

GMS Flash Alert

Immigration

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Japan – Business Manager Visa Reforms Take Effect

On 10 October 2025, the Ministry of Justice of Japan promulgated an amended ministerial ordinance that tightens the requirements and criteria for the “Business Manager” visa in Japan. Under the new rules, the minimum capital requirement will be raised to 30 million yen (six times the previous amount). Additional requirements include Japanese language proficiency, management experience, and the employment of full-time staff.

The new eligibility requirements will take effect on 16 October.¹

WHY THIS MATTERS

The amendments to the “Business Manager” visa represent a significant tightening of requirements and criteria for foreign entrepreneurs and managers operating in Japan. The reforms introduce important, stricter requirements:

- substantial increase in the minimum capital requirement,
- creation of new employment,
- Japanese language proficiency,
- career/academic criteria, and
- professional verification of business plans.

These changes will directly impact on both new applicants and current Business Manager visa as well as the Highly Skilled Professional (i)(c) and (ii) visa holders for renewal procedures. In other words, the new rules are applicable to the new applicant (to enter Japan) and to those already living in Japan under Business Manager, Highly Skilled Professional (i)(c) and Highly Skilled Professional (ii) visas for extension of period of stay and status change.

Highlights of Before October 16 and After (Including) October 16

The table on the next page offers a comparison of the situation before and after the amendments, highlighting the key changes, improvements, and implications brought about by the revised provisions.^{2,3,4,5}

Category	Before	After (effective October 16)	Implication
Capital requirements	Minimum: JPY 5 million	Minimum: JPY 30 million (six-fold increase)	Aims to foster substantive business operations and prevent nominal company establishments.
Employment requirements	No obligation	Mandatory employment of at least one full-time employee who is a Japanese national, a permanent resident, spouse of Japanese national, spouse/child of permanent resident or long-term resident.	Highlights the necessity of substantive business activities.
Japanese language requirement	No requirement	Either the applicant or one of the full-time employees must possess a sufficient level of Japanese language; CEFR B2 level or higher. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JLPT (Japanese Language Proficiency Test) N2 or higher. • BJT Business Japanese Proficiency Test 400 points or higher. • 20+ years of residence in Japan as a mid-to-long-term resident. • Graduation from a Japanese university or other higher education institution. • Completion of Japanese compulsory education and graduation from high school. 	Fosters adaptability to Japanese society and business environment.
Career and academic background requirement	No requirement	Master's degree or higher in business or related field, or at least three years of management experience.	Importance placed on the qualities required for business management personnel.
Review of business plans by certificated professionals	No requirement	Business plans must be validated by certified professionals (small and medium enterprise management consultant, certified public accountant, or tax accountant).	Business plans must be specific, reasonable, and feasible.
Compliance with tax and social insurance obligations (for renewals)	Basic verification	Verification of details including the status of labor insurance coverage, the status of social insurance coverage, and the payment status of national and local taxes to be paid by the business establishment.	Establishes legal obligations and social responsibilities as a member of Japanese society.

Source: KPMG in Japan

Other Key Points

Business Activities – Actual business operations will be strictly reviewed.

Business Premises – Applicants are required to have physical business premises suitable for the scale of their operations. Virtual offices or nominal addresses will not be accepted.

Overseas Travel During Stay – An extended absence from Japan during the period of stay without a valid reason will be considered as a lack of actual activities in Japan, and permission for extension of stay will not be granted.

Acquisition of the Permits and Licenses Required for Business Operations – Obligated to submit documents certifying the necessary permits and licenses related to the business.

KPMG INSIGHTS

Impact on Current Business Manager Visa and Highly Skilled Professional (i)(c) Visa Holders

- Applications for Permanent Residency and Highly Skilled Professional⁶: The new rules will be equally applied to the Highly Skilled Professional (i)(c) - Advanced Business Management activities, and those Highly Skilled Professional (ii) holders who previously changed from Highly Skilled Professional (i)(c). The application will not be accepted if the applicant does not meet the new requirements at the time of application for permanent residency from Business Manager, Highly Skilled Professional (i)(c), or Highly Skilled Professional (ii) (where activities are based on Business Manager) or the individual's status changed from Highly Skilled Professional (i)(c) to Highly Skilled Professional (ii).
- Renewal Procedure⁷: For those already holding a Business Manager or Highly Skilled Professional (i)(c) visa who do not meet the new requirements at the time of the extension application submitted between 16 October 2025 and 16 October 2028, the Immigration Bureau will make a decision based on the business situation and the prospect of meeting the amended permit criteria.

For applications to extend the period of stay submitted after three years have passed since the effective date, it is necessary to meet the amended permit criteria.

If assignees planning to enter Japan to work or those who are current holders of visa types as noted above and/or their program managers who are responsible for their mobile employees' travel and immigration affairs have any questions or concerns about the new requirements, their potential impacts, and appropriate next steps, they should consult with their qualified immigration adviser or a member of the immigration team with KPMG in Japan (see the Contacts section).

FOOTNOTES:

1 Published by the Ministry of Justice (in Japanese): <https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/content/001448236.pdf>.

2 Published by the Ministry of Justice (in Japanese): <https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/content/001448237.pdf>.

3 Published by the Immigration Services Agency (in Japanese): https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/applications/resources/10_00237.htm.

FOOTNOTES (cont'd):

4 Published by the Immigration Services Agency (in Japanese):
<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/content/001448231.pdf>.

5 Published by the Immigration Services Agency (in Japanese):
<https://www.moj.go.jp/isa/content/001448070.pdf>.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

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Contact Us

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The information contained in this newsletter was submitted by the KPMG International member firm in Japan.

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