

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 published an Issue Brief on "[Why Migration Matters for 'Recovering Better' from COVID-19](#)", highlighting the positive power of migration in recovery efforts, and ways to mitigate the immediate and long-term negative impacts on migrants, and the societies and economies that depend on them.

The United Nations Network on Migration published a statement on "[Standing in solidarity with migrants: Supporting civil society and other stakeholders in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic](#)". The statement recognizes the role of a range of civil society stakeholders in supporting, protecting and collaborating with migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic, and urges governments to recall their commitments to a whole-of-society approach under the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM).

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

Department of Employment reopens for migrant workers' Work Permit extensions

Reference: The [Thairath](#), 9 July 2020

The Director-General of Thailand's Department of Employment (DOE) [announced](#) the reopening of DOE offices nationwide. This decision aims to assist 504,784 migrant workers (Pink Card holders) who have previously registered on the DOE's Name Lists to complete their transition to MOU status. Pink Card holders who complete this process will receive the MOU Work Permit allowing them to work in Thailand for an initial period of two years, with option to extend for another two years. DOE offices will be open from 13 July to 30 November 2020 as follows:

- Monday to Friday, 10:00 AM – 16:00 PM
- Saturday and Sunday, 08:00 AM – 16:00 PM

Migrant workers who have registered in the Name Lists should complete the following process, with support from their respective employers:

- 1) Obtain medical clearance* from designated government hospital;

*for those who have already obtained the medical clearance but have not yet completed the transition process, their

existing medical clearance will remain valid until 30 November 2020. Workers with existing medical clearance do not need to obtain another medical clearance for their work permit extension (reference: [Ministry of Public Health, Sor Tor 0230.05/Wor 13349](#), 15 July 2020);

- 2) Apply for Non-LA visa** at provincial or Bangkok-based Immigration Bureau offices;
- 3) Apply for E-Work Permit online [HERE](#);
- 4) Print out the online registration form from the [E-Work Permit online system](#) and contact DOE office in respective provinces/Bangkok to issue the Work Permit**.

**At the time of writing, a two-year Non-LA Visa costs THB 1,900, and a two-year Work Permit costs THB 1,900.

Reassessing the state quarantine policy and incoming international flight regulations

Reference: Thailand's Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) official [Facebook page](#), 13 July 2020

After two COVID-19 cases were identified among non-Thai nationals returning to Thailand in early July, Thailand's Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) announced plans to reassess the state quarantine policy and incoming international flight regulations. In the meantime, entry of international diplomats and special business representatives have been suspended from 13 July 2020 until further notice.

Myanmar

Extension of COVID-19 restrictions until 31 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 extended COVID-19 restrictions until 31 July. This is the third extension following a similar decision on 1 July. 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.
- 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.

Online survey for Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand launched

Reference: Myanmar Labour Attaché Office official [Facebook page](#), 13 July 2020

The Myanmar Labour Attaché Office in Thailand launched an online survey for Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand, aiming to collect information on the total number of Myanmar migrant workers currently in Thailand, and their situation, including occupation, income and migration status. Results will inform evidence-based programming by the Government of Myanmar. The online survey can be accessed here: <http://moliponlinesurvey.com/>

For questions regarding this survey, please contact [Myanmar Labour Attaché Office](#) on Facebook.

Update on safe return arrangements for Myanmar migrants in Thailand

Reference: General Administrative Department, Myawaddy

As of 14 July 2020, 85,719 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 from Thailand, 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](#).



IOM Cambodia conducting capacity building on COVID-19 prevention and protection, and distributing IEC materials for the Health Centre Management Committee and Village Health Support Group in Pouk District, Siem Reap Province, 8 July 2020.

Cambodia

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

Reference: Poipet City Administration, Banteay Meanchey province, Letter No. 142/20 SDN, 0 July 2020

As summarized on page 3 in [IOM's Flash Update #14](#), Rong Khloeu market in Thailand was temporarily closed as a result of COVID-19 and border closures, thus Cambodian vendors who were operating businesses in the market had not been able to access their assets since March 2020.

Starting from 15 July onwards, Cambodian vendors who were operating in Rong Khloeu market in Sa Kaeo province are permitted to collect their remaining business assets. They are allowed to enter the market **every day except for Saturday** between 08:00 AM and 10:00 AM. Vendors must return to Cambodia before 13:00 PM on the same day. Overnight stays are NOT allowed.

The process must follow the below requirements agreed between the Governor of Banteay Meanchey province in Cambodia and the Governor of Sa Kaeo province in Thailand:

- Maximum 50 vehicles are allowed to cross daily;
- Maximum two persons per vehicle, including one driver and one passenger;
- Returning vendors must comply with border crossing regulations of both countries, and present entry/exit documents upon request. Authorities of the Poipet City Administration will coordinate the issuance of these documents;
- Returning vendors must complete their transit permission application with the Poipet City Administration one day prior to the planned border-crossing date. The city administration will instruct vendors on the appropriate form in the near future.
- Returning vendors must comply with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures as

per the Thai Ministry of Public Health guidelines. For example, vendors are required to wear face masks and must undergo body temperature checks to prove that their temperature is not higher than 37.3°C.



IOM Cambodia providing hygiene kits for 32 migrants, and conducting health education on COVID-19 prevention with health centre staff at Poipet Transit Centre, Poipet City, 11 July 2020

Lao People's Democratic Republic

90 consecutive days without a new COVID-19 case

The Lao Ministry of Health reported no new cases of COVID-19 for 90 consecutive days, as of 11 July 2020. Lao People's Democratic Republic announced its first two confirmed COVID-19 cases on 24 March 2020, and the last COVID-19 patient was discharged on 9 June 2020. The Government encourages residents to continue to implement preventative measures.



IOM Lao People's Democratic Republic, together with the Provincial Labour and Social Welfare Department, distributing IEC materials and direct assistance packs for returned migrants in Khong Sedon District, Salavan Province, 9 July 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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