
NEWS RELEASE

ECONTEXT Offers the “CASH POST” BtoC Wire Transfer Service to Help Schools Refunding Lunch Fees

~Support Refunding School Lunch Fees during Temporary School Closures due to the COVID-19~

ECONTEXT, INC. (HQ: Tokyo; Representative Director and President: Keizo Odori; ECONTEXT), a payment service provider and subsidiary of Digital Garage, Inc. (TSE first section: 4819; HQ: Tokyo; Representative Director, President Executive Officer and Group CEO: Kaoru Hayashi; DG) offers its BtoC wire transfer service, “CASH POST,” as one facet of efforts to assist elementary, middle, and special-needs schools that have suspended their school lunch programs with tasks required to refund school lunch fees to students. This is based on the nationwide closure of Japanese schools with the aim of preventing the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

■ Background

The government ordered elementary, middle, high and special-needs schools to temporarily close down. As elementary and middle schools are not serving lunches during the closure, there is a need to refund the school lunch fees previously collected from students. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) sent a notice on March 10 about how to handle the suspension of school lunch programs*₁ to school lunch management sections at prefectural and designated municipal boards of education and other parties. The government has decided to provide aid for the costs incurred by school operators to refund school lunch fees to parents and guardians from the newly established subsidies designed to cope with temporary school closures.

Accordingly, ECONTEXT offers its BtoC wire transfer service “CASH POST” at a special price by charging no initial fee. This will allow school operators to easily refund school lunch fees at a low cost.

“CASH POST” requires no system development for installation as the user can enter refund information one at a time on the dedicated admin page, or can input this information all at once via a CSV file. The only thing required is an Internet-connected computer. Since this service is provided with no initial fee, there are no costs for installation, including development costs.

【Outline of “CASH POST” (provided with no initial fee)】

- Service: “CASH POST” <https://www.econtext.jp/lp/cashpost/>
No initial fee will be charged (regularly costs 30,000 yen [tax not included])
- Eligible participants: School lunch management sections at boards of education; national, public, and private elementary and middle schools; etc.*₂
- Application period: March 26 (Thursday) – April 30 (Thursday), 2020
- Inquiries: Contact us by filling out the following form.
<https://www.econtext.jp/contact/cashpost/>

NEWS RELEASE

■ About “CASH POST”

When the Payment Services Act^{*3} came into effect in April 2010, ECONTEXT was registered as a Funds Transfer Service Provider in 2011 with the Financial Services Agency (registration number: Kanto Local Finance Bureau Chief 00030). “CASH POST” was one of the first wire transfer services in the industry. With this service, business operators can quickly send wire transfers to customers just by registering an e-mail address. There is no need to acquire or handle any personal information, such as bank account information.

Consumers can choose from four withdrawal services offered via “CASH POST”: online bank transfer, docomo Kouza^{*4}, cash withdrawal at Lawson stores, and Seven Bank's “ATM Uketori” service^{*5}. “CASH POST” has lower handling fees than past methods, such as postal money orders, deposit certificates, and registered mail, and no monthly fees are charged.

This service is used for applications including refunds provided for customer returns from online and mail order shopping, cash-back promotions, prize money, reward money, and point redemption. It is also utilized for refunds for event cancellations, as well as reduced and suspended public transportation operations such as airplanes and highway buses, due to the recent spread of the COVID-19.

■ Future developments

The MEXT has adopted a public accounting system, in which school lunch fees are incorporated into local government accounts, with the aim of reducing the tasks teachers must perform related to school lunch fees collection and management. The MEXT sent a notice^{*6} telling local governments to carry out the tasks involved in collecting school lunch fees from parents/guardians and managing this money. As one method for suitable school lunch fees collection, the MEXT recommends using online services provided by designated payment agents such as credit card companies and payment settlement agents.

ECONTEXT offers services related to financial transactions between business operators and consumers, from payments to wire transfers. It provides comprehensive payment services for schools and other educational institutions to collect test fees, matriculation fees, and other fees. Going forward, it will also offer payment solutions for prefectural and municipal boards of education to optimize school lunch fees collection tasks and provide better payment convenience to parents and guardians, in addition to wire transfer services.

ECONTEXT will continue contributing to the realization of a reliable, safe, and convenient cashless society by providing more convenient payment solutions.

*1 Source: MEXT “Suspension of School Lunch Programs During Temporary Closing” (3/10/2020)

https://www.mext.go.jp/content/202000310-mxt_kouhou01-000004520_1.pdf

*2: The service will be provided at a special price for school lunch management sections at prefectural and designated municipal boards of education; national, public, and private elementary and middle schools; and special-needs schools.

NEWS RELEASE

- *3 The Payment Services Act regulates fund transfers other than banking, as well as certificates and electronic money such as gift certificates and prepaid cards.
- *4 docomo Kouza: A virtual wallet service from DOCOMO for shopping and wire transfers. It can be used to pay for online shopping and other purchases, as well as for wire transfers.
- *5: Seven Bank's "ATM Uketori" service will be launched in mid-June 2020.
- *6 Source: MEXT "Introduction of Public Accounting Systems, etc. for the Collection of School Lunch Fees and Other Fees" (7/31/2019) https://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/sports/syokuiku/1419091.htm

【About ECONTEXT】 <https://www.econtext.jp/>

A payment provider that handles online payment initiatives within the Digital Garage Group. Through the efforts of ECONTEXT and VeriTrans, another company beneath the DG umbrella, the DG Group has become one of Japan's largest online payment providers and is now expanding into a global online payment platform covering not only Japan, but overseas markets as well, with a particular focus on Asia. ECONTEXT has also been a pioneer in the use of convenience store kiosks for realistic payment settlement, operating the wire transfer service "CASH POST" and other efforts in the field of financial transfers.