

Request for cooperation by business owners in supplying support funds/cash handouts to employees for unavoidable leave or absence from work due to COVID-19.

Guidelines regarding support funds and cash handouts for unavoidable leave or absence from work due to COVID-19:

This system supplies 80% of the wages (max. ¥11,000 per day) the employee was receiving before taking unavoidable leave, at no expense to the business owner, provided the employee meets the two conditions below:

- ① The employee works for a small-to-medium-sized business owner who, as a consequence of COVID-19, has asked that they take time off in the period between Apr. 1st, 2020 and Dec. 31st, 2020.
- ② The employee is unable to receive wages (leave allowance) during their leave or absence.

Request for business owners to fill out the “Payment Requirements Confirmation” form:

In order to provide support funds/cash handouts, a “Payment Requirements Confirmation” form needs to be submitted along with the employee’s request, serving as proof of the actual leave of absence taken. We ask that you kindly cooperate in filling out the “Payment Requirements Confirmation” form to ease the payment process.

《Notes》

- Filling out the “Payment Requirements Confirmation” form is for the purposes of authorizing a leave-allowance payment only, **not for judging the validity of payment obligation, as stipulated in Article 26 of the Labor Standards Act.**
- A **Labor Insurance Number** is required on the application. Should a business employ even one worker, it is deemed as covered by labor insurance, regardless of its type or scale – with the exception of select businesses in the agriculture, forestry and fishery industries. As such, this application procedure is mandatory.
- Should an employee **be made redundant, dismissed, or subject to any disadvantageous changes in working conditions as a direct result of applying for support funds/cash handouts, this decision may be invalidated in accordance with Labor Contract Law.** Moreover, the intentional allocation of low-level work far below an employee's ability or experience without just reason, or the absence of any work at all, may be deemed as power harassment in the workplace.

Workplace troubles, if any, relating to the application for support funds/cash handouts for unavoidable leave or absence from work: --- To all employees ---

Should you encounter any troubles in the workplace, such as dismissal or suspension of employment as a result of applying for support funds, please contact the Consulting Service for Foreign Workers of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

This service is located at prefectural labor bureaus and labor standards inspection offices nationwide, and accepts consultations on a one-stop basis for labor issues of varying kinds in fields such as dismissal, hiring, reassignment, wage reduction, bullying/harassment, and power harassment.

For inquiries regarding support funds and cash handouts for unavoidable leaves of absence:

- **For inquiries over the phone, please contact the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Call Center**
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare Call Center for COVID-19 Support Funds and Cash Handouts:
Tel. 0120-221-276 (8:30am - 8:00pm weekdays / 8:30am - 5:15pm weekends and holidays)

Q&A regarding information on support funds and cash handouts, as well as anything related to their respective application forms, can be found at the following specialist website for the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (please search “support funds and cash handouts”):

<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/kyugyoshienkin.html>



What qualifies as “leave or absence from work” taken due to COVID-19 and is therefore covered by support funds/cash handouts?

Leave or absence from work that is covered by support funds/cash handouts includes any leave or absence from work whereby the employee has been instructed to take time off, as a result of COVID-19, during a time when they would normally be required to work.

Payment of support funds/cash handouts **is to be authorized using the Payment Requirements Confirmation form, which needs to be jointly filled out by both the employee and the employer.** If this form establishes that the employer instructed the employee to take leave or absence from work, no other documents – including employment contracts et al. – will be required.

(NB) The above applies even in instances where the leave or absence is caused by external business operations. For example, **should a business or retailer inside a large facility, such as a shopping center, have to suspend business as a result of the entire shopping center closing due to COVID-19, this would still be considered as an employer (store manager) instructing an employee (store staff) to take time off from work.**

Regarding shift workers e.g. day-to-day laborers, registered dispatch workers etc.

These individuals will also be applicable to receive support funds/cash handouts, provided the employee and employer both agree that the employer instructed the employee to take time off from work, and then jointly prepare the Payment Requirements Confirmation form, while taking the cases below into consideration. **Even if the actual leave or absence from work taken cannot be confirmed with the “Payment Requirements Confirmation” form, the cases below will still be covered by support funds/cash handouts:**

Case I

Either (a) **specific working days, such as “work # days a week”, are stipulated as employment conditions on the employment contract;** or (b) **the shift schedule had already been submitted for the month in which the application for support funds/cash handouts is made,** and the employer confirms that it is correct.

Case II

The employee has worked 4 or more days a month, for a period of more than 6 months, which can be verified with a payroll slip; and that, had there been no COVID-19 outbreak, these working conditions would have continued in the months during which the support funds/cash handouts are to be provided (this excludes cases, however, in which leave or absence was caused by reasons other than COVID-19).

Points to Consider

- If the employer does not cooperate in preparing the Payment Requirements Confirmation form, the employee can still apply and state as such on the form. Should this be the case, the Prefectural Labour Bureau will meet directly with the employer to confirm this and then request their cooperation.
- There may also be instances in which the Prefectural Labour Bureau asks the employer or employee to submit any further documents that are deemed relevant. Cooperation would be most appreciated in such cases.

For those who have already received a Denial of Payment Notification

The decision regarding the payment or non-payment of support funds for leave or absence from work is final and cannot be changed for the month in which an application has already been submitted. However, even if the provision of support funds/cash handouts has already been denied owing to a lack of confirmation regarding the “actual leave or absence” or the “reality of one’s employment”, it is possible to submit a fresh application if the case is applied for as listed on this leaflet. If so, a copy of the Denial of Payment Notification along with the documents required for the application including the application form etc. need to be submitted.