Nippon Foundation Telephone Relay Service — Japan's Statutory, Levy-Funded Sign and Text Relay With Its Own 050 Numbers, Reviewed by MIC in 2026

Digital Inclusion · Good practice · Japan

Quality score: 92/100

Evidence strength: Strong

Summary

Japan's public relay service lets deaf and speech-impaired people phone anyone 24/7 via sign or text interpreters, with their own 050 numbers so hearing callers can ring them. 20,370 registrations and ~634,000 calls in FY2025; a 2026 MIC review flags low awareness.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Innovation level	3/5
Sustainability (ongoing)	1/1
Evaluation evidence	1/1
Demonstrated reach	1/1
Documented learning	1/1

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

C-NAPSE web research — accessed 2026-11-23

Nippon Foundation Telecommunication Relay Service (designated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications) — accessed 2026-11-23

NFTRS — FY2025 monthly registrations and call statistics (PDF) — accessed 2026-11-23

MIC — Review panel report on the telephone relay service, March 2026 (PDF) — accessed 2026-11-23

MIC press release — Designation of relay provider, 13 Jan 2021 — accessed 2026-11-23

Nippon Foundation — Japan launches public phone relay service — accessed 2026-11-23

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