

5. Legal Procedures and Tax

A. Registration of Foreign Nationals

Residence card

After arriving in Japan, you should already have been issued a resident card at the airport. You will need to register it and receive a “proof of residence” form (juminhyo) at Iwamizawa City Hall’s Citizen Service Department.

Renewing, change of Residence & more

For more information on the residency management system and for what to do when renewing your card, changing residences, etc., see the section on the Immigration Service Agency’s website.

[\[http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_1/en/index.html\]](http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact_1/en/index.html)



B. Personal Seal

The inkan, or personal seal, (also known as a hanko) is an indispensable part of everyday life in Japan, and is used in the same manner that a signature is in the West.

Any inkan used in an official capacity must be registered at the City Hall. There are certain specifications of the stamp in order to be registered.

- A diameter of between 9mm and 25mm
- Your name (or some portion thereof) as printed on your Resident Card, Alien Registration Card or Special Permanent Resident Certificate.

You can use either a romaji or katakana spelling of your name, if that spelling has been registered on your “certificate of residence” (juminhyo).

Registration is done at the Citizens' Service Section at City Hall. You will need to bring your Residence Card (or any of the stated above) with the inkan you want to register. After registering, you will receive an “inkan tourokushou” or “Personal Seal Registration Card”. At this point, your seal is then known as a “jitsuin.”



When purchasing a car, entering certain contracts, or in various other transactions, you’ll need to provide your *jitsuin* and a document that proves your seal has been registered. You can get this document by taking the aforementioned “Personal Seal Registration Card” to the Citizens’ Service Section of the City Hall and requesting a “Proof of Personal Seal Registration” (inkan touroku shoumeisho).

You can buy inkan at many general stores, though as a foreigner you may have to get one custom made. You can get them at inkan specialty shops.

C. Taxes

Your tax status depends largely on your nationality, how long you are staying in Japan and your occupation. Taxes are paid on income, property, and consumption on the national, prefectural, and municipal levels.

To make sure you are up to date with the most recent information and to know more about the types of taxes and how to pay them, it is advised that you check online for the current tax situation in Japan, such as on Japan-Guide.com:

[\[http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2206.html\]](http://www.japan-guide.com/e/e2206.html)

Local Inhabitant Tax

Every year local inhabitant tax (住民税 jūmin zei) is paid to the city you are living in. It is assessed by the prefectural and municipal governments, based on your previous year's income.

Iwamizawa City Hall will send out your inhabitant tax bill, so it is important to note that even if you move to another city in the meantime, you must still pay Iwamizawa City as your former residence. It may be the case that the inhabitant tax is automatically withheld from your monthly salary.

If you are employed by a Japanese employer, you should receive a statement of earnings document at the end of the year (源泉徴収票 gensen chōshū hyo). This will be used to file your taxes, and you can see how much money has been withheld for inhabitant tax and insurance.