

Overview of work and family-life balance measures

Enforcement of the Child Care and Family Care Leave Law, etc.

Maternity protection and health care during pregnancy and after childbirth

- Maternity leave (6 weeks before childbirth, 8 weeks after childbirth)
- Transfer to light activities, limitation on overtime work and late-night work
- Employers' obligation to take measures to ease commuting difficulties and ensure appropriate breaks and leave according to the doctor's instructions
- Prohibition of dismissal by reason of pregnancy or childbirth

Systems to help parents balance work and life

- Securing the right to take child care leave until the child reaches 1 year of age (or 1 year and 2 months of age if both parents take child care leave*) (or 1 year and 6 months of age if day-care service is unavailable)
- Obliging employers to establish a short working hour system for workers with children under 3 years of age and exempt them from overtime work*
- Prohibiting dismissal or other disadvantageous treatment by reason of e.g. taking child care leave

* Expanded by the revised law promulgated on July 1st, 2009. The effective date is the day specified by Cabinet Order within a period not exceeding 1 year from the promulgation date.

Support and incentives to employers

Promotion of employers' efforts under the Law for Measures to Support the Development of the Next Generation

- Formulating and publishing an action plan for creating an environment facilitating work-life balance and communicating it to employees
(Companies with 301 or more employees are obliged, and those with 300 or less obliged to make efforts; all companies with 101 or more employees will be obliged from April 2011)
- Certifying companies meeting the specified criteria, e.g. having achieved planned targets ("Kurumin" logo)

Support for employers with subsidies

- Providing subsidies for companies active in supporting work-life balance, e.g. establishing an on-site day-care center, a short working hour system, etc.

Employers' awareness raised through award programs

- Giving awards ("Excellent Equal Opportunity / Work-Life Balance Companies") to companies providing flexible work patterns that consider work-life balance
- Developing and disseminating "work-life balance indicators" as a measure of how pro-work-life balance the company is

Support for workers

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- Promoting the "new zero wait listed children strategy" and providing diverse day-care services, e.g. extended day care and holiday day care
- Promoting after-school children's clubs
- Accelerating the establishment of Family Support Centers

Reemployment support for people having left their jobs for child care

- Periodical provision of information for registered subscribers and assisting the formulation of reemployment plans according to personal needs
- Support services at Mothers' Hello Work, e.g. detailed one-on-one counseling
- Entrepreneurial support through mentor referral services, etc.

A society where everyone can work comfortably while taking care of children if they want