

4. Banking and Postal Services

A. Banking Services

◎ Types of Accounts

Although various types of accounts such as company and long-term savings accounts can be opened at the bank, the **most commonly used type is the ordinary deposit or savings account (*futsu-yokin*)**.

◎ Opening an Account

You can open an account at a bank, credit union (*shinyou-kinkou*), post office, etc. To open an account, in order to prove your address, you will need some sort of personal identification such as your alien registration or your resident registration card. Also, most banks will require that you have your personal seal (*hanko* or *inkan*).

◎ ATMs and Cash Cards

As in other countries, you can withdraw money from your bank or postal account at an automatic teller machine (ATM) using a cash card. You can also deposit money, make bank transfers, check your current balance, and conduct other transactions.

Although ATMs are open longer than normal banking hours, **they are not usually open 24 hours** as in other countries. Most close early in the evening, on certain holidays and sometimes even on weekends.

Generally, your ATM card can be used at most banks, although a surcharge will be added if you use your card at a bank other than your own, or at an ATM in a convenience store. Postal Savings cash cards can be used at any post office ATM machine in Japan.



◎ How to Use a Japanese ATM

ATMs can differ greatly from bank to bank and even from branch to branch of the same bank, and for most, the **options can be displayed in English by selecting the "English" button**. But here are a few terms in Japanese that are often seen:

あんしょうばんごう
暗証番号: PIN number

ていせい
訂正: Correction

ひきだ
お引出し: Withdrawal

とりけし
取消: Stop Transaction

あずけい
お預入れ: Deposit

かくにん
確認: Confirm Entry

おふりこみ
お振込: Money Transfer

まん
万: 10,000

ざんだかしょうかい
残高照会: Current Balance

せん
千: 1,000

つうちょうきにゆう
通帳記入: Update bankbook

えん
円: yen



◎ Domestic Money Transfers

Domestic money transfers can be made from any bank to any other bank account in Japan. There are both ordinary and telegraphic transfers available, with telegraphic transfers being slightly faster and more expensive. It is also cheaper to send money to an account within the same bank than to one in a different bank.

In addition to filling out the proper forms and paying at a teller's window, it is also possible to make transfers using your cash card. The ATM will prompt you for the amount of money you want to send, then ask you for the bank, branch name or number, account type, and account number. You will need to know the bank and branch name in Japanese in order to do this, but it is an inexpensive and convenient way to make domestic money transfers.

◎ Automatic Payment of Bills

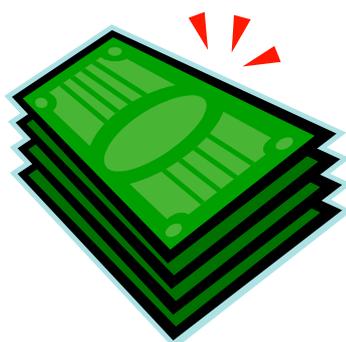
Payments for many public utilities can be made directly from your bank or postal account each month, eliminating worries about forgetting due dates and inconvenient trips to the bank. Among the bills that can be paid automatically are: water, electricity, gas, NHK TV service, other satellite TV services, taxes, and telephone (both domestic and international). Each utility has a separate form that will need to be filled out, requesting that your bills be automatically paid each month.

◎ Sending Money Abroad

Money can be sent to most countries from banks that offer foreign money transfers. You can also send money abroad through the main branch of the post office, or using private services such as Go Lloyds (<http://www.golloyds.com>).

◎ Exchanging Money

Money can be exchanged at the main branches of most banks, but check what currencies are available beforehand. Most main post offices are also equipped to exchange money.



B. Postal Services

There are many Post Offices in Iwamizawa with different opening and closing times; however, in general **Post Office opening hours in Japan tends to be shorter** than what you may be used to back in your home country.

You can search for your nearest Post Office and check what times they are open on the Japan Post website (in Japanese):

<http://map.japanpost.jp>

For more information on Japanese Post Offices, their postal and banking services etc, see their Japan Post website in English at:

<http://www.japanpost.jp/en>

One of the largest Post Offices in Iwamizawa is near the City Hall:

Address: 9 Jo Nishi 2 chome 1-5

Their opening times are as follows;

OPENING TIMES	Week days	Saturdays	Sundays & Holidays
Post/Mail Counter	9:00 – 19:00	9:00 – 15:00	Closed
Banking Counter	9:00 – 16:00	Closed	Closed
ATM	8:45 – 19:00	9:00 – 17:00	9:00 – 17:00
Insurance Desk	9:00 – 16:00	Closed	Closed

