

13. Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Violence against Women

Violence against women is a serious violation of human rights. Promoting initiatives for its prevention and redress to eradicate violence is a very important issue in order to form a gender-equal society.

■ Promoting Main Measures

● Creating a Foundation for Preventing and Eradicating Violence against Women

- Education and awareness-raising for developing a social environment where violence against women is absolutely not tolerated.
- Implementing sufficient, seamless and effective support in consideration with forms of violence and types of victims.
- Conducting a study on a data collection toward the precise understanding of the situation of violence against women.

Campaign to Eliminate Violence against Women

- The Campaign to Eliminate Violence against Women is held for two weeks from November 12 to November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women).
- The Purple Ribbon is used as the campaign's symbol, and during the campaign people are encouraged to wear this ribbon. Tokyo Tower and other buildings are also lit up with purple lights.



'Purple Light-up'



Symbol mark for
Eliminating Violence
against Women



'Purple Ribbon'

● Spousal Violence and Support for Victims

- The Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims was established in 2001, and has been subsequently revised four times, in 2004, 2007, 2013, and 2014.
- The act includes provisions establishing Spousal Violence Counseling and Support Centers, which provide consultation services for victims, counseling, temporary protection, information to help victims become self-reliant, and other services, as well as protection orders, which are issued to perpetrators by the court upon a petition from the victim.
- A domestic violence consultation service has been established to provide information on support organizations, via a single telephone number that can be used nationwide, to people who don't know who to consult with in connection with spousal violence.

Definition of the Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims

Spouse Regardless of gender. Includes common-law marriage and former spouses.
 ※In cases where the perpetration of violence began before a divorce, and continued after the divorce.
 ※Also applies to the partners who share the residence as a base for living together with the victims, or former partners who share the residence as a base for living together with the victims.

Violence Includes not only bodily harm but also psychological abuse and sexual assault.
 ※ Protection orders are only applicable to bodily harm or life threatening intimidation, etc.

Protection Orders

If a declaration is made to a court, a protection order will be issued against the perpetrator.
 ※This only applies in instances where further violence poses a serious threat to life or there is a danger of serious physical violence.

Order Prohibiting Approach to the victims

【Period: 6 months】
 This forbids the perpetrator from being around the victim, or from going near to their place of residence or work.

Order Prohibiting Approach to the victim's relatives or children

【Period: 6 months】
 In order to ensure the effectiveness of the stay-away order for the victim, perpetrators are forbidden from approaching the victim's relative or children, or going near to their children or relative's residences or place of work.

Order prohibiting phone calls or other behavior to the victim

【Period: 6 months】
 In order to ensure the effectiveness of the stay-away order for the victim, the perpetrator is forbidden from making any phone calls or E-mails to the victim.

Order to vacate

【Period: 2 months】
 Orders that that perpetrator leaves the residence where he/she shares with the victim.

Also possible to make allegations in the case of a common-law marriage, and allegations against former spouses, as well as intimate partners who share a principal residence and former intimate partners who used to share a primary residence. If the order is violated, the perpetrator faces a custodial sentence of less than one year or a fine below 1 million yen.

● Stalking Cases

- The Anti-Stalking Act was revised in December 2016 which restricts the act of continuously sending SNS messages, reviews the procedure for administrative measures, toughens penalties, etc.
- Based on the Comprehensive Anti-Stalking Policy (established March 2015; revised April 24, 2017), enhancements are being made to the system for receiving consultations from victims, etc., and activities such as research surveys, publicity and awareness-raising initiatives are being promoted.
- The Japan Legal Support Center (houterasuu) provides victims of domestic violence and stalking, etc. with necessary legal consultations to prevent damage.

● Sex Offences・Sexual Violence

- In 2017, provisions of the Penal Code related to sexual crimes were partially revised. The revisions primarily consisted of 1) revising the constitutive elements of rape under the law and strengthening statutory penalties, 2) stipulating criminal indecency and criminal intercourse by a custodian as new criminal categories, 3) revising the constitutive elements of rape during a robbery, and 4) making rape, etc. crimes that do not require a complaint from the victim to prosecute.
- One-stop support centers for victims of sex crimes and sexual violence were established in all prefectures in October 2018 to provide victims of sex crimes and sexual violence with medical and psychological support, etc. immediately after being victimized at one location as much as possible.

● Sexual Violence against Children

- The Act on Regulation and Punishment of Acts Relating to Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, and the Protection of Children was partially revised in June 2014. The act of possessing or retaining child pornography or electronic or magnetic records of these for the purpose of satisfying one's own sexual curiosity, etc. has become subject to punishment.
- “Actions for proceeding measures on the Issues of so-called forced appearances in pornographic materials and 'JK Business'” were established in May 2017, and based on these actions, the government is working to further grasp the situation, strengthen crackdown, etc., strengthen education and awareness-raising, enhance consultation systems, and strengthen initiatives for protection and self-reliance support.



“Month for prevention of so-called forced appearance in pornographic materials and 'JK Business'” ;
Shibuya station street campaign

● Human Trafficking

- The Government revised its Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons in December 2014 in order to make further efforts against TIP. The Penal Code, relevant laws and regulations have been strictly applied against perpetrators in order to prevent and eradicate TIP and protect victims, and efforts have been made to realize appropriate regulations and penalties.
- In order to further improve protection of victims, the Government has been collaborating with the governments in other countries, international organizations and NGOs.



● Sexual Harassment

- The Equal Opportunity Employment Act makes it mandatory for employers to take measures to prevent sexual harassment at the workplace. Relevant laws were revised in March 2016 to make it mandatory for employers to take measures to prevent harassment at the workplace with respect to pregnancy, childbirth, and childcare leave, etc. (enforced January 1, 2017).
- Promoting of preventative measures in all sectors including employment, education, research, medical care, sports by providing a framework for consultation.
- “Strengthening Sexual Harassment Measures: Emergency Measures Based on a Case Occurring between the Media and Government” was established in June 2018.