

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 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

State of Emergency extended from 1 to 31 March 2021

Reference: [Bangkok Post](#), 22 February 2021

The Thailand Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) has approved the extension of the State of Emergency Order to 31 March 2021. This extension, the tenth since March 2020, allows the Royal Thai Government to continue implementing COVID-19 preventative measures in the country.

National budget approved for setting up organizational quarantine facilities for migrants

Reference: Thailand's Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) official [Facebook page](#), 16 March 2021

The CCSA has announced Cabinet's resolution on approving the budget for setting up organizational quarantine (OQ) facilities for regular and irregular migrants in 14 locations in Chanthaburi, Chiangrai, Nong Khai, Ranong, Sa Kaeo, Songkla, and Tak provinces. The

Government is planning to start setting up the OQ facilities in April and complete them in September 2021.

Note: at the time of writing, the Government has not announced the exact locations of OQ facilities or other details related to the facilities.

Registration period for regularization of irregular migrant workers residing in Thailand ended

Reference: [The Royal Thai Government Official website](#), 14 February 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 (DOE) to regularize their stay. The registration window was open from 15 January to 13 February 2021. According to the announcement of the Ministry of Labour (MOL) on 14 February 2021, a **total of 654,864 migrant workers registered** during the indicated period. Tables below provide additional information on the registered migrant workers:

1. Migrant workers who registered with their employers: 596,502, including:

Cambodian	180,476
Laotian	63,482
Myanmar	352,544

2. **Unemployed migrant workers:** 58,362, including:

Cambodian	23,203
Laotian	3,626
Myanmar	31,533

3. **Top five provinces where migrant workers registered (both employed and unemployed):**

Bangkok	120,163
Chonburi	47,326
Pathum Thani	38,994
Samut Prakan	37,621
Samut Sakhon	28,953

4. **Top five sectors in which employed migrant workers registered:**

Construction	148,332
Agriculture and livestock	117,430
Food and beverages	49,702
Services	45,118
Other related to agricultural (i.e. crops processing)	39,025

Note: at the time of writing official gender disaggregated data was not available.

Once registered, migrant workers must complete a medical examination and COVID-19 test by 16 April 2021. The results must be obtained before their employers can apply for the work permit, on workers' behalf, with the DOE. Work permit applications must be completed by 16 June 2021. The **deadline for completing the whole registration process** resulting in the receipt of a stay permit (pink card) **for migrant workers who registered with their employers is 30 December 2021.**

Unemployed migrant workers must register directly with the Ministry of Interior and must find an employer by 13 September 2021. The **deadline for unemployed registered workers to complete the whole registration process** resulting in the receipt of a stay permit (pink card) is **28 February 2022.**

The cost for completing the process for all workers is THB 9,180, except for the workers in fisheries for whom the cost is THB 9,380.

Myanmar

IOM COVID-19 response

IOM Myanmar continued to provide humanitarian support for vulnerable returnees from Thailand in distressed conditions, reaching a total of 306 (232 Men, 74 Women) migrants during the period from 19 February to 17 March 2021. IOM supported the costs of onward transportation and meals and provided clothing and medical support, in close collaboration with the Kayin State, Shan State, Ayeyarwaddy and Tanintharyi Region authorities.



IOM Myanmar providing humanitarian support to returnee migrant workers at Facility Quarantine Centre in Patheingyi Township, Ayeyarwaddy Region, 1 March 2021.

Suspension of international flights operation extended until 31 March 2021

Reference: [Yangon International Airport's Official website](#), 27 February 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 31 March 2021.

Cambodia

COVID-19 situation in Cambodia

As of 17 March 2021, Cambodia has reported 1,505 confirmed COVID-19 cases in total, with one death reported. The Ministry of Health encourages people to continue complying with COVID-19 prevention measures. For the latest on the COVID-19 situation in Cambodia, please visit: <http://www.cdcmoh.gov.kh/>

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

Reference: The Labour Attaché's Office's [official Facebook page](#), 21 February 2021

On 21 February 2021, the Royal Embassy of Cambodia in Thailand led by H.E. Ouk Sorphorn, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Cambodia in Thailand, and local authorities distributed food supplies to 200 Cambodian workers employed in a wood work factory, and who are affected by the spread of COVID-19 in Klaeng district, Rayong province.

H.E. Ouk Sorphorn reiterated the importance of complying with the hygiene and COVID-19 prevention measures. He also explained to Cambodian workers the instructions relating to return to their hometowns through the designated Point of Entry (POE) as organized by the relevant authorities of the two countries, as well as the requirement of mandatory 14-day quarantine in the designated centers in Cambodia.

It was emphasized that anyone who tries to use non-designated POE to avoid undergoing quarantine upon return, will be subject to fines.

His Excellency also stressed that if Cambodian migrant workers want to return to Thailand, they must do so through the regular migration channels.

Note: Fines are defined in accordance with Article 7 of the Law on "Measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other serious and dangerous diseases" (2021): the avoidance of undergoing a 14-day mandatory quarantine or escape from a quarantine center resulting in infecting other individuals is punishable by an imprisonment term of six months to three years and a fine of two to 10 million Riels.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Travel advisory for entering Lao People's Democratic Republic during the implementation of measures to prevent, control, combat and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic

Reference: [The National Task Force Committee for Prevention, Control and Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic](#), Travel advisory announcement No.3078/TC, 26 February 2021

The National COVID-19 Task Force Committee announced travel advisory on entering Lao People's Democratic Republic during the period of implementing measures to prevent, control, combat and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Details are listed on the National COVID-19 Taskforce's [official website](#). Key measures are listed below, with all measures subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures:

- 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;

- All travelers, both Lao and non-Lao nationals, entering Lao People's Democratic Republic, must purchase COVID-19 insurance and use tracking devices; The National COVID-19 Taskforce is to issue further regulations on COVID-19 insurance;
- Expenditures incurred by a non-Lao national related to the mandatory quarantine, COVID-19 test, and rental of tracking device during quarantine shall be covered by the traveler's COVID-19 insurance or individually or by their employer organization;
- All treatment expenditures of a Non-Lao national whose test result is positive shall be covered by their COVID-19 insurance.



IOM Lao People's Democratic Republic visiting KM21 Provincial Quarantine Centre to observe the Centre's management and operational procedures and needs, Champasack province, 10 March 2021.

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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