

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 has assessed COVID-19 Related Vulnerabilities and Perceptions in three districts along the Thailand-Myanmar border:

- In [Mae Sot District, Tak Province](#)
- In [Mueang Ranong District, Ranong Province](#)
- In [Suk Samran District, Ranong Province](#)

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

NEW: Extension of stay for seasonal workers and MOU workers who have completed four years of employment

Reference: [Ror Ngor 0316/ wor 20129](#), on 2 June

Previously the duration of stay for seasonal workers and MOU workers who have completed four years of employment was extended to 31 May, summarized on page 1 in [IOM's Flash Update #8](#).

A [new announcement issued on 2 June](#) by the Department of Employment has further extended permission for both groups to stay and work in Thailand until **31 July**, even with expired stay and work permits.

In case any borders re-open before 31 July, seasonal workers who holding an expired Border Pass must exit Thailand and return to their country of origin within seven days of borders re-opening. MOU workers who have completed four years of employment must exit Thailand and return to their country of origin no later than 31 July.

During this period until 31 July, visa extensions, 90-day reporting, visa fees, and submission of other documents are all exempted for foreign nationals temporarily staying in Thailand.

INFORMATION
The government permits
**aliens to temporarily stay in Thailand
until 31 July 2020.**

- No need to extend visa
- No need to do 90-day reporting
- No need to pay fee
- No need to submit any documents

Immigration Bureau will process the abovementioned steps automatically.

Hotline: 1178

Immigration Bureau

Further easing of restrictions for businesses in Thailand from 1 June

Reference: [Royal Gazette no. 137 special edition no. 127 \(จ.\)](#), 30 May 2020

The Prime Minister has officially announced further measures to ease restrictions, from 1 June. Key measures are listed below, with all measures subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures:

- Educational institutions at all levels can re-open across the country;
- All malls can open for business between 4:00 AM to 9:00 PM;
- Hair salons can provide services that do not exceed two hours per customer, with no sit-down waiting period for customers permitted;
- Food courts can open but must maintain a distance of one metre between each table, and between each seat.



Myanmar

Bangkok to implement COVID-19 prevention measures at construction sites

Reference: [The Nation Thailand](#), 29 May 2020

Thailand's Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) asked the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) to employ prevention measures at construction sites in the Bangkok metropolitan area. BMA has deployed health officials to test construction workers for COVID-19. As of 29 May, more than 49,000 construction workers had been tested. BMA has been working closely with heads of construction sites to monitor the health status of the workers and to provide information on hygiene practices in workplaces and accommodation.

Further extension of precautionary restrictions until 15 June

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 announced the extension of related Orders, Announcements, and Requests to the Public. These measures were previously extended to 31 May and have now been further extended to 15 June 2020, specifically:

1. Extension of the nationwide curfew from 00:00 AM to 04:00 AM daily.
2. Extension of the ban on international commercial flights in and out of Myanmar.
3. Extension of the Stay at Home Order in two Townships in Yangon (Mayangone and Insein). From 4:00 PM on 29 May, the Order no longer

applies in eight townships (South Okkalapa, Pabedan, Bahan, Tamwe, Mingaladon, Hlaing Tharyar, Shwe Pyi Thar and Botahtaung).

4. Extension of the temporary suspension of Visas on Arrival and E-Visas.
5. Extension of temporary suspension of overseas employment processes and all Pre-Departure Orientation and skills training.

Updates on safe return arrangements for Myanmar migrants in Thailand

Reference: General Administrative Department, Myawaddy

Following coordination between the Embassy of Myanmar in Thailand and Thai authorities, 12,053 Myanmar migrants have been safely repatriated from Thailand between 23 May and 1 June. The Myanmar Labour Attaché Office – Thailand [Facebook page](#) continues to post a list of confirmed passengers on a daily basis. For more details on these arrangements, please see page 2 in [IOM's Flash Update #10](#).



IOM Myanmar providing humanitarian assistance to returning migrants in distress, supported by the IOM MRC Counsellor at Kyauk Lone Gyi Quarantine Centre, Myawaddy. 30 May 2020

Cambodia

Preventative measures in factories and enterprises

Reference: Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training (MoLVT) [official Facebook page](#), 2 June 2020

The Ministry further urged enterprises and factories in Cambodia, especially those in the garment sector, to continue implementing strict prevention measures in workplaces. Businesses and individuals should follow specific measures updated regularly by the Ministry of Health (MOH) on their [official Facebook page](#), including: daily temperature checks for all workers, providing hand sanitizer and soap in workplaces, providing extra face masks for workers, and reporting any COVID-19 symptoms detected in workplaces to the COVID-19 hotline, managed by MOH, using the following phone number: 115.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Domestic travel restrictions eased from 2 June 2020

Reference: The Prime Minister's Office, N.597/PMO, 29 May 2020

The Prime Minister officially announced further easing of restrictions from 2 to 30 June. Details are listed on the National COVID-19 Taskforce [Official Website](#). Key measures are listed below, with all measures subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures:

- From 2 June: all grades of kindergarten, primary and secondary schools, non-formal education, schools for monks, vocational training centres, and final years of technical schools, colleges and universities are allowed to re-open;
- From 15 June: non-final years of technical schools, colleges and universities are allowed to re-open;

- Night markets and restaurants are allowed to fully re-open for business;
- Gatherings and ceremonies are allowed;
- Local, traditional, and international Points of Entry (POEs) remain closed.

Government instructions for employers and workers impacted by COVID-19

Reference: N.1559/LSW, 1 June 2020

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW) has instructed businesses to continue to pay wages to workers whose jobs have been suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Full details of the announcement are listed on the MoLSW [official Facebook page](#). Key measures are listed below:

1. Businesses that were ordered to suspend operations (as per [Prime Minister's Order N.06/PMO](#)) during the month of April 2020 must pay their workers their regular wages for that month, or at least 50% of their regular wage if the business experienced serious financial difficulties.
2. Workers in this situation whose salaries are below minimum wage (LAK 1,100,000) must be paid no less than 50% of the minimum wage (LAK 550,000) for the month of April.
3. Workers still stood down/furloughed from 1 May must be paid their regular wage.

4. Workers who lost their job due to COVID-19 on or after 1 May, and who are registered under the Social Security Fund (SSF) in Lao People's Democratic Republic, will receive unemployment benefits as stated in the [Law on Social Security N.213/PM, Chapter 9, Article 66](#).
5. All other employers must continue to comply with their responsibilities as per the individual worker's employment contract. This applies to all workers including those not registered under the SSF.
6. Any contract terminations related to COVID-19 must be approved by MoLSW, after consultation between MoLSW officials, and the employer and employee.



IOM Lao People's Democratic Republic hand over 500 copies of information sheets, 200 face masks, basic supplies including food, water, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and soap to the I-Job recruitment agency. The packs will be provided to returning migrants at checkpoints and quarantine centres in Vientiane Capital. 2 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

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