

Act on the Promotion of Policy on Child Poverty

(Act No. 64 of June 26, 2013)

Table of Contents

Chapter I General Provisions (Articles 1 to 7)

Chapter II Guiding Initiatives (Articles 8 to 14)

Chapter III Council for Policy on Child Poverty (Articles 15 and 16)

Supplementary Provisions

Chapter I General Provisions

(Purpose)

Article 1 The purpose of this Act is to comprehensively promote measures to combat child poverty by establishing guiding principles, clarifying the responsibilities of the State, etc. and establishing the particulars upon which measures against child poverty are based, so as to eliminate child poverty in the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with a view to protecting the healthy physical and mental development of, and equal educational opportunities for all children, and allowing every child to have hopes and dreams without their present and future being dependent on the environment in which they were born and raised.

(Basic Principles)

Article 2 (1) Measures against child poverty must be promoted across all fields of society with a view to respecting children's views, considering their best interests as a priority, and protecting their healthy physical and mental development, in accordance with their age and degree of development.

(2) Measures against child poverty must be promoted by implementing initiatives in a timely and comprehensive manner, including educational support, support for a stable lifestyle, employment support to stabilize and improve working life and economic support for children, etc., with a view to preventing children's present and future being dependent on the environment in which they were born and raised, while taking into account each individual's lifestyle and circumstances.

(3) Measures against child poverty must be promoted by taking into consideration the various societal factors behind child poverty.

(4) Measures against child poverty must be implemented in a comprehensive manner covering relevant fields, in close collaboration with organs of the national and local governments.

(Responsibilities of the State)

Article 3 The State is responsible for developing and implementing measures against child poverty in a comprehensive manner, in accordance with the guiding principles referred to in the preceding Article (referred to as the "guiding principles" in the following Article).

(Responsibilities of Local Governments)

Article 4 Local governments are responsible for developing and implementing initiatives for measures against child poverty in accordance with the guiding principles, in accordance with the circumstances of the region, and in collaboration with the State.

(Responsibilities of Citizens)

Article 5 Citizens must endeavor to cooperate with measures against child poverty implemented by the national or local governments.

(Legislative Measures)

Article 6 The government must take legislative, financial or other measures necessary to achieve the purpose of this Act.

(Publication of the State of Child Poverty and Implementation of Measures Against Child Poverty)

Article 7 The government must publish information on the state of child poverty and the implementation of measures against child poverty once a year.

Chapter II Guiding Initiatives

(General Principles of Policy on Child Poverty)

Article 8 (1) The government must establish general principles of policy on child poverty (hereinafter referred to as the "general principles") with a view to promoting measures against child poverty in a comprehensive manner.

(2) The general principles are to provide the following particulars:

- (i) guiding policies on measures against child poverty;
- (ii) indicators of child poverty, such as the child poverty rate, poverty rate of single-parent households, the upper secondary school enrollment rate of children from households receiving public welfare benefits, and tertiary school enrollment rate of children from households receiving public welfare benefits, as well as initiatives to improve those rates;
- (iii) particulars on measures against child poverty including educational support, support for a stable lifestyle, employment support to stabilize and

- improve the working lives of guardians, and economic support;
- (iv) particulars on the research and study of child poverty; and
 - (v) particulars on frameworks for the promotion of initiatives for measures against child poverty, including the verification and assessment of the state of implementation thereof.
- (3) The Prime Minister must seek a cabinet decision for drafting general principles.
 - (4) When the Cabinet decision under the preceding paragraph is made, the Prime Minister must publish the general principles without delay.
 - (5) The provisions of the preceding two paragraphs apply mutatis mutandis to changes to the general principles.
 - (6) The definitions of the terms "child poverty rate," "poverty rate of single-parent households," "upper secondary school enrollment rate of children from households receiving public welfare benefits" and "tertiary school enrollment rate of children from households receiving public welfare benefits" as referred to in paragraph (2), item (ii) are to be specified by Cabinet Order.

(Prefectural Plans)

- Article 9 (1) Prefectures are to endeavor to develop their own respective plans on measures against child poverty (referred to as a "prefectural plan" in the following paragraph and paragraph (3)), through taking into account the general principles.
- (2) Municipalities are to endeavor to develop their respective plans on measures against child poverty (referred to as a "municipal plan" in the following paragraph) through taking into account the general principles (or both the general principles and prefectural plan, if a prefectural plan is established).
 - (3) If a prefecture or municipality establishes or changes a prefectural plan or municipal plan, it must publish that plan without delay.

(Educational Support)

Article 10 The national and local governments are to implement initiatives necessary for supporting the education of children in poverty to secure equal educational opportunities, such as providing assistance for entering school, support for school tuition, and learning support.

(Support for a Stable Lifestyle)

Article 11 The national and local governments are to implement initiatives necessary for supporting a stable lifestyle for children in poverty, such as providing life counseling for them and their guardians, and creating opportunities for children in poverty to interact with society.

(Employment Support to Stabilize and Improve the Working Life of Guardians)

Article 12 The national and local governments are to implement initiatives necessary to support the employment of guardians of children in poverty to increase the income of those guardians or to stabilize and improve their working lives, such as providing vocational training and assisting in job placement.

(Economic Support)

Article 13 The national and local governments are to implement the necessary initiatives for economic support of children in poverty, such as providing various types of benefits and loans.

(Research and Studies)

Article 14 The national and local governments are to implement initiatives necessary to develop and implement measures against child poverty in an appropriate way, such as conducting research and studies on child poverty, including developing indicators of child poverty.

Chapter III Council for Policy on Child Poverty

(Establishment of Council and Administrative Affairs under Jurisdiction)

Article 15 (1) The Cabinet Office is to establish a council for policy on child poverty (hereinafter referred to as the "council") as a special institution.

(2) The council is responsible for the following administrative affairs:

(i) to develop draft general principles; and

(ii) beyond what is set forth in the preceding item, to discuss important particulars concerning measures against child poverty and to promote the implementation of those measures.

(3) In relation to the preparation of draft general principles by the council pursuant to the preceding paragraph, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology must prepare a draft of the part relating to the particulars set forth in the items of Article 8, paragraph (2) which are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology and submit it to the council.

(4) In relation to the preparation of draft general principles by the council pursuant to paragraph (2), the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare must prepare a draft of the section relating to the particulars set forth in the items of Article 8, paragraph (2) and submit it to the council.

(5) In relation to the preparation of draft general principles by the council pursuant to paragraph (2), the Prime Minister must prepare a draft of the section relating to the particulars set forth in the items of Article 8, paragraph

(2) other than those prescribed in the preceding two paragraphs, with cooperation from the heads of relevant administrative organs, and submit it to the council.

(6) When preparing the draft general principles pursuant to paragraph (2), the council is to take measures necessary to reflect the opinions of children in poverty and their guardians, persons with relevant expertise, private organizations engaged in activities tackling child poverty, and other relevant persons.

(Organizations)

Article 16 (1) The council is organized by a chairperson and committee members.

(2) The Prime Minister acts as the chairperson of the council.

(3) The committee members are appointed by the Prime Minister from among the Ministers of State, excluding the chairperson.

(4) General affairs of the council are to be handled by the Cabinet Office with cooperation from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and other relevant administrative organs.

(5) Beyond what is set forth in the preceding paragraphs, necessary particulars in relation to the organization and operation of the council are to be specified by Cabinet Order.

Supplementary Provisions [Extract]

(Effective Date)

Article 1 This Act comes into effect as of the date to be specified by Cabinet Order within a period not exceeding one year from the date of promulgation.

(Review)

Article 2 After five years have elapsed from the enforcement of this Act, the government is to evaluate the provisions of this Act and take measures as required if it is found necessary to do so in light of the state of enforcement of the Act.