

Act on the Promotion of Consumer Education

(Act No. 61 of December 12, 2012)

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Chapter I General Provisions

(Purpose)

Article 1 In consideration of the importance of consumer education for the prevention of damage to the consumer caused by disparity in the quality and quantity of information, as well as in negotiating power, etc. between consumers and business operators and for supporting the self-reliance of consumers so that they can take independent and informed action to support and enhance their interests, and in accord with the facts that consumers have the right to be given the opportunity to receive consumer education, this Act sets forth the basic principles on consumer education and the responsibilities, etc. of the State, and local governments, while at the same time, for the comprehensive and integrated promotion of consumer education, the purpose of this Act is to prescribe the basic policy and other necessary particulars pertaining to the promotion of consumer education, and to thereby contribute to the stabilization and improvement of people's lives as consumers.

(Definitions)

Article 2 (1) The term "consumer education" as used in this Act means education on consumer affairs for supporting the self-reliance of consumers (including education to deepen consumers' understanding of and interest in the importance of independent commitment to the establishment of a society with consumer citizenship) and educational activities equivalent to education on consumer affairs.

(2) The term "society with consumer citizenship" as used in this Act means a society in which consumers proactively commit themselves to the creation of a just and sustainable society with mutual respect for the individuality of each consumer, as well as the diversity of consumer lifestyles and with an awareness of how their own consumption behavior could influence

socioeconomic trends both at home and abroad, and the global environment at present as well as over future generations.

(Basic Principles)

Article 3 (1) Consumer education must be implemented so that consumers may fully acquire knowledge of consumer affairs and foster consumers' practical ability to combine what they have learned with appropriate consumption behavior.

(2) Consumer education must be implemented in order to actively support the training of consumers so that they will be able to independently participate in the creation of a society with consumer citizenship as a member of the society and may contribute to the development thereof.

(3) Consumer education must be conducted in a systematic manner tailored to each stage of life, from childhood to old age, and in an appropriate way catering for the individual characteristics of consumers, such as their age and whether or not a consumer has a disability.

(4) Consumer education must be implemented effectively through utilizing appropriate approaches which take into account the characteristics of the schools, local communities, households, offices, and other various settings, while ensuring collaboration between a variety of entities that promote consumer education in each setting, as well as cross-functional coordination with other consumer policies. (meaning comprehensive measures pertaining to the support and promotion of consumer gains; the same applies in Article 9, paragraph (2), item (iii)).

(5) Consumer education must be implemented in order to provide consumers with information on how their consumption behavior could influence socioeconomic trends both at home and abroad, and on the global environment at present as well as over future generations, as well as other information from a diverse range of standpoints.

(6) Consumer education must be implemented in order to deepen consumer knowledge and understanding of consumer affairs in cases of emergency so that consumers can take informed action even in case of disaster or in other emergency situation.

(7) When implementing consumer education measures, necessary care must be taken to ensure cross-functional coordination with education-related policies on environmental education, dietary education, education for international understanding, and other policies related to consumer affairs.

(Responsibilities of the National Government)

Article 4 (1) In consideration of the significance of training to develop self-reliant consumers who can take independent and informed action to support

and promote their own interests, the national government is responsible for the establishment and implementation of comprehensive measures pertaining to the promotion of consumer education, in accordance with the basic principles as specified in the preceding Article (hereinafter referred to as "basic principles" in this Chapter).

(2) For the appropriate and effective formulation and implementation of the measures specified in the preceding paragraph, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology must maintain close collaboration and coordination with the heads of relevant administrative organizations and promote measures concerning the promotion of consumer education under their authority.

(Responsibilities of Local Governments)

Article 5 In accordance with the basic principles and in consideration of appropriate role sharing with the State, local governments are responsible for the formulation and implementation of measures in accordance with the social and economic circumstances in the areas of the local governments for promoting consumer education through close coordination between consumer affairs centers (meaning consumer affairs center as specified in paragraph (3) of Article 10 of the Consumer Safety Act (Act No. 50 of 2009); the same applies in paragraph (2) of Article 13 and paragraph (1) of Article 20 of this Act), boards of education, and other relevant organizations.

(Consumer Groups' Endeavors)

Article 6 In accordance with the basic principles, consumer groups are to endeavor to carry out their activities independently in the promotion of consumer education and are to endeavor to cooperate with consumer education activities implemented in schools, local communities, households, offices, and other various settings.

(Business Operators' and Trade Associations' Endeavors)

Article 7 In consideration of their close connection with consumer affairs as providers of products and services, business operators, together with trade associations, are to endeavor to cooperate with the State and local governments to implement measures for the promotion of consumer education and are to endeavor to carry out their activities independently in the promotion of consumer education, in accordance with the basic principles.

(Financial Measures)

Article 8 (1) The Government must take financial and other necessary measures to implement measures for the promotion of consumer education.

- (2) The local governments must endeavor to take financial and other necessary measures to implement measures for the promotion of consumer education.

Chapter II Basic Policy, etc.

(Basic Policy)

Article 9 (1) The Government must prescribe the basic policy on the promotion of consumer education (hereinafter referred to as the "basic policy" in this Chapter and Chapter IV).

- (2) The basic policy is to provide the following particulars.
- (i) the significance of consumer education promotion and particulars concerning its fundamental orientation
 - (ii) particulars concerning the content of consumer education promotion
 - (iii) basic particulars concerning coordination with other relevant consumer policies
 - (iv) other important particulars concerning Consumer Education promotion
- (3) The basic policy must be in harmony with the basic plan for consumers as specified in paragraph (1) of Article 9 of the Basic Act on Consumer Policies (Act No. 78 of 1968).
- (4) The Prime Minister and the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology must prepare a draft of the basic policy and seek a cabinet decision.
- (5) Before making a draft of the basic policy, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology must consult with the heads of relevant administrative organizations, hear the opinions of the Consumer Education Promotion Council and the Consumer Committee, and take necessary measures to reflect the voice of consumers and other relevant persons in advance.
- (6) When a cabinet decision under the provision of paragraph (4) is made, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology must announce the basic policy officially without delay.
- (7) Taking into account changes in circumstances surrounding consumer affairs, as well as the results of surveys, analyses, and evaluation on the implementation of consumer education promotion, the government is to review the basic policy approximately every five years, and make revisions to the basic policy if they find it necessary.
- (8) The provisions of paragraphs (4) to (6) apply mutatis mutandis to the revision of the basic policy.

(Prefectural Consumer Education Promotion Plan)

Article 10 (1) Prefectures must endeavor to formulate a plan for implementing

measures for the promotion of prefectural consumer education in the prefectural area (hereinafter referred to as the "prefectural consumer education promotion plan" in this Article and in Article 20, paragraph (2), item (ii)) based on the basic policy.

- (2) Municipalities must endeavor to formulate a plan for implementing measures for the promotion of consumer education in the municipal area (hereinafter referred to as the "municipal consumer education promotion plan" in this Article and in Article 20, paragraph (2), item (ii)) based on the basic policy (the basic plan and prefectural consumer education promotion plan, if the municipal consumer education promotion plan has been formulated).
- (3) Prefectures and municipalities are to endeavor to take necessary measures to reflect the opinions of local consumers and other relevant persons in the relevant prefectural or municipal area in advance, before formulating the prefectural consumer education promotion plan or municipal consumer education promotion plan. In this case, prefectures and municipalities that are the members of a regional council for consumer education promotion under the provisions of paragraph (1) of Article 20, must hear opinions from the relevant regional council.
- (4) When establishing the prefectural consumer education promotion plan or municipal consumer education promotion plan, prefectures and municipalities are to endeavor to announce this officially without delay.
- (5) After the establishment of prefectural consumer education promotion plan or municipal consumer education promotion plan, prefectures and municipalities are to endeavor to survey, analyze, and evaluate the implementation of measures for the promotion of local consumer education in the prefectural or municipal area, and are to revise the prefectural consumer education promotion plan or municipal consumer education promotion plan if they find it necessary.
- (6) The provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) apply mutatis mutandis to the revision of the prefectural consumer education promotion plan or municipal consumer education promotion plan.

Chapter III Basic Measures

(Promotion of Consumer Education in Schools)

Article 11 (1) National and local governments must promote necessary measures so as to ensure the opportunities for appropriate and systematic consumer education in classes and other educational activities at schools (meaning schools as specified in Article 1 of the School Education Act (Act No. 26 of 1947), excluding universities and colleges of technology; the same applies in paragraph (3)), depending on the developmental stages of infants, children, and

students.

- (2) National and local governments must take necessary measures to enhance the quality of training for teachers concerning consumer education, depending on the professional duties and experience of teachers.
- (3) In order to implement practical consumer education in schools, National and local governments are to promote the utilization of personnel with expertise in and experience of consumer education regardless of whether in or outside of a school.

(Promotion of Consumer Education in Universities)

Article 12 (1) National and local governments are to encourage universities, etc. (meaning universities and colleges of technology specified in Article 1 of the School Education Act, as well as specialized training colleges, miscellaneous category schools, and other education institutions beyond those specified in that Article, which provide education that is associated with school education; hereinafter the same applies in this Article and paragraph (2) of Article 16) to stimulate education and other independent initiatives to prevent damages to the lives of students, etc. as consumers so that consumer education can be implemented appropriately at universities, etc.

- (2) For the promotion of initiatives taken by universities, etc. specified in the preceding paragraph, the State and local governments must ensure training opportunities for and share information with educators in charge of assisting students, etc. and take other necessary measures, in cooperation with relevant organizations.

(Promotion of Consumer Education in Local Communities)

Article 13 (1) The State, local governments, and the National Consumer Affairs Center of Japan, Incorporated Administrative Agency (hereinafter referred to as "NCAC" in this Chapter) must offer training for, share information with, and take other necessary measures for commissioned welfare volunteers prescribed in the Commissioned Welfare Volunteers Act (Act No. 198 of 1948), social welfare officers prescribed in the Social Welfare Act (Act No. 45 of 1951), certified care workers and other care workers who provide the necessary support to the elderly, the disabled, etc. to carry out their daily activities, so that consumer education can be appropriately implemented for the elderly, the disabled, etc. in local communities.

- (2) The State, local governments, and NCAC must take necessary measures so that consumer education by using case studies built on data collected by consumer affairs centers, etc. can be implemented in community centers, other social education facilities, etc.

(Support for Consumer Education Provided by Business Operators and Trade Associations)

- Article 14 (1) Business operators and trade associations are to endeavor to enhance consumer knowledge on consumer affairs through information sharing and other types of coordination with consumer groups and other relevant groups.
- (2) Business operators are to endeavor to provide consumers with useful information about consumer affairs that was obtained through inquiries, consultations, etc. with consumers.
- (3) Business operators are to endeavor to have their employees deepen their knowledge and understanding of consumer affairs by offering them training, or by having them attend workshops held by trade associations, etc.
- (4) Trade associations are to endeavor to offer financial and other support to consumer education promotional campaigns implemented by consumer groups and other private bodies.

(Improvement of Teaching Materials)

Article 15 The State and local governments must endeavor to improve teaching materials used for consumer education and make an effort endeavor to develop and effectively provide teaching materials that reflect the opinions of persons, etc. with practical experiences relevant to consumer education so that the teaching materials can be effectively utilized in schools, local communities, households, offices, and other various settings.

(Personnel Training)

- Article 16 (1) The State, local governments, and NCAC must implement training to build expert knowledge in consumer education for consultants and other persons who carry out activities for the protection or enhancement of consumers' interests, specified in Article 11 of the Consumer Safety Act, and take other measures necessary to enhance their skills and qualifications.
- (2) The State and local governments are to encourage universities etc., research institutes, consumer groups, and other relevant organizations and groups to hold workshops for and implement other independent initiatives for the training of personnel in charge of consumer education, as well as the enhancement of their skills and qualifications.

(Research and Study)

Article 17 In cooperation with universities, research institutes, and other relevant organizations and groups that carry out research and study on consumer education, the State and local governments must endeavor to conduct surveys and research on the content of and approaches toward

comprehensive, systematic, and effective consumer education at schools in foreign countries, as well as on other content of and approaches toward consumer education carried out in and outside Japan, and to disseminate and utilize the results of the surveys and research.

(Collection and Provision of Information)

- Article 18 (1) The State, local governments, and NCAC must endeavor to collect and provide information on innovative approaches toward consumer education implemented in various settings, such as schools, local communities, households, and offices, and other information on consumer education, taking into account the individual characteristics of consumers, such as age and whether or not a consumer has disability.
- (2) In order to prevent damages to people's lives as consumers, the State must endeavor to reflect gathered information on consumer affairs to the content of consumer education correctly and promptly, by taking into account the individual characteristics of consumers, such as age and whether or not a consumer has a disability.

Chapter IV Consumer Education Promotion Council

(Consumer Education Promotion Council)

- Article 19 (1) The Consumer Education Promotion Council is established within the Consumer Affairs Agency.
- (2) The Consumer Education Promotion Council takes charge of the following administrative affairs.
- (i) to implement sharing and coordination of information between the members of the Consumer Education Promotion Council in relation to the comprehensive, systematic, and effective promotion of consumer education.
 - (ii) to handle the particulars specified in paragraph (5) of Article 9 (including as applied *mutatis mutandis* pursuant to paragraph (8) of that Article) regarding the basic policy.
- (3) The members of the Consumer Education Promotion Council are appointed by the Prime Minister from among consumers, business operators, education-related personnel, the representatives of consumer groups, trade associations, and other relevant groups, persons with relevant expertise, or the staff of the relevant administrative organizations and relevant incorporated administrative agencies (meaning incorporated administrative agencies specified in paragraph (1) of Article 2 of the Act on General Rules for Incorporated Administrative Agencies (Act No. 103 of 1999)).
- (4) beyond what is provided in the provisions of the preceding two paragraphs, necessary particulars concerning the organizational structure and operation of

the Consumer Education Promotion Council are specified by Cabinet Order.

(Regional Councils for Consumer Education Promotion)

Article 20 (1) For the promotion of local consumer education in the prefectural or municipal area, the relevant prefecture or municipality must endeavor to establish a regional council for consumer education promotion that comprises of consumers, consumer groups, business operators, trade associations, education-related personnel, consumer affair centers and other relevant organizations in the relevant prefecture or municipality, etc.

(2) Regional councils for Consumer Education promotion are to undertake the following administrative affairs.

(i) to implement sharing and coordination of information between the members of regional councils in relation to the comprehensive, systematic, and effective promotion of local consumer education in the prefectural or municipal area.

(ii) to state their opinion on the creation or revision of a prefectural consumer education promotion plan or municipal consumer education promotion plan, if prefectures or municipalities intend to create or revise a prefectural consumer education promotion plan or municipal consumer education promotion plan.

(3) In addition to what is provided for in the preceding two paragraphs, necessary particulars concerning the organizational structure and operation of the regional councils for consumer education promotion are specified by regional councils themselves.

Supplementary Provisions

(Effective Date)

(1) This Act comes into effect as of the day specified by Cabinet Order within a period not exceeding six months from the date of its promulgation.

(Review)

(2) The State is to review the status of the enforcement of this Act approximately five years after its enforcement and take necessary measures based on the results of this review, if they find it necessary.

(Partial Amendment to the Act for the Establishment of the Consumer Affairs Agency and Consumer Commission)

(3) The Act for the Establishment of the Consumer Affairs Agency and Consumer Commission (Act No. 48 of 2009) is to be partially amended as follows.

In the table of contents, Article 5-4 is added after Article 5-2.

The following item is added after item (xiii) of Article 4.

(xiii)-2 formulation and promotion of the basic policy on consumer education promotion as specified in paragraph (1) of Article 9 of the Act on Promotion of Consumer Education (Act No. 61 of 2012).

Article 5-2 is amended as follows.

(Establishment of Councils)

Article 5-2 (1) Councils, etc. that are established within the Consumer Affairs Agency, as provided separately by law, are as follows.

Consumer Safety Investigation Commission

Consumer Education Promotion Council

In Section 3 of Chapter II, the following two provisions are to be added after Article 5-2.

(Consumer Safety Investigation Commission)

Article 5-3 The Consumer Safety Investigation Commission is governed by the provisions of the Consumer Safety Act (including an order based on this Act).

(Consumer Education Promotion Council)

Article 5-4 (1) The Consumer Education Promotion Council is governed by the provisions of the Act on Promotion of Consumer Education (including an order based on this Act).

In item (iv) of paragraph (2) of Article 6, the phrase the "Act on Promotion of Consumer Education" is added after the "Food Safety Basic Act."