

Pardons Act

(Act No. 20 of March 28, 1947)

Article 1 A general pardon, special pardon, commutation of sentence, exemption from execution of a sentence, and restoration of rights are governed by this Act.

Article 2 A general pardon is granted by Cabinet Order specifying the types of crimes.

Article 3 Unless the Cabinet Order referred to in the preceding Article provides otherwise, a general pardon has the following effect with respect to the crime for which it is granted:

- (i) pronouncement of guilt ceases to be effective against the persons subject to that pronouncement; and
- (ii) the right to prosecute any person not yet subject to pronouncement of guilt is extinguished.

Article 4 A special pardon is granted to a specific person who has been pronounced guilty of a crime.

Article 5 A special pardon causes pronouncement of guilt to cease to be effective.

Article 6 Commutation of sentence is granted to persons already subject to sentencing pronouncement, by Cabinet Order providing the type of crime or punishment for which they are granted, or commutation of sentence is granted to specific sentenced persons.

Article 7 (1) Commutation of sentence by Cabinet Order reduces the sentence except as otherwise specifically provided by the Cabinet Order in question.

Commutation of sentence granted to a specific person reduces the sentence or execution of the sentence.

Notwithstanding the provisions of the preceding paragraph, with regard to a person who has been sentenced to suspension of execution of the entire sentence and whose period of suspension has not yet expired, only commutation of sentence is to be granted, and the suspension period may also be shortened; provided, however, that with regard to a person deemed to have been sentenced to suspension of execution of the entire sentence, the suspension period will not be shortened.

Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (2), with regard to a person who

has been sentenced to a partial suspension of execution of sentence and who has not yet completed suspension, only commutation of sentence or a reduction of the period of execution of the part of the sentence for which the execution has not been suspended is to be granted, and the suspension period may also be shortened in addition to reduction of the sentence; provided, however, that with regard to a person deemed to have been sentenced to a partial sentence, the suspension period is not shortened.

Article 8 Exemption from execution of a sentence is granted to a specific person who has already been sentenced; provided, however, that exemption from execution of a sentence is not granted if all of the person's sentence is subject to a suspended execution, nor is it granted if a part of the person's sentence is subject to a suspended execution and the person has finished serving the part of the sentence not subject to the suspension but has not yet completed the suspended period.

Article 9 Restoration of rights is granted to persons whose legal capacity has been lost or suspended pursuant to laws and regulations as a result of having been pronounced guilty of a crime, by establishing the requirements for the restoration by Cabinet Order; provided, however, that restoration of rights is not granted to a person who has neither finished serving the sentence nor been exempted from execution.

Article 10 (1) Restoration of rights means restoring a person's legal capacity. Restoration of rights may be granted with respect to a specific capacity.

Article 11 The existing effect from pronouncement of guilt is not to be altered by a general pardon, special pardon, commutation of sentence, exemption from execution of a sentence, or restoration of rights.

Article 12 A special pardon, commutation of specific person's sentence, exemption from execution of sentence, and restoration of specific person's rights are to be granted to persons proposed by the National Offenders Rehabilitation Commission.

Article 13 When a special pardon, commutation of a specific person's sentence, exemption from execution of sentence, or restoration of a specific person's rights is granted, the Minister of Justice must issue that person a certificate of that special pardon, commutation of sentence, exemption from execution of the sentence, or restoration of rights.

Article 14 When a general pardon, special pardon, commutation of sentence, exemption from execution of sentence, or restoration of rights is granted, the public prosecutor must add a supplementary note to that effect to the original of the judgment.

Article 15 Ministry of Justice Order provides the necessary matters concerning the implementation of this Act coming into effect.

Supplementary Provisions [Extract]

This Act comes into effect on the date on which the Constitution of Japan comes into effect.

Supplementary Provisions [Act No. 195 of December 17, 1947] [Extract]

Article 17 This Act comes into effect on the day on which sixty days have elapsed from the date of promulgation.

Supplementary Provisions [Act No. 143 of May 31, 1949]

This Act comes into effect on the date on which the Offenders Prevention and Rehabilitation Act (Act No. 142 of 1949) comes into effect (July 1, 1949).

Supplementary Provisions [Act No. 268 of July 31, 1952] [Extract]

(1) This Act comes into effect on August 1, 1952.

Supplementary Provisions [Act No. 160 of December 22, 1999] [Extract]

(Effective Date)

Article 1 This Act (excluding Article 2 and Article 3) comes into effect on January 6, 2001; provided, however, that the provisions stated in the following items come into effect on the dates specified in each item, respectively:

- (i) the provisions of Article 995 (limited to the part related to the provisions amending the Supplementary Provisions of the Act for Partially Amending the Act on the Regulation of Nuclear Source Material, Nuclear Fuel Material and Reactors) and Article 1305, Article 1306, Article 1324, paragraph (2), Article 1326, paragraph (2) and Article 1344: the date of promulgation.

Supplementary Provisions [Act No. 49 of June 19, 2013] [Extract]

(Effective Date)

Article 1 This Act comes into effect on the date specified by Cabinet Order within a period not exceeding three years from the date of promulgation.

Supplementary Provisions [Act No. 68 of June 17, 2022] [Extract]

(Effective Date)

- (1) This Act comes into effect on the effective date of the Partially Amending Act on the Penal Code; provided, however, that the provisions stated in the following items come into effect on the dates specified in those items, respectively:
- (i) the provisions of Article 509: the date of promulgation.

Supplementary Provisions [Act No. 39 of May 23, 2025] [Extract]

(Effective Date)

- Article 1 This Act comes into effect on the date specified by Cabinet Order no later than March 31, 2027; provided, however, that the provisions stated in the following items come into effect on the dates specified in those items, respectively:
- (i) the provisions of Article 3, paragraph (4), Article 5, paragraph (4), Article 10, paragraph (2), Article 18, paragraph (2), Article 39, and Article 41 of the Supplementary Provisions: the date of promulgation.

(Delegation to Cabinet Order)

Article 39 In addition to what is stipulated in these Supplementary Provisions, transitional measure necessary for the enforcement of this Act are specified by Cabinet Order.