

CHAPTER 6 REHABILITATION SERVICES

I. PAROLE

A. Overview

Parole is a form of community-based treatment of offenders, and it aims to prevent reoffending and promote reformation, rehabilitation and smooth social reintegration.

When a person sentenced to imprisonment shows signs of substantial reformation, the person may be released early on parole by a decision of the regional parole board after that person has served one-third of the sentenced term or 10 years in the case of a life imprisonment (see Article 28, Penal Code). More concretely, according to an ordinance issued by the Ministry of Justice, parole can be granted to inmates (i) who are deemed to have a sense of remorse for the offence they committed and are deemed to be willing to reform and rehabilitate themselves, (ii) have no likelihood of reoffending, (iii) it is thus deemed reasonable to place them under parole supervision for their own reformation and rehabilitation, and (iv) the public sentiment approves of that decision.

Parole decisions are made by regional parole boards upon application by the correctional institution where the inmate is accommodated; inmates are not entitled to apply for parole. In addition, the regional parole board may commence a parole examination on its own initiative.

1. Parole Examination

When a parole examination is initiated, a board member visits the institution and interviews the individual. Later, three members of the board examine the case to evaluate whether the requirements for parole are met. The evaluation will consist of an examination of observations by the interviewer, information from the inmate's institutional record, the result of the pre-parole inquiry by the probation officers and the probation office's report on re-entry coordination. In addition, regional parole boards are required to hear the opinions and feelings of the victims, if requested.

2. Parole Decision

When the panel of three board members finds that the requirements are met, they will grant parole specifying the date of parole, place of residence during parole, and special conditions applicable to the parolee during the parole supervision period.

3. Pre-parole Inquiry by the Probation Officers

Probation officers attached to regional parole boards visit correctional institutions regularly for to prepare for parole. They collect information through interviews with inmates, case conferences with correctional officers and examination of relevant correctional records. The result of this inquiry is submitted to the board, and its copy is also sent to the probation office to provide the field officer with the pertinent data on potential parolees.

4. Re-entry Coordination

Re-entry coordination means that a probation officer or a *hogoshi* (see page 9) ascertains the status of a place where an inmate of a correctional institution is due to live upon release (for example, by meeting the guarantor preferred by the inmate after release), arranges social circumstances such as accommodation and a place of employment, and works to create an environment suited to reformation and rehabilitation. This coordination starts soon after the inmate enters the correctional institution and is implemented continuously until the point of release from the institution. The progress of coordination is periodically reported to the director of the probation office, the regional parole board and the correctional institution. Social circumstances are taken into account in treatment within the institution, reviews for parole and supervision after release on parole. Every year, re-entry coordination is initiated for around 30,000 inmates.

II. PAROLE AND PROBATIONARY SUPERVISION OF ADULT OFFENDERS

A. Overview

Both parole and probationary supervision are forms of community-based treatment of offenders. Probation is a court-imposed measure that places the offender or juvenile delinquent under the supervision of the probation

office while allowing them to remain in the community. As long as they abide by the conditions of parole or probation, parolees and probationers can avoid being committed to prisons or juvenile training schools.

Parolees are the early released offenders and juvenile delinquents who have been committed to prisons or juvenile training schools. Parole decisions are made by regional parole boards (see page 9), and parolees are also placed on supervision and assistance of the probation office.

The probation office deals with the following four categories of individuals:

- (1) juveniles placed on probation by the family court (juvenile probationers);
- (2) juveniles released from juvenile training schools on parole (juvenile parolees);
- (3) inmates released from prisons on parole (adult parolees); and
- (4) offenders receiving a suspended sentence and placed on probation by the court (adult probationers).

This section describes the status of the parole and probation supervision of adult parolees and probationers, whereas the next section will describe the treatment of juvenile parolees and probationers.

1. Adult Parolees

An offender serving a prison sentence may be conditionally released on parole by a decision of the regional parole board. An adult parolee shall be placed on parole supervision for the remaining term of the sentence (in the case of offenders released on parole from life sentences, parole supervision runs for life). In 2024, of the 15,040 inmates released, 9,448 (62.8%) were released on parole.

2. Adult Probationers

Under certain circumstances, a sentencing court may suspend the execution of the sentence and may place the convicted offender on probation. In Japan, probation is not an independent sentencing option for adults; it is only used as a measure combined with the suspension of execution of sentence. The period of probation ranges from one to five years, corresponding to the period of suspension of the execution of sentence (including partial suspended execution of sentence) specified by the sentencing court (see page 34).

Of the 45,585 offenders sentenced to imprisonment in 2024, 30,354 (66.6%) had the execution of their sentences suspended, out of which 1,496 were placed on probation.

B. Parole and Probation Conditions

Parolees and probationers are required to abide by the general and special conditions of parole or probation. Committing another crime is a violation of the general condition. Failure to comply with the conditions may result in adverse action such as parole revocation.

1. General Conditions

The general conditions of parole or probation are specified in the Offenders Rehabilitation Act. General conditions are imposed on all adult and juvenile parolees and probationers alike, and they cannot be changed or withdrawn during parole or probation.

The general conditions are: (i) maintaining a sound attitude towards life; (ii) responding to summonses or interviews by probation officers and *hogoshi*, (iii) providing relevant information when requested by probation officers and *hogoshi*; (iv) residing at the designated or registered residence; (iv) obtaining the permission of the director of the probation office before changing residence or travelling for seven days or more.

2. Special Conditions

In addition to the general conditions, special conditions necessary for reformation and rehabilitation may be set for individual parolees and probationers. In the case of parolees, special conditions are determined by regional parole boards on the basis of proposals by the director of the probation office. In the case of probationers, special conditions are determined by the director of the probation office based upon the opinion of the court.

Special conditions are chosen from among the itemized list in the Offenders Rehabilitation Act. Unlike the general conditions, they may be added to, changed, or withdrawn during parole or probation in accordance with changes in the circumstances of each person.

The examples of special conditions include: (i) prohibition of specific acts such as association with certain

unfavorable persons, going to certain unfavorable places, reckless wasting of money for pleasure and excessive consumption of alcohol; (ii) performing or continuing to perform certain acts such as engaging in work or attending school, and (iii) attendance at certain treatment programmes specified by the Minister of Justice.

3. Life and Conduct Guidelines

The director of a probation office may, if necessary, establish individual guidelines for life and conduct that contribute to the reformation and rehabilitation of parolees and probationers. Unlike the conditions, non-compliance with the guidelines does not result in adverse action against the parolees or the probationers.

C. Parole and Probationary Supervision

1. General Framework

The purpose of parole or probation, as defined in the Offenders Rehabilitation Act, is to ensure the reformation and rehabilitation of the parolees and probationers through “instruction and supervision” and “guidance and assistance.”

“Instruction and supervision” is implemented by (i) maintaining contact with parolees and probationers and keeping track of their behaviour, (ii) giving necessary instructions or taking measures to ensure that parolees and probationers comply with the general and special conditions of parole or probation, and (iii) providing specialized treatment designed to improve specific criminal tendencies.

“Guidance and assistance” includes (i) assistance in securing accommodation, (ii) assistance in receiving medical care, (iii) assistance in employment and vocational guidance, (iv) improving and coordinating social circumstances, and (v) providing instructions on necessary life skills.

While the aim of “guidance and assistance” is to enable parolees and probationers to live independent and responsible lives, they may face acute financial difficulties that can hamper their reformation and rehabilitation. Under such circumstances, the director of the probation office may provide necessary “urgent aid” including medical care, meals, accommodation, clothes and travel expenses. In 2024, 3,746 parolees and probationers received such urgent aid directly from probation offices, and 4,780 through persons commissioned by the probation offices such as halfway houses.



Interview by a Probation Officer

2. Intake Interviews and Treatment Plans

Individuals placed on parole or probation are required to report immediately to the probation office that has territorial jurisdiction over his or her residence. At the office, an intake interview and initial risk and needs assessments using a method known as Case Formulation in Probation/Parole (CFP) will be conducted, and the probation officer will explain the framework of supervision, notify him or her of the conditions of parole or probation, register his or her residence and draw up an individualized treatment plan.

3. Role of Probation Officers and *Hogoshi*

Japanese probation officers are usually responsible for one or several local administration divisions (“probation district”), and they supervise all the cases within that division. In order to supplement their work, a *hogoshi* (see page 9) will be assigned to serve as a day-to-day supervisor for the parolee or probationer. In many cases, the *hogoshi* lives nearby the parolee or probationer, which makes regular contact much easier.

After receiving the treatment plan and other relevant information from the probation officer, the *hogoshi* starts supervising the parolee or probationer. The *hogoshi* keeps in touch with the parolee or probationer and his

or her family by means of visits and interviews and submits a monthly progress report to the probation office. While *hogoshi* are entrusted with day-to-day supervision of ordinary cases, probation officers need to directly intervene in cases of high-risk or difficult individuals or in critical situations.

4. Day Offices

Probation officers regularly visit venues such as the municipal office, public hall or youth centre located in the area of their respective probation districts. Probation officers interview parolees and probationers, visit their homes, counsel their families, and consult with *hogoshi* and other related parties such as school teachers, employers, and community agencies. This practice facilitates direct casework by probation officers and provides *hogoshi* with closer supervision and consultation.

5. Progressive Treatment

Parolees and probationers are classified into five grades in accordance with the results of their initial risk and needs assessments conducted using CPF. The grade determines the required frequency of contact and the criteria for the measures against inappropriate conduct. Parolees and probationers are upgraded or downgraded depending upon the outcome of treatment.

6. Categorized Treatment

Categorized treatment is a system designed to effectively treat parolees and probationers effectively based on their particular problems. There are 19 categories, classified into four issue areas: relationships, delinquent peers, social adaptation, and addiction.

7. Treatment Programmes as Special Conditions

Structured treatment programmes are designed to address specific criminal tendencies and are designated by the Minister of Justice and as such may be included as a special condition for parolees and probationers.

Currently, there are four designated treatment programmes: a sex offender treatment programme; a drug relapse prevention programme; a violence prevention programme; and an impaired driving prevention programme. As they form part of the special conditions, failure to participate can lead to adverse action.

These programmes are based on cognitive-behavioural theory, and they consist of one introductory session and five core sessions. By participating in these programmes, parolees and probationers are expected to understand their biases in thinking, to recognize the situations in which they are likely to commit the offence and to develop skills to cope in such situations. Notably, a drug relapse prevention programme includes compulsory drug testing (either urinalysis or saliva test), and if the result is positive, it will be reported to the police unless the parolee or probationer voluntarily turns himself or herself in to the police.

These programmes are basically implemented on an individual basis (i.e., one-on-one counselling). However, programmes for drug offenders and sex offenders may also be conducted in a group format. In addition, follow up and maintenance programmes are provided after completion of the core programmes to help reinforce and apply what has been learned.

8. Comprehensive Job Assistance Scheme

Secure employment is essential to social reintegration and rehabilitation of offenders and juvenile delinquents. To improve their employability and provide job placement assistance more effectively, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare agreed to strengthen their coordination in the provision of services. For example, Public Employment Security Offices provide support in preparing for employment while the offender is still in prison. To ease the anxieties of potential employers, trial employment programmes and fidelity guarantee system are provided as well.

9. Offender Rehabilitation Facilities (Halfway Houses)

Some offenders, despite their willingness to change and the progress they have made, may still not be eligible for lack of an appropriate place to return in the society. In such cases, offender rehabilitation facilities

can be one of the options as a place to live with necessary support (see page 10).

10. National Centre for Offenders Rehabilitation

National centres for offenders rehabilitation are established to provide assistance to offenders that have no appropriate place to return in the society. These centres are national rehabilitation facilities attached to the probation offices established in order to provide such offenders with temporary accommodations as well as intensive supervision and employment support by the probation officers.

There are four national centres for offenders rehabilitation. The offenders released from custody, including parolees, others released from prison and probationers, those who received suspended imprisonment sentence are accommodated in these facilities. Two of them mainly perform vocational agricultural education and training, and one of these two is specifically established for juveniles.

As of 2025, the total capacity of the four centres was 58 residents.



Ibaraki National Centre for
Offenders Job Training and Employment Support

11. Self-Reliance Support Homes

Besides offender rehabilitation facilities (halfway houses), there are facilities registered with the probation offices called self-reliance support homes, which provide the parolees and probationers with accommodation, etc. Self-reliance support homes are run by private corporations, organizations and other businesses and can take various forms, including residential facilities, detached homes and apartments. Probation offices entrust to the corporations, businesses or groups that operate these facilities the provision for offenders of accommodation, living guidance (independence preparation support), and whenever necessary, meals.

As of 2025, 562 bodies were registered as self-reliance support homes. For FY2024, the actual number of parolees and probationers accommodated was 1,686.

12. Community Resettlement Support Centres

When offenders are released from a correctional institution, some have difficulty in living independently, owing to old age or disability, or they have nowhere to live after release. Probation offices undertake “special coordination”, which enables these former inmates to enter social welfare facilities etc. in collaboration with prefectural community resettlement support centres established by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare. Several hundred former inmates complete special coordination every year. In 2024, the number of cases concluded through special coordination was 766. Of these individuals, 392 had mental disorders, 366 were elderly, 209 had intellectual disabilities and 88 had physical disabilities. These figures include overlapping counts, as some individuals fell into more than one category.

13. Social Contribution Activities

Social contribution activities include cleaning activities at public places and volunteer activities at welfare facilities. These have been implemented since FY2011 as part of the treatment involved in parole/probation supervision, thereby helping offenders to acquire a sense of self-efficacy and develop greater moral awareness, and the ability to adapt to society through continued participation in social activities which benefit their local communities.

D. Termination of Parole and Probation

Depending on the performance of the parolee or probationer, parole or probation may be terminated early (see page 52 for the regular period of each type of parole and probation), or in “failure cases,” adverse action such as parole revocation may be taken.

1. Measures for Good Conduct

i) Adult Parolees

Parole supervision for adult parolees runs for the remaining term of the sentence, and there is no early discharge from parole supervision.¹ This means that offenders released on parole from life imprisonment will be on parole supervision for life, which can be terminated only through pardon.

ii) Adult Probationers

As for adult probationers, the period of probation corresponds to that of the suspension of execution of sentence as specified by the sentencing court, and it cannot be shortened. However, the regional parole board, upon the proposal of the director of the probation office, may provisionally cancel the probationary supervision, in which case, the probationer will be treated as if not on probation.

2. Measures against Inappropriate Conduct

i) Adult Parolees

If an adult parolee does not comply with the conditions, the regional parole board, upon the proposal of the director of the probation office, may revoke parole.² When parole is revoked, the parolee is returned to a correctional institution for the remaining term of his or her original sentence from the date parole was granted.

ii) Adult Probationers

When an adult probationer does not comply with the conditions and the circumstances of non-compliance are serious, the director of the probation office shall submit a proposal in writing to the public prosecutor, who will then apply to the court for a decision to revoke the suspension of the execution of the sentence.³

E. Outcome of Parole and Probation

The number of adult parole and probation cases terminated in 2024 is shown in the following Table.

2024 Total	Adult Parole	Adult Probation
Completion of term*	9,444 (96.0%)	2,437 (77.2%)
Terminated due to revocation	352 (3.6%)	637 (20.2%)
Others**	38 (0.4%)	84 (2.7%)
Total	9,834	3,158

* The parole or probation period passed without any adverse action being taken.

** “Others” for adult parolees indicates completion of statute of limitations during suspension of parole supervision, and death, etc. “Others” for adult probationers indicates death, etc.

III. PAROLE AND PROBATIONARY SUPERVISION OF JUVENILES

A. Overview

This section describes the status of the parole and probationary supervision of juvenile parolees and

¹ Offenders paroled from indeterminate prison sentences may be discharged early from parole supervision. However, in Japan, indeterminate sentencing is applicable only to juveniles, and even then is rarely applied.

² Article 75 (1), Article 75(2), Offenders Rehabilitation Act.

³ Article 26-2(2), Article 27-5(2), Penal Code, Article 79, Offenders Rehabilitation Act.

probationers.

1. Juvenile Parolees

A juvenile committed to a juvenile training school may be released on parole by a decision of the regional parole board. The parole procedure is as same as for adults (see page 46). However, the requirements for parole for juvenile-training-school residents differ from those for adult offenders: (i) the juvenile has reached the highest stage of treatment, and release on parole is appropriate for his or her reformation and rehabilitation; or (ii) release on parole is necessary for his or her reformation and rehabilitation.

Juvenile parolees are placed on parole supervision during the period of parole, which is, as a general rule, until reaching 20 years of age. In 2024, 1,630 juveniles were paroled from juvenile training schools, accounting for 99.9 per cent of those who were released from juvenile training schools.

2. Juvenile Probationers

The family court, after a hearing, may impose a juvenile delinquent on a protective measure, and probation is one of the options available (see page 36). The legally prescribed period of probation for a juvenile probationer is until he or she reaches 20 years of age or for two years, whichever is longer. On the other hand, the family court shall subject Specified Juveniles to protective measures including 6-month probation or 2-year probation under the amended Juvenile Act. In 2024, the family court placed 10,731 juveniles on probation. This represents 23.4 per cent of the juveniles whose cases were disposed of by the family court.

B. Parole and Probation Conditions

Parole and probation conditions for juveniles are the same as those for adult parolees and probationers (see page 47). There are limitations on requiring juveniles to attend specialized treatment programmes as special conditions (see page 47). For further details, see the next section.

C. Parole and Probationary Supervision

Parole or probationary supervision for juvenile parolees and probationers are basically the same as that for adult parolees and probationers. The general framework of parole and probationary supervision (see page 48), the methods of intake interviews and treatment plans (see page 48) and the roles of probation officers and *hogoshi* (see page 48) are the same as those for adult parolees and probationers. Day offices (see page 49), progressive treatment (see page 49), categorized treatment (see page 49) and comprehensive job assistance schemes (see page 49) are applied to juvenile parolees and probationers as well as adult parolees and probationers. Regarding the national centres for offenders rehabilitation (see page 50), one centre is established exclusively for juveniles (Numatacho National Centre for Offenders Job Training and Employment Support). Some self-reliance support homes (see page 50) accept juvenile parolees and probationers. Community resettlement support centres (see page 50) are also utilized to undertake special coordination for juvenile-training-school residents.

With regard to specialized treatment programmes, juveniles who are 18 years of age or older and for whom participation is deemed necessary may be required to attend such programmes as a special condition of probation or parole. For juveniles under 18 years of age, such programmes may be provided with the consent of the juvenile and his or her guardian when deemed necessary for appropriate guidance and supervision.



Numatacho National Center for
Offenders Job Training and Employment Support

Measures important for juvenile parolees and probationers are described below.

1. Short-Term Programmes for Juvenile Probationers

Upon recommendation by the family court, juvenile probationers with relatively low criminal tendencies may be placed in programmes called “Short-Term Traffic Probation” or “Short-Term Juvenile Probation.” While the duration of probation is legally no different from ordinary juvenile probation, these programmes operate on the assumption that probation will be terminated early if the juveniles fulfil certain requirements.

Short-Term Traffic Probation requires juvenile probationers to attend group sessions such as lectures and discussions, and to submit monthly reports on their daily lives. Those who have satisfied these requirements are usually discharged from probation after three to four months.

Juveniles placed on short-term juvenile probation are required to submit monthly reports and to complete certain tasks assigned by the probation officer. These tasks are determined on an individual basis, and they may include “social participation activities” as described in the next section.

In addition, Specified Juveniles may be placed on six-month probation. This form of probation is intended for those who have committed relatively minor offences, whose issues are assessed as limited, and for whom rehabilitation is considered achievable without a custodial response in the event of non-compliance. Under this probation, juveniles are required to report on their daily lives to a probation officer once a month. Depending on their individual needs, they may also be required to attend necessary programmes, such as group sessions on traffic safety or “social contribution activities” as described in the next session, once or several times during the probation period.

2. Social Contribution Activities and Social Participation Activities

Social contribution activities have been applied to juvenile parolees and probationers as well as adult parolees and probationers (See page 50), whereas social participation activities have been implemented mainly for juvenile-training-school parolees and juvenile probationers and with the aim of fostering a appropriate socialization and enhancing their ability to adapt to society. Frequently implemented activities include “participating in cleaning and environmental beautification activities”, “participating in nursing care for the elderly, etc. and volunteer activities”, and “participating in creative activities, hands-on experience, and various classes, etc.”

3. Treatment of Juveniles Who Have Committed Heinous or Serious Offences

Juvenile parolees and juvenile probationers and who commit serious offences such as homicide, in many cases, have problems related to their predisposition and complex serious problems with family relationships etc. They are therefore placed at the highest level of progressive treatment with the intensive involvement of probation officers to help them develop the ability to adapt to society and to encourage them to apologize to their victims by providing them with an atonement guidance programme.

4. Measures for Guardians

Probation offices provide the guardians of juvenile parolees and juvenile probationers with instruction or advice until reaching 20 years of age, thus ensuring that the guardians provide the appropriate supervision through understanding of juveniles’ living conditions etc. and rectifying their behaviour that could obstruct reformation and rehabilitation. Probation offices also make information available that contributes to solving problems pertaining to the juvenile’s delinquency by holding meetings with guardians etc.

D. Termination of Parole and Probation

Depending on the performance of the parolee or probationer, parole or probation may be terminated early (see page 52 for the regular period of each type of parole or probation), or in “failure cases,” adverse action such as parole revocation may be taken.

1. Measures for Good Conduct

i) Juvenile Parolees

For juvenile parolees, the decision on early discharge is made by regional parole boards upon the proposal of the director of the probation office.

ii) Juvenile Probationers

Juvenile probationers are discharged early when the director of the probation office finds it no longer necessary to continue the probation.

2. Measures against Inappropriate Conduct

i) Juvenile Parolees

When a juvenile parolee does not comply with the conditions of parole, the regional parole board, upon the proposal of the director of the probation office, may apply to the family court for a decision to recommit the parolee to a juvenile training school.

ii) Juvenile Probationers

When a juvenile probationer does not comply with the conditions of probation, the director of the probation office may issue official warnings. If the juvenile still does not comply and the degree of non-compliance is serious, the director may apply to the family court for a decision to commit the juvenile to a juvenile training school.

E. Outcome of Parole and Probation

The number of juvenile parole and probation cases terminated in 2024 is shown in the following table.

2024 Total	Juvenile Parole	Juvenile Probation*
Early discharge**	83 (7.8%)	4,632 (69.0%)
Completion of term	790 (74.0%)	915 (13.6%)
Terminated due to revocation	192 (18.0%)	1,151 (17.1%)
others***	2 (0.2%)	14 (0.2%)
Total	1,067	6,712

* Excluding special Short-Term Programmes for juvenile traffic offenders and Specified Juveniles on six-month probation

** The parole or probation was terminated early for good conduct.

*** “Others” indicates death, etc.

IV. AFTERCARE OF DISCHARGED OFFENDERS

Offenders released from custody but not subject to parole or probation may still need some form of aftercare support from the government. Under the Offenders Rehabilitation Act, as amended in 2023, various measures have been strengthened to provide long-lasting support for offenders, with the aim of ensuring seamless assistance after release. Examples of such offenders include (i) inmates released after serving the full term of their imprisonment sentences; (ii) defendants who received “suspension of execution of sentences without probation (see page 34)”; and (iii) suspects released by prosecutors on “suspension of prosecution” or “pending disposition” (see page 22).

The Offenders Rehabilitation Act authorizes the director of the probation office, upon application by eligible discharged offenders or by inmates scheduled for release from correctional facilities, to provide “urgent aftercare” to such eligible offenders, either directly or by commissioning appropriate persons, to the extent necessary for their reformation and rehabilitation. Aftercare services that may be provided include medical care, meals, accommodation, clothing, education and training, travel expenses, vocational guidance, and referral to Public Employment Security Offices or Public Welfare Offices. The maximum period of aftercare is six months in principle, but may be extended for up to one year. For measures excluding the provision of money, goods, or accommodation, the period may be extended for up to two years. Even after the period during which urgent aftercare is available has elapsed, probation offices may provide offenders with necessary assistance, such as information and advice, to support their rehabilitation and reintegration. Furthermore, probation offices provide community based assistance by responding to consultations from community residents, including individuals who have previously been involved in the criminal justice system, as well as from relevant agencies and organizations, and by offering information and advice based on their professional expertise in offender rehabilitation, with the aim of contributing to offender rehabilitation and the prevention of crime in the community.

V. PARDONS

A pardon is an action of the executive branch that officially nullifies punishment or other legal consequences of a crime. Though pardons are not measures for offender treatment, they can function as a stimulus and encouragement for behavioural change. It is particularly significant for offenders released on parole from life sentences, for they will be placed on parole supervision for life unless the underlying sentence is remitted by a pardon. The authority to grant pardons to specific individuals belongs to the Cabinet. Upon recommendation by the National Offenders Rehabilitation Commission, the Minister of Justice asks for a Cabinet decision granting a pardon, which is then attested by the Emperor.

VI. MEASURES FOR CRIME VICTIMS

In 2007, the Rehabilitation Bureau launched four measures for crime victims in relation to offender rehabilitation. The four measures are (i) the system for hearing the victim’s opinions during parole examination (victims may express their opinion regarding parole); (ii) the system for conveying the victim’s feelings on parole and probation (victims may ask the probation officer to convey their sentiments to parolees and probationers); (iii) the victim notification scheme (certain information about parole and probation is notified to victims); and (iv) victim consultation and support services. In addition to these victim-related measures, the amendment to the Offenders Rehabilitation Act enacted in 2023 introduced provisions concerning the treatment of offenders that take into account the feelings and circumstances of crime victims and their families. The amendment also includes measures such as adding instructions to make efforts to repair or mitigate harm caused by crime to the methods of supervision of parolees and probationers. As of 2025, 123 probation officers and 99 *hogoshi* were assigned to work exclusively on victim support measures.

VII. MEDICAL TREATMENT AND SUPERVISION

The Act on Medical Care and Treatment for Persons Who Have Caused Serious Cases under the Condition of Insanity provides for medical care and treatment of individuals who committed acts that would constitute offences of homicide, rape, robbery, arson or injury (or attempts thereof) but who, for reasons of insanity or diminished capacity, were acquitted, received a reduced sentence with suspension of its execution, or were not prosecuted. Under the act, the court may commit such persons to a designated medical facility or order them to receive outpatient treatment.

Persons ordered to undergo outpatient treatment are placed under the medical supervision of a probation office. The purpose of the supervision is to ensure that the person continues to receive necessary medical treatment. Other responsibilities of the probation office include re-entry coordination and coordination of various institutions and organizations involved in the care and treatment of the person. These responsibilities are undertaken by rehabilitation coordinators (see page 9), and not by ordinary probation officers. In 2018, the Rehabilitation Bureau launched the victim notification scheme (certain information about medical treatment and

supervision is notified to victims upon request).

VIII. CRIME PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

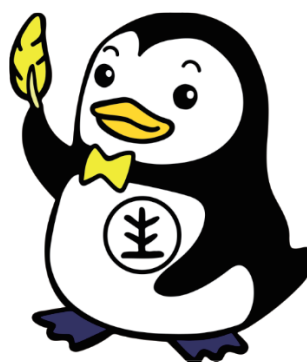
Rehabilitation authorities carry out various initiatives throughout the year to (i) raise public awareness of the importance of offender rehabilitation; (ii) improve social environments and engage communities in the prevention of crime. These initiatives include community lectures and symposiums, delinquency prevention seminars and street-based youth guidance activities. Such activities are implemented by probation offices and volunteer organizations, such as *hogoshi* associations, women’s associations for rehabilitation aid, and BBS associations, in cooperation with various relevant agencies and organizations in the community.

As part of such efforts, an annual crime prevention campaign, called the “Yellow Feather Campaign”, is organized under the leadership of the Ministry of Justice. The campaign is carried out through the year, but in the campaign month of July, an extensive public relations programme is launched to advocate “The power of the community preventing crimes and juvenile delinquency, assisting rehabilitation of offenders”.

One of the figures that helps raise public awareness of crime prevention is “*Hogo-chan*”, the penguin mascot of the Rehabilitation Bureau of the Ministry of Justice. This mascot has a background story in which he himself was a delinquent youth but rehabilitated through the support of the local community. Together with his companion characters, *Hogo-chan* appears on the Rehabilitation Bureau’s official social media platforms, in pamphlets and other materials, and at Yellow Feather Campaign events held nationwide, thereby helping to enhance public awareness of and familiarity with the offender rehabilitation system.



Campaign for Junior High School Students



Hogo-chan