

Japan restarts domestic travel discount program

- A Monitor Desk Report

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The Japan Tourism Agency has restarted its domestic travel discount program on a smaller scale starting today (Jan 10) after a suspension during the year-end and New Year holidays.

The move is part of efforts to support the domestic tourism industry, which has been battered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The maximum discount to be awarded per tourist, per night will be lowered from ¥11,000 to ¥7,000, including shopping coupons that can be used at places such as restaurants.

Users of the program will be required to show proof of having received a booster shot for COVID-19 or a negative test result.

Each prefecture will decide when to terminate the program in light of financial funding provided by the central government. The resources will be available at least until the end of March, according to the agency.

The discount rate for travel will be reduced from 40pc to 20pc, while the ceiling on

the discount amount will be lowered from ¥8,000 to ¥5,000 a night per tourist for tour packages that include public transportation services and from ¥5,000 to ¥3,000 for hotel stays only and single-day trips.

Shopping coupons to be provided as part of the program will be issued in electronic form in principle. The amount issued in coupons will be cut from ¥3,000 to ¥2,000 for weekdays and remain at ¥1,000 for weekends and holidays.

“Reviving tourism demand is very important to revitalize the economy,” tourism minister Tetsuo Saito told a news conference Friday (Jan 6). “We want people to travel in Japan while taking basic COVID-19 precautions.”

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