



**Claim: The evidence submitted to the Children and Family Affairs Agency included the case of a 13-year-old child who died refusing a blood transfusion during a bone marrow transplant.**

- **Source:** Kotaro Tanaka, ex-JW attorney, member of the Jehovah's Witness Issues Support Lawyers Group, as quoted on AvoidJW.org, April 27, 2024.
- **URL:** <https://avoidjw.org/news/april-2024-updates-around-the-world/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Direct quote from a named, credentialed attorney speaking on the public record.
  - **Key quote:** "Of the 304 facilities with emergency medical centers, 138 responded to this report. Among them was a case in which a 13-year-old child died after refusing a blood transfusion during a bone marrow transplant."

**Claim: Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare wrote child protection guidelines naming Watchtower's blood refusal cards by description.**

- **Source:** Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, "Q&A; on Responses to Child Abuse Related to Religious Beliefs," December 27, 2022. Original Japanese-language document.
- **URL:** <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/11900000/001031751.pdf>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Official Japanese government document on the Ministry's own website.

**Claim: An English translation of the Q&A; Guidelines is published in *The Journal of CESNUR*, Volume 7, Issue 2, March-April 2023, as Appendix B.**

- **Source:** Massimo Introvigne, "Dangerous for Many Religions: The New Japanese Guidelines on Religious Donations and Religious Abuse of Children," *The Journal of CESNUR*, Vol. 7, Issue 2, pp. 72-113.
- **URL:** [https://cesnur.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/tjoc\\_7\\_2\\_4\\_japanese.pdf](https://cesnur.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/tjoc_7_2_4_japanese.pdf)
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Academic journal translation. The CESNUR network has a documented pro-new-religious-movements editorial perspective, which is addressed elsewhere in the video, but the translation of the government document itself is verifiable against the Japanese original.

**Claim: The United Nations sent formal communications to Japan in 2024 regarding the guidelines.**

- **Source:** Four UN Special Rapporteurs, joint communication to the Japanese government, April 30, 2024.
- **URL:** <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/10/japan-un-experts-concerned-continued-stigmatisation-religious-minorities>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Official UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights statement, October 2025, referencing the April 2024 communication.

**Claim: On April 13, 2026, approximately 20 Jehovah's Witnesses filed a lawsuit in Tokyo District Court against the Japanese government to invalidate the guidelines.**

- **Source:** The Japan Times, "Jehovah's Witnesses followers sue Japanese government," as republished by The Cult News Network.
- **URL:** <https://cultnews.net/jehovahs-witnesses-followers-sue-japanese-government/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Verbatim reproduction of the original Japan Times article, which is otherwise behind a paywall. The original Japan Times URL is referenced at the bottom of the Cult News Network page.

## **SECTION 2: The Official Story and the Hate Crimes**

**Claim: Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan reported a 638% increase in hate incidents in 2023 compared to the previous six years.**

- **Source:** Human Rights Without Frontiers, citing Watchtower's submission to the United Nations.
- **URL:** <https://hrwf.eu/japan-religious-discrimination-against-jehovahs-witnesses/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Human rights advocacy organization, citing primary source data submitted to UN.

**Claim: In June 2023, a Jehovah's Witness in her seventies was kicked while preaching near Hiroshima and her right wrist was broken.**

- **Source:** Massimo Introvigne, *Bitter Winter*, interview with the victim (identified as "S").
- **URL:** <https://bitterwinter.org/anti-jehovahs-witnesses-hate-in-japan-1-an-elderly-victim-speaks/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Investigative journalism, direct interview with the named victim.

**Claim: In February 2024, mass-murder threat letters were left at Kingdom Halls in Kobe, and in Yachiyo City, Chiba, an elderly Witness was kicked down a flight of stairs and dragged by her hair.**

- **Source:** Human Rights Without Frontiers and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.
- **URL:** <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/10/japan-un-experts-concerned-continued-stigmatisation-religious-minorities>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Official UN OHCHR statement documenting the specific incidents.

## SECTION 3: The Guidelines and the Lawyers' Group

**Claim: Question 4-5 of the MHLW Q&A; Guidelines specifies that forcing children to carry blood transfusion refusal cards constitutes neglect.**

- **Source:** Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, "Q&A; on Responses to Child Abuse Related to Religious Beliefs," December 27, 2022, Q 4-5. English translation in *Journal of CESNUR*, Vol. 7, Issue 2, Appendix B.
- **URL (original Japanese):** <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/11900000/001031751.pdf>
- **URL (English translation):** [https://cesnur.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/tjoc\\_7\\_2\\_4\\_japanese.pdf](https://cesnur.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/tjoc_7_2_4_japanese.pdf)
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Official Japanese government document.
  - **Key quote:** "It constitutes neglect if guardians do not allow children to receive certain medical treatments... including by forcing the children to carry a card to express that they refuse blood transfusions."

**Claim: The Jehovah's Witness Issues Support Lawyers Group reviewed 78 cases of former Witnesses, and 77 of 78 reported being whipped during religious discipline.**

- **Source:** UCA News, "Japanese lawyers decry Christian group's blood transfusion ban," February 28, 2023, citing the Yomiuri Shimbun and Asahi Shimbun.
- **URL:** <https://www.ucanews.com/news/japanese-lawyers-decry-christian-groups-blood-transfusion-ban/100509>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — News reporting on the lawyers' group's presentation to the Tokyo Bar Association.

**Claim: The lawyers' group's November 2023 survey found 81% of respondents had carried a blood transfusion refusal card.**

- **Source:** Barrier Free Japan, citing Japanese press coverage of the November 20, 2023 press conference.
- **URL:** <https://barrierfreejapan.com/2023/11/21/jehovahs-witnesses-cited-as-the-most-significant-violator-of-the-government-guidelines-on-religious-abuse/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Reporting on the lawyers' group's CFA submission.

**Claim: The lawyers' group submitted a petition to the Children and Family Affairs Agency on November 20, 2023, asking for Watchtower to be investigated for dissolution under the Religious Corporations Act.**

- **Source:** Barrier Free Japan, news coverage of November 20, 2023 press conference.
- **URL:** <https://barrierfreejapan.com/2023/11/21/jehovahs-witnesses-cited-as-the-most-significant-violator-of-the-government-guidelines-on-religious-abuse/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Reporting on a public legal filing.

## SECTION 4: The Precedent — The Unification Church

**Claim: Former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was assassinated in July 2022 by Tetsuya Yamagami, whose mother was a Unification Church member and who blamed Abe for his political ties to the church.**

- **Source:** NPR, "*Shinzo Abe's assassination spotlights Unification Church links to Japan's politics*," July 28, 2022.
- **URL:** <https://www.npr.org/2022/07/28/1113777419/shinzo-abe-assassination-unification-church-japan>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Established news source of record.

**Claim: The Unification Church's manipulative fundraising practices (known in Japan as "spiritual sales") took roughly 20 billion yen from approximately 1,500 victims over 40 years.**

- **Source:** NPR, Anthony Kuhn, "*Tokyo court orders Unification Church's Japan branch to dissolve after fraud ruling*," March 4, 2026.
- **URL:** <https://www.npr.org/2026/03/04/nx-s1-5734057/tokyo-court-orders-unification-churchs-japan-branch-to-dissolve-after-fraud-ruling>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Established news source of record.
  - **Key quote:** "*The court ruled that since the 1980s, the church bilked some 1,500 people out of about \$130 million.*"

**Claim: In October 2023, Japan's Ministry of Education formally requested the Tokyo District Court to dissolve the Unification Church.**

- **Source:** NBC News, "*Japan's government asks a court to revoke the legal status of the Unification Church*," October 13, 2023.
- **URL:** <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/japan-dissolve-unification-church-shinzo-abe-rcna120251>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Established news source of record.

**Claim: On March 25, 2025, the Tokyo District Court granted the dissolution request and revoked the Unification Church's legal status.**

- **Source:** Associated Press via PBS NewsHour, Mari Yamaguchi, "*Court in Japan orders dissolution of Unification Church*," March 25, 2025.
- **URL:** <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/court-in-japan-orders-dissolution-of-unification-church>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — AP wire, established news source of record.

**Claim: Article 81 of Japan's Religious Corporations Act (1951) allows dissolution where a religious corporation "in violation of laws and regulations, commits an act which is clearly found to harm public welfare substantially."**

- **Source:** Japanese Law Translation Database, Ministry of Justice, Japan. *Religious Corporations Act* (Act No. 126 of April 3, 1951), Article 81(1)(i).
- **URL:** <https://www.japaneselawtranslation.go.jp/en/laws/view/3898>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Official Japanese government English translation of the statute.

**Claim: On March 4, 2026, the Tokyo High Court upheld the dissolution order. Presiding Judge Motoko Miki stated: "A dissolution order is necessary and inevitable, even when taking into consideration the impact on followers' freedom of religion."**

- **Source:** Jiji Press wire as carried by Barrier Free Japan, "*Tokyo High Court Upholds Unification Church Dissolution Order*," March 4, 2026.
- **URL:** <https://barrierfreejapan.com/2026/03/05/tokyo-high-court-upholds-unification-church-dissolution-order/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Direct quote from a Japanese court ruling as reported by the Jiji Press wire (Japan's domestic news wire of record).

**Claim: Japan had only previously dissolved a religion twice in the previous thirty years: Aum Shinrikyo (1995 sarin gas attack, 13 killed) and Myokakuji (executives convicted of fraud). Both involved criminal convictions.**

- **Source:** Associated Press via PBS NewsHour, Mari Yamaguchi, "Court in Japan orders dissolution of Unification Church," March 25, 2025.
- **URL:** <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/court-in-japan-orders-dissolution-of-unification-church>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Established news source of record.

## SECTION 5: The Lawsuit

**Claim: The plaintiffs in the April 13, 2026 lawsuit are the Japanese branch of Jehovah's Witnesses (based in Ebina, Kanagawa Prefecture) and couples with children from Tokyo and six other prefectures.**

- **Source:** The Japan Times, as republished by The Cult News Network.
- **URL:** <https://cultnews.net/jehovahs-witnesses-followers-sue-japanese-government/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Verbatim reproduction of the original Japan Times article.

**Claim: The plaintiffs are demanding the court invalidate the December 2022 Q&A; guidelines on the grounds that they violate religious freedom under Article 20 of the Japanese Constitution and Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and are demanding 2 million yen per plaintiff in damages from the state.**

- **Source:** The Japan Times, as republished by The Cult News Network.
- **URL:** <https://cultnews.net/jehovahs-witnesses-followers-sue-japanese-government/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Verbatim reproduction of the original Japan Times article.

**Claim: The Japan Times reports this is the first lawsuit in Japan challenging the constitutionality of the guidelines.**

- **Source:** The Japan Times, as republished by The Cult News Network.
- **URL:** <https://cultnews.net/jehovahs-witnesses-followers-sue-japanese-government/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Verbatim reproduction of the original Japan Times article.
  - **Key quote:** "The lawsuit is believed to be the first to challenge the constitutionality of the government guidelines."

## SECTION 6: The Turning Point — The Autologous Blood Policy Change

**Claim: On March 20, 2026, Governing Body member Gerrit Lösch released Governing Body Update #2 announcing that storing one's own blood is now a personal conscience matter.**

- **Source:** [jw.org](https://www.jw.org), "2026 Governing Body Update #2," March 20, 2026.
- **URL:** <https://www.jw.org/en/news/region/global/2026-Governing-Body-Update-2/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Watchtower's own official publication.
  - **Key quote:** "Each Christian must decide for himself how his own blood will be used in all medical and surgical care. This includes whether to allow his own blood to be removed, stored, and then given back to him."

**Claim: In the 1989 Watchtower Questions From Readers, preoperative autologous blood storage was explicitly forbidden.**

- **Source:** *The Watchtower*, March 1, 1989, Questions From Readers, available at Watchtower Online Library.
- **URL:** <https://wol.jw.org/en/wol/d/r1/lp-e/1989169>

- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Watchtower's own official publication, archived in their online library.
  - **Key quote:** *"This clearly rules out one common use of autologous blood — preoperative collection, storage, and later infusion of a patient's own blood. ... Jehovah's Witnesses, though, DO NOT accept this procedure." (Capitalization on 'DO NOT' is from the original.)*

**Claim: In the October 15, 2000 Watchtower Questions From Readers, the prohibition was reaffirmed with more explicit language.**

- **Source:** *The Watchtower*, October 15, 2000, Questions From Readers, jw.org library.
- **URL:** <https://www.jw.org/en/library/magazines/w20001015/Questions-From-Readers/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Watchtower's own official publication.
  - **Key quote:** *"Hence, we do not donate blood, nor do we store for transfusion our blood that should be poured out. That practice conflicts with God's law."*

**Claim: AJWRB (Advocates for Jehovah's Witness Reform on Blood) described the March 20, 2026 update as the most significant doctrinal shift since the 1945 prohibition on blood transfusions.**

- **Source:** AJWRB, *"The 2026 Autologous Pivot: A Victory for Conscience, a Failure of Accountability,"* March 24, 2026.
- **URL:** <https://www.ajwr.org/the-2026-autologous-pivot-a-victory-for-conscience-a-failure-of-accountability>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Established reform advocacy organization that has been pushing Watchtower to change this exact doctrine since 1997.
  - **Key quote:** *"This announcement marks the most significant doctrinal shift since the 1945 prohibition on blood transfusions."*

## SECTION 7: The PR Machine and the "Independent" Study

**Claim: Watchtower operates a dedicated Japan PR website at jw-japan.org.**

- **Source:** Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan official website.
- **URL:** <https://jw-japan.org/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Watchtower's own official website for Japan-related materials.

**Claim: The "Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan — A Quantitative Study" is featured on jw-japan.org and hosted on its own dedicated domain.**

- **Source:** JWJ-QS Official Website.
- **URL:** <https://jwj-qs.jp/en/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — The study's own dedicated website.

**Claim: The study describes itself as conducted by "independent researchers" but funding was provided by the Arnold-Liebster Foundation, which was established by two Jehovah's Witnesses.**

- **Source:** The study's own funding disclosure in *"Jehovah's Witnesses in Japan — A Quantitative Study"* (PDF report).
- **URL:** <https://jwj-qs.jp/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/JWJ-QS-Study-Report-v1.1a.pdf>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — The study's own published disclosure page.
  - **Key quote:** *"Funding was provided by the Arnold-Liebster Foundation (founded for the purpose of promoting peace, tolerance, and human rights)."*

**Claim: The Arnold-Liebster Foundation was established in 2002 by Max Liebster (who founded a Jehovah's Witness congregation in France after liberation) and Simone Arnold Liebster (a Gilead-trained Watchtower missionary).**

- **Source:** Arnold-Liebster Foundation, official "The Founders" page.
- **URL:** <https://alst.org/en/the-founders/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — The foundation's own biographical page about its founders.

## SECTION 8: Background Context

### **Claim: Norway revoked the Jehovah's Witnesses' registration as a religious community in December 2022.**

- **Source:** Human Rights Without Frontiers, "*Norway: The Supreme Court dismisses all accusations against Jehovah's Witnesses.*"
- **URL:** <https://hrwf.eu/norway-the-supreme-court-dismisses-all-accusations-against-jehovahs-witnesses/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Human rights advocacy organization covering the full Norway timeline through the April 2026 Supreme Court ruling.

### **Claim: Japan has over 214,000 Jehovah's Witness publishers, making it one of Watchtower's largest national operations in any developed country.**

- **Source:** Watchtower's *2024 Service Year Report* (covering September 2023 through August 2024).
- **URL:** <https://www.jw.org/en/library/books/2024-service-year-report/>
- **Verification:** PRIMARY — Watchtower's own annual statistical publication.
- **Note:** The 2024 Service Year Report shows Japan at 214,020 peak publishers, 213,719 average publishers, and 2,866 congregations.

## SECTION 9: Additional Supporting Sources

### **AvoidJW.org — "April 2024 Updates around the world"**

- **Source:** AvoidJW.org.
- **URL:** <https://avoidjw.org/news/april-2024-updates-around-the-world/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Established research and resource site for ex-JW community.
- **Contains:** The verbatim Tanaka quote about the 13-year-old child and the survey data, plus context on the formation and activities of the Jehovah's Witness Issues Support Lawyers Group.

### **AvoidJW.org — "News: Jehovah's Witnesses Change Blood Doctrine — What About the Losses?"**

- **Source:** AvoidJW.org.
- **URL:** <https://avoidjw.org/news/news-blood-doctrine-governing-body-update-deaths/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Detailed coverage of the March 20, 2026 Governing Body Update.
- **Contains:** Coverage of the March 20, 2026 GB Update with personal testimony from former Jehovah's Witnesses about the doctrine.

### **The Cult News Network**

- **Source:** The Cult News Network, run by Rick Alan Ross of the Cult Education Institute.
- **URL:** <https://cultnews.net/jehovahs-witnesses-followers-sue-japanese-government/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Verbatim republication of original Japan Times reporting.
- **Contains:** Free-to-read version of the otherwise-paywalled Japan Times article about the April 13, 2026 lawsuit filing.

### **Massimo Introvigne, Bitter Winter — Coverage of anti-JW hate incidents in Japan**

- **Source:** Bitter Winter, an online magazine edited by Massimo Introvigne.
- **URL:** <https://bitterwinter.org/anti-jehovahs-witnesses-hate-in-japan-1-an-elderly-victim-speaks/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — Direct interview with a hate crime victim. Note: Bitter Winter's editorial stance is sympathetic to Watchtower's position in the dispute, and this is discussed in the video.
- **Contains:** The interview with the victim of the June 2023 Hiroshima attack, with detailed account of the incident.

### **UCA News — Coverage of the lawyers' group founding**

- **Source:** Union of Catholic Asian News.
- **URL:** <https://www.ucanews.com/news/japanese-lawyers-decry-christian-groups-blood-transfusion-ban/100509>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — News coverage citing original Japanese press (Yomiuri Shimbun, Asahi Shimbun).
- **Contains:** English-language coverage of the formation of the Jehovah's Witness Issues Support Lawyers Group and their initial findings.

### **Barrier Free Japan — Coverage of the November 2023 CFA submission**

- **Source:** Barrier Free Japan, an English-language news site covering Japanese disability and minority rights issues.
- **URL:** <https://barrierfreejapan.com/2023/11/21/jehovahs-witnesses-cited-as-the-most-significant-violator-of-the-government-guidelines-on-religious-abuse/>
- **Verification:** SECONDARY — News reporting on the lawyers' group's submission to the Children and Family Affairs Agency.
- **Contains:** Coverage of the November 20, 2023 press conference and CFA submission, including survey data.