

Act to Promote the Utilization of Electronic Civil Court Information

(Act No. 49 of May 30, 2025)

(Purpose)

Article 1 The purpose of this Act is to provide for the responsibilities of the national government, the formulation of basic policy by the Minister of Justice, and the designation, etc. of corporations that conduct the business, etc. of processing and providing civil court information to third parties, concerning the promotion of the utilization of electronic civil court information, in light of the diversification of demand for civil court information as a result of the advancement of a digital society, in order to develop a foundation for the proper and effective utilization of electronic civil court information, and thereby contribute to the development of a creative and vibrant society.

(Definitions)

Article 2 (1) In this Act, the terms stated in the following items have the meanings specified in those items:

- (i) civil court information: information related to the matters recorded in the following electronic or magnetic record (meaning a record used for information processing by a computer, which is created in an electronic form, a magnetic form, or other forms that cannot be perceived by the human senses; the same applies below) prepared in civil litigation proceedings and administrative case litigation proceedings:
 - (a) electronic judgment document (meaning an electronic judgment document prescribed in Article 252, paragraph (1) of the Code of Civil Procedure (Act No. 109 of 1996), and limited to judgment that is recorded in a file stored on a computer (including an input and output device) used by the court pursuant to the provisions of Article 253, paragraph (2) of that Code (simply referred to as a "file" below in this item));
 - (b) electronic record referred to in Article 254, paragraph (2) of the Code of Civil Procedure (limited to records recorded in a file pursuant to the provisions of Article 160, paragraph (2) of that Code);
 - (c) electronic decision (meaning an electronic or magnetic record prepared pursuant to the provisions of Article 252, paragraph (1) of the Code of Civil Procedure as applied mutatis mutandis pursuant to Article 122 of that Code, and limited to a record that is recorded in a file pursuant to the provisions of Article 253, paragraph (2) of that Code as applied mutatis mutandis pursuant to Article 122 of that Code), which is specified by Order of the Ministry of

Justice as being related to a judicial decision that serves as a reference for the interpretation and application of laws and regulations;

- (ii) retained civil court information: civil court information recorded in an electronic or magnetic record which a designated corporation prescribed in Article 5, paragraph (2) has received from the Supreme Court pursuant to the provisions of Article 7, paragraph (1), and which is retained by the designated corporation;
 - (iii) pseudonymized civil court information: information obtained by processing retained civil court information so that a specific individual (excluding a judge who has made a judicial decision related to the retained civil court information or any other person specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice as a person whose rights and interests are found unlikely to be harmed even if the measures prescribed in this item are not taken; the same applies below in this item and Article 13) cannot be identified unless the information is collated with other information by taking measures to delete all or part of the information such as the name or date of birth (including replacing the information and the individual identification code with other information by a method that does not have the regularity to enable restoration of the information and the individual identification code) that can identify a specific individual and the individual identification code (meaning the individual identification code prescribed in Article 2, paragraph (2) of the Act on the Protection of Personal Information (Act No. 57 of 2003); the same applies below in this item);
 - (iv) civil court related information: information related to civil court information, which is specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice as information that contributes to the promotion of the utilization of civil court information, such as information indicating that an appeal has been filed regarding a judicial decision related to that civil court information;
- (2) When the Minister of Justice enacts, amends, or repeals the Order of the Ministry of Justice referred to in item (i), sub-item (c), or item (iv) of the preceding paragraph, the Minister must hear the opinion of the Supreme Court in advance.

(Responsibilities of the National Government)

- Article 3 (1) In order to achieve the purpose of this Act, the government is to formulate and implement policies to promote the utilization of electronic civil court information, and endeavor to take necessary measures for the appropriate implementation of those policies in cooperation with the Supreme Court and other relevant persons.
- (2) In order to promote the utilization of electronic civil court information, the Supreme Court is to provide electronic or magnetic records in which civil court information is recorded and take other necessary measures.

(Basic Policy)

Article 4 (1) The Minister of Justice must specify the basic policy for promoting the utilization of electronic civil court information (referred to as the "basic policy" below in this Article and Article 8, paragraph (1)).

(2) The basic policy is to specify the following matters:

- (i) matters concerning the significance of promoting the utilization of electronic civil court information;
- (ii) basic matters concerning the policies for promoting the utilization of electronic civil court information;
- (iii) basic matters concerning the management and provision of retained civil court information; and
- (iv) in addition to what is stated in the preceding three items, important matters concerning the promotion of the utilization of electronic civil court information.

(3) When specifying the basic policy, the Minister of Justice must hear the opinion of the Supreme Court in advance.

(4) When having specified the basic policy, the Minister of Justice must publicize the policy without delay.

(5) The provisions of the preceding two paragraphs apply mutatis mutandis to the changes to the basic policy.

(Designation)

Article 5 (1) The Minister of Justice may designate a general incorporated association, general incorporated foundation, or any other non-profit corporation that satisfies the following requirements as the sole entity in the whole country that conducts the business stated in the items of paragraph (1) of the following Article (referred to below as the "business of management and provision of civil court information"), upon their application:

- (i) the entity has the necessary financial basis and technical capability to conduct the business of management and provision of civil court information properly and reliably;
- (ii) there is no risk of the composition of the entity's officers or employees hindering the fair implementation of the business of management and provision of civil court information;
- (iii) if the entity conducts business other than the business of management and provision of civil court information, there is no risk that the implementation of that other business to cause the business of management and provision of civil court information to become unfair;
- (iv) the entity is not an entity whose designation has been cancelled pursuant to the provisions of Article 18, paragraph (1), and for which five years have not passed since the date of the cancellation; and

- (v) there is no officer of the entity that falls under either of the following persons:
 - (a) a person who has been sentenced to imprisonment or a heavier punishment, and for whom five years have not passed since the day on which the person finished serving the sentence or ceased to be subject to its enforcement; or
 - (b) a person who has been sentenced to a fine for violating the provisions of this Act, and for whom five years have not passed since the day on which the person finished serving the sentence or ceased to be subject to its enforcement.
- (2) When the Minister of Justice makes a designation under the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the Minister is to give public notice of the name of the person that has been designated (referred to below as the "designated corporation"), the location of the principal office, and the date on which the designation was made.
- (3) If a designated corporation intends to change its name or the location of its principal office, it must notify the Minister of Justice to that effect, no later than two weeks before the date of the intended change.
- (4) When a written notification under the provisions of the preceding paragraph has been filed, the Minister of Justice is to give public notice to that effect.
- (5) If a designated corporation appoints or dismisses an officer, it must notify the Minister of Justice to that effect without delay.

(Business)

Article 6 (1) A designated corporation is to conduct the following businesses in accordance with the provisions of this Act and the operational rules prescribed in Article 8, paragraph (1):

- (i) to prepare pseudonymized civil court information by organizing and processing retained civil court information in order to develop a database related to pseudonymized civil court information that is sufficient to meet general demand;
- (ii) to provide pseudonymized civil court information by electronic or magnetic means (meaning a means of using an electronic data processing system or other means of using information and communications technology, which is specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice) to a person who seeks to use pseudonymized civil court information;
- (iii) to manage the retained civil court information, the information deleted from the retained civil court information by the measures prescribed in Article 2, paragraph (1), item (iii) (referred to as "deleted information" in Article 20), information on the method of processing used pursuant to the provisions of Article 13, paragraph (1), pseudonymized civil court information, and collected and organized civil court related information that is prescribed in paragraph (2) of the following Article (referred to below as "retained civil court information,

etc."); and

(iv) to conduct business incidental to the business stated in the preceding three items.

(2) In addition to the business of management and provision of civil court information, a designated corporation may conduct investigation and research services that contribute to the enhancement of the judicial system by using pseudonymized civil court information, and collected and organized civil court related information that is prescribed in paragraph (2) of the following Article (referred to as "pseudonymized civil court information, etc." in Article 12).

(Request for Provision of Information)

Article 7 (1) In order to conduct the business of management and provision of civil court information, a designated corporation may request the Supreme Court to provide electronic or magnetic records stated in Article 2, paragraph (1), item (i), sub-items (a) through (c) (excluding the part for which a request for inspection, etc. of the electronic or magnetic case record prescribed in Article 45, paragraph (5), item (ii) of the Code of Civil Procedure is restricted pursuant to the provisions of Article 92, paragraph (1) of that Code or the provisions of other laws and regulations) containing the matters recorded in the electronic or magnetic records, as provided for by the Rules of the Supreme Court.

(2) In order to conduct the business of management and provision of civil court information, a designated corporation is to collect and organize civil court related information and endeavor to provide the collected and organized civil court related information to persons who seek to use pseudonymized civil court information.

(Operational Rules)

Article 8 (1) In accordance with the basic policy, a designated corporation must specify operational rules on the business of management and provision of civil court information (referred to as "operational rules" below in this Article and Article 18, paragraph (1), item (iv)) and obtain approval of the Minister of Justice. The same applies when a designated corporation seeks to change the operational rules.

(2) The operational rules must specify the following matters:

(i) matters concerning the method of processing retained civil court information;

(ii) matters concerning the conclusion of a contract for the provision of pseudonymized civil court information (referred to as an "information provision contract" in Article 10 and Article 12);

(iii) matters concerning the prevention of leakage, loss, or damage of the retained civil court information, etc. and other matters concerning the security management of the retained civil court information, etc.;

- (iv) matters concerning fees;
 - (v) matters concerning the processing of complaints; and
 - (vi) in addition to what is stated in the preceding items, matters specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice as matters necessary for implementing the business of management and provision of civil court information.
- (3) If the Minister of Justice finds that the operational rules that have been granted the approval referred to in paragraph (1) have become inappropriate for properly and reliably implementing business of management and provision of civil court information, the Minister may order a designated corporation to change the operational rules.

(Business Plans)

Article 9 (1) A designated corporation must prepare a business plan and an income and expenditure budget each business year, and obtain the approval of the Minister of Justice before the commencement of the relevant business year (for the business year that includes the day on which the designation under the provisions of Article 5, paragraph (1) has been obtained, without delay after obtaining the designation). The same applies when a designated corporation seeks to change them.

- (2) A designated corporation must prepare a business report and a statement of income and expenditure each business year, and submit them to the Minister of Justice within three months after the end of that business year.

(Conclusion and Cancellation of Contracts)

Article 10 (1) A designated corporation must not refuse to conclude an information provision contract unless the applicant for the information provision contract has performed a deception or other wrongful acts concerning the application, or unless there are other legitimate grounds specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice.

- (2) A designated corporation must not cancel an information provision contract unless it is found that there are material grounds that make it difficult to continue the contractual relationship due to a breach of contractual obligations by the person who has concluded the information provision contract, or unless there are other legitimate grounds specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice.

(Suspension or Discontinuation of Business)

Article 11 (1) A designated corporation must not suspend or discontinue all or part of its business of management and provision of civil court information without the permission of the Minister of Justice.

- (2) When the Minister of Justice permits the discontinuation of all of the business of management and provision of civil court information pursuant to the provisions of

the preceding paragraph, the designation related to the permission ceases to be effective.

- (3) When the Minister of Justice has granted permission referred to in paragraph (1), the Minister must give public notice to that effect.

(Prohibition on the Use of Retained Civil Court Information, etc. for Purposes Other than Its Intended Purpose)

Article 12 The officers, employees, or other workers of a designated corporation, or persons who were formerly in those positions are not to use the retained civil court information, etc. for purposes other than for the business of management and provision of civil court information; provided, however, this does not apply when using pseudonymized civil court information, etc. to conduct the business prescribed in Article 6, paragraph (2) or when providing civil court related information to a person who has concluded an information provision contract.

(Preparation of Pseudonymized Civil Court Information)

Article 13 (1) When preparing pseudonymized civil court information, a designated corporation must process the retained civil court information in accordance with the standards specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice as necessary to ensure that specific individuals cannot be identified unless the information is collated with other information.

- (2) In handling pseudonymized civil court information, a designated corporation must not collate the pseudonymized civil court information with other information in order to identify the specific individual related to the retained civil court information that was used to prepare the pseudonymized civil court information, excluding cases based on laws and regulations.

(Entrustment)

Article 14 (1) Pursuant to the provisions of Order of the Ministry of Justice, a designated corporation may entrust part of its business of management and provision of civil court information to another person with the approval of the Minister of Justice.

- (2) A person entrusted under the provisions of the preceding paragraph may further entrust a part of the entrusted business of management and provision of civil court information to another person with the consent of the designated corporation. In such a case, the designated corporation must obtain approval of the Minister of Justice regarding the further entrustment in advance.
- (3) The provisions of Article 12 apply mutatis mutandis to persons who are or were engaged in the business of management and provision of civil court information to be conducted under the entrustment or further entrustment pursuant to the provisions of the preceding two paragraphs.

(Keeping of Books)

Article 15 Pursuant to the provisions of Order of the Ministry of Justice, a designated corporation must keep books (if electronic or magnetic records are prepared in lieu of the books, including the electronic or magnetic records; the same applies in Article 17, paragraph (1) and Article 21, paragraph (1), item (ii)), enter or record the matters concerning the business of management and provision of civil court information which are specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice in the books, and retain them.

(Supervision Order)

Article 16 If the Minister of Justice finds it necessary for ensuring the proper implementation of the business of management and provision of civil court information, the Minister may issue orders necessary for supervising the business to a designated corporation.

(Reports and Inspections)

Article 17 (1) If the Minister of Justice finds it necessary for ensuring the proper implementation of the business of management and provision of civil court information, the Minister may request the designated corporation to make a necessary report on the status of the business, or may have relevant officials enter a designated corporation's office to inspect the status of its business or its facilities, books, documents, and other objects, or have them question the persons concerned.

(2) The officials conducting an on-site inspection pursuant to the provisions of the preceding paragraph must carry an identification card and present it to the persons concerned.

(3) The authority to conduct the on-site inspection under the provisions of paragraph (1) must not be construed as being granted for criminal investigation purposes.

(Cancellation of Designation)

Article 18 (1) If a designated corporation falls under any of the following items, the Minister of Justice may cancel its designation, or order the corporation to suspend all or part of the business of management and provision of civil court information by specifying a fixed period:

(i) if it is found that the designated corporation cannot properly and reliably implement the business of management and provision of civil court information;

(ii) if the designated corporation violates the provisions of this Act, or an order or a disposition based on those provisions;

- (iii) if the designated corporation no longer satisfies the requirements stated in Article 5, paragraph (1), item (v); or
 - (iv) if the designated corporation conducts the business of management and provision of civil court information without following the operational rules that has been approved pursuant to the provisions of Article 8, paragraph (1).
- (2) If the Minister of Justice renders a disposition under the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the Minister must give public notification to that effect.
- (3) When a cancellation of designation under the provisions of paragraph (1) is made, the corporation whose designation has been cancelled must promptly hand over the retained civil court information, etc. under its management to a designated corporation newly designated by the Minister of Justice pursuant to the provisions of Article 5, paragraph (1), pursuant to the provisions of Order of the Ministry of Justice.
- (4) In addition to what is specified in the preceding paragraph, the handover of the business of management and provision of civil court information and other necessary matters when the designation is cancelled under the provisions of paragraph (1) are specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice.

(Delegation to Order of the Ministry of Justice)

Article 19 In addition to what is specified in this Act, necessary matters concerning the business of management and provision of civil court information are specified by Order of the Ministry of Justice.

(Penal Provisions)

Article 20 (1) If any of the following persons provides or misappropriates retained civil court information acquired in the course of duties (limited to information that is planned to be deleted or replaced with other information through the measures prescribed in Article 2, paragraph (1), item (iii)), deleted information, or information on the method of processing used pursuant to the provisions of Article 13, paragraph (1) (limited to information with which deleted information can be reconstructed using the information) for the purpose of obtaining unlawful gains for themselves or a third party, that person is subject to imprisonment for not more than one year or a fine of not more than 500 thousand yen, or both:

- (i) a person who is or was an officer, employee, or other workers of a designated corporation; or
- (ii) a person who is or was engaged in the business of management and provision of civil court information to be conducted under entrustment or further entrustment pursuant to the provisions of Article 14, paragraph (1) or (2).

Article 21 (1) If any of the following items applies, an entity that has committed the violation is subject to punishment by a fine of not more than 300 thousand yen:

- (i) if an entity discontinues all of the business of management and provision of civil court information without obtaining the permission referred to in Article 11, paragraph (1);
 - (ii) if an entity, in violation of the provisions of Article 15, fails to keep books, fails to make entries or records in books, or makes false entries or records in books, or fails to retain books; or
 - (iii) if an entity fails to report under the provisions of Article 17, paragraph (1) or makes a false report, or refuses, hinders, or evades an inspection under the provisions of that paragraph, or fails to give a statement or gives a false statement in response to questions asked under the provisions of that paragraph.
- (2) If the representative or administrator of a corporation (including an organization without legal personality for which a representative or administrator has been designated; the same applies below in this paragraph), or an agent, employee, or other worker of a corporation or an individual commits a violation referred to in the preceding paragraph concerning the business of the corporation or individual, in addition to the offender being subject to punishment, the corporation or individual is subject to the punishment referred to in that paragraph.
- (3) If the provisions referred to in the preceding paragraph apply to an organization without legal personality, its representative or administrator represents the organization without legal personality regarding the procedural acts, and the provisions of laws concerning criminal proceedings apply *mutatis mutandis* when the accused or the suspect is a corporation.

Supplementary Provisions

(Effective Date)

Article 1 This Act comes into effect on the day specified by Cabinet Order within a period not exceeding nine months from the date of promulgation; provided, however, that the provisions of Article 6, Article 7, Article 8, paragraph (3), Article 9, paragraph (2), Article 10 through Article 18, Article 20, and Article 21 come into effect on the day specified by Cabinet Order within a period not exceeding two years from the date of promulgation.

(Preparatory Acts for Business of Management and Provision of Civil Court Information)

Article 2 A designated corporation may conduct preparatory acts necessary for implementing the business of management and provision of civil court information, even before the date on which the provisions prescribed in the proviso to the preceding Article come into effect.

(Adjustment Provisions)

Article 3 If the effective date of this Act falls before the date on which the Act Partially Amending the Code of Civil Procedure (Act No. 48 of 2022) comes into effect, the term "the Code of Civil Procedure" in Article 2, paragraph (1), item (i) is deemed to be replaced with "the Code of Civil Procedure amended by the provisions of Article 2 of the Act Partially Amending the Code of Civil Procedure (Act No. 48 of 2022)", until the day before the date on which that Act comes into effect.

(Partial Amendment of the Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Justice)

Article 4 The Act for Establishment of the Ministry of Justice (Act No. 93 of 1999) is partially amended as follows.

The following item is added after Article 4, paragraph (1), item (xxv)-2.

(xxv)-3 matters concerning the supervision of a corporation that conducts business of management and provision of civil court information under the provisions of the Act to Promote the Utilization of Electronic Civil Court Information (Act No.49 of 2025).

(Review)

Article 5 When five years have passed since the enforcement of the provisions prescribed in the proviso to Article 1 of the Supplementary Provisions, the government is to review the implementation status of this Act, and take necessary measures based on the results of the review.