

Measures for Working Hours

Overview

Major Measures for Working Hours (FY2010)

Full complication with the statutory working hours

- Implementation of supervision and group guidance, etc.
(Statutory working hours: 8-hours a day, 40-hours per week (44-hours per week for workplaces subjected to special measures))

Reduction of non-scheduled working hours

- Guidance for employers on compliance with the overtime limit

(limit standards)

Period	Limit	Period	Limit	Period	Limit
1 week	15 hours	1 month	45 hours	1 year	360 hours
2 weeks	27 hours	2 months	81 hours		
4 weeks	43 hours	3 months	120 hours		

* Different criteria are applied to one-year variable working hour system.

- Enlightenment guidance in accordance with the Outlines for Reduced Non-Scheduled Working Hours

Realization of work-life balance

- Dissemination and enlightenment of "Guidelines for Improvement of Working Time Arrangements"
Dissemination and enlightenment of "Guidelines for Improvement of Working Time Arrangements" based on "Charter for Work-Life Balance" and "Action Policy for Promoting Work-Life Balance".
- Support for improvement of working time arrangements
Guidance and assistance by experts to associations of small and medium-sized enterprises that are actively working on the improvement of working time arrangements.
- Provision of subsidy for promoting the improvement of working time arrangements
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Subsidy provided to small and medium-sized enterprises that are actively working on the improvement of working time arrangements.
- Support by consultants on improvement of working time arrangements
Consultation on the improvement of working time arrangements at Prefectural Labour Bureaus.

Detailed Information

Outline of Act on Special Measures for Improvement of Working Time Arrangements and Guidelines for Improvement of Working Time Arrangements

Improvement of working time arrangements

- Improvement of working time arrangements related matters, including working hours, opening/closing time, the number of day off, the number of annual paid leave, and seasonal working time, for covering diverse work styles with consideration given to Worker's health and life
- Employers are obliged to make efforts in taking necessary measures for improving working time arrangements
- The Government must make efforts in supporting employers, etc. and promoting necessary measures in an comprehensive and effective manner

Guidelines for Improvement of Working Time Arrangements

To list reference matters that are helpful for business operators to respond to their obligation to make efforts in improving working time arrangements

Committee for the Improvement of Working Time Arrangements

- Committee for the Improvement of Working Time Arrangements is established to provide labour and management with opportunities for discussion
- Exceptions of the Labour Standards Act, such as substitution effects of labour and management agreement and notification exemption, are applied to committees that meet specific conditions

Implementation plan for improvement of working time arrangements

In case two or more employers jointly formulate the plan and receive ministerial approval, relevant ministers and the Fair Trade Commission shall check whether there's any violation of the Antimonopoly Act

Points of Guidelines for Improvement of Working Time Arrangements

1. Basic ideas

- (1) Efforts toward the realization of work-life balance, including the review of work time arrangements,
 - are necessary for making Japanese society sustainable and stable, reversing the trend in falling birthrate, and enabling various people to get employed under the situations of declining population; and
 - increase chances of securing, developing, and adapting talented human resources that are sources of energy and competitiveness of enterprises.
- (2) It is important that executive officers take the lead in carrying out, and strive for raising awareness for the reform of working environments
- (3) Taking measures in a systematic manner toward the realization of work-life balance according to the actual conditions of individual enterprises with consideration given to the goals of the entire society provided in the "Action Guidelines for Work-Life Balance Promotion" is important
(Goals of the entire society in 2020)
 - "To halve the ratio of workers who work for 60 hours or more per week by 2008"
 - "To raise the acquisition rate of annual paid leave by 70%"

2. Measures that are important for the realization of work-life balance

- (1) Development of opportunities for discussion between labour and management
 - Development of opportunities for discussion between labour and management such as Committee for the Improvement of Working Time Arrangements
- (2) Development of environment where annual paid leave is easily taken
 - Creation of an atmosphere where annual paid leave is easily taken by encouraging its acquisition
 - Scheduled acquisition of annual paid leave
 - Introduction of a system to confirm the annual paid leave acquisition status
 - Discussion on setting the targets for the acquisition rate, etc.
- (3) Reduction of non-scheduled working hours
 - Introduction and improvement of "no overtime day" and "no overwork week"
 - Control of working long hours (to avoid constantly working long hours), etc.
- (4) Consideration for health and life of individual workers
 - Workers determined to be in particular need of maintaining their health
 - Workers that are raising their children or nursing their family members
 - Business bachelors
 - Workers making voluntary efforts in vocational ability development

Detailed Data 1

Changes in Average Annual Hours Actually Worked per Person in 6 Major Countries

(Hours)

Year	Japan	U.S.A.	U.K.	Canada	Germany	France
2005	1802	1801	1666	1735	1354	1466
2006	1811	1802	1648	1734	1352	1447
2007	1808	1799	1655	1734	1354	1468
2008	1792	1797	1634	1727	1351	1475
2009	1733	1776	1630	1699	1309	1469

Source: OECD Employment Outlook (2010)

(Note) 1. Including part-time workers, but excluding self-employed persons.

2. The figures for Japan indicate hours worked by workers in in offices with 5 or more workers. No limitation is imposed on the figures for other countries.

3. The figures for 2008 and 2009 for France are estimates.

4. Note that statistical methods used for obtaining the data, including selection of the general population, are different in each country.

Detailed Data 2 Acquisition Status of Annual Paid Leave

Scale of enterprise, industry, year	Grant days ¹⁾	Acquired days ²⁾	Acquisition rate ³⁾
2010	17.9	8.5	47.1
2009	18.0	8.5	47.4
1000 or more workers	19	10.2	53.5
300-999 workers	18.1	8.1	44.9
100-299 workers	17.3	7.8	45
30-99 workers	16.9	6.9	41
Mining and quarrying of stone and gravel	18.5	11.6	63
Construction	18.6	7.1	38.1
Manufacturing	18.6	9.9	53.2
Electricity, gas, heat supply and water	19.6	14.6	74.2
Information and communications	18.8	10.3	54.6
Transport and postal activities	17.2	8.4	48.9
Wholesale and retail trade	17.5	6	34.6
Finance and insurance	19.6	8.5	43.3
Real estate and goods rental and leasing	17	7.2	42.2
Scientific research, professional and technical services	18.2	9.7	53.3
Accommodations, eating and drinking services	15.8	5	31.4
Living-related and personal services and amusement services	15.4	6.5	42
Education, learning support	16.7	6.6	39.5
Medical, health care and welfare	14.5	6.4	44
Services (not elsewhere classified)	16.5	8.7	52.7
2006	17.9	8.4	47.1
2007	17.7	8.3	46.6
[¶] 2008*	17.8	8.5	47.7
[¶] 2009*	18.3	8.8	48.1
[¶] 2010*	18.1	8.7	48.2

(Note) 1. "Grant days" doesn't include carryover days.

2. "Acquired days" refers to days actually acquired within the year of 2009 (or FY2008)

3. "Acquisition rate" is calculated by the total of acquired days / grant days × 100%

4. Survey subjects were expanded from "private enterprises with 30 or more regular workers at headquarters" (up to 2007) to "private enterprises with 30 or more regular workers" (from 2008).

The figures for 2008*, 2009*, 2010* are calculated under the condition of "private enterprises with 30 or more regular workers at headquarters" for the purpose of comparing them with the figures up to 2007.