

JAPAN 1997

1. Overview of the system

Unemployed persons can receive an unemployment insurance benefit for a period varying with the age and the employment record of the claimant. Social assistance is also available for persons with limited means; it includes a housing aid. Income tested family benefits can be obtained, as well as non means-tested lone parent benefits. Income-related child-care costs are paid for children under 5. Central and local government taxation is individual. The 1997 APW earnings level is ¥ 4 273 736. It is assumed that 80 per cent of this amount is in standard earnings, and 20 per cent is in the form of an annual bonus.

2. Unemployment insurance

2.1 *Conditions for receipt*

2.1.1 Employment conditions

Minimum of 6 months of insured work in the last 12 months, with minimum 20 hours of work per week.

2.1.2 Contribution conditions

2.2 *Calculation of benefit amount*

2.2.1 Calculation of gross benefit

The benefit is calculated from the daily reference earnings (DRE). DRE are earnings of the last 6 months, excluding bonuses, divided by 180 days:

$$\text{DRE} = [(\text{annual gross earnings} / 2) * 80\%] / 180$$

A benefit ratio (BR) is then calculated, with the following formula:

$$\text{BR} = 0.8 + [(0.2 * (4\ 180 - \text{DRE})) / (10\ 100 - 4\ 180)]$$

The annual benefit is the product of the daily reference earnings, the benefit ratio, and the number of days the benefit is paid during the year, that is 365 days per year:

$$\text{benefit} = \text{DRE} * \text{BR} * 365$$

The maximum benefit is ¥ 2 963 000.

2.2.2 *Income and earnings disregards*

It is not means-tested, the benefit stops when income is earned from work. Means-tested social assistance can complement the unemployment benefit.

2.3 *Tax treatment of benefit*

Not taxable.

2.4 *Benefit duration*

It is paid on a 7-day week basis, after a 7-day waiting period, for a period that varies from 90 to 300 days according to the employment record and the age of the recipient, as follows:

Unemployment benefit duration (in days, 7 days per week)				
Insured employment (months)	Age of recipient			
	18-29	30-44	45-59	60-64
6 - 12	90	90	90	90
13 - 60	90	90	180	240
61 - 120	90	180	210	300
121 - 240	180	210	240	300
241 +	180	210	300	300

A unique feature in the unemployment benefit system is the re-employment benefit: a lump-sum amount is paid to an unemployment benefit recipient if the beneficiary takes up employment before the duration of the benefit ends (see table below):

Total duration of unemployment (days)	Remaining duration (days)	Daily lump sum benefit (¥)
300	200-300	120
	150-199	70
	100-149	30
240	160-240	90
	120-159	50
	80-119	30
210	140-210	85
	105-139	50
	70-104	30
180	120-180	80
	90-119	50
	60-89	30
90	60-90	45
	45-59	30

2.5 *Treatment of particular groups*

2.5.1 *Young persons*

None.

2.5.2 *Older workers*

None.

3. **Unemployment assistance**

None.

4. **Social assistance**

Social assistance consist of seven parts or aids, provided for those who are unable to provide minimum living standards. These are: livelihood aid, housing aid, medical aid, occupational aid, education aid, maternity aid, and funeral aid. Only livelihood aid and housing aid are considered here. The selected rates are classified as Grade 1-1, as payed in Osaka and Tokyo.

4.1 *Conditions for receipt*

It is tested against gross earned income.

4.2 Calculation of benefit amount

4.2.1 Calculation of gross benefit

Livelihood aid is composed of two types of benefit:

- Personal expenses (Category 1) are related to the age of each family member:

Age	Benefit amount for region (Grade 1-1) (¥ per month)
0	15 000
1 - 2	21 840
3 - 5	27 010
6 - 8	32 090
9 - 11	36 520
12 - 14	44 110
15 - 17	47 400
18 - 19	42 090
20 - 40	40 060
41 - 59	38 260
60 - 69	36 170
70	32 400

- Household expenses (Category 2) are related to the number of family members:

Number of family members	1	2	3	4 + X
Basic amount (in ¥ per month)	40 980	47 570	52 740	57 380 + 440 X

The maximum amount of livelihood aid is calculated by summing up amounts of Category 1 for each family member and amounts of Category 2.

A housing aid is also available, it covers housing costs up to ¥ 13 000 per month.

4.2.2 Income and earnings disregards

Earnings net of tax and social security contributions up to ¥ 8 340 per month are disregarded. From this level, social assistance is reduced by earnings net of tax and social security contributions exceeding a threshold which increases with earnings. The monthly disregard is assumed to increase proportionally with gross earnings. The monthly amounts are as follows for the same region (Grade 1-1) as for personal expenses:

Monthly gross earnings X (¥)	Monthly threshold Y (¥)
0 - 8340	0 - 8 340
8 340 - 92 000	8 340 - 22 570
92 000 - 244 000	22 570 - 33 260
244 000 +	33 260

4.3 *Tax treatment of benefit*

Not taxable.

4.4 *Benefit duration*

As long as the conditions are fulfilled.

4.5 *Treatment of particular groups*

None.

5. Housing benefits

See social assistance in Section 4.

6. Family benefits

6.1 *Conditions for receipt*

The benefit is income-tested. It is paid for a child under 3 years old.

6.2 *Calculation of benefit amount*

6.2.1 *Calculation of gross benefit*

¥ 5 000 per month per child for the first two children, and ¥ 10 000 per month per child for the third and subsequent children (until they are 3).

6.2.2 *Income and earnings disregards*

It is paid if the annual gross income minus the employment income deduction (see Section 10.1) is lower than ¥ 1 496 000 plus ¥ 300 000 per child.

6.3 *Tax treatment of benefit*

Not taxable.

6.4 *Treatment of particular groups*

As long as the conditions are fulfilled.

7. Child-care benefits

There are no child-care benefits, but a system of income related child-care costs exists.

7.1 Conditions for paying

To have a child under 5 years old. The cost/contribution is income related: it increases with local and central income tax (see tax system in Section 10).

7.2 Calculation of cost amount

7.2.1 Calculation of gross cost

Municipal child-care is available. The following is used as the standard for calculating the amount of government subsidy to each municipality. The more income tax a family pays, the bigger the contribution to the child-care costs:

Standard child-care cost per child (¥ per month)			
Category*	Income tax position (¥ per year)	Age of child (years old)	
		< 3	3 and 4
1	Eligible to social assistance	0	0
2	No local tax	8 000	6 000
	Local tax:		
3	Only fixed part	17 000	14 000
4	Fixed part + earnings related part	21 000	18 000
	Central tax:		
5	1 - 17 000	26 000	23 000
6	17 000 - 80 000	32 000	Actual cost (< 29 000)
7	80 000 - 140 000	40 000	Actual cost (< 37 000)
8	140 000 - 200 000	49 000	Actual cost (< 46 000)
9	200 000 - 510 000	57 000	Actual cost (< 54 000)
10	510 000 +	Actual cost	Actual cost

* Category 2, 3, 4 exclude cases which fall into category 1, 5, 10.
Category 5-10 exclude cases which fall into category 1.

7.2.2 Income and earnings disregards

Local and central income tax are taken into consideration, there are no disregards.

7.3 Tax treatment of cost

The implicit benefit is not taxable.

7.4 Treatment of particular groups

None.

8. Employment-conditional benefits

None.

Note that removal expenses are provided for persons who have to move after having obtained a job or a training introduced by the Public Employment Security Office.

9. Lone-parent benefits

9.1 Conditions for receipt

To be a lone parent, and to have a child who has not yet reached his/her 18th birthday by March 31st of the given year.

9.2 Calculation of benefit amount

9.2.1 Calculation of gross benefit

Number of children	1	2 + X
Basic amount (in ¥ per month)	41 390	46 390 + 3 000 X

9.2.2 Income and earnings disregards

Not means-tested.

9.3 Tax treatment of benefit

Not taxable.

9.4 Treatment of particular groups

None.

10. Tax system

10.1 Income tax rate schedule

10.1.1 Tax allowances and credits

There are no tax credits. The tax allowances are as follows:

- basic exemption: ¥ 380 000;
- spouse exemption: ¥ 380 000 if dependent spouse;
- special spouse exemption: ¥ 380 000;
- dependent exemption: ¥ 380 000 per dependent child granted to each tax paying spouse;
- social security contributions: see Section 10.3;
- employment income deduction: regressive with gross annual earnings. The minimum of ¥ 650 000 is granted when the allowance is calculated to be less than this amount:

Gross earnings (¥ per year)	Marginal rate (%)
0 - 1 800 000	40
1 800 000 - 3 600 000	30
3 600 000 - 6 600 000	20
6 600 000 - 10 000 000	10
10 000 000 +	5

10.1.2 The definition of taxable income

It is the gross income minus the above tax allowances. Note that taxable incomes for the government income tax and the local tax are the same.

10.1.3 Tax schedule

- Central government tax:

Taxable income (¥ per year)	Marginal tax rate (%)
0 – 3 300 000	10
3 300 000 - 9 000 000	20
9 000 000 - 18 000 000	30
18 000 000 - 30 000 000	40
30 000 000 +	50

- Local government tax: it is made of the prefectural tax and the municipal tax:
- prefectural: it is ¥ 1000 per adult plus:

Taxable income (¥ per year)	Marginal tax rate (%)
0 – 7 000 000	2
7 000 000 +	3

- municipal: for a city of more than 500 000 persons, it is ¥ 3 000 per adult (for a city of between 50 000 and 500 000 persons, it is ¥ 2 500 per adult, and for a city of less than 50 000, it is ¥ 2 000 per adult) plus:

Taxable income (¥ per year)	Marginal tax rate (%)
0 - 2 000 000	3
2 000 000 - 7 000 000	8
7 000 000 +	12

10.2 Treatment of family income

The tax unit is the individual, couples are taxed separately.

10.3 Social security contribution schedule

Annual gross earnings can be split in 80 per cent of standard earnings, and 20 per cent of bonuses:

- pension: 8.675 per cent of standard earnings + 0.50 per cent of bonuses;
- sickness: 4.10 per cent of standard earnings + 0.30 per cent of bonuses;
- unemployment: 0.4 per cent of gross earnings (including bonuses).

11. Part-time work

11.1 Special benefit rules for part-time work

Minimum of 6 months of insured work in the last 12 months (with minimum 20 hours of work per week) to be eligible for unemployment benefits.

11.2 Special tax and social security contribution rules for part-time work

None.

12. Policy developments

12.1 Policy changes introduced in the last year

None.

12.2 Policy changes announced

None.

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**The annual tax/benefit position of an unemployed single person, 1997
(Yen)**

	Unemployment insurance	Social assistance
A. Taxable benefits		
Means-tested benefits		
Non-means tested benefits		
Total taxable benefits	0	0
B. Income tax and social security contributions		
Total income tax and social security contributions	0	0
C. Non-taxable benefits		
Means-tested benefits		
Social assistance	0	1 152 480
Non-means tested benefits		
Unemployment insurance	2 150 480	0
Total non-taxable benefits	2 150 480	1 152 480
D. Net income out of work (A-B+C)	2 150 480	1 152 480
E. Net income in work	3 630 609	3 630 609
F. Net replacement rate (D/E) (per cent)	59	32

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**The annual tax/benefit position of an unemployed married couple with two children, 1997
(Yen)**

	Unemployment insurance	Social assistance
A. Taxable benefits		
Means-tested benefits		
Non-means tested benefits		
Total taxable benefits	0	0
B. Income tax and social security contributions		
Total income tax and social security contributions	0	0
C. Non-taxable benefits		
Means-tested benefits		
Child benefits	0	0
Social assistance	0	2 515 200
Non-means tested benefits		
Unemployment insurance	2 150 480	0
Total non-taxable benefits	2 150 480	2 515 200
D. Net income out of work (A-B+C)	2 150 480	2 515 200
E. Net income in work	3 864 600	3 864 600
F. Net replacement rate (D/E) (per cent)	56	65

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**The annual tax/benefit position of a lone parent with two children, 1997
(Yen)**

	Unemployment insurance	Social assistance
A. Taxable benefits		
Means-tested benefits		
Non-means tested benefits		
Total taxable benefits	0	0
B. Income tax and social security contributions		
Total income tax and social security contributions	0	0
C. Non-taxable benefits		
Means-tested benefits		
Child benefits	0	0
Social assistance	0	1 978 800
Non-means tested benefits		
Unemployment insurance	2 150 480	0
Lone parent benefits	556 680	556 680
Total non-taxable benefits	2 707 160	2 535 480
D. Net income out of work (A-B+C)	2 707 160	2 535 480
E. Net income in work	4 311 281	4 311 281
F. Net replacement rate (D/E) (per cent)	63	59