

# GUIDE TO FOREIGN PRESS REGISTRATION CARD

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## QUICK START GUIDE FOR NEWLY ARRIVED JOURNALISTS

The Foreign Press Registration Card facilitates your access to press occasions provided by official organizations including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Prime Minister's Office, Diet and other governmental agencies.

First, please refer to the **Attachment 1** to have a bird's-eye view on what you need for application.

Then please read **Section 5.** carefully to prepare for application and make it processed smoothly.

When you are ready to apply, please send an application form and related documents to the Foreign Press Center, Japan (FPCJ) by e-mail in accordance with **Section 4.**

After roughly one-month interval for processing, please refer to **Section 6.** to collect your card.

## 1. Foreign Press Registration Card (FPR Card)

- (1) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) issues a Foreign Press Registration Card (FPR Card) to support news-gathering activities of those residing in Japan and engaging in foreign media organizations. Applications for the FPR Card are accepted by the Foreign Press Center, Japan (FPCJ) on behalf of MOFA.
- (2) The FPR Card offers you the following advantages.
  - (a) The bearer is eligible to attend press conferences held at MOFA without prior registration and being escorted by a Ministry's staff member in the MOFA premises.
  - (b) MOFA sends the bearers its press releases in English and press conference/briefing notices immediately upon their becoming available for release.
  - (c) The bearer can attend press conferences at several other Ministries and agencies.
  - (d) Possession of the FPR Card is one of the requirements for news coverage at the Diet and the Prime Minister's Office.

## 2. Basic Requirements for FPR Card Issuance

- (1) The applicant is required to be a professional journalist who:
  - (a) Is employed by or regularly contracted to media organizations headquartered outside Japan, and
  - (b) Conducts news gathering and other journalistic activities.
- (2) Freelance journalists may also be eligible to hold an FPR Card if they submit an employment certificate attesting to the presence of a regular contract with media organizations headquartered outside Japan.
- (3) Those to whom one or more of the following categories apply are **NOT ELIGIBLE** to have the FPR Card issued:
  - Those related to media organizations headquartered in Japan;
  - Those engaging in journalistic activities as a side job;
  - Those who only assist visiting journalists in news coverage;
  - Those not residing in Japan;
  - Those involved in media organizations but not engaging in journalistic activities such as drivers and escorts;
  - Those related to media organizations that (i) cover only limited areas of interest without reporting on political, diplomatic, economic, social and other topical news -

- i.e. for example fashion or entertainment magazines) or, (ii) can hardly be regarded as engaging in journalistic activities for commercial purposes such as house bulletins;
- Those related to program production firms who cannot certify regular contract/employment relations with TV companies that own broadcasting networks;
  - Those deemed to have no track record of regular journalistic activities; or
  - Those who have submitted flawed documents.
- (4) If the applicant is a non-Japanese national, he/she must in principle possess one of the following types of status of residence:
- Journalist;
  - Permanent resident;
  - Spouse or child of Japanese national; or
  - Long-term resident.

### 3. General Terms and Conditions

#### (1) Objectives

MOFA issues the FPR Card for your convenience in conducting journalistic activities such as attending press conferences and briefings held at MOFA and using report assistance services extended by the FPCJ. **It CANNOT be used as a substitute for an identification card in any term under any condition.**

#### (2) Term of Validity

The FPR Card is valid for one year from the date of issue. However, the FPC card of a non-Japanese national will expire if their status of residence, passport or alien registration card expires or otherwise becomes invalid. As a result, the expiry date of an FPR Card is set on (a) the expiry date of the status of residence, (b) the expiry date of passport, or (c) the 30th day after the starting date of the renewal period of the alien registration card, when whichever the date that comes first among (a), (b) and (c) falls within one-year after the issuance of the FPR Card.

The FPC card will be invalid when a bearer loses one or more requirements for its possession before its expiry date, and the bearer is then required to return the card to the FPCJ immediately for void.

#### (3) Request for Renewal Procedure

**An expired FPR Card is invalid WITHOUT EXCEPTION. A journalist desiring to maintain an FPR Card is called upon to go through a renewal procedure promptly before the term of validity of the current FPR Card expires.**

#### (4) Request for Return of FPR Card

Please return the FPR Card to the FPCJ, WITHOUT DELAY, when the bearer:

- Leaves Japan for a job transfer and other reasons;
- Terminates journalistic activities due to retiring, expiration of contract, or any other reason;
- Changes professional affiliation to another media organization;
- Receives a renewed FPR Card; or
- Has the current card expire.

If the bearer fails to return the FPR Card when required, MOFA may turn down the applications for FPR Card issuance made by his/her successor or by other journalists employed by or contracted to the organization that the bearer belongs to.

#### (5) Request for Report on Changes in Entries in Application Form

Please report to MOFA and the FPCJ immediately upon any change in the information stated in the application form. In case of a change in professional affiliation to another media organization, the bearer is required to apply for a new FPR Card on which the new affiliation shall be inscribed, even if the current card remains valid.

(NOTE: Applications can be made before the actual job transfer takes place. On the other hand, the previous card expires on the date when you leave the previous job, and, if the application process is not yet completed at that time, you are NOT eligible for any benefit for FPR Card bearers until a new card is delivered to you.)

#### (6) Loss of FPR Card

If a bearer has lost his/her FPR Card, report the loss to the police and at the same time to MOFA and the FPCJ immediately, irrespective of the bearer's desire to have a new FPR Card. Please use the attached "Report of Lost Card" form to report the loss to MOFA. If this Notice is not submitted appropriately, MOFA may turn down the application for a FPR Card (or its renewal) made by the applicants who affiliate to the organization that the bearer of the lost card belongs to.

### 4. Application Procedure

**All applications for FPR Card shall be made electronically**, with limited exceptional cases described in NOTE below.

When you apply, you are requested to attach the following electronic files to an application e-mail:

- (a) A completed Application Form;
- (b) A JPEG-formatted full-face color photograph of the applicant of 1MB or less with 7:9 horizontal-vertical ratio of length; and
- (c) Other PDF-formatted documents necessary for application (further elaborated in 5. below).

Please always use “Application for FPR Card” as the subject title of an application e-mail. **Submission of necessary documents stored in a compact disk, memory card or any other removable memory devices shall NOT be permitted.**

If you are ready, please e-mail all these materials to [presscard#fpcjpn.or.jp](mailto:presscard#fpcjpn.or.jp). You are recommended to use a “message viewed” notice to ensure the delivery has been made successfully. (For security reasons, the e-mail address above contains “#” instead of “@”. When you actually send an e-mail for application, please replace “#” with “@”.)

NOTE:

**The FPCJ accepts the Application Form and applicant’s face photograph ONLY ELECTRONICALLY. Non-electronic transmission of OTHER documents is accommodated only when you find it difficult to digitalize them.**

If you desire to make non-electronic submission, please submit the documents either **in person** or **by post** to the address below after sending the Application Form and photograph by e-mail. **Please also note that the submission of documents via fax transmission is NOT permitted.**

Please also be reminded that non-electronic submission will result in a longer time for processing your application.

Foreign Press Center, Japan (Press Card Application)

6F, Nippon Press Center Building,  
2-2-1, Uchisaiwaicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 100-0011 Japan  
TEL: 03-3501-5251 (Coordination & Planning Division)

## 5. Documents Required

There are four categories of application listed below:

- (1) Application for Initial Issuance: For a journalist who has not held an FPR Card in the past;
- (2) Application for Renewal Issuance: For a journalist possessing a valid FPR Card currently or one who has had an FPR Card issued before;
- (3) Application for Change of Affiliations: When a journalist possessing a valid/invalid FPR Card changes the media organizations he/she belongs to; and

(4) Application for Reissuance upon Loss: For a journalist who has lost his/her FPR Card.

**Please refer to the Attachment 1 for the details of requirements for each category.** When you fill in or prepare respective documents, please read the following notes carefully.

**Please also note again that (A) and (B) below shall be submitted electronically. Applicants are strongly recommended to submit (C) to (I) electronically as well (using the Attachments for (E) and (I), while converting the other documents into the PDF), only unless the digitalization of these documents are extremely difficult.**

- (A) **Application Form (Attachment 2)**: Please provide accurate information in as many details as possible.
- (B) **Applicant's Full-Color Photograph**: Photographs shall be JPEG-formatted with 7:9 horizontal-vertical ratio of length, taken within the past six months.
- (C) **Certificate of Applicant's Affiliation**: Please attach the original letter that certifies the employment, contract or any other working relationship between applicant and media organization.
  - (i) Letter shall be written within the past three months and signed by a person who has authority over the personnel affairs of the media organization;
  - (ii) **Please send the letter in PDF format upon application first, and then submit the original copy of the letter by the time when the applicant collects his/her FPR Card. The FPR Card shall NOT be delivered without the submission of the original copy.**
  - (iii) **If the submitted copy of the letter fails to be confirmed as original, the applicant may be requested to return the delivered Card, and his/her future applications may be turned down.**
- (D) **Proof of regular contributions to the media**: The applicants who belong to media organizations other than TV or radio stations (i.e. writers and photographers of print or on-line newspapers or magazines) are requested to submit material that can certify his/her regular contributions to the media.
  - (i) **Writers** are requested to submit bylined articles written within the past three months in principle.
  - (ii) **Photographers** are requested to submit photographs with name credit, taken within the three months in principle and published in newspapers or magazines.

- (E) **Overview of Media Organization (Attachment 3)**: Applicant who is the first person of a newly established Tokyo Bureau to make any application for FPR Card is requested to submit basic information concerning his/her organization.
- (F) **Identification**:
- (i) **Non-Japanese nationals** are requested to submit a photocopy of passport, which shall include the pages presenting the bearer's photograph, passport number, date of issue and expiry, and status of residence and its expiry date issued by Japan's immigration authorities.
  - (ii) **Japanese nationals** are requested to submit a photocopy of official photo ID such as passport or driver's license.
- (G) **Photocopy of Alien Registration Card (Non-Japanese national applicants only)**: Please submit the **PHOTOCOPIES OF BOTH SIDES** of the Registration Card. To be eligible for the FPR Card, it must indicate either that the applicant's occupation is professional journalist or that he/she belongs to a foreign media organization.
- (H) **Previous FPR Card**: Please return the previous Card upon collecting a new card.
- (I) **Report of Lost Card (Attachment 4)**: Please be reminded that those who have lost FPR Cards are requested to file the loss BOTH to the police and issuer (MOFA).

## 6. Examination and Collection

- (1) After an applicant makes an application to the FPCJ, documents will be forwarded to and examined by MOFA. For the purpose of examination, MOFA may contact the Tokyo Bureau or the headquarters of the organization to which an applicant is affiliated, or applicant himself/herself. The applicant may also be requested to submit additional documents.
- (2) Our experience indicates that approximately one-month period is required after receiving application to issue an FPR Card. Upon completing the issuance process, a staff member at each collection point listed below will contact the applicant to advise him/her that the card is ready for collection. If you are not contacted by the staff at each collection point within one month after the date of application, please make inquiry to the relevant collection point.
- (3) Again, in the case of renewal or change in professional affiliation, please return the previous FPR Card upon collection of a new FPR Card.

### Card Collection Point

Types of application	Collection Point
Initial	MOFA
Renewal	FPCJ
Change in affiliations	FPCJ
Reissuance upon loss	MOFA

### 7. Contact Information

#### (1) Ministry of Foreign Affairs (International Press Division)

2-2-1, Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 100-8919, Japan

TEL: 03-5501-8134

#### (2) Foreign Press Center, Japan

6F, Nippon Press Center Building,

2-2-1, Uchisaiwaicho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, 100-0011, Japan

TEL: 03-3501-5251 (Coordination & Planning Division)

E-mail: [presscard#fpcjpn.or.jp](mailto:presscard#fpcjpn.or.jp)

**(As explained in 4. (1) above, please replace “#” with “@” to make it effective as an e-mail address.)**

(END)