

# Sendai Multicultural Center News



## I would like to drive in Japan



A is an office worker working in Sendai City. In their home country, A drove ordinary vehicles. As they would like to drive in Japan as well, A decided to consult the Multicultural Center.



Person seeking consultation (A)

I would like to drive in Japan. What do I need to do?

If you would like to drive in Japan, there are two major options you could choose from:

- ① Switch your driver's license from your home country to a Japanese driver's license
- ② Attend lessons at a driving school in Japan to learn traffic rules and how to drive, and then take an exam at a Driver's License Center.



### ① Switching one's driver license from their home country to a Japanese license

(Requirements that must be met to be able to proceed with this option)

It is required that one has stayed in their home country from more than 3 months after acquiring their driver's license. If there are stamps marking entries and departures on one's passport, that will be used as proof.

(Things to bring)

3 cm X 2.4 cm photo, a copy of one's resident record, one's driver's license from their home country, a Japanese translation of the foreign driver's license, one's passport. Depending on the country, other documents might be also be required.

(Testing and Screening)

At the Driver's License Center, procedures such as confirmation of required documents, screening, and interview will be conducted. One will also be tested on their knowledge of Japanese traffic rules, driving skills, and undergo a vision test before acquiring their Japanese driver's license. Depending on the country where one acquired their initial driver's license, one might be exempt from the knowledge and skill examinations.

For those who need to be tested on their knowledge and driving skills, they will need to make a separate appointment on another day to take the examinations after completing the necessary procedures at the Driver's License Center.

### For method ②

Although some driving schools might have learning materials written in foreign languages available, all lectures will be conducted in Japanese. Nevertheless, other than attending lessons at a driving school, one could opt to attend lectures and take exams at the Driver's License Center instead.

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Publications in Six Languages

In addition to English, we also have publications in Japanese / にほんご, Chinese / 中文, Korean / 한국어, Vietnamese / Tiếng Việt, and Nepali / नेपाली. They can also be viewed on our website, or found at the Sendai Multicultural Center.





I have a driver's license from my home country, and I would like to switch it to a Japanese license. However, my Japanese is not great, so I am worried about the procedure.



The Sendai Multicultural Center can help you with any procedures and with making the booking. The knowledge test can be conducted in languages other than Japanese.

### If one has difficulty communicating in Japanese

(Making an appointment at the Driver's License Center)  
Staff of the Multicultural Center will assist them in making an appointment.

(Procedures at the Driver's License Center)  
It is possible for a Tsukibo Volunteer from Open Assist & Support In Sendai (OASIS) to accompany you to their appointment. During the appointment at the Driver's License Center, the volunteer will interpret for the foreigner who does not speak Japanese when they are completing the necessary procedures.

(Knowledge test in languages other than Japanese)  
At Driver's License Centers in Miyagi prefecture, it is possible to take the exam in English, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Thai, or Persian.

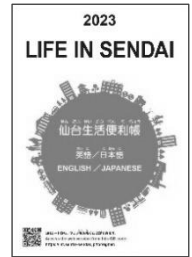
※ License holders from certain countries and regions are exempt from knowledge and skill examinations.

You can find a multilingual website about vehicle licenses below.

More information in regard to the procedure of switching a foreign driver's license to a Japanese license can be found on the following multilingual websites and resources:

- <<Life In Sendai>>

[https://int.sentia-sendai.jp/foreigner/pdf/j/13\\_life\\_in\\_sendai\\_j\\_BasicLife5.pdf](https://int.sentia-sendai.jp/foreigner/pdf/j/13_life_in_sendai_j_BasicLife5.pdf)



Japanese



English



Chinese



Korean



Vietnamese



Nepali



Ukrainian



Russian

- Official website of the National Police Agency  
<https://www.npa.go.jp/english/bureau/traffic/index.html> (English)  
Multilingual resources can be found on the English website.



## Notice: Introduction of the Interpretation Support Hotline and Give Away

### [Interpretation Support Hotline]

022-224-1919

We provide over-the-phone interpretation service via three-way phone calls. Please utilize this service when you are having trouble communicating at places such as ward office, civic center, nursery school, and school.

Examples of use:

- You would like to schedule an appointment with the bulky waste reception center to get rid of oversized garbage
- You would like to call the Waterworks Bureau as you will be moving
- You are a ward office worker who would like to know the purpose of a foreign resident's visit.

\*This is not a medical interpretation service. We cannot interpret for doctor's appointments.

\*Depending on circumstances of the interpreters, you may be required to wait.

### [Give Away]

The Multicultural Center is giving away old books, magazines, and newspapers. Books that were part of the Multicultural Center Library collection of which the period of retention has passed and foreign newspapers and magazines can be picked up for free.

Pick up is available as long as the Multicultural Center is open. Please drop by and see if there are any books you might be interested in bringing home!

Location:

Lobby of the Sendai Multicultural Center

Time:

Every day from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Excluding Year End and New Year's holiday, and one to two days per month on which the Multicultural Center is closed)

※Please bring your own bag if you need one as we will not be able to provide you with a bag

※No commercial use is allowed. Resale is prohibited.

## Advisor Corner "Driving a car"

### Thoughts and experiences from advisors on this issue's theme

As Canada is a very big country, the main method of transportation is by cars. In Japan, the driver's license is considered a national qualification, whereas in Canada, licenses are issued by provincial insurance companies. As a result, the method of acquiring a driver's license and the minimum age requirement to take the licensing exam differ between provinces.

In the province of British Columbia where I used to live, although it is possible to take the written knowledge test once you are 16 years old, one must wait a year upon acquiring their Learner's license before they become eligible to take the primary road test. Nevertheless, there are restrictions such as when the holder of the Learner's license is driving, they must be accompanied by a full license holder who is older than the age of 25. The Learner's license is only valid for two years, and if one did not manage to pass the primary road test within said two-year period, they must retake the knowledge test.

Upon passing the primary road test, one can acquire a Novice license. Although Novice license holders may

drive on their own, they are not allowed to have more than one passenger (family members excluded) in their car. Two years after one acquired their Novice license, they may take the secondary road test and switch over to a full license. However, for those who do not mind the restrictions, they can opt to renew their Novice license every 5 years instead.

(Advisor Z)

Each advisor writes in the "Advisor Corner" each issue in all language versions. The Japanese translation for each is on our blog. Please have a look.

# Sendai Multicultural Center

せんだいたぶんかきょうせい

## 仙台多文化共生センター



Opening Hours Daily 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Closed during the New Year's holidays and 1 to 2 days per month for maintenance)

Address Sendai International Center Conference Bldg. 1F, Aobayama, Aoba-ku, Sendai, 980-0856

TEL (022) 265 - 2471

FAX (022) 265 - 2472

Email [tabunka@sentia-sendai.jp](mailto:tabunka@sentia-sendai.jp)

URL <https://int.sentia-sendai.jp/e/exchange/>



### ■ Advice in foreign languages

We are able to give advice in many languages for daily-life troubles or problems. Please call the Interpretation Support Hotline on (022) 224-1919.

Languages available: English, Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Nepali, Tagalog, Thai, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Indonesian, Italian, French, German, Malay, Khmer, Burmese, Mongolian, Sinhala, Hindi, Bengali, and Ukrainian

### ■ Other Services

We have lecture rooms, a children's playroom, a bulletin board, and book rental. We also have spaces for interaction and information on citizen activities.

## Specialist Consultations for Foreign Residents

We periodically hold specialist consultations with lawyers, administrative scriveners and so on. If there are matters that are affecting your life in Sendai, please feel free to have a consultation. Consultations are confidential, and are limited to 30 minutes per person. Consultations are held from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

You can check the consultation dates on our website.

<https://int.sentia-sendai.jp/e/exchange/consultation.html>



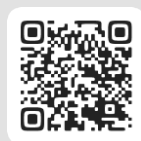
Administrative Scrivener

Lawyer

Labour Bureau

Immigration Bureau

Tax Accountant



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