

Emergency Statement on the 2011 Off the Pacific Coast of Tohoku Earthquake

=The All Japan National Certified Guide-Interpreters Organization
Establishes a Voluntary Language Support Team for the Great Tohoku
Earthquake=

The Great Tohoku Earthquake, which struck on March 11, 2011, has caused unparalleled damage. There is an urgent need for the rescue and relief of disaster victims, as well as restoration of the Tohoku area.

Based on requests for support from the central and local governments, 15 organizations of national certified guide-interpreters hereby announce that we have formed a language support team to provide guide-interpreter's services on a voluntary basis. We are more than willing to support relief and restoration activities in whatever the way we can through translation and communication services. The activities of our team are as follows:

1. Dispatch/provide guide-interpreters to support rescue teams and medical professionals from overseas and facilitate smooth communication in their operations.
2. Dispatch/provide guide-interpreters to airports, tourist information and media centers, and so forth in Japan, to offer accurate disaster-related information.
3. Make swift and flexible responses to the requests through coordinated teamwork.

(*What is a guide-interpreter?)

A government licensed guide-interpreter is a highly professional expert in tour guiding, introducing the culture and views of life in Japan correctly and providing various travel guidance to overseas visitors with cordial hospitality and the utmost care so as to ensure safe traveling.

The Guide-Interpreter Business Law stipulates that a guide-interpreter who works for a fee providing travel guide services in 10 foreign languages while accompanying overseas visitors in Japan must pass the national exam conducted by the Japan Tourism Agency and have his/her name registered with a prefectural government.

The voluntary team consists of the following 15 groups, which have a total membership of 3,248 persons:

JFG (Japan Federation of Certified Guides), JGA (Japan Guide Association), GICSS

(NPO Guide Interpreting & Communication Skill Studies Association), IJCEE (NPO Institute for Japanese Cultural Exchange and Experience), CGO (Chinese Guide Organization of Japan), KIGA (Kansai Interpreter & Guide Association), KGO (Korean Guide Organization), TOTAK (Tochigi Association of Certified Interpreters & Guides), FYGIA (Mt. Fuji Yamanashi Guide-Interpreter Association), JCC (Japan Culture Club), JAIG (Japan Association of Interpreter and Guide), HIGA (Hiroshima Interpreter & Guide Association), NPO Kyushu Interpreter Guide Association, OIGA (Okinawa Interpreter Guide Association), JGC (Japan Guide Consortium)

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Emergency contact number:

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090-6502-3850 (Negishi), 090-9683-7127 (Yasuda)

*Please contact us by e-mail or fax if you require any volunteer interpretation.