

Act on the Protection of Personal Information (APPI) — Act No. 57 of 2003 (Amended 2017)



APPI is Japan's data protection law that governs handling, security, and disclosure of personal information to protect individuals' privacy.

What it is

The Act on the Protection of Personal Information (APPI) is a Japanese data protection regulation that establishes requirements for the handling of personal information to ensure privacy and safeguard individual rights. APPI helps organizations protect personal data, respond to privacy risks, and demonstrate compliance with regulatory obligations in Japan.

Enacted and administered by the Personal Information Protection Commission (PPC) of Japan, APPI applies to both domestic and certain foreign entities that process the personal data of individuals within Japan. The regulation covers key areas such as data collection, use, disclosure, security safeguards, and data breach notification, aligning with international privacy frameworks like the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

At a glance

<div>PUBLISHER</div> <div>Personal Information Protection Commission (PPC)</div>	<div>TYPE</div> <div>Framework</div>	<div>VERSION</div> <div>APPI (current consolidated version with amendments)</div>
<div>EFFECTIVE</div> <div>April 1, 2005</div>	<div>DOMAIN</div> <div>Privacy</div>	<div>FAMILY</div> <div>Global Privacy Regulations</div>
<div>REGION</div> <div>Japan</div>	<div>ADOPTION MODEL</div> <div>Regulatory Compliance</div>	<div>IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY</div> <div>High</div>

Source: https://www.ppc.go.jp/files/pdf/APPI_english.pdf

Why it matters

- **Strengthen data protection practices** Establish robust requirements for collecting, storing, and using personal data to reduce privacy risks and unauthorized access.
- **Enhance regulatory alignment** Support compliance with Japanese legal obligations while aligning internal policies with international privacy frameworks for consistency.
- **Improve incident response capabilities** Mandate notification procedures and breach management processes to help organizations respond swiftly to security incidents and minimize harm.
- **Increase audit readiness** Ensure up-to-date documentation, policies, and procedures are in place to facilitate regulatory audits and demonstrate compliance.

How SmartSuite supports APPI

Purpose and Processing Documentation Track processing purposes, allowed uses, and data handling requirements.	Personal Data Inventory and Retention Document data categories, retention rules, and deletion workflows with proof.	Cross-Border Transfer Safeguards Track overseas transfer decisions, safeguards, and ongoing review evidence.
Vendor and Subcontractor Oversight Manage contracts, safeguards, and monitoring for service providers.	Incident Response and Documentation Capture incident timelines, decisions, and corrective actions tied to personal data.	Compliance Posture and Evidence Coverage Reporting Report posture, open actions, and evidence coverage across teams.

Common framework mappings

- APEC PF
- CCPA/CPRA
- GDPR
- ISO 27701
- NIST Privacy Framework v1.0
- PIPEDA

Official resources

APPI - Act on the Protection of Personal Information Official English translation of Japan's APPI regulation, detailing data protection requirements. ppc.go.jp/files/pdf/APPI_english.pdf	APPI Guidelines Provides comprehensive guidance on the interpretation and application of APPI provisions. ppc.go.jp/en/legal
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Frequently asked questions

- What is the Japan APPI used for?**
The Act on the Protection of Personal Information (APPI) is used to establish baseline privacy standards for handling personal data in Japan. It aims to ensure the protection of individual rights and sets requirements for collecting, using, sharing, and safeguarding personal information.
- Is the Japan APPI mandatory or certifiable?**
Compliance with the Japan APPI is mandatory for organizations handling personal data of individuals within Japan, including certain foreign entities. Unlike some international standards, APPI does not provide a formal certification process but is backed by regulatory enforcement through the Personal Information Protection Commission (PPC).
- Who does the Japan APPI apply to?**
Japan APPI applies to both domestic businesses and foreign entities that process the personal information of individuals located in Japan. The regulation is relevant for organizations regardless of size if they process data that can identify Japanese residents.
- What are the key requirements or artifacts under the Japan APPI?**
Key requirements include maintaining a data inventory, implementing privacy policies, ensuring access controls, conducting privacy impact assessments, and having clear procedures for data breach notification and handling data subject requests. Organizations must also document data flows and update third-party contracts to ensure compliance.
- How do organizations implement the Japan APPI?**
Organizations implement APPI by mapping privacy requirements to internal controls, embedding security safeguards (such as encryption and access control), conducting risk assessments, and maintaining up-to-date policy documentation. Regular monitoring, privacy training, and incident response planning are also essential for operational compliance.

How does the Japan APPI relate to other data protection frameworks like GDPR?

Japan APPI shares similarities with international standards such as the EU GDPR, particularly regarding data subject rights, breach notification, and controls for cross-border data transfers. Organizations often align APPI compliance efforts with global privacy programs to streamline requirements and maintain consistent privacy management practices.

What are the ongoing compliance requirements under the Japan APPI?

Ongoing obligations include regular risk assessments, periodic policy reviews, continuous employee training, active monitoring for unauthorized data access, and timely data breach notification to both the PPC and affected individuals. Organizations should maintain detailed compliance documentation and respond promptly to data subject requests.

How would SmartSuite support Japan APPI?

SmartSuite enables organizations to operationalize APPI compliance by providing tools for risk tracking, control library management mapped to APPI requirements, evidence collection, and audit readiness. The platform supports policy governance, compliance tracking, workflow management for remediation, and reporting dashboards that aggregate compliance status and support regulatory reporting.

License included / downloadable: Yes The Act on the Protection of Personal Information is Japanese national legislation and is publicly available through official government sources.

Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/japan-act-on-the-protection-of-personal-information-appi