

Dear Church/Organisation Leader,

Greetings from Sendai, Japan. If you are reading this, you have a member who has recently been accepted to join the staff team of Youth With A Mission (YWAM) in Japan. We are very excited about each member of our team, and are extremely grateful for his or her willingness to spend a season with us in the unreached harvest field of Japan. Each application is carefully considered and prayed over, and we are confident that the Lord is calling each new staff we accept to serve Him in Sendai.

In order to bring a missionary into Japan, we as YWAM will apply for a Religious Workers Visa, usually valid for 3 years. These visas can be renewed if the individual wishes to continue longer in Japan. Japanese Immigration will grant these visas to missionaries who are connected to an officially recognised church or organisation, such as YWAM, who will support and supervise their activities while in Japan.

Japanese Immigration also requires to hear from the sending church or organisation of the missionary's home country, in the form of a Letter of Dispatch and a Letter of Release, so that they can vouch for their character and service back home. This is a required part of the visa application process and we cannot obtain a visa without your support in this matter. Each missionary serving in Japan, regardless of mission organisation, needs a sending church or organisation to send these required letters to Immigration on their behalf.

We have provided a template for each of the letters for you. This is to ensure that all the required information is included in a way that Immigration Officials can easily recognise with minimal translation work. Sometimes a church is uncomfortable with the wording on the financial support letter because it states that a church is committing to support the missionary financially. Because of this frequent concern, we want to provide a clearer understanding of this matter.

In YWAM, our structure is for each missionary to raise support as an individual by God's grace, and funds are raised from a variety of sources. Therefore, both YWAM and the member in question understand and recognise that you as a church or organisation are **not committing to supply all their financial needs** as a missionary. The letters you will submit to Immigration are **not** a legally binding contract giving the missionary the right to demand full support from you. Please be assured of this.

Currently your member is embarking on a support raising effort through various means, which will include a large number of small supporters from among his family and friends, which become a strong network for him or her. If your church or organisation can commit to some regular amount of support, even a small amount, as well as commit to be a support of prayer and encouragement, this will fulfill the financial statement indicated on the Immigration letter.

Should financial difficulties arise, neither YWAM nor your member in question will demand that you meet their needs, nor are you obligated to do so. In difficult circumstances, we often take up offerings from among ourselves to help those in need. We help our staff write newsletters asking for aid, if needed, and try to support in every way. But it is God we pursue in these matters, and we do not pressure people or churches. We always see God provide for our needs as a team, and we frequently rejoice together over the latest miracle of provision.

We want you to understand these matters as you stand together with your member as he or she follows Christ in the fulfillment of the Great Commission. We appreciate your help in the completion of the Church Letters for the Immigration process. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions.

Blessings from Japan,

Gary Seddon
YWAM Sendai Leader