



February 2017

Dear AFS Participants,

Here at AFS Japan we are happy that you have decided to come to Japan to learn more about our language, culture, and people, and we are now looking forward to seeing you all within a short time. We imagine that by now you are feeling a bit excited and maybe a little nervous also, but please don't worry about what will happen after your arrival, just devote yourself to preparing as much as possible before you leave home.

What kind of preparation? Well, first of all, how is your Japanese language study going? Learning as much Japanese as possible is probably the best thing you can do to make your experience in Japan start off (and continue!) smoothly. If you just started to study Japanese, try to be able to read and write HIRAGANA (ひらがな) and KATAKANA (カタカナ) by the time you come to Japan. Remember, your school will expect you to have some skill when you arrive. Also, very importantly, being able to speak some Japanese will make it easier for you to become close to your host family, and to make friends who will support you. Many former participants suggest that you **keep trying** to study Japanese, even if time is short! We would like to recommend a few free language learning links that you may find interesting and helpful:

e-learning

<http://www.erin.ne.jp/en/>

<http://e-nihongo.tsukuba.ac.jp>

<http://www.kkjin.jp>

We also propose that you get **a book-type Japanese dictionary** for your Japanese study before leaving your country. Some of you who have a smartphone may want to use it as a dictionary. However, most schools in Japan do not allow students to do so during classes. Moreover, Japanese dictionaries for non-Japanese learners are not sold everywhere in Japan and they are expensive

In addition to all of the other things that you are packing in your suitcase, remember to put in the **Welcome to Japan**, and the **Tips for Personal Safety in Japan** booklets which you have already received. Not only are these filled with useful and important information that you will need to know for your daily life, but they are also a good tool for helping you communicate with your host family about issues that you need to have a common understanding about. You will need to have these booklets with you at your arrival orientation, the day after you arrive in Japan.

For those of you who intend to bring credit cards and/or cash-cards to take money out in Japan, please contact the credit cards and/or cash-cards companies before your departure, and make sure you are able to use the cards in your hosting community, otherwise please bring enough cash.

Finally, don't forget to pack **2 photos** (4cmx3cm) for your school ID and **additional 1 photo** for a Residence Card for those under 16, **Yen in cash** (3,000yen) for personal spending during the orientation, and **bath and hand towels and toothbrush** to be used at your arrival orientation. Arrival orientation will be held in a youth hostel where bringing your towels and toothbrush is your responsibility.

All of these belongings with only a **20kilogram weight limit!** Good Luck!

The time will be flying by very quickly from now on, so please use your time effectively to get ready for one of the most interesting experiences of your life! Remember once again, your host families, your schools, volunteers, and staff are all eagerly looking forward to your arrival. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact your AFS office/sending organizations, at any time.

With our fondest wishes,



Kimio Sato
Partner Director,
AFS Intercultural Programs, Japan

“Welcome to Japan” Booklet Updated Information

Extend your stay in Japan – NOT accepted

Your visa is issued only to serve the purpose of your stay as an AFS student with AFS Japan being your guarantor in Japan. Since AFS Japan is required to report our program end date to the immigration office and cannot take any responsibility to you after this date, your remaining in Japan after the AFS program is not accepted under any conditions.

Budgeting

AFS Japan suggests students to prepare 10,000-15,000yen per month for personal spending money.

Mobile Phone and E-mail address

AFS Japan will no longer lend mobile phones to students (with some exceptions). Instead, we recommend you to bring a SIM free phone from your country and buy prepaid SIM cards (data only) in Japan. Please read "Prepaid SIM Card in Japan" and be prepared.

In addition, AFS Japan will check your Email address during Arrival orientation and we will send necessary information during your stay to those Email addresses. If your Email address which you used for Online Application is no longer available, please contact AFS office in your country to modify your registered Email address before 3rd March.

School Related Items

Please be aware that AFS students and their parents are responsible for the cost of purchasing school related items.

<Examples>

- | | | |
|----|---|------------------|
| 1. | School shirts (summer clothes and winter clothes) | 6,000-10,000yen |
| 2. | Gym clothes, school indoor shoes, gym shoes | 13,300-28,000yen |
| 3. | School materials | 5,000-10,000yen |

- Your school will provide you with a hand-me-down uniform out of its uniform pool free of charge, but if it does not fit you, you have to buy your own.
- If students wish to participate in the school trips, it requires additional 80,000-300,000yen, depending on duration and destination.

Immigration and Registration

Any students under 16 years of age upon arrival, they must re-apply for their residence card at regional immigration authorities, and students need to pay for traveling expense (approximately 1,000-10,000 yen).

Under the Japanese Government's new social security and taxation system began in October 2015, all students will receive an Individual Number (or "My Number") issued by the local public office in a form of a notification card. Transportation cost when you change the address written in the notification card due to family change or when you return the card to the local public office at the end of the program are responsibility of each student.

<http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/seisaku/bangoseido/english.html>

Academic/Attendance Certificates from Your Host School

Students from some countries might need academic/attendance certificates issued by your host school and submit them to school in your home country after your return.

Make sure to check BEFORE YOUR DEPARTURE FROM HOME COUNTRY whether or not if school in your home country requires you to obtain such certificates. If such certificates are required upon your return, it is **your responsibility** to acquire them during your stay in Japan.

After you come to Japan, please ask your host school whether or not if they will be able to issue at the end of your stay. Please note that there is a possibility that your host school could not issue them.

AFS Japan is open to receive questions from you. However, AFS Japan and host family will NOT monitor about your acquisition of such certificates.

Arrival Orientation Information

When you arrive in Japan, you will be met by AFS Japan staff and/or volunteers at the Tokyo/Narita International Airport. You will stay overnight at a hotel near the airport, then you will be accompanied to the arrival orientation site in one of three different parts of Japan, according to your destination by bus. You can rest up from your long trip and receive useful information to start a new life in Japan. You will meet your host family on March 25.

Make sure that you pack only as much as you can carry by yourself (**max. 20kg**). When you travel between the airport and your host community, via the arrival orientation site, you must walk a long way carrying everything by yourself. The walk at railway stations and at the airport can be very long and may include stairways. A chartered bus we use also has limited luggage storage space. Therefore, we would like to strongly ask that **you bring only 1 suitcase**.

We would also like to advise you to separately pack the belongings necessary for the arrival orientation, so that you don't have to open your big suitcase. You need to pack bath and hand towels which you will use during the orientation from March 23 to 25.

The weight limit on checked-in luggage for domestic flights in Japan is **20kg**. For carry-on bags, the limit is **10kg** (the size of the bag must be within **45cm x 35cm x 20cm, total 100cm**), and only one bag is allowed per person.

At Narita Airport, all students will be asked to briefly hand in their passports and residence card to the AFS staff, so that they may check the entry status and visa information. We appreciate your cooperation.

Orientation Site	Hosting Chapters
Tokyo	<u>ASAHIKAWA</u> , FUJI-HOKUROKU FUKUSHIMA, GUNMA, IBARAKI-MITO, IBARAKI-TSUKUBA, IWATE, JOETSU, KANAGAWA, KEIYO, KITA-KANAGAWA, MIYAGI, NAGANO-HOKUSHIN, NAGANO-NANSHIN, NAGAOKA, NIIGATA, <u>OBIHIRO</u> , <u>OKHOTSK</u> , SAITAMA, <u>SAPPORO</u> , SHONAN, TOCHIGI, TOKYO, TOKYO-CHUO, TOKYO-JOHOKU, TOKYO-NERIMA, TOKYO-TAMA
Nagoya	CHITA, EAST-MIKAWA, FUJISAN, FUKUI, GIFU, KANAZAWA, KOMATSU, MIE, NAGOYA-KITA, SHIZUOKA, TOKAI, WEST-MIKAWA
Osaka	BISAN, <u>EHIME</u> , <u>FUKUOKA</u> , <u>FUKUOKA-MINAMI</u> , <u>HAKATA</u> , HIGASHI-HIROSHIMA, HIROSHIMA, HYOGO-KEN, <u>KAGOSHIMA</u> , <u>KUMAMOTO</u> , KYOTO, <u>MATSUE</u> , <u>MIYAZAKI</u> , <u>MIYAZAKI-MINAMI</u> , <u>NAGASAKI</u> , NARA, <u>OITA</u> , <u>OITA-NAMBU</u> , OKAYAMA, OSAKA-HIGASHI, OSAKA-KITA, OSAKA-MINAMI, OSAKA-MISHIMA, <u>SAGA</u> , SHIGA, <u>TAMANA</u> , TOTTORI-KEN, YAMAGUCHI

- The students who are placed in the underlined chapters, in the table above will fly to their hosting communities, while others will take trains and/or bus.
- It is important to know your hosting chapter. If you can't find it, please contact your AFS office/sending organizations.