



To all concerned

Information on implementation of “Campaign to Eliminate Fraudulent Acts” related to Technical Intern Training Program • Specified Skilled Worker Program in 2024

National Association for Global & Open Minded Communities
(NAGOMi)

To Supervising Organization, Registered Support Organization, Accepting Organization, Sending Organization, and Foreign Workers
Please cooperate in eliminating fraudulent acts to ensure proper employment of foreign workers

1. (1) On February 9th, 2024, the government's policy toward the revision of both systems (regarding the government's response based on the final report of the expert meeting on the state of the technical intern training program and the specified skilled worker program) was announced at the relevant ministerial meeting. On March 15th of the same year, a bill to partially amend the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Act on Proper Implementation of Technical Intern Training and Protection of Technical Intern Trainees was submitted to the current Diet session and passed plenary session of the House of Representatives on May 21st.

(2) One of the reasons for this program reform was the criticism both domestically and internationally regarding human rights violations (e.g. abusive language, violence, unpaid salaries, etc.) and frequent disappearances that were often reported in connection with the technical intern training program. For this reason, “protection of the human rights of foreigners” and “career advancement of foreigners” are specifically mentioned in the vision for reviewing the new system.

2. (1) In the business world, under the banner of “Business and Human Rights,” there is a need to ensure and publicize that there are no human rights violations in the supply chain (Human Rights Due Diligence, hereinafter referred to as “Human Rights DD”). Many Western countries have enacted laws that hold companies accountable for human rights violations such as forced labor and child labor (e.g., the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act in the United States and the Supply Chain Act in Germany), and violators

are subject to import ban and product boycott.

(2) Although it has not been legalized in Japan, the government created the “Action Plan on Business and Human Rights” in 2020, and in April 2023, made “Human Rights DD” a requirement for public construction and government procurement.

In the private sector, the Japan Business Federation (Keidanren) created a “Handbook for Respecting Human Rights” in 2021 to promote corporate awareness reform and voluntary initiatives. Nissho and Tosho also raise awareness of the importance of human rights DD through seminars and other activities. As a result, the number of companies implementing human rights DD is steadily increasing.

In 2022, the issue of unpaid overtime pays for 11 Vietnamese technical intern trainees at a garment company in Ehime came to light, and Wacoal, a major clothing company that ordered production, donated 5 million yen to a support organization for the trainees. Hankyu and Hanshin department stores have decided to discontinue sales of clothing produced on consignment by the company. Additionally, according to reports, since July of 2023, three megabanks Mitsubishi UFJ, Mitsui Sumitomo, and Mizuho have been conducting strict checks to ensure that there are no human rights violations such as forced labor in the supply chain when lending.

3. (1) The declining population and labor shortage issues in Japan are becoming more and more serious, and the future of Japan will depend on promoting capital investment (DX conversion) and becoming a country trusted and chosen by foreign human resources. This is a serious issue. Unfortunately, the depreciation of the yen over the past two years has greatly diminished Japan's attractiveness.

(2) In order to be a “country that is trusted and chosen by foreign human resources,” above all, it is important to revitalize the Japanese economy and increase wages, but we are living in an era where it is essential to reduce cases of human rights violations as much as possible.

To this end, it is necessary to “establish prompt and effective remedies” when human rights violations occur, and to “take strict punishment against violating companies.” In addition, from the perspective of reducing debt, which is one of the causes for disappearances, an important issue is the abolition or reduction of fees collected from foreign human resources, as advocated by the Vietnamese government and the ILO. Furthermore, from the perspective of Japan's security (to avoid creating anti-Japanese), it is important to create an environment (including career advancement in ssw) that allows foreign human resources to feel glad to have come to Japan.

4. (1) Since the spring of 2022 after the coronavirus pandemic, we have begun to hear of a relapse and spread of kickbacks and excessive entertainment from sending organizations to supervising organizations, which were slowing down. And, it is said that in the field of “Engineer/Specialist in Humanities/International Services” the number of “disguises” based on forged documents and false applications is increasing. Furthermore, in the field of specified skilled worker, malicious brokers are already operating behind the scenes, and eliminating them is an urgent issue. The number of requests for help from foreign human resources from various countries working under the specified skilled worker program to support organizations from each country in Japan is increasing.

(2) In dealing with these issues, the roles of the “Japanese government” and “sending country's government” are very important, but the awareness and efforts of “Japanese parties” (supervising organizations, registered support organizations, accepting organizations) and “sending country’s parties” (sending organizations, foreign human resources coming to Japan) are also very important.

From this perspective, we will promote a “Campaign to Eliminate Fraudulent Acts” related to the technical intern training program and specified skilled worker program for one year starting from June 2024.

We sincerely appreciate the cooperation of all concerned.