

We herein describe the “Housing Support Book for Foreigners”, which explains the key points for foreigners looking for an apartment in Kawasaki.

Assistance in finding an apartment

If you are facing difficulties in finding an apartment, consult Kawasaki City Consultation Service Counter for Housing. They provide free assistance. It is advisable to call the office beforehand.

For support in a foreign language, contact Kanagawa Housing Support Center for Foreign Residents. They can assist you with the moving process and offer guidance on various aspects of moving. You will also get the information and manuals for searching for a room and its availability in multiple languages. It is advisable to call the office beforehand.

What to do before looking for an apartment

There are a few important steps to take before beginning your room research.

When renting an apartment, it is necessary to have a joint guarantor or Rental Liability Guarantee.

A joint guarantor is a person who will cover your rent or repair costs on your behalf when you cannot pay. Rental Liability Guarantee is a guarantee system that requires the guarantee company to pay on your behalf if you cannot pay your rent, which must be repaid to the guarantee company later. In order to use Rental Liability Guarantee, it is necessary to pay the guarantee fee to the guarantee company, for example, at the time of signing a contract or renewal.

You also need to have an emergency contact person.

The real estate agency or rental liability guarantee company will contact an emergency contact person when they are unable to contact you. An emergency contact person will not pay the rent on your behalf. Before looking for an apartment, find someone who can act as a joint guarantor or an emergency contact person. If you are unsure whether you can use Rental Liability Guarantee, consult the Consultation Service Counter for Housing.

What to do before looking for an apartment

Before renting a room, consider the following:

The date you would like to move in: You may not find an apartment immediately. Therefore, you better start searching for a room as early as possible. Rent: The rent could be about one third of your salary.

Desired area: Is there a train station or bus stop you will use? Number of rooms. Will you have someone to live with? Do you need a parking space? Do you plan to have a pet?

Next, when you consult a real estate agency, please bring your passport, or your current Residence Card or Special Permanent Resident Certificate. If you are a Japanese citizen, you will need to provide proof of identity, such as your Individual Number Card (My Number Card), your driver's license, etc. If you are working, you will need the Certificate of Income. If you are attending school, you will need the Certificate of Enrollment.

Please prepare the initial cost required for renting an apartment in advance.

The security deposit will cost about one to three months' rent. It is for the situations where you are unable to pay the rent or if the room needs repairs when you move out. The key money is paid to the landlord when the contract is signed. Sometimes no key money is required. It is about one to two months' rent. The brokerage fee is paid to the real estate agent when signing the contract. This amount will not be more than one month's rent. The advance rent is the rent for the next month, which is paid at the time of signing the contract. The fire insurance premiums are paid to insure furniture and household goods against loss in a fire or other accident. The rental liability guarantee fee is the amount for Rental Liability Guarantee. The key exchange fee is to cover changing the key when you move in, although sometimes this is not charged for. The common service fee is separate from the rent and is required to manage the common areas you share with other tenants. It is usually paid with the rent, but sometimes it may not be required.

You will also need to pay a moving company to help with your moving procedure. Get an estimate and find out how much it will cost.

When you move out, you need to clean up the room you were living in. The amount required to restore the room to its original condition is called the restoration cost. If the deposit is not enough to cover the restoration cost, an additional amount will be charged. It is important not to leave behind what you bring in, as your landlord may ask for the amount required to dispose of whatever you leave behind.

What to do after securing a room

You need to find out all you need to know to start your new life after securing a room.

First, you receive the necessary documents and an explanation of the important points regarding the contract at the real estate agency. This is called the Important Points Explanation of Property to be Leased. If there are no problems, you can sign the contract to rent a room. This is called the Rental Housing Contract.

After signing the Rental Housing Contract, you will receive a key to your room. Do not lose the key as you must return it when you move out.

When you enter the room, check the following: Does the key properly open/close? Do the doors and windows open/close smoothly? Are there any stains or scratches on the floor or walls? If there are any problems, ensure to inform the real estate agent and have them check the problems together with you.

Contact the electricity company. Once the electricity is connected, switch on the electricity breaker and check that the lights and air-conditioning are working. Furthermore, check the amount of electricity available and whether facilities for the TV or Internet have been installed.

Contact the gas company to confirm the date of the work in your room. During the work, you must be informed how to use the gas appliances properly. Your landlord may come to see the work.

Contact your local water authority. Once the water supply has been turned on, check that there are no leakages, whether the water heater is working, and if the water in the bath and toilet runs and stops properly. If you are unsure of the procedures for electricity, gas, and water, check with your real estate agency.

Here we will explain the procedure that will be carried out at the ward office.

First, you need to transfer your certificate of residence within two weeks of moving out. For detailed information, consult the resident section at the ward office.

The next step is the insurance procedure. You need to follow the necessary procedures for health insurance and pension insurance. If your income is too low to pay the premiums, you may be entitled to a reduction or exemption. Please consult the health insurance and pension section at the ward office.

If you have a child, you will apply for the child allowance at the ward office where you moved in.

Furthermore, you need to notify your child's school and your workplace that you are moving. Please inform the post office of your new address.

Manners while living in an apartment

First, let us understand the manners while living in an apartment. When you meet someone who lives in the same apartment, do greet each other.

Next are the rules regarding garbage disposal. You can dispose of your garbage depending on the type of garbage. The days and times when you can dispose of garbage varies depending on your area. If you dispose of garbage incorrectly, it will not be collected. If garbage is left behind, it may cause problems with people living nearby. The city's website also explains how to separate and dispose of garbage. Furthermore, the rules may differ depending on the building you live in. Please ensure to check with your real estate agent about how to dispose of your garbage, how to separate it, and the days of the week allotted for garbage disposal.

If you want to have a pet, please ensure to check with your real estate agent or landlord first. Please avoid driving nails or drilling holes into the walls and/or pillars of your room.

No one other than the person you informed the real estate agency about at the time of signing the contract may live in your apartment. When you get married or expand your family owing to childbirth, please consult a real estate agency. While living in your apartment, listening to music or talking loudly can disturb people living around you. Please keep quiet, especially at night. If you use strong-smelling incense or cook often, please consult a real estate agency first.

The rent and common service fee must be paid by the specified date. If you think your payment will be delayed, please consult your real estate agency. Also, when renewing your contract, you will need to pay a renewal fee. Ensure to have the renewal fee ready.

Corridors, stairs, and balconies in condominiums and apartments serve as escape routes in the event of an earthquake or fire. Please do not leave garbage or bicycles there.

If you keep your room clean, you will spend less money cleaning it when you move out.

Ask your real estate agency about participating in the activities of your residents' association or neighborhood association.

Procedure for moving out

This is the procedure when moving out of an apartment.

First, please notify the real estate agency that you are moving out at least one to two months before the deadline written in the contract. Additionally, submit a notice to move out. If you have furniture, home appliances, etc., or large garbage items, you need to contact the city hall as soon as possible to find out how to dispose of bulk trash. If the bulk trash is scheduled to be collected only after you move out, consult your landlord or building manager.

Please move out during the day time. At night, it may cause inconvenience to people living nearby. Remove all your belongings from your room, keep it clean, and avoid leaving any trash behind. Return the key to the real estate agency.

The process of repairing or cleaning the part that you broke or damaged is called “restoration to original condition”. Check with your real estate agency to see the room and confirm the details of restoration to original condition.

After you move out, have the security deposit settled. The cost of restoration to original condition and the cost of disposing of abandoned personal property will be paid from the security deposit. If this amount exceeds the security deposit, the balance amount will have to be paid.

Other things you need to do before moving out:

First, you need to notify your electricity provider company, gas company, and water bureau about your moving out at least one week beforehand. On the day of moving out, the person in charge from the electricity, gas company and water bureau will come and shut off your electricity, gas and water supplies. At that time, confirm how you will settle the bills. In addition, if you have a phone, inform the phone company that you are moving out and update them with your new address.

If you notify the post office of your new address, they will forward your mail from your old address to your current address for one year after you move out. However, this service is available only within Japan.

If you have any problems while moving in

Lastly, we explain whom to contact if you have any problems during your stay.

If you don't understand what they say or you want to consult someone regarding housing matters, please contact Kanagawa Housing Support Center for Foreign Residents TEL 045-228-1752. You can view the homepage from the QR code.

If you have any inquiries about anything you don't know about, especially regarding medical care, health and welfare, administrative procedures, child-rearing, etc., please contact Kawasaki International Association TEL 044-455-8811. You can view the homepage by scanning the QR code at the bottom left. You can also access multilingual information from the QR code at the bottom right.

If you are not able to pay your rent or have problems with your living expenses, you need to contact your real estate agency or landlord first.

If you need help, please contact Dai-Job Center or the welfare office. You can view the homepage from the QR code.

If you don't know how to use the room or something in the room is broken, you need to consult the real estate agency. Make a note of the real estate agency's contact information.

We have notified you of the manners to be followed and other important considerations when moving to a new apartment, residing in it, or moving out.

Please enjoy your life in Kawasaki!