

## 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

#### Re-zoning of COVID-19 control areas

Reference: [Bangkok Business Newspaper](#), 18 May 2021

The Royal Thai Government Gazette released an order updating COVID-19 control zones by provinces and announcing new measures on COVID-19 prevention effective from 17 May 2021. Bangkok, Nonthaburi, Pathum Thani, and Samut Prakarn are classified as maximum and strict control zone (dark red), where further restrictions have been put in place as follows:

- Restaurants are allowed to open for dine-in with a maximum occupancy of 25 per cent of the total seats at a time, until 9 PM. Take-away service is allowed until 11 PM.
- Mass gatherings of over 20 people are banned.
- Schools remain closed and educational training activities are not allowed.

- Indoor gyms and sports venues remain closed (open-air sports fields and venues may open until 9 PM).
- Shopping malls, department stores, and community malls remain open until 9 PM.
- Supermarkets, markets, walking streets, and convenience stores are open until 11 PM.
- Residents of the dark red zone provinces are urged not to travel outside the control zone.

In addition to the dark red zone, the Thailand Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) has re-classified 17 provinces as a maximum control zone (red zone) and 56 provinces as a control zone (orange zone).

#### Restrictions on migrant workers' movement in selected provinces remain in place

Restrictions on migrant workers' movement in and out Kanchanaburi, Pisanulok, Samut Prakarn, Samut Sakhon, and Tak provinces remain in place. Migrant workers' movement is allowed in specific circumstances and subject to provincial governors' permission. Details on the movement restrictions and permission request process are summarized in [IOM's Flash Update #29](#).

#### Social Security Fund compensation for unemployment due to force majeure cases

Reference: [The Social Security Office's Official Website](#), 3 May 2021

Employees including migrant workers enrolled in the Social Security Fund (SSF), who are affected by the

Government's order to temporarily close their workplaces due to the COVID-19 pandemic, are entitled to receive half of their daily wage from the SSF during the closure period for a maximum of 90 days in a calendar year. However, their contribution to the Fund must total a minimum of six months within the latest 15-month period in order to be eligible for the compensation.

## Myanmar

### IOM COVID 19 response

IOM Myanmar continued to provide humanitarian support for vulnerable returnees from Thailand and internal migrants in distressed conditions, reaching a total of 3,247 (1,257 men, 1,990 women) migrants during the period from 21 April to 19 May 2021. IOM supported the costs of onward transportation and meals and provided clothing and medical support, in close collaboration with the Kayin State authorities, Myanmar Garment Manufacture Association and Rakhine Thaharya Association in Yangon.



IOM Myanmar providing clothing for vulnerable returnee migrant workers in distressed condition at Myawaddy-Mae Sot Check point, 12 May 2021.

## Suspension of International Flights Operation extended until 31 May 2021

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

## Cambodia

### COVID-19 situation

As of 18 May 2021, Cambodia has reported 22,889 confirmed COVID-19 cases in total, with 156 deaths reported. The Ministry of Health encourages people to continue complying with COVID-19 prevention measures strictly. For the latest on the COVID-19 situation in Cambodia, please visit: <http://www.cdcmoh.gov.kh/>

## Lao People's Democratic Republic

### Updated measures to prevent, control and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic

Reference: The Prime Minister's Office, Order N.15/PMO, 21 April 2021; the Prime Minister's Office, Order N.462/PMO, 5 May 2021

The Prime Minister officially announced further easing of restrictions in Vientiane Capital during the period from 22 April to 20 May 2021. Details are provided on [the National COVID-19 Task Force Committee's official website](#) and [the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare's official Facebook page](#).

Key measures are listed below, with all measures subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures:

- The National COVID-19 Task Force Committee and the Ministry of Health are to establish COVID-19 testing points, enhance measures on identifying and tracing close contacts for confirmed COVID-19 cases in Vientiane Capital,

and continue roll-out of the vaccination in the country.

- Organizations are to reduce and rotate staff who need to go to offices and implement working from home arrangements.
- All Lao and non-Lao nationals should not leave their residences, except for immediate needs such as grocery shopping, hospital visits, and going to work in exceptional cases.
- Events involving gatherings of more than 20 people are not permitted. Emergency events, such as a funeral, must comply with COVID-19 prevention measures.
- Local and traditional Points of Entry (POEs)<sup>1</sup> remain closed, except for some POEs which are allowed for goods transportation with the Government's permission.
- International POEs are open only for movement of individuals with emergency needs as identified by the National COVID-19 Task Force. Transportation of goods through international POEs is allowed.
- All travelers, both Lao and non-Lao nationals, entering Lao People's Democratic Republic, must have COVID-19 insurance and wear tracking devices during their 14-day mandatory quarantine.
- Entertainment venues, such as karaoke clubs, game centres and sports clubs, remain closed.
- Operation of essential organizations are allowed including banks, hospitals, pharmacies, rescue

stations, fire stations, waterworks offices, post offices, grocery stores, gas stations, hotels, and restaurants.

### The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare issues a policy on remedy measures for workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic

Reference: The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Announcement N.1532/LSW, 5 May 2021

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare announced a policy on remedy measures for workers in Lao People's Democratic Republic affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to support their needs and daily livelihood. Details are provided on [the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare's official Facebook page](#), and key measures include:

- Companies that have suspended their operation due to the relevant Government orders on COVID-19 prevention must consider helping their workers to the extent possible to sustain their livelihoods.
- Workers who are enrolled into the National Social Security Fund and who have been suspended from work from 1 May 2021 onwards will receive unemployment benefits. They will be eligible for the benefits on the condition of contributing to the Social Security Fund for at least six months in the past 12 months. Unemployment benefits will be provided during the announced period of lockdown from 1 to 20 May 2021.

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*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](mailto:ThailandLHD@iom.int)*

*Important disclaimer: The information presented in this document does not necessarily reflect the views of IOM. The inclusion or presentation of material does not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of IOM or of any of its members or partners.*

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<sup>1</sup> Local POE is for Lao nationals crossing the border using day passes.

Traditional POE is for residents of the area surrounding the border crossing. Residents do not have to present any paperwork to cross the border using traditional POE.