

COVID-19 Flash Update: Government Guidance Affecting Migrant Workers and their Employers in Thailand and Neighbouring Countries

In this update, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) provides information for migrant workers and their employers on government decisions relevant to migrant workers in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar and Thailand in the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Important Note: Please note that this is only a summary of the information provided by the above governments. Every effort is made to ensure information is up to date, however, as the situation is changing quickly you are encouraged to seek further information by contacting the Ministry of Labour or respective embassies directly.

Updates and Information from IOM

IOM published a Policy Brief on [Labour Mobility and Skills in Response, Recovery and Post COVID-19 Pandemic](#).

IOM Thailand is monitoring border movements and providing assistance to migrants and the Royal Thai Government. For updates and to access IOM tools and guidelines related to COVID-19, please check here: <https://thailand.iom.int/iom-thailand-covid-19-response>

Thailand

Registration for irregular migrant workers residing in Thailand: next steps

References: [Bangkok Business Newspaper](#), 14 February 2021; [Immigration Division 1 official website](#), 31 January 2021

The Cabinet Resolution dated 29 December 2020 allowed irregular migrants residing in Thailand, regardless of their employment status, to register online with the Department of Employment to regularize their stay. The registration window was open from 15 January to 13 February 2021. Details of the registration process were summarized in [IOM's Flash Update #26](#). The Ministry of Labour reported that a total of **654,864 migrants have registered** as of 13 February 2021.

As a next step, the registered migrants have to obtain medical clearance at [designated hospitals](#). Upon receipt of medical clearance, migrants need to submit their biometric data (fingerprints) to the Immigration Bureau. Migrants working or staying in Bangkok have to make an appointment to visit the Immigration Bureau using its website <https://www.immbkklabour.com/>, which is available in English, Khmer, Laotian, Myanmar, and Thai languages. Migrants in other provinces have to visit provincial Immigration Offices directly. When visiting the Immigration Bureau offices migrants must present the following documents:

- Registration documents from www.e-workpermit.doe.go.th
- Confirmation of online appointment made at www.immbkklabour.com
- Receipt of payment for biometric data collection for employed migrants. No confirmation of receipt of payment is requested from unemployed migrants.

Note: the announcement did not clarify whether the unemployed migrants will be required to pay the fee.

Medical clearance and submission of biometric data must be completed by 16 April 2021. **The deadline for completing the whole registration process** resulting in the receipt of a stay permit (pink card) is **12 November 2021**.

Myanmar

IOM COVID-19 response

IOM Myanmar continued to provide humanitarian support for vulnerable returnees from Thailand in distressed conditions, reaching a total of 334 migrants during the period from 21 January to 17 February 2021. IOM supported the costs of onward transportation and meals and provided clothing and medical support, in close collaboration with Kayin State, Yangon and Ayeyarwaddy, Yangon Region authorities.

In the context of the recent political developments in Myanmar, direct support to vulnerable returned migrants such as humanitarian support are continuing, and Migrant Resource Centers (MRCs) are operating.



IOM Myanmar providing humanitarian support to returnee migrant workers at Kyauk Lone Gyi Facility Quarantine Centre, Myawaddy, 4 February 2021

Suspension of International Flights Operation extended until 28 February 2021

Reference: [Yangon International Airport's Official website](#), 30 January 2021

According to the notice from the Department of Civil Aviation issued on 30 January 2021, the ban on all international commercial flights to and from the Yangon International Airport has been further extended until 28 February 2021.

Cambodia

Announcement of fines for returning Cambodian workers not complying with the quarantine measures

Reference: Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training, [Letter No. 006/21 KB/SChNKhL](#), 15 February 2021

Following the recommendations made by Mr. Samdech Hun Sen, Prime Minister of Cambodia, on 15 February 2021, the Ministry of Labor and Vocational Training made the following announcement to all Cambodian workers abroad:

- Workers should not attempt to enter Cambodia irregularly, as this can pose a high risk to their life and increase the risk of transmission of infectious diseases into Cambodia.
- If workers are returning to Cambodia, they must undergo 14 days quarantine. Failure to comply will result in a fine of 1 million Riels or more and criminal penalties as stipulated in the applicable laws and regulations.
- Workers should contact the Cambodian embassy or the relevant competent authorities to inform them of brokers who promise to arrange irregular travel for migrant workers into and/or out of Cambodia.

Press Release of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Cambodia in Thailand

Reference: The Labour Attaché Office's [Official Facebook page](#)

On 5 and 14 February 2021, the Labour Attaché of the Royal Cambodian Embassy in Thailand, in cooperation with the Labour Rights Promotion Network and local authorities, distributed food supplies to more than 450 Cambodian workers employed in construction and chemical fertilizer factories, and who are affected by the spread of COVID-19 in Wat Bot Somphon Chai, Ratchakhram commune, Bang Sai district, Ayutthaya province.

The meeting of the Commission for the Legalization of Cambodian Workers Residing and Working in Thailand

Reference: Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training's [Official Facebook page](#), 11 February 2021

On 11 February 2021, H.E. Dr. Ith Sam Heng, Minister of Labor and Vocational Training and Chair of the Commission for the Legalization of Cambodian Workers Residing and Working in Thailand, chaired a meeting to discuss the procedure for the renewal of travel documents for Cambodian nationals working abroad. The meeting discussed identifying measures and developing action plans to provide necessary protection and support services to workers who are able to stay and work regularly in Thailand, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of the meeting, the Commission confirmed its readiness to provide the necessary documents and support services to irregular Cambodian workers to renew their travel documents when the Thai authorities complete their internal procedures.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Mitigation measures to prevent, control, combat and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic from 1 February to 31 March 2021

Reference: Ministry of Health, Press conference on the implementation of mitigation measures to prevent, control and combat the outbreak of COVID-19, 2 February 2021

Dr. Bounkong Sihavong, Minister of Health, Deputy Head of the Task Force Committee for Prevention, Control and Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic informed that the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic has

agreed to continue implementing relevant sections of the measures stated in the [Prime Minister's Office's letter N.1414/PMO, 23 December 2020](#). It was emphasized that the measures must be implemented more strictly for the period from 1 February to 31 March 2021. Details of the measures are listed on the [Centre of Information and Education for Health's Official Facebook Page](#). Key measures are summarized in [IOM's Flash Update #26](#), and additional updates include:

- All travelers, both Lao and non-Lao nationals, must obtain a COVID-19 test certificate within 72 hours prior to arrival. Airlines are responsible for ensuring that travelers possess valid test certificates before arriving in Lao People's Democratic Republic. Upon arrival, travelers must take an additional COVID-19 test at the airport.
- The Ministry of Health is to issue detailed instructions for using tracking devices, and regulations on COVID-19 insurance, for non-Lao nationals who enter the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

All measures are subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures.

This COVID-19 Flash Update: Government Guidance Affecting Migrant Workers and their Employers in Thailand and Neighbouring Countries, has been produced by IOM Thailand. For more information, please contact ThailandLHD@iom.int

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