

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 completed a **second Rapid Assessment** on [COVID-19 Related Vulnerabilities and Perceptions of Non-Thai Populations in Thailand](#).

“Results reveal that the greatest challenge faced by non-Thai nationals since the outbreak of COVID-19 is insufficient income. In total, 29 per cent of the respondents indicated that most non-Thai nationals have lost their jobs and face financial problems.”

IOM Thailand released [Remittances in Crisis](#), marking the International Day of Family Remittances on 16 June 2020, highlighting the contributions migrants make to national and international development and the significant challenges they are experiencing under the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

Thailand lifts nation-wide curfew

Reference: [Royal Gazette no. 137, special edition no. 138](#), 12 June 2020

The Royal Thai Government **officially lifted the nation-wide curfew** for a 15-day trial period, effective from 15 June 2020 until 30 June 2020. Key updates include:

- The curfew between 11:00 PM and 03:00 PM has been lifted, with no restrictions on movement overnight.
- Quarantine requirements for domestic travel are no longer in place.
- All educational institutions can resume operations from 15 June.
- Public and private childcare and elderly care facilities can resume operations.
- Passenger transportation between provinces can resume.

All measures are subject to compliance with physical distancing and COVID-19 prevention measures.

Note: at the time of writing, the incoming flight ban remains in place until 30 June. The [Bangkok Post](#) reported that the Director-General of the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) stated that international flights may remain suspended after 1 July 2020.

Prevention measures for public transport remain in place

Reference: [Royal Gazette no. 137, special edition no. 139](#), 12 June 2020

The Royal Thai Government announced **specific COVID-19 prevention measures for public transportation operators and passengers**:

- Maintain **hygienic surfaces**.
- Passengers to **maintain a one-metre distance** between each other at all times.
- Passenger numbers must be restricted to less than **70 per cent of the vehicle's capacity**.
- Driver/s and passengers **must wear face masks** at all times.
- **Body temperature** of driver/s and passengers must be checked.

An additional measure for **public van operators**:

- Driver/s must **open windows** when the vehicle is stationary.

Domestic flights resume operations

Reference: Thailand's Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration (CCSA) [official Facebook page](#), 16 June 2020

CCSA announced that **six airlines are allowed to resume operations from 16 to 30 June 2020**, namely Air Asia, Nok Air, Thai Lion Air, VietJet Air, Bangkok Airways, and Thai Smile. Passengers are recommended to check flight information, the airline's prevention measures, and boarding policies ahead of departure.

Myanmar

Extension of precautionary restrictions until 30 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 until 15 June and have now been further extended until 30 June 2020, specifically:

- **Extension of the nationwide curfew** from 00:00 AM to 04:00 AM daily.
- **Extension of the ban on international commercial flights** in and out of Myanmar.
- **Extension of the Stay at Home Order** in Insein Townships in Yangon. From 4:00 PM on 15 June, the Order no longer applies in the other nine townships (Mayangone, South Okkalapa, Pabedan, Bahan, Tamwe, Mingaladon, Hlaing Tharyar, Shwe Pyi Thar and Botahtaung).
- **Extension of the temporary suspension of Visas on Arrival and E-Visas.**
- **Extension of temporary suspension of overseas employment processes** and all Pre-Departure Orientation and skills training.



IOM Myanmar providing WASH consumable kits to returning migrants in Kyuak Lone Gyi, Myawaddy, 6 June 2020

Cambodia

Cambodian and Thai authorities discuss support to Cambodian migrant workers

Reference: The Royal Embassy of Cambodia [official Facebook Page](#), 9 June 2020

On 2 June 2020, the Ambassador of the Royal Embassy of Cambodia in Thailand met with the Director-General of the Department of Employment of the Thai Ministry of Labour to **discuss potential support for Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand**. While these measures are yet to be implemented, Thai authorities **agreed to look at potential areas of support** to Cambodian migrant workers, including:

- Extension of stay and work permits for MOU workers who have completed four years of employment.
- Consider re-opening online registration with the Ministry of Labour for Pink Card holders, to allow them stay and work in Thailand while gaining or maintaining regular status.
- Employment opportunity support from the Department of Employment for workers who have been stood down, furloughed or had their employment terminated due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Coordination with Thai employers to support workers affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with food, water and electricity.

The Ambassador of the Royal Embassy of Cambodia in Thailand stated that the Embassy has supported more than 4,000 Cambodian migrant workers in Thailand with basic food supplies.



IOM Cambodia conducting community outreach with the Cambodian Red Cross (Banteay Meanchey Province Branch) on Safe Migration, COVID-19 prevention, and HIV protection measures in Poipet village, Banteay Meanchey province, 10 - 12 June

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Social Security Organization offers financial support to Lao workers

Reference: The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, [N.1302/LSS](#), 11 June 2020

From 10 June, employers can register with the Lao Social Security Organization (LSS) under the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW), **to request financial assistance for workers whose jobs have been suspended due to COVID-19 pandemic**.

The LSS will provide **financial assistance equivalent to 60 per cent of eligible workers' regular wages**, for the period of employment suspension and/or for lost working days due to business arrangements resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Eligible groups and key measures are summarized below:

- Workers who are registered under and have **contributed to the Social Security Fund (SSF) for over one year** and were stood down/furloughed due to COVID-19, are eligible for this financial support.
- Workers who have been registered under the SSF for less than one year, or who resigned, are NOT eligible for this financial support.
- Eligible **workers cannot apply individually. Their respective employers are required to submit a list** of eligible workers to LSS along with:
 - **Certification of business suspension**, which should be obtained from the responsible association or state agencies. The responsible association or agency is usually determined through the business registration process. For example most businesses are under the National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, while private schools are under the Ministry of Education and Sports.
 - A summary of **the total days of each workers' employment suspension** and/or the total lost working days.
 - **Wage Statement** as per employment contract terms.
- LSS will verify workers' eligibility and **disburse payments directly to individual worker's bank account**.



IOM Lao People's Democratic Republic distributing information sheets on COVID-19 prevention measures, and conducting interviews with returning migrants at the Lao-Thai Friendship Bridge I in Vientiane Capital, 15 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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