

# VLT Legal Update

April 2025

## Changes to Childcare Leave and Caregiver Leave

The Act on Childcare Leave, Caregiver Leave, and Other Measures for the Welfare of Employees Caring for Children or Other Family Members was amended on May 31, 2024. Some of those amendments, which are as follows, take effect on October 1, 2025.

### Obligation for Achieving a Flexible Working Style

As of October 1, 2025, an employer will be obligated to take measures which enable applicable employees to achieve a flexible working style. Applicable employees are those employees who are raising a child between the ages of three and the start of elementary school. Under the new obligation, an employer is required to **offer at least two** of the following five options to applicable employees:

- i. **Alternative Set Working Hours:** Introduce a flextime system or other system where employees have the ability to change their arrival and departure time.
- ii. **Work From Home:** Introduce a work from home system where the employee is permitted to work his/her prescribed working hours from home 10 or more days per month.
- iii. **Childcare Facilities:** Establish and operate childcare facilities or provide any other similar benefits (e.g. provide a system where an employee can arrange for a babysitter and the employer bears the cost).
- iv. **Special Leave:** Granting at least 10 days of special leave per year to support the balancing of work and child-rearing.
- v. **Shortened Working Hours:** Shortening the prescribed working hours to six hours.

Additional  
Links

Note Only Available  
in Japanese

- [MHLW  
Overview](#)
- [MHLW  
Flyer](#)

Applicable employees can then choose to **use one of the options** made available by the employer.

With respect to work from home and special leave, employer must allow applicable employees to use these options on an hourly basis. In addition, before choosing which measures to offer, an employer must obtain an opinion from the majority union (or the employee representative if there is no majority union at a workplace).

### Obligation to Provide Individual Notification

Under the amendments, an employer will also be obligated to individually notify employees with a child under the age of three of the details of the flexible working style systems that the employer making available to the applicable employee, and the employer must confirm which of the offered options the employee would like to utilize. Such notification must be provided by at least one month before the child's third birthday.

### **Working Conditions Confirmation Obligation**

If either of the two conditions exist:

- 1) an employer is informed that an employee or the employee's spouse is expecting a child or has recently given birth to a child, or
- 2) an employee is caring for a child who is/will be turning three years of age,

then, the employer has an obligation to confirm if the employee has particular desires with respect to certain working conditions that are specified by the law (e.g. working hours, work location, etc.). The employer is also required to try to accommodate the employee's wishes in light of the company's circumstances.