

Outline of Immediate Regulatory Reform – Matters to be Implemented

Review of documentation, seal, and face-to-face requirements

Review of documentation, seal, and face-to-face requirements for administrative procedures

- Government/ministry ordinances and official notices will be amended in principle within this year so that all administrative procedures currently subject to affixing seals will be exempt from the requirement, excluding 83 procedures that will continue to require seals for identification and other purposes. The bills needed for this review will be submitted to the next ordinary Diet session. [Implementation in FY2020]
- Excluding those considered not suited for going online by its nature, more than 95% of the procedures for the public and business operators applying to administrative agencies will go online within the next five years. [Implementation by FY2025]
- Concerning procedures for business operators applying to local governments, the forms and formats of such procedures vary depending on each local government, placing a burden on business operators. The relevant ministries will develop a platform for online procedures and work on procedure standardization.
- Government agencies will select procedures from among frequently applied and strongly requested procedures, set the goal of boldly increasing online usage rates for those procedures, and promptly take necessary measures.
- Ministerial ordinances will be amended as needed to enable cloud-based digital signature for central and local government contracts. [Immediate implementation in FY2020]

A package of bills pertaining to the review of seal and documentation requirements

[Submission of the bills to the next ordinary Diet session]

Review of exclusive/resident duties

Rationalizing concurrent service requirements for building environment and sanitation management engineers working at specified buildings

- The rationalization of concurrent service requirements for building environment and sanitation management engineers will be examined, including the necessity of "the identical maintenance authority" to take necessary measures. [Start of discussion in FY2020, implementation in FY2021]

Deregulation of requirements for on-site work and concurrent serving of industrial physicians

- The necessity of a resident, exclusive industrial physician will be reviewed to clarify the concept of online medical practices through notices. Also, geographical requirements for concurrent services as a non-exclusive industrial physician in other workplaces will be abolished. [Implementation in FY2020]

Review of regulations on OTC drug sales

- Regulations on selling hours (at least half the open hours of the store) will be abolished. [Conclusions in FY2020, implementation as soon as conclusions are drawn]
- Concerning OTC drug sales at stores, the whole concept of ICT-assisted management systems and information sharing by pharmacists and others will be studied to take necessary measures. [Start of discussion in FY2020, conclusions as early as possible]

Digital transformation of regulations

Regulatory system development toward the smooth distribution of broadcast contents on the Internet

- The existing copyright system will be reviewed to enable smooth one-stop rights handling when distributing broadcast programs on the Internet. [The bill is aimed to pass an ordinary Diet session in 2021]
- Discussions among concerned parties will be promoted so that both broadcasters and rights holders can utilize new regulatory systems without anxiety. Then detailed system designs and practical operations will be realized, including the formulation of guidelines. [Implementation in 2021]

Promoting development and introduction of leading-edge medical devices

- A system will be developed to enable unified prior consultation on the relevance of medical devices, approval procedures, and the possibility of insurance coverage. At the same time, criteria for the relevance of medical device programs will be clarified. [Immediate implementation in FY2020]
- The concept of reviewing those medical devices will be organized by each classification based on the program's characteristics to develop specific performance indicators. [Start of discussion in FY2020, conclusions as early as possible]
- The concept of evaluating medical fees for medical care provided will be clarified utilizing SaMD, including the perspective of healthcare professionals' work style reform. [Start of discussion in FY2020, conclusions as early as possible]

Review of documentation, seal, and face-to-face requirements for private-sector procedures

- Requirements for electronic storage of books and documents based on the Act concerning Preservation of Electronic Books will be significantly relaxed, including (i) not requiring prior approval from the district tax office director when using the system that can store scanned images in place of original copies such as receipts, (ii) abolishing the self-signed requirement after receiving receipts, (iii) enabling disposal of receipts after being scanned, and (iv) extending the validity of timestamps from about three business days to within two months. [Submission of the bill to the next ordinary Diet session]
- An amendment bill will be submitted to amend Certificates of Receipt for Payment (receipts) under Article 486 of the Civil Code to enable data request. [Submission of the bill to the next ordinary Diet session]
- Appropriate measures will be taken to be able to hold a virtual-only annual meeting of shareholders. [Submission of the bill to the next ordinary Diet session]
- An amendment bill will be submitted to amend the Real Estate Brokerage Act to enable the electromagnetic submission of documents and disclosure statements that real estate brokers issue when concluding real estate lease, sales, and mediation contracts. [Submission of the bill to the next ordinary Diet session]
- An amendment bill will be submitted to enable the electromagnetic delivery of documents pertaining to the covenant of fixed-term land lease, documents pertaining to the conclusion of a fixed-term building lease contract, and prior explanatory documents, all of which the Act on Land and Building Leases mandates. [Submission of the bill to the next ordinary Diet session]

Spread and promotion of telework

- In order to spread and promote telework, matters concerning general labor-management will be better understood based on the characteristics of telework, including working hours management by workers' self-reported data, improvement of a working environment, and occupational safety and health such as health management. Aiming to make both labor and management feel telework is a viable working style, the discussions will be accelerated toward revising the Telework Guideline. The results will be put together by the end of this year. [Implementation in 2020]
- Based on the outcome, the Telework Guideline will be revised, and related measures will be taken. [Implementation as soon as possible within FY2020]

Regulatory reform toward economic revitalization including rural areas and a return to a growth path

Revitalizing the local economy through the creation of robust agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries

- Further studies will be conducted concerning measures for agricultural corporations to smoothly raise funds and develop farm management based on the needs of agricultural ventures aiming to become listed on the stock exchange and funders. Those studies include how to treat corporations that have a track record of success in agriculture. Conclusions will be drawn within this fiscal year. [Discussion and conclusions in FY2020]
- Diverse inspection methods, including voluntary inspection, will be enabled by understanding consumer needs and reviewing how agricultural products inspection standards should be. The creation of a smart food chain and the establishment of JAS standards will be supported, and new standards will be established to leverage the strengths of technological equipment. [Conclusions in FY2020, implementation as soon as conclusions are drawn]
- Specific standards will be substantially relaxed while increasing the area that does not require structural review under a special law excluding livestock barns from application of the Building Standards Act to approximately 1,000 to 2,000m². [Implementation in 2022]

Relaxing standards on permission for occupancy of roads by restaurants

- The Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism will extend the relaxation of standards on permission for occupancy of roads by roadside restaurants until the end of FY2020. Besides, necessary measures will be taken to ensure a smooth transition to a pedestrian-friendly road system, such as simplifying regulatory procedures. [Implementation in 2020]
- In applying for permission for road use under the new system, the National Police Agency will enable one-stop applications through a road occupancy system. [Implementation in 2020]