

# Thailand Announces COVID-19 Visa Relief Measures

Following the announcement of a state of emergency on March 26, 2020, Thailand has put in place several measures that limit international travel as part of its efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19, including the closure of land borders with neighboring countries and the prohibition of arrivals by almost all international commercial passenger flights. These measures have left many non-Thai citizens in the country in a difficult position, due to the potential expiry of visas during a period when travel is being widely restricted. To address the issue, on April 8, 2020, Thailand's Ministry of Interior announced a notification granting visa relief measures for the benefit of all visiting and resident foreigners of all nationalities, and holders of all types of visas, including Thai permanent residence permits, who have been affected by the state emergency.

The immigration measures are summarized below:

- ▶ Visas that expired on or after March 26, 2020, will be automatically extended to April 30, 2020. This applies to persons who entered into Thailand with any type of visa, including visas under the privileges of the Board of Investment (BOI), the Industrial Estate Authority of Thailand (IEAT), or the Petroleum Act; visas on arrival; and visa exemptions. After the situation has improved and returned to normal, visa holders must apply for extensions of stay under the normal procedures applicable to their case, unless notified otherwise.
- ▶ Those due to give a 90-day report between March 26 and April 30, 2020, inclusive, are temporarily exempted from the 90-day report requirement during this period. After the situation has improved and returned to normal, their 90-day report duty will resume, unless notified otherwise.
- ▶ Permanent residence permit holders who have already obtained an endorsement before leaving Thailand, but who are unable to return to Thailand before the expiry date of the one-year period for their return (a requirement to retain their residence status), have been granted an automatic extension to the expiry date. When the situation has improved, they must urgently return to Thailand within a time frame that will be announced by the Immigration Bureau.
- ▶ Citizens of neighboring countries who have entered Thailand holding a border pass will be allowed to stay in Thailand while the borders with these countries are closed. However, all border pass holders will be required to leave Thailand within seven days after the borders are reopened.

For more details about these immigration measures, or for any matter relating to immigration issues in Thailand, please contact Penrurk Phetmani at [penrurk.p@tilleke.com](mailto:penrurk.p@tilleke.com) or +66 2056 5509.

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## Our Commitment to Continuous Client Service

During the COVID-19 outbreak, we are focused on maintaining high-quality client services while ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our team. Over the past several weeks, Tilleke & Gibbins has implemented our Business Continuity Plan across our offices in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. The vast majority of our team members are now working remotely, and based on our robust technology infrastructure, we are providing our full range of services as usual. We are now carrying out all client meetings through the use of technology, and, as many of you will have already experienced, this is proving to be a highly effective solution. By implementing a range of technology and agile working measures, we will ensure that you continue to receive the highest quality services with the fastest possible response times from our team. We know that you are facing complex business challenges during this crisis, and we have put together a bank of practical resources tracking the legal developments in the region as they happen—you can access them all at [this link](#). In addition, we want to assure you that our team will be continuously available to help you navigate these issues across Southeast Asia. If you have any queries about these measures, please contact your usual client service partner, or email [communications@tilleke.com](mailto:communications@tilleke.com).

Stay well, safe, and healthy.