

Families Who Leave Tokyo To Receive ¥1 Million

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Incentive (Noun) /ɪnˈsɛntɪv/ a thing that encourages a person or organization to do something
Example: Incentives will be given to companies that use renewable energy..
2. Relocation (Noun) /ˌriːləʊˈkeɪʃn/ the action of moving to a new place to work, live, operate, etc.
Example: The relocation of the employee from Tokyo to Osaka is scheduled on the 3rd of the month.
3. Commute (Verb) /kəˈmjuːt/ to travel between one's home and work or school
Example: Working from home saves employees time and money from commuting.
4. Municipality (Noun) /mjuːˌnɪsɪˈpæləti/ a town or area with its own local government
Example: The island has 8 municipalities.
5. Mountainous (Adjective) /ˈmaʊntənəs/ having many mountains
Example: Switzerland is one of the mountainous countries in Europe.



For a year starting in April 2023, the Japanese government will offer 1 million yen per child — around \$7,600 — to families that move out of Tokyo. The incentive is an increase from the 300,000 yen in relocation child support that's currently available. The increase comes on top of a maximum 3 million yen — or \$23,000 — already available as relocation support. A family with two children could receive up to 5 million yen, or \$38,000.

Payments will be offered to people who currently live in one of the 23 central wards of Tokyo, or those who commute there from areas such as Saitama, Chiba and Kanagawa prefectures. To receive the payments, families should move to one of the municipalities outside Tokyo participating in the program, although some mountainous areas in Tokyo are also

included. Around 1,300 municipalities are currently participating, which is about 80% of the total number of municipalities in Japan.

Children must be under 18 years of age, or if 18, currently in their final year of high school. And parents must have some form of employment, whether at the location they move to, by remote work, or by starting a new business. A family must also stay in the new location for five years. If they leave the area before the five years are over, they will have to pay the money back. The relocation support program is part of government efforts to reduce the population in overcrowded Tokyo, and bring new life to other areas of Japan that suffer from low birthrates and aging populations.

In December, the government announced details of its "Digital Garden City Nation" plan, which aims to attract people to these areas by improving access to high-speed internet and providing other services such as self-driving buses and remote medical care. Currently, about 100,000 people move from rural areas to Tokyo every year. However, the government hopes that by 2027, a net total of 10,000 people a year will relocate from Tokyo to rural areas instead.

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on Japan offering families money to leave Tokyo?
2. Do you know anyone who's moved from a big city to the countryside?
3. Would you be willing to relocate if you were offered \$20,000?
4. In your opinion, what are the biggest problems facing your town or city?
5. What would you say are the best things about where you live?