



## One step at a time, towards my dream

In this issue of Mimitaro, we interviewed Mr. Riki Febriana (Otsu city) who works as an auto mechanic.



I first came to Japan from Indonesia as a technical intern in 2017. I loved Japanese animations and wanted to learn the advanced technology of Japan. I also felt close to Japan with many Japanese companies operating in Indonesia, and thought I could work comfortably, in this peaceful country.

The training was at an outboard motor manufacturing plant in Shizuoka Prefecture, and since there were about 50 Indonesians, the company provided a prayer space for us Muslims, as well as Japanese language classes. Thanks to this, at the end of the three years of technical training, I was able to obtain JLPT N3 and outboard motor assembly specialist level certifications. After that, I returned to Indonesia and for six months I taught simple Japanese to people who wanted to go to Japan. I then took the exams for the agricultural field of the Specified Skilled Worker System and came back to Japan. For 6 months in Nagano Prefecture, I worked in lettuce cultivation with Vietnamese and Chinese co-workers. It was interesting to learn that Japanese agriculture starts with soil preparation, but it was hard work, with harvesting starting from 1:00 after mid-night, and on top of that, it was difficult to take days off too. With the specialist level certification that I had previously acquired, I then worked for a year and a half at a manufacturing plant for temperature control equipment in Fukushima Prefecture. While working there, I studied on my own using YouTube and books to take the Specified Skilled Worker exam for automobile repair and maintenance. Then last April, on my second try, I was able to pass the Specified Skilled Worker exam, and I am now working at Daishin Jidosha in Otsu City.

I love automobiles, and becoming a mechanics was my dream job. All the skills I have acquired so far are useful in my current job. I am the first foreign employee at my workplace, and my boss and senior employees taught me how to do my job from scratch. When asked to “pass the

*megane*,” I thought it was eyeglasses, but it turned out to be the name of a tool, so every day is a learning experience for me. The company handles a variety of services, including automobile sales, repairs, and inspections, and my job is to inspect the cars and inform senior employees if any malfunctions are found. At times there are some interactions with the customers, which is a big challenge for me. It always makes me nervous, but by calling out “*Irasshaimase!*”, my heart lifts, and right now, it’s the most fun. With still a lot of experience to gain, next I plan to take the level 3 automobile mechanics certification exams.

I had been living in dormitories in Japan, but this is the first time to live alone in an apartment. The procedures for moving into an apartment were difficult, as there were many documents to prepare and notifications to submit, but I was also confused by the different rules in each area. When I went to buy garbage bags, I was told that the designated bags could be used for any type of garbage, whereas in my previous place of residence, garbage bags were of a specific color for each type of garbage. I cook my own meals. I do not eat pork because of my religion, but it’s okay because I check labels before purchasing foods. I often make spicy Indonesian curry by ordering Halal foods and seasonings online.

Another place I found in Shiga is Japanese language classes, which I attend every week. In the classroom, other than being able to learn Japanese, the interaction with the kind teachers and people from various countries warms my heart. I strongly recommend Japanese language classes because it can help you improve your work level and stabilize your life.

I have come to love Shiga because it has its calm and peaceful local color, and most importantly, it has beautiful Lake Biwa with many places to enjoy. I talk with my wife and 2 years old daughter in my home country every day via videophone, but it is my dream to live here with my family and enjoy camping and traveling together. I am not a person fond of studying, but I will do my best in both Japanese and work to achieve my dream!

## How to look for a housing?

These are useful information for finding housing.

Housing includes “public housing,” “rental housing,” and “owned house.”

☆ **Koei Jutaku (Public Housing)** Public housing is available for those who meet certain conditions, such as those with low incomes. Applications are accepted on a scheduled basis, and housing is determined by drawing lots. In Shiga Prefecture, there are prefectural housings and in some municipal, there are municipal-owned housings too. Since there are status of residence and income requirements, please confirm.

① **Ken-ei Jutaku (Prefectural Housing)** There are prefectural housing in various areas of Shiga, and opportunities to apply for housing are in April, July, October and January, four times a year.

Shiga Prefectural Housing Management Center

TEL: 077-510-1500 (Main number)

TEL: 077-510-1501 (For foreigners)

<https://shiga-kenei.com/>



② **Shiei/Choei Jutaku (Municipal Housing)** Please contact the municipal office.

☆ **Chintai Jutaku (Rental Housing)** In Japan, people typically search for properties at real estate agencies and sign a contract in writing. Depending on the property, at the time of the contract, key money (*Reikin*) and security deposit (*Shikikin*) are required. (Key money is a custom of paying a gratuity to the landlord and will not be returned. Security deposit is used to restore the property to its original condition when the tenant leaves, and may be partially refunded.) A joint guarantor may also be required, or a rent guarantee company may be used. In addition, a commission fee (*Chukai-tesuryo*) is paid to the real estate agent. The contract will usually include fire insurance (*Kasai-hoken*). In most cases, you will need to pay a management fee (*Kanrihi*), and also a renewal fee (*Koshinryo*) every two years.

### Useful Websites

| Real Estate Information Search Website<br>Shiga Real Estate Agents Association                          | List of Real Estate Agencies Offering Foreign Language Services<br>Japan Property Management Association | Ensuring Smooth Move-in of Foreign Nationals to Private Rental Housing<br>Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism   |
|---|--|---|
| <br><a href="https://www.hatomarksite.com/search/shiga/">https://www.hatomarksite.com/search/shiga/</a> | <br><a href="https://www.jpm.jp/multilingual/index.html">https://www.jpm.jp/multilingual/index.html</a>  | <br><a href="https://www.mlit.go.jp/jutakuentiku/house/jutakuentiku_house_tk3_000017.html">https://www.mlit.go.jp/jutakuentiku/house/jutakuentiku_house_tk3_000017.html</a> |

### • Shiga Prefectures housing support/ housing safety net

Information on private rental housing, etc. that accepts elderly households, households with disabilities, foreign households, and households raising children in Shiga Prefecture.



Shiga Safety Net Housing

[https://safetynet-jutaku.mlit.go.jp/guest/apart\\_list.php?pref=25](https://safetynet-jutaku.mlit.go.jp/guest/apart_list.php?pref=25)



Shiga Anshin Chintai Jutaku

<https://www.pref.shiga.lg.jp/ippan/kendoseibi/zyuutaku/300196.html>

### • Kasai-hoken (Fire Insurance)

Houses, whether rented or owned, must be covered by fire insurance. In the case of rental apartments and condominiums, it is common for the “landlord” and “tenant” to purchase fire insurance when moving in or at the time of renewal. Since the building is the landlord’s asset, the landlord purchases fire insurance for the building and pays the premiums, while the tenant purchases and pays the premiums for insurance for household goods such as furniture and appliances in the room. If the house is privately owned, fire insurance is purchased to cover both the building and household goods.



☆ **Owned House** In Japan, there are no restrictions based on nationality or status of residence when purchasing real estate. However, only those with permanent resident or special permanent resident status are eligible to borrow a housing loan. If you meet the criteria for age, income, and years of employment, and pass the screening process, you will be eligible for a housing loan. In addition, if you meet the requirements and other conditions, you can claim for a tax deduction for housing loan on your final tax return. After purchasing a home, if there is a change in your financial situation, consult with the bank about refinancing or modifying the repayment terms of your housing loan. Furthermore, those who own a house as of January 1<sup>st</sup> pay property tax calculated based on the property to the municipal office in which they reside.

• **Akiya Bank (vacant house databases)**

This is a system in which information registered by people who wish to rent or sell vacant houses is introduced to people who wish to make use of such houses. Ask the housing division of the municipal office where you wish to live if they have *Akiya Bank*.

<https://www.akiya-at-home.jp/buy/25/>



**Consultation services when you need advice (Free consultation)**

Consultation service for problems during tenancy, contract cancellation, and vacating the property



- Shiga Prefectural Consumer Affairs Center (Hikone)/ TEL 0749-23-0999
- Consumer Affairs Center in each municipal in the prefecture (*Shohi seikatsu center*)

Consultation services for various housing matters such as home acquisitions, defects, problems with entrepreneur, etc.



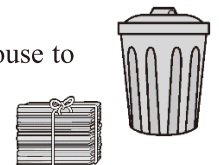
- Sumairu Dial TEL 03-3556-5147

<https://www.chord.or.jp/consult/index.htm>

~What should I do once I decide to move?~

• **Notification** Submit a notification of moving out to your municipal office. Within 14 days after moving, you must notify the municipal office of your new address and change the address of your residence card and individual number card. If you have children, you need to arrange for their transfer to a new nursery school, kindergarten, or school. You will also need to contact your workplace and bank, and change the address on your driver's license. By submitting a relocation form to the post office, mail delivered to your former address will be forwarded to your new address.

• **Relationship with Neighbors** In Japan, it is customary for people who have moved to a new house to greet their neighbors. Get to know your neighbors and ask them to share with you the local rules such as garbage collection dates and locations, evacuation sites in case of disasters, etc.



• **Jichikai (Neighborhood Association)** Each area has its own neighborhood association run by its residents. The neighborhood association engages in a variety of activities, such as crime prevention, disaster prevention, and beautification activities to improve the quality of life in the neighborhood, as well as “*Kodomo-kai*” (children's association) where local children enjoy sports, festivals, and other activities. For the operation of these activities, members pay neighborhood association fees and are assigned roles and responsibilities. In addition, “*Kairanban*” a circular with detailed information about the area is passed around. Membership is voluntary, but in some cases, such as when the neighborhood association manages the garbage collection point, membership may be required. In the event of a disaster, neighbors will need to help each other, so try to maintain good relations with your neighbors.

※ Please be sure to check whether there is a neighborhood association or not, as the activities and fees vary depending on the area.

# Mimitaro Information

## ◆ Spring Festivals in Shiga

- ◆ **Hino Matsuri** May 2<sup>nd</sup> (Fri), 3<sup>rd</sup> (holiday)  
Umamioka Watamuki Jinja (Shrine)  
705 Murai Hino-cho Gamo
- ◆ **Sanyare Odori** May 3<sup>rd</sup> (holiday)  
Held in 7 different areas in Kusatsu  
(Yagura, Shimogasa, Kataoka,  
Nagatsuka, Shina, Yoshida, Shinanaka)
- ◆ **Shinoda no Hanabi** May 4<sup>th</sup> (holiday)  
Shinoda Jinja 1613 Ueda-cho Omihachiman
- ◆ **Shichikawa Matsuri** May 4<sup>th</sup> (holiday)  
Oarahiko Jinja Inokuchi Shin Asahi-cho Takashima
- ◆ **Sushikiri Matsuri** May 5<sup>th</sup> (holiday)  
Shimoniikawa Jinja 1356 Sazukawa-cho Moriyama
- ◆ **Shinryoku Masu Matsuri** May 11<sup>th</sup> (Sun)  
Shiga Pref. Samegai Trout Farm Kaminiu Maibara



## ◆ Shiga Pref. Azuchi Castle Archaeological Museum

Reopened on March 18<sup>th</sup> after renovation  
6678 Shimotoira Azuchi-cho Omihachiman

## ◆ Shigaraki Sakkaichi (artists fair)

May 2<sup>nd</sup> (Fri) to 5<sup>th</sup> (holiday)  
Shiga Prefectural Ceramic Cultural Park Taiyo no Hiroba  
2188-7 Chokushi Shigaraki-cho Koka

## ◆ Various flowers in bloom

- ◆ **Shiga Agricultural Park Blume no Oka**  
Nemophila (Late-April to Mid-May)  
Rose (Mid-May to Early July)  
843 Nishioji Hino-cho Gamo
- ◆ **Kusatsu City Aquatic Botanical Park Mizunomori**  
Water lily (June to July)  
1091 Oroshimo-cho Kusatsu
- ◆ **Moriyama Ashikari-en**  
Hydrangea (Mid-June)  
Sugie-cho Moriyama



## Shiga Foreign Residents Information Center

(within Shiga Intercultural Association for Globalization)

Tel 077-523-5646 Fax 077-510-0601

email : mimitaro@s-i-a.or.jp

Next issue of Mimitaro is scheduled in July



# Mimitaro News



## ◆ Law amendment from April 1st 2025 Child Care and Family Care Leave Act

### Revision of Kono Kango-tou Kyuka (*Leave to Care for Children*)

- Extended the period of leave until the child completes the third grade of elementary school.
- Reasons for acquisition: In addition to (1) Illness/ injury and (2) Vaccinations /health checkups, (3) Class closures due to infectious diseases and (4) Entrance and graduation ceremony have been added.
- The leave can be obtained even if the period of continuous employment is less than 6 months.
- Number of days of leave that can be taken: 5 days in a year, 10 days if there are two or more children.

### Employment Insurance Act

#### Establishment of Shusseigo Kyugyou Shien Kyufukin

(*Post-natal leave support benefits*)

For those who are enrolled in employment insurance, if both parents take childcare leave for 14 days or more during a certain period right after the birth of a child, additional benefits will be provided along with the current childcare leave benefits for up to 28 days. As a result, the insured will be compensated for the same amount of income (equivalent to 100%) as they had before the childcare leave.

In the case of a single-parent family or a spouse who is a housewife (husband) or self-employed, there is no requirement for the spouse to take the leave.

## ◆ Orizuru-kai Support for traffic accident orphans

The program provides scholarships, new enrollment benefits, and other benefits as well as recreational activities during the summer vacation to children living in the prefecture (from age 0 to March of the school year in which they reach 18) who have lost a guardian in a traffic accident.



[\[INQ\]](#) Orizuru-kai Foundation office  
(within Shiga Prefecture Road Maintenance Division)  
TEL 077-528-3682

## ◆ Time to apply for scholarships

In addition to Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), there are also scholarships offered by universities, private companies, foundations, and local governments.



<https://www.jasso.go.jp>

## ◆ Operation of Myna Menkyo-sho (*My Number License*) has started from March 24<sup>th</sup>

Procedures for recording driver's license information on My Number Card (*Individual Number Card*) can be done at the Driver's License Center and the police station. For more information, please check the website of the National Police Agency.



[https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/r4kaisei\\_main.html](https://www.npa.go.jp/bureau/traffic/r4kaisei_main.html)