



News & Types: Immigration Update

Japan to Implement Digital Nomad Visa

2/13/2024

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Practices: Immigration

Commencing at the end of March 2024, Japan will implement a digital nomad visa for persons who wish to live in Japan and will work remotely for a non-Japanese employer. This will not be a new visa category, but the digital nomad will be issued a visa under the “designated activities” category. One of the stated goals of the digital nomad visa is to stimulate the local economy in Japan by having persons spend money on short-term housing, food and tourism, and to also introduce Japan as a potential place to live on a long-term basis. If approved, the digital nomad will be allowed to live in Japan for a maximum period of six months and the basic requirements are as follows:

1. The digital nomad must be from one of the 49 countries that are visa exempt;
2. The digital nomad’s country of origin must have entered into a tax treaty with Japan;
3. The digital nomad must earn the equivalent of ¥10,000,000 per year; and
4. The digital nomad must procure traveler’s health insurance that will cover the digital nomad’s stay in Japan.

During the digital nomad’s stay in Japan, the digital nomad will not be considered a resident of Japan and, as such, will not be able to open bank accounts, obtain a Japanese driver’s license or obtain a Japanese residence permit (which is often required to rent housing on a long-term basis). The digital nomad will not be allowed to work in Japan for a Japanese employer and any work must be on behalf of the foreign employer. However, ancillary activities, such as sightseeing, enrolling in language school, or participating in a short-term business meeting on behalf of the foreign employer will be allowed.

Notably, a Certificate of Eligibility will not be required and a person applying for the digital nomad visa will submit the application directly to the Japanese Consulate that has jurisdiction over the applicant’s foreign place of residence. The digital nomad will not be subject to Japanese income taxes during the period that he/she is working in Japan with the digital nomad visa and the digital nomad’s foreign employer will not be considered to have a permanent establishment in Japan that would require company registration.

The digital nomad visa will have a maximum validity of six months and cannot be extended. The digital nomad visa holder will not be able to reapply for a new digital nomad visa for six months after the expiration of the current digital nomad visa. However, the person may visit Japan as a business visitor or tourist and can apply

for a working visa at any time, including while in Japan under the digital nomad visa. The digital nomad's family will be allowed to accompany the digital nomad, but children will not be allowed to enroll in public school.

The terms of the digital nomad visa are subject to change prior to implementation, and we will provide updates regarding specific application procedures as they become available.

Masuda Funai is a full-service law firm with offices in Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, and Schaumburg.