

Article 4 : Life in Yamagata

1 About Yamagata

Yamagata, translated to English, means “Mountain Shape,” and as might be expected, there are many famous mountains within the prefecture. In the north sits Mt. Chokai. In the middle of the prefecture are located the three mountains of Dewa, deemed to be holy, and each having a famous temple. In the Murayama region lies Mt. Zao, a mountain with many hot springs, and a well-known ski resort.

The prefecture is well known for its fruit, earning the nickname “Orchard Kingdom.” The vast majority of Japan’s cherries and pears are grown here, along with other fruits such as apples, grapes, and peaches. And the beef produced in the southern Okitama region, named after its main city of Yonezawa, has been known for over a hundred and fifty years as being very high in quality.

Yamagata also supports a burgeoning industrial sector. Yamagata is active in research and production in cutting-edge, high-tech fields such as nanotechnology, organic electroluminescence, and ultra-high precision processing technology, among others.

Yamagata Prefecture is located about 300 km north of the nation's capital Tokyo.

Yamagata City is the capital and largest city of Yamagata Prefecture. Two of the four YU college campuses are in this city. Yonezawa City and Tsuruoka City, where two other YU campuses are based, are two of the other largest cities in the prefecture.

2 Postal services (domestic/international)

The symbol of post offices is red 〒, and mail boxes in Japan are basically red. Post offices also handle banking and insurance services. You can open an account at the post office just like you would at a bank.

Post offices are open on weekdays from 9 am to 5 pm. (Some offices may be open on the weekends and late at night.) Banking and insurance services are handled from 9 am to 4 pm, Monday through Friday.

If you move and notify the post office of the change in address, mail sent to the old address will be automatically forwarded to the new address for one year.

【Yamagata Area】

Name	Location	Telephone No.	Office Hours
Yamagata Central Post Office 1-7-14 Tokamachi Yamagata city	15 minutes from Kojirakawa Campus by feet.	023-622-2180	Mon. ~Fri. 9:00~19:00 Sat. 9:00~17:00 Sun. Holidays 9:00~12:30
Nanokamachi 5 th Post Office 5-13-27 Nanokamachi Yamagata city	5 minutes from Kojirakawa Campus by feet.	023-631-3087	Mon. ~Fri. 9:00~17:00 Sat. Closed Sun. Holidays Closed
YU Hospital Post Office 2-2-2 Iida-Nishi Yamagata city	On the 1 st floor of YU Hospital	023-631-1103	Mon. ~Fri. 9:00~16:00 Sat. Closed Sun. Holidays Closed

【Yonezawa Area】

Name	Location	Telephone No.	Office Hours
Yonezawa Post Office 3-1-43 Kanaike Yonezawa city	35 minutes from Yonezawa Campus By feet	0238-22-5005	Mon. ~Fri. 9:00~19:00 Sat. Closed Sun. Holidays Closed
Yonezawa Jyohnan Post Office 4-1-1 Jyounnan Yonezawa city	2 minutes from Yonezawa Campus By feet	0238-22-9429	Mon. ~Fri. 9:00~17:00 Sat. Closed Sun. Holidays Closed

【Tsuruoka Area】

Name	Location	Telephone No.	Office Hours
Tsuruoka Post Office 4-15 san-noh-cho Tsuruoka city	20 minutes from Tsuruoka Campus By feet	0235-22-7751	Mon. ~Fri. 9:00~19:00 Sat. 9:00~15:00 Sun. Holidays Closed
Tsuruoka Wakaba-cho Post Office 22-6 Wakaba-cho Tsuruoka city	8 minutes from Tsuruoka Campus By feet	0235-22-4267	Mon. ~Fri. 9:00~19:00 Sat. Closed Sun. Holidays Closed

3 Bank services

Japanese people tend to deposit extra money on hand into the bank or in the post office savings bank and withdraw cash as needed.

When opening a new savings account at the bank, you are required to bring the cash you'd like to deposit and your Residency Card. You must fill out a designated form with your name, address and signature. You will receive a savings bankbook.

In addition, it is useful to create an ATM card (called cash card in Japan) when opening a savings account at the bank. You will be required to register a 4-digit personal identification number (PIN) for the card. This card allows you to instantly withdraw or deposit money into your account through an ATM at any branches of the bank. You can withdraw money at any bank with an ATM card.

【Around each Campus】

Area	Name	Address	Telephone No.
Yamagata	Yamagata Bank Head Office	3-1-2 Nanokamachi Yamagata City	023-623-1221
	Yamagata Bank Higashi-Yamagata Branch	1-8-26 Kojirakawa Yamagata city	023-624-2225
	Yamagata Bank Daigaku Byouin- mae Branch	1-2-17 Iida-nishi Yamagata city	023-624-1220

	Kirayaka Bank Sakura-machi Branch	7-35 Sakura-machi Yamagata city	023-625-8877
	Kirayaka Bank Kojirakawa Branch	2-2-20Kojirakawa Yamagata city	023-631-0715
	Shonai Bank Yamagata-minami Branch	2-1-3 Suwa-machi Yamagata city	023-622-1728
Yonezawa	Yamagata Bank	1-2-25 Hon-cho Yonezawa city	0238-21-6202
Tsuruoka	Yamagata Bank	9-18 Hiyoshi-cho Tsuruoka city	0235-22-1555

4 Telephone

How to Dial Direct

Within Japan

Dial the number. Cell phones cannot call toll free numbers (0120 prefix). 0120 numbers are free to call from landlines.

Outside of Japan

- 1) Dial the international dialing access code (001, 0041 or 0061) followed by 010, then dial the country code of the country you are calling. If the phone number you want to call starts with a 0, drop the 0 and dial everything else.

For example, to call the US number (123) 456-7890, dial 001+010+1+123-456-7890. Note that this method will work from any Japanese phone, however it is the most expensive way to make an international call. Most service providers offer an international calling program that is cheaper but requires registration.

- 2) International calling cards can be bought at convenience stores and online. Shop around for the best rates for the particular country that you wish to call.
- 3) Skype, iPhone and others work with an internet connection.

Telephone services

Police 110

(Car accident, Crime)

Emergency 119

(When you need an ambulance due to a sudden illness or injury, or in case of a fire)

5 Newspapers

Newspapers can be bought at convenience stores and KIOSKs. You can have them delivered if you subscribe. You can also read newspapers in the university libraries for free.

6 Radio and TV

There are 7 channels (including 2 satellite channels) on TV, 8 channels (5 FM channels) on radio in Yamagata.

People who have a TV need to make a Receiving Contract with NHK.

7 Gas, Electricity and Water

Make sure you apply for electricity, gas and water before you move in. Procedures may vary depending on the area.

1) Gas

There are two types of gas: town gas and propane gas.

The type of gas in your home will depend on the area which you live.

2) Electricity

You must contact Tohoku Electric Power. You should find a card from the company located in your new home, on which you can write your address and name, and mail it to the power company.

3) Water

You can drink tap water safely at home.

【Yamagata Area】

Category	Name	Telephone No.	Procedures for moving	
Town gas	Yamagata Gas	023-623-0085	Contact by 5 days	Address, Name, Telephone no., Number of Customer, Moving time, New address
Electricity	Tohoku Electric Power	0120-175-266		
Water	Yamagata City Water	023-645-1177		

【Yonezawa Area】

Category	Name	Telephone No.	Procedures for moving	
Electricity	Tohoku Electric Power	0120-175-266	Contact by 5 days	Name, Address, Number of Customer, Moving time, New Address
Water	Yonezawa City Water	023-22-4511		

【Tsuruoka Area】

Category	Name	Telephone No.	Procedures for moving	
Town gas	Tsuruoka Gas	0235-25-0011	Contact by 5 days	Name, Address, Number of Customer, Moving time, New Address
Electricity	Tohoku Electric Power	0120-175-266		
Water	Tsuruoka City Water	0235-23-7731		

8 Garbage

Waste management practices differ depending on the area (municipality) you live in. Residents are required to sort out garbage accordingly and put it out on a specified day of the week, time and place. Oversized items and items that are hard to dispose of are collected with a charge or may not be collected at all. Since there are various rules for garbage collection in Japan, it is important to check with your real estate agent, neighbor and/or local office if there is anything you are not sure about.

Example of Sorting : Combustible garbage, Incombustible garbage, Recyclable waste, Oversized garbage

9 Information for accompanying family

1) Education

In general, education in Japan consists of three years in kindergarten, six years in elementary school, three years in junior high school, three years in high school and four years in university (two years in junior college). The nine-year education in elementary and junior high schools, from 6 to 15 years old, is mandatory in Japan.

Non-Japanese children between ages 6 and 15 are entitled to receive an education at a public school. They are not only accepted free of charge but are provided with necessary extra lessons and activities that help them learn Japanese and adapt to regular classroom settings.

2) Everyday family life

There are many Volunteer groups to support international students and their families in every city in Yamagata. They provide interesting events that you can join with your family. Advertising flyers are on the wall at the students' services section on each campus.

3) Counselling Help Desks for Foreign Residents

Counseling staff are comprised of native speakers of several languages, so they can offer insights into both your culture and that of Japan. Both male and female counsellors are available to help you. Please feel free to call them. For more information on counselling and interpreting services throughout the prefecture, ask at the Yamagata Prefectural Office.

1 0 Bike registry

Bicycles are categorized as vehicles and bicycle riders must follow the traffic rules. When purchasing a bicycle, be sure to have it registered for theft prevention (BOHANTOROKU).