

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

The COVID-19 situation is evolving rapidly. 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 Thailand, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar.

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 distributed 14,000 masks for frontline border officials, as part of a new regional project to prevent the spread of COVID-19 through capacity building and technical support for immigration officials at points of entry. Details are available [HERE](#).

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 to 31 July

Reference: [Royal Gazette edition no. 137 Special edition no. 153 Nhog](#)

The Royal Thai Government has officially extended the State of Emergency Order until 31 July 2020. Key updates listed below are effective from 1 July. All are subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures:

- Shopping malls, department stores and community malls can open until 10:00 PM (previously 9:00 PM).

- Convenience stores can operate 24 hours a day.
- Entertainment venues, including pubs and bars, can open until 00:00 AM (previously not allowed to open).
- All businesses must register via the [Thai Chana platform](#) before reopening to facilitate COVID-19 contact tracing. Details are summarized on page 2 in [IOM's Flash Update #10](#). Educational institutions can also use this platform for contact tracing among students.

#### Ban on incoming international flights partially lifted

Reference: the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand's official [Facebook page](#), 29 June 2020

The Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) has partially lifted the ban on international flights into the country from 1 July onwards, under [specific conditions](#). Key information is summarized below:

- Flights over, into and out of Thailand continue to be permitted for (1) state or military aircrafts, (2) emergency landing flights, (3) technical landing flights without disembarkation, (4) humanitarian aid, medical and relief flights, (5) **repatriation flights** and (6) cargo flights.

- Commercial passenger flights can secure CAAT's permission to fly over, into and out of Thailand only if passengers are in permitted categories summarized [here](#). As of 3 July, migrant workers holding an MOU work permit are not included in the CAAT-listed categories of passengers allowed into Thailand. All persons entering Thailand must comply with the COVID-19 procedures summarized in the below factsheet.



## Myanmar

### Approximately 250,000 Myanmar workers out of work due to COVID-19

The Deputy Minister for Labour, Immigration and Population estimated that [250,000](#) Myanmar workers, including migrant workers, were unemployed as of June. The number of unemployed workers includes 140,000 workers previously employed in the 5,658 factories in Myanmar that shut down due to COVID-19. A further 110,000 Myanmar migrant workers are estimated to have returned from China, Japan, South Korea, and Thailand.

### Extension of COVID-19 restrictions until 15 July

Reference: National Level Central Committee for Prevention, Control, and Treatment of COVID-19

The National Level Central Committee for Prevention, Control, and Treatment of COVID-19 has extended COVID-19 restrictions until 15 July. This is the second extension following a similar decision in early June. Key points are summarized below.

- The nationwide curfew from 00:00 AM to 04:00 AM daily remains in place.
- The ban on international commercial flights into and out of Myanmar remains in place.
- Stay at Home Order has been lifted for all townships in Yangon.
- The temporary suspension of visas on arrival and e-visas remains in place.
- Temporary suspensions remain in place for overseas employment processes (including MOU recruitment procedures), and all pre-departure orientation and skills training.



IOM Myanmar together with the General Administration Department, providing humanitarian assistance to returning migrants at Kawthaung district, 29 June 2020

### Update on safe return arrangements for Myanmar migrants in Thailand

Reference: General Administrative Department, Myawaddy

As of 30 June 2020, 75,464 Myanmar nationals had been safely repatriated from Thailand. On a daily basis, the Myanmar Labour Attaché Office posts names of Myanmar nationals who are awaiting repatriation to their country of origin, and whose travel arrangements have been confirmed, on the Office's [Facebook page](#). For more details on these arrangements, please see page 2 in [IOM's Flash Update #10](#).

### Cambodia

#### Cambodian vendors to be permitted to collect business assets in Rong Khloeu market in Thailand

Reference: The National Television of Cambodia's official [Facebook page](#), 23 June 2020

Cambodian vendors who were operating businesses in Rong Khloeu market in Sa Kaeo province in Thailand prior to COVID-19 will be able to collect their business assets.

The Rong Khloeu market is located in Aranyaprthet district, Sa Kaeo province in Thailand, and thousands of Cambodian vendors sell products at the market. Due to temporary closure of the market as a result of COVID-19, as well as border closures, vendors have not been able to access their assets since March 2020.

On 23 June 2020, the Governor of Banteay Meanchey province in Cambodia and the Governor of Sa Kaeo province in Thailand held a video conference. As a result of the discussion, Thai authorities will allow a maximum 50 vehicles per day, with a maximum of two people per vehicle, to enter Thailand between 08:00 AM and 13:00 PM. Returning vendors must comply with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures as per the Thai Ministry of Public Health guidelines. IOM is closely monitoring the situation for further announcements.

Note: The Poipet International Border Gate remains closed. All Cambodian nationals must return through Ou Beichoan land border crossing in Banteay Meanchey Province.



IOM Cambodia together with the Provincial COVID-19 Supervision Committee visiting the Point of Entry at Ou Beichoan, Banteay Meanchey province, 26 June 2020

## USD 125 million Social Assistance Program announced for Cambodians living in poverty

Reference: The Royal Government Spokesperson Unit's official [Facebook page](#), 24 June 2020

The Prime Minister will allocate USD 125 million to support Cambodians living in poverty, aiming to reach approximately 2.3 million people and 560,000 household affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Cambodian nationals holding poverty cards level 1 and level 2 are eligible to receive financial assistance under this Social Assistance Program. The Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, and the Ministry of Economy and Finance, will co-manage the programme. In detail:

- Eligible individuals residing in urban areas will be entitled to receive USD 30 per month, while those residing in rural areas will be entitled to receive USD 20 per month. Residential data will be provided by the Ministry of Planning.
- An additional sum of between USD 4 and USD 10 per month will be granted to eligible households with children under the age of five, people with a disability, people above the age of 60, and people living with HIV.
- Individual eligibility will be determined by implementing ministries based on national socio-economic statistics which will be verified through field visits.

- The payment will be made in the fourth week of each month, starting from June 2020.
- The payment will be made through [Wing \(Cambodia\) Limited Specialised Bank](#) using its nationwide network.

## Lao People's Democratic Republic

### Further easing of restrictions from 1 - 31 July 2020

Reference: The Prime Minister Office, N.697/PMO, 30 June 2020

The Prime Minister has further eased restrictions during the period from 1 to 31 July 2020. Details are listed on the Lao Youth Radio FM 90.0 Mhz official [Facebook page](#). All permitted activities are subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures. Several restrictions remain in place:

- Entertainment venues, such as karaoke clubs and game centres, remain closed.
- Local<sup>1</sup>, traditional<sup>2</sup>, and international Points of Entry (POEs) remain closed.
- The issuance of entry visas remains suspended for citizens of countries affected by COVID-19.

Note: these measures are being implemented temporarily only. If any province reports one new COVID-19 case, that province must resume lockdown measures.

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

<sup>2</sup> 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.

If more than two provinces report new COVID-19 cases, nationwide lockdown will be reinstated.

## Social Security Organization offers financial support to Lao workers

Reference: The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, N.1302/LSS, 11 June 2020

As detailed in [IOM's Flash Update #13](#), page 3-4, employers should register with the Lao Social Security Organization (LSS) to request financial assistance for employees whose jobs were suspended on or after 1 May 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. LSS posted further details on its official [Facebook page](#) on 16 June, instructing employers to submit a Request Letter to LSS along with the following documents:

- Certification of business suspension. A sample can be found [here](#).
- A list of eligible workers with their names, Social Security Fund ID, total days of employment suspension, wage statement, and bank account information.



IOM Lao People's Democratic Republic, together with officials from the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, distributing 260 direct assistance packs and Safe Migration IEC materials to returned Lao migrants at KM27 Quarantine Centre in Vientiane Capital, 26 June 2020

*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)*

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