morning of the designated day

※ You can apply for the collection of some bulky waste online. (Japanese only).

<https://www.sendai-sodai.jp/eco/view/sendai/top.html>

※ Video on bulky waste disposal "Guide on How to Dispose of Bulky Waste in Sendai City" (English only). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jWKQGHq5IRI>

*** The City of Sendai does not collect the following items.**

Please consult the store where you bought the item.

Air conditioners • televisions • refrigerators • freezers • washing machines • dryers • computers • tires • gasoline • fire extinguishers • propane gas cylinders • waste oil (kerosene) • explosives • hazardous substances • dangerous drugs • poison • agricultural chemicals • paint • large safes • pianos • batteries • motorcycles (over 50cc) • automobiles

If you need to call the Bulky Waste Information Center and require language assistance, or if you have any questions about waste disposal, please contact **the Sendai Multicultural Center** (TEL: 022-224-1919; E-mail: labunka@sentia-sendai.jp).

Basics / II. Daily life / 9. Television and radio

●Television●

If you have set up a television in your home, you will need to sign a broadcast subscription contract with NHK, and pay subscription fees. Subscription fees vary depending on your contract. For more information, please contact NHK.

NHK toll-free number TEL: 0120-151515

Hours: 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. including Saturdays, Sundays and national holidays (excluding the year-end and New Year holiday period)

NHK subscription fees guide <https://www.nhk-cs.jp/jushinryo/>

(J, E, C, K, V and 7 other languages.)

●Foreign-language radio programs● ※ Frequency in parentheses

Hello SENDAI! (Advice for living in Sendai)	Radio 3 (76.2), FM Izumi (79.7), FM Taihaku (78.9), FM Natori (80.1) For details, see the International Relations Department section of SenTIA's website: Top>Hello SENDAI! (J, C, E, K)	FM
GLOBAL TALK (Advice for disaster risk reduction)	Date fm (FM Sendai) (77.1)	FM
Foreign language news	NHK Radio 2 (Sendai 1089, Kesenuma 1539)	AM

●Viewing and listening to international broadcasts on the internet●

NHK international broadcasts are broadcasted 24 hours, aiming to provide people overseas with the latest news and topics about Japan. You can also view or listen to these broadcasts online while in Japan.

NHK World-Japan TV: 24-hour English TV broadcasts.

NHK World Radio Japan: Radio services broadcast in 17 languages.

There is also an app that you can download for free on smartphones and tablets.

For details, see NHK's website: [NHK WORLD https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/](https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/)

(J, E, C, K, V and 15 other languages.)

Basics / II. Daily Life / 10. Police boxes

A police box is a place where police officers are stationed in turns. The officers work to respond to various issues such as crime, and go on patrols to help protect the safety of local residents. If you are the victim of a crime, or have lost your possessions, etc., you can talk to the police officers in the police box about it. It is best to know where your local police box is.

Basics / II. Daily life / 11. Neighborhood associations

A neighborhood association is a volunteer organization that carries out activities to promote mutual aid and friendly relationships within the neighborhood. You can get to know your neighbors by participating in these activities. (Membership fees vary by association, but are used for things such as neighborhood beautification, disaster drills, and recreational activities.)

When you join your neighborhood association, you will receive information such as:

- ① Newsletters from Sendai City and Miyagi Prefecture (Sendai City Newsletter, Miyagi Prefecture News)
- ② Information on various events hosted by the neighborhood association

Basics / II. Daily life / 12. Taxes, pension, and welfare

●Taxes●

All people living in Japan, regardless of nationality, must pay taxes. There are many different types of taxes.

(Examples) Income tax, inhabitant tax (refers to the combined municipal tax and prefectural tax), consumption tax (including local consumption tax), light vehicle tax, automobile tax, etc.

●Paying inhabitant tax when you leave Japan●

All residents of Japan must pay inhabitant tax to the city, town or village in which they resided as of January 1 of the given year. Taxes are calculated based on your income in the previous year (January 1-December 31) and must be paid even if you moved or returned to your country during the year.

- ※ If your yearly income is below a certain level, you will be exempt from paying inhabitant tax.
- When you return to your country, please either pay your taxes in advance or designate a tax agent who can pay on your behalf.

●Pension●

If you live in Japan and are between the ages of 20 and 60, you must pay into a public pension. There are two kinds of public pension. For details, please inquire at the National Health Insurance and Pension Section of any ward office or a regional Pension Office.

• Employees' pension

When you are employed by a company, you will enroll into the employees' pension at work. Payments will be deducted from your paycheck.

• National pension

If you are not enrolled in employees' pension, you must enroll in national pension.

- ※ If you neglect your pension payments you may not be able to update your status of residence

※ Lump-sum withdrawal payments

If you have paid insurance fees for six months or more, and have returned to your country without receiving the pension money that you paid, you can still receive the payout afterwards.

You can acquire the invoice form at your regional pension office before returning to your country or from the Japan Pension Service website, and you must claim and send the invoice by post within two years of returning to your home country.

For details on documentation and things to keep in mind, please see the Japan Pension Service website.

Information about lump-sum withdrawal payments for mid to long-term foreign residents (available in E, C, K, V, Portuguese, Spanish and 8 other languages):

<https://www.nenkin.go.jp/international/japanese-system/withdrawalpayment/payment.html>
payment.html (You can choose your preferred language on this webpage)

●Welfare services●

Disability welfare services are also available for persons with physical, mental or intellectual disabilities or intractable diseases, as well as health and welfare services for the elderly.

For details, please inquire at the Disabled and Senior Citizens Welfare Section of each ward office.

*** Sendai Multicultural Center Interpretation Support Hotline (TEL: 022-224-1919) ***