



# Separating and Retiring

## In Japan For

# Transitioning Military Member



**MARINE** &  
*Family*

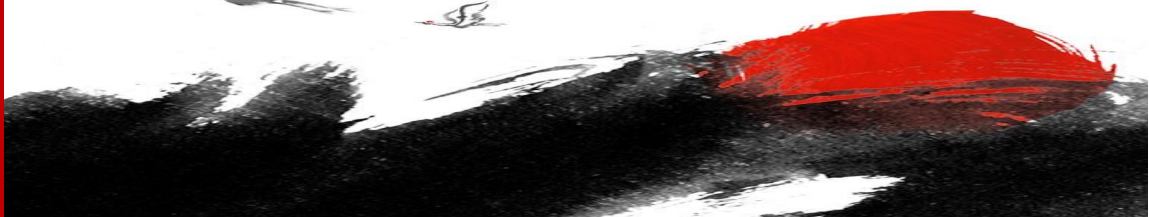
Transition Readiness  
Program



# OUTLINE

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*This is an informational pamphlet only and is subject to change at any time. Please contact the appropriate department for further information. (I.e. housing questions speak to Kadena Housing; Employment – Transition Office; Health Care- TRICARE; Passports – Consulate; etc.). For their contact numbers please refer to last page of the pamphlet.*





## **1. PAPERWORK**

To start the paperwork, see your local IPAC Office or PSD and ask for the On-Island Separation package. In order to separate on the island without going back to the United States, you will need to have employment and the paperwork done at least 6 months before you EAS. So, start early!!!

## **2. LEGAL STATUS**

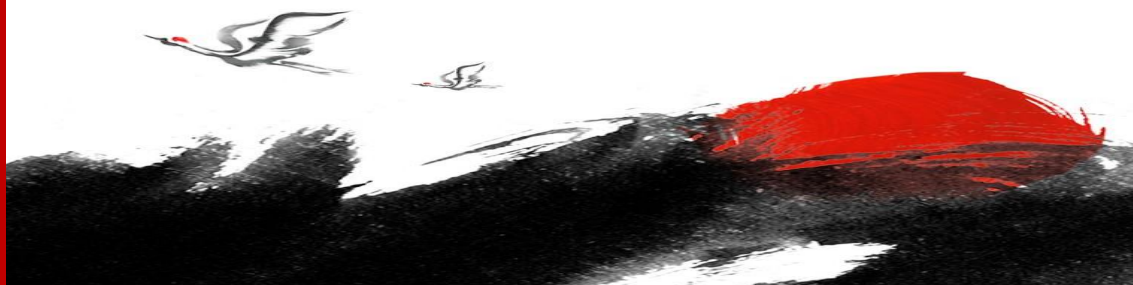
### **A. PASSPORT AND VISAS.**

In order to obtain a visa to separate and stay in Japan, you need conditional approval from the Commanding Officer. In addition, you need to request a visa at the local Japanese Immigration Office in person. Finally, you will need to complete the following steps if you fall in to one of these categories.

#### **I. WORKING (SKILLED LABOR)**

##### **a. With “Certificate of Eligibility”**

Valid passport, visa application, photograph, and an original “Certificate of Eligibility” (COE) from the Ministry of Justice in Japan.





**b. Without “Certificate of Eligibility”**

Except the COE, you will need the above plus documents outlining the receiving organization and its business (copy of corporate registration, recent profit-and-loss statement, list of alien employee, etc.), documents certifying qualification (i.e applicants CV), and copy of employment contract.

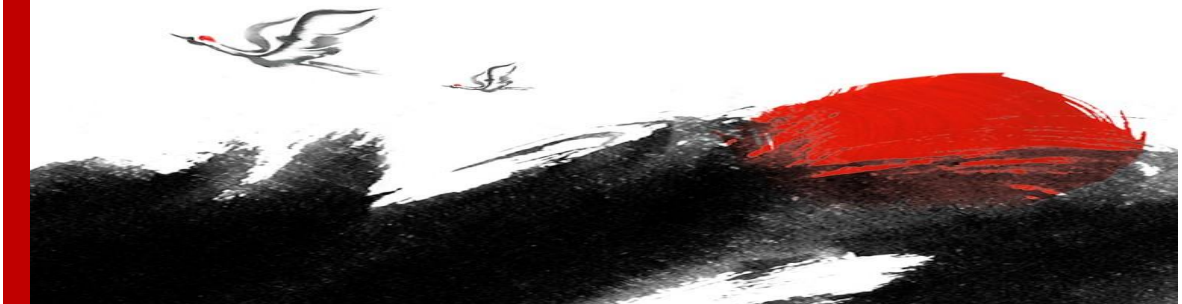
**II. Work (Engineer/Temporary/Contractor)**

**a. With “Certificate of Eligibility”**

Valid passport, visa application, photograph, and a original COE from the Ministry of Justice in Japan.

**b. Without “Certificate of Eligibility”**

Except the COE, you will need the above plus documents outlining the receiving organization and its business (copy of corporate registration, recent profit-and-loss statement, list of alien employee, etc.), documents certifying qualifications (i.e. CV), copy of contract describing the activity, duration, and position.





### **III. US Spouse/Dependent of a Japanese National**

#### **a. With “Certificate of Eligibility”**

Valid passport, visa application photograph, and an original COE from Ministry of Justice in Japan.

#### **b. Without “Certificate of Eligibility”**

Except the COE, you will need all of the above plus Japanese family register certifying the marriage.

##### **1b. If Japanese spouse (JS) is employed:**

A letter of guarantee from JS, JS's Certificate of Employment (COY), and Certificate of Tax Payment (COT)

##### **2b. If JS is not employed:**

A letter of guarantee from Japanese Guarantee (JG) residing in Japan, JG's COY, and COT.

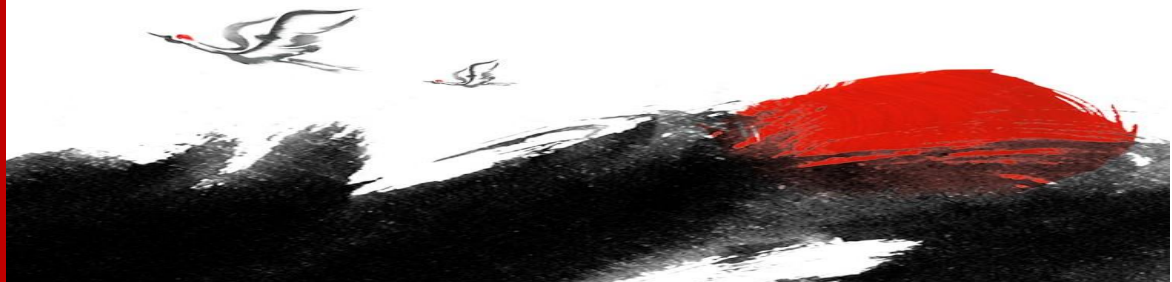
If you would like to come back to Japan after separating in the US, you will need to obtain a visa through the Japanese Embassy or consulate located in the US. For more information, visit:

##### **Japanese Embassy in Washington.**

<http://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/english/html>

##### **American Embassy in Tokyo**

<http://japan-usembassy.gov>





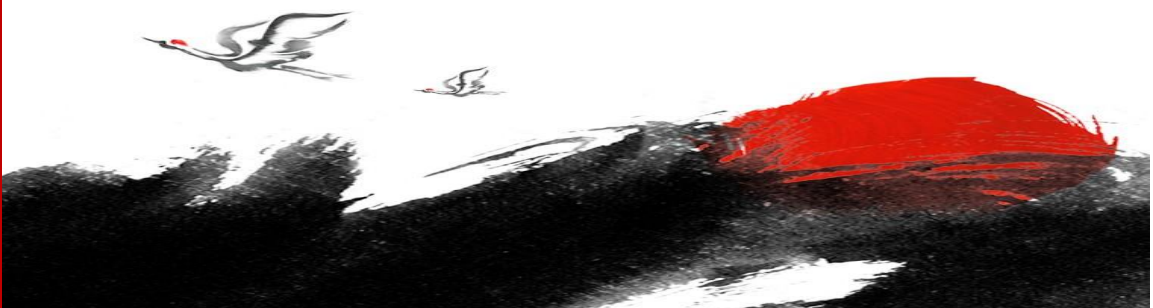
## **B. SOFA STATUS**

If you are currently an active duty member or a spouse of an active duty member, you have Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) status. With this, you have access to the military installations and the use of the facilities (commissary, hospital, gym, etc.). You also have a "Y" license plate for your car, the use of the USPS, and you may receive military assistance if involved in an accident and/or illness.

However, you lose the SOFA status when you separate from the military and/or upon completion of terminal leave. If you separate locally and on terminal leave, you still have SOFA until your separation date. Once you lose the SOFA status, you have 60 days to either obtain a visa or depart Japan. Although having SOFA status is not mandatory, finding a way to obtain this status will make it easier for your transition and stay in Okinawa.

## **C. MISCELLANEOUS**

If you, your spouse, and/or dependents reside in Japan longer than 90 days, you are required to register at the municipal office of the town or village in which you reside. Make sure you take your passport along with a statement of intention to stay in Japan.





If you are not a retiree, you will not have access to base facilities. You will be treated like a visitor and need to be sponsored to come on base.

If you elect to join the reserves, you and your family will receive an I.D. card, have access to military installations and receive TRICARE if you meet the requirements.

### **3. DRIVER LICENSE**

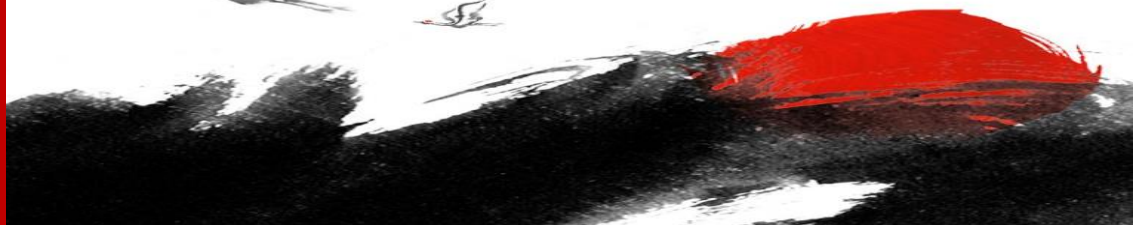
As mentioned earlier, by living here without SOFA, you will not have access to things you might have grown accustomed to. In addition, once you have decided to live in Japan without SOFA, you will need to obtain a Japanese Driver's License. An international Driver's Permit will not suffice.

To obtain a Japanese license or Gaimen Kirikae, you will need to bring the following to the Driver's License Center in Naha: a valid foreign driver's license (stateside) AND proof that you have stayed in the issuing country for at least 3 months total after obtaining the license.

Once you have those documents, you will need to go to the Driver's License Center and do the following: submit application documents, take the Aptitude test, complete a traffic rule knowledge check, and a driver's test. In addition, you will need to have your foreign driver's license translated into Japanese which has to be done through a JAF Translation Office.

To obtain the application form for the JAF, go to:

<http://www.jaf.or.jp/e/index.htm>







There is a fee of 3,000 YEN which is non-refundable and it usually takes 2-3 weeks to obtain the translation for the license.

After you obtain your translated driver's license, you will need to get a Certificate of Residence at your local Citizens' Affairs of your local prefecture. There is also a nominal fee for this certificate as well. After that, you can visit the Driver's Center with all of the above documentation along with 5,000 YEN between the hours of 0800-1200. The written test can only be taken on a certain day and will cost around 2,650 YEN. The driver's test is next which can take 2-3 weeks to get a time slot and cost around 3,500 YEN. (\*all of these fees are subject to change).

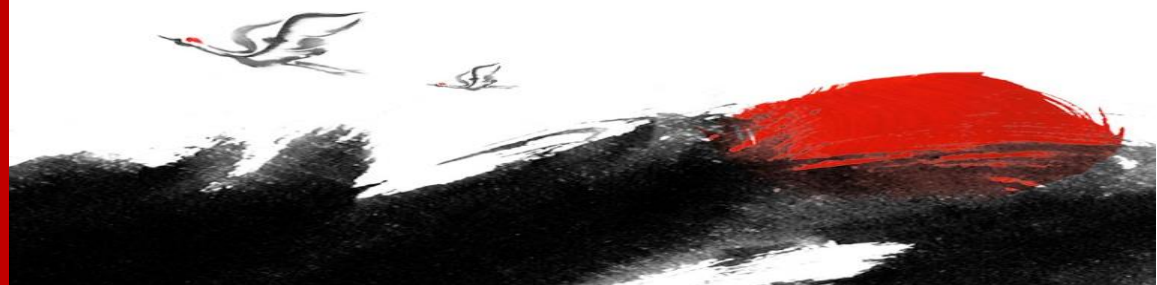
### **JAF Urasoe Office**

**Address:** 1-48-7 Maeda Urasoe-shi Okinawa, Japan.

**Office:** 098-877-9225

## **4. EMPLOYMENT**

There are two main types of employment on-island and on-base: Non Appropriated Funds (NAF) and Appropriated Funds (APF). With General Service (GS) jobs, a travel agreement and a housing allowance will not always be given when you are offered a position. Pay special attention to the job announcement to understand who the company is looking to hire (local hire, international candidate, and/or world-wide hire). If you have a visa, you might not be considered a world-wide hire and receive housing allowance.







You are allowed to apply for positions while on terminal leave from the military or 120 days before your separation date. Again, pay attention to the job announcement and contact the Human Resource office for further questions about the applications process.

There are contractor employment opportunities and the best way to learn about the jobs is through networking. Start asking around to see if anyone is hiring, what companies you might want to work for, and what positions are available.

**Vacancies are usually posted on:**

[www.mccsokinawa.com/jobs/](http://www.mccsokinawa.com/jobs/)

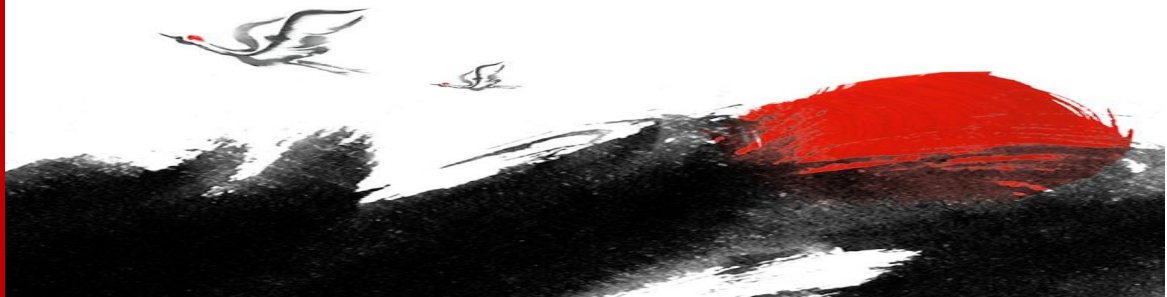
<http://www.usajobs.gov>

For a more extensive listing and to learn more about the Federal Application process, you can contact your local Transition and Employment office.

The Transition office holds monthly Federal Application, Resume and Interview workshops at Camp Foster, Schwab, Hansen, Kinser and Courtney.

To find more information about the benefits, SOFA availability, and other topics, contact the Human Resource office located on the job announcement.

You can also call **MCCS NAF HRO** at 645-3052 or **GS CHRO** at 645-2475





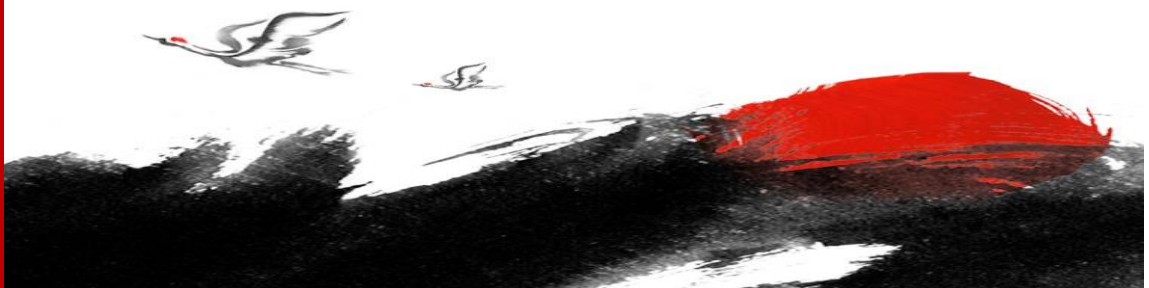
## 5. HOUSING

Looking for an apartment or house to rent in Okinawa can be challenging and frustrating. It is suggested that you bring a translator who can explain the terms of the lease. Also, keep in mind that some housing agencies will not rent to foreigners.

There are some noticeable differences between American housing and to Okinawa housing. These differences usually are less square footage, no a/c, no oven, pay for parking, bathroom facilities, no dryers, and the location of the washing machine. When renting, a Japanese sponsor might need to co-sign in the event the rent is not paid.

After the contract has been signed, there might be additional fees to include, but are not limited to the following:

- 1<sup>st</sup> month's rent and maintenance fees
- Insurance
- Housing Agency Fee (1 month rent)
- Deposit (1-3 months' rent)
- Reikin is non-refundable (1-3 months' rent)





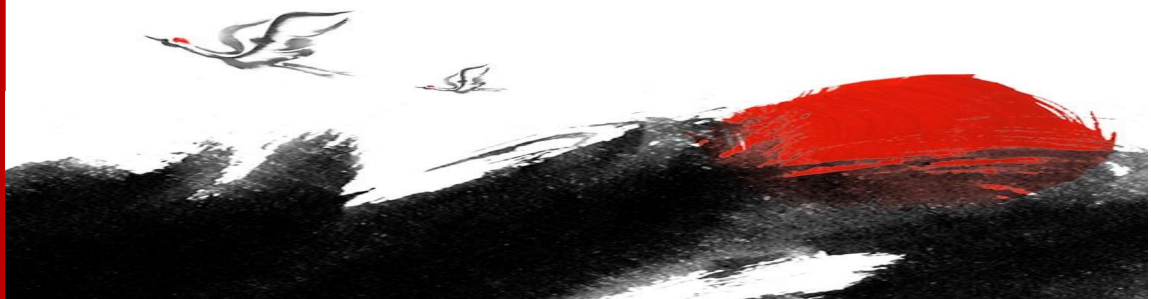
## 6. HEALTH CARE AND INSURANCE

### A. RETIREES

As a retiree, you are automatically enrolled in TRICARE Standard Overseas if your information is current in DEERS. You will receive care from either the host- nation provider or you can also be seen at the military treatment facility, but only on a space- available basis. In addition, you may have to pay the provider in full and then file a claim with TRICARE for reimbursement. For more information, visit <http://www.tricare.mil/Resources/Claims.aspx>

As a Separatee, you will not have the ability to get TRICARE. Once you obtain your long-term visa for Japan, you can enroll in Japan's national health insurance system. However, it does not pay for medical evacuation. If you do not get enrolled in the national health insurance system, you will need to pay the provider in full at the time of treatment. If you are paying in full, many places do not accept credit/debit cards or checks drawn on U.S. bank accounts.

If you have another type of U.S. health insurance, make sure you ask your provider if your stay in Japan will be covered. Not all insurance companies will cover you.





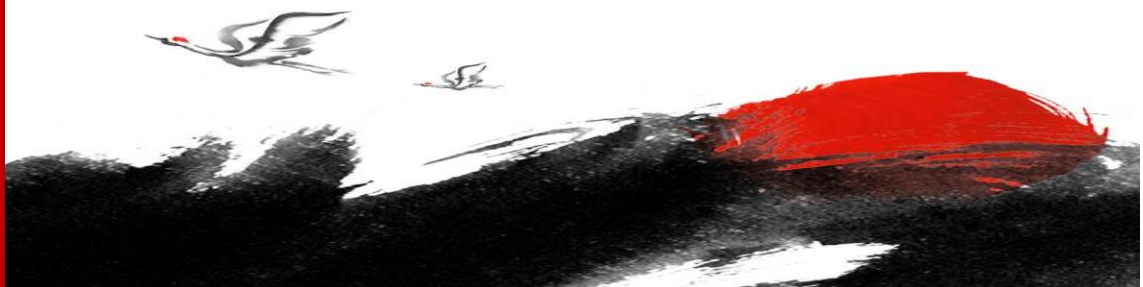
In addition, U.S. prescriptions are not honored in Japan and some common medication for things such as ADHD, are not widely available. You might also want to check out the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website to learn about local outbreaks and recommended vaccinations. You can visit their website at <http://www.cdc.gov/>

## **7. MISCELLANEOUS**

Japan is one of the most seismically (earthquakes) active locations in the world along with additional dangers such as tsunami and typhoons. If you would like to make sure you receive travel alerts and local advisors/ warnings, you can register in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>  
<https://step.state.gov/step/>

This is also beneficial because it always lets the U.S. government know that in the event of a crisis, how many U.S. citizens are located overseas, and how many they need to evacuate if the need arises.





## 8. FUTURE CHALLENGES

Besides the cultural barrier and new surroundings, there are other challenges that might be present later on. First, if you are unable to get SOFA and/or you are not a retiree, you will not have access to the hospital. Second, the military Distribution Management Office (DMO) gives you 364 days to decide if you want to stay here. Up until that mark, if you decide to leave the island, DMO will provide you with the same service as if you were PCSing. However, at day 365, DMO will no longer help you move your belongings.

## 9. RESOURCES

### Information about Japan from the U.S. Government

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/4142.htm>

### Japan Travel Alerts

<http://japan.usembassy.gov/e/acs/tacs-warden.html>

### Smart Traveler Enrollment Program

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/>

### U.S. Embassy in Japan

<http://japan.usembassy.gov/>

### Living On-Island Information

<https://sites.google.com/site/urasoeblog/>

### Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act

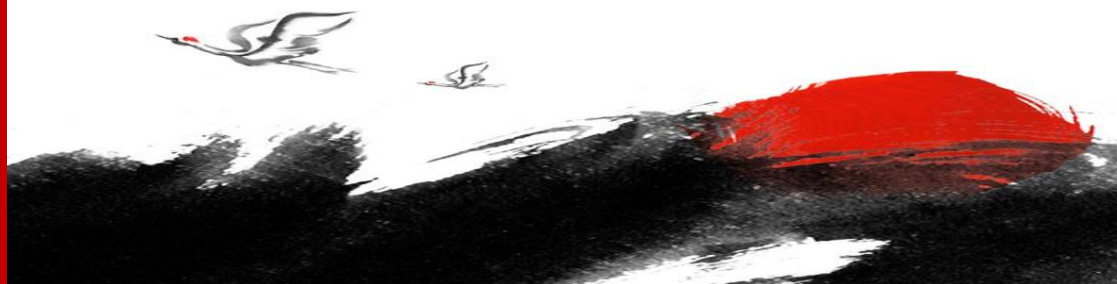
[http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/english/newimmiact/newimmiact\\_english.html](http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/english/newimmiact/newimmiact_english.html)

### US Consulate Office

**Office:** 098-876-4211

**Email:** NahaACS@state.gov

<http://naha.usconsulate.gov/contact.html>





If you would like additional assistance with finding employment, you can contact your local Transition Office.

CAMP LOCATION	PHONE NUMBER	BUILDING #
Camp Foster	645-3151	Bldg. 445
Camp Kinser	637-2815/1307	Bldg. 1220
Camp Hansen	623-305/7291	Bldg. 2339
Camp Schwab	625-2622/2699	Bldg. 3429
Camp Courtney	622-7332/7878	Bldg. 4425

## For additional information/assistance:

Relocation Office: 645-8395

Retired Activities Office: 645-3159

TRICARE Overseas Office: 646-7704

### Veteran Affairs and benefits:

VA representative on Camp Foster: 645-3508

Kadena: 634-3366

### Off-base housing:

Kadena Housing: 634-1430





*Courtesy of MCCS Marine & Family Programs  
Transition Readiness Program*

*Camp Foster*

*Okinawa, Japan*

*645-3151*

