

May 11, 2021

Supplementary Budget Bill for May 2021 (FY21)

Hello Citizens, this is OMORI Masao, Mayor of Okayama City.

On May 10, the City government released a supplementary budget bill for May 2021 aimed at funding a range of measures to deal with the pandemic.

Okayama City reported 118 new COVID-19 infections on May 8, 2021, the highest single-day increase ever reported. The infectious variant has already spread widely across the city. The supplementary budget bill is to check further spread of infection and at the same time to provide support to the local economy and citizens' lives that have been affected for a long time. The bill for May 2021 is approximately 3.2 billion yen.

The details are as follows.

■ Stop the virus from spreading

○ PCR testing for workers in elderly care facilities

- In light of the current situation, PCR testing will be conducted at regular intervals on workers at elderly care facilities in the city.
- Approximately 11,000 workers at 392 facilities are targeted.
 - ※ We have already started PCR testing on some of the workers at special elderly nursing homes.

■ Provide support to the local economy

○ For businesses in the city experiencing a decline in sales

- Small and medium-sized enterprise operators, small business operators, medical corporations, and those who engage in agriculture, forestry, and fishery are eligible for the 200,000 yen or 100,000 yen payout, depending on the number of employees, in case they have experienced a 30% or more decrease in revenues for one month within the target period compared to the same month of the previous year or two years earlier.
- Approximately 16,520 operators are expected to be eligible.

○ For restaurants in the city implementing infection prevention measures

- The city provides subsidies to restaurants for the purchase of infection control equipment such as droplet-proof acrylic panels, remote thermometers, etc.
- Up to 50,000 yen in subsidy is provided for purchases made between April 1 and June 30 this year. Applications will be accepted from April 26 until July 12.

○ For local public transportation

- Free-fare days are being planned especially for holidays when the number of users is low, and the City will bear the fares in order to promote the use of local buses and streetcars.
 - ※ The exact date(s) will be decided considering the infection status.
- 40,000 premium taxi tickets will be issued to promote the use of taxis; a ticket worth 4,000 yen costs 3,000 yen. The City will cover the difference.

■ Provide support to citizens

○ Aid to low-income single-parent households

- In addition to the government's special benefit for child-rearing families, which is 50,000 yen per child, the city provides an additional 20,000 yen per family.
- Approximately 6,000 households are expected to be eligible.

Okayama City has been taking timely measures while striking a balance between preventing the spread of infection and restoring the local economy. Under the current infection and medical situations, it is critical to focus on containing the spread of infection first. We will take immediate action when needed.

Depending on how the pandemic settles down, I will flexibly prepare a budget that can restore the local economy and boost consumption.