

Japanese gov't plans to raise monthly wages for nursing, child care workers by up to \$88 ^[1]

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Source: The Mainichi

Format: Article

Publication Date: 10 Nov 2021

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

EXCERPTS

TOKYO -- Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said on Nov. 9 that raising the wages of nursing care workers, child care workers, nurses and others is a top priority, and expressed his desire to achieve this goal before the "spring offensive" for wage negotiations between businesses and labor unions begins in earnest early next year.

During a Nov. 9 inaugural meeting of the public price evaluation review committee Kishida stated, "We will take the necessary measures in the economic stimulus package and implement them earlier, ahead of the discussions on the spring offensive."

The committee plans to raise the workers monthly salary by around 5,000 to 10,000 yen (about \$44 to 88) as early as next February, and will finalize its decision by the end of this year.

Since the price of nursing care, child care and medical services is determined publicly, it is difficult to raise wages even when there is a labor shortage. Kishida has announced his stance of promoting policies that emphasize distribution of wealth, and he aims to use the improved treatment of nursing care workers and others to build momentum for wage increases in the private sector.

In addition, Kishida also seeks to improve treatment of employees in the medical and welfare sectors, where many non-regular female workers are employed, in order to solve labor shortages and reduce disparities. The prime minister also mentioned raising wages for kindergarten teachers.

According to a 2020 survey by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, the average monthly wage (excluding overtime and other expenses) for full-time workers of both sexes was 239,800 yen (about \$2,120) for nursing home workers, 245,800 yen (about \$2,180) for child care workers, and 309,100 yen (about \$2,740) for nurses, compared to the all-industry average of 307,700 yen (about \$2,730).

As for the source of funds for the increase, the gov't plans to provide a lump-sum payment for a certain period of time as a grant, and from the second half of the next fiscal year, it intends to raise the amount by adding the nursing care fees that establishments receive as compensation for their nursing care services.

However, it may lead to an increase in the burden on the public by funding the cost with taxes and an increase in nursing care insurance premiums.

Region: Asia ^[3]

Tags: wages ^[4]

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