

Flash Update:

Migrant Worker - Related Government Guidance on COVID-19 Measures in Thailand

The COVID-19 situation is evolving rapidly. In this update, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has combined key updates from the Government of Thailand and governments of the neighbouring countries in relation to migrant workers currently employed in Thailand.

This update provides information for migrant workers and their employers about the governmental decisions relevant to workers from 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 Thailand:

- Lao language with Lao subtitle: [HERE](#)
- Lao language with Thai and English subtitles: [HERE](#)
- Khmer language: [HERE](#)
- Tips for Migrant Workers Whose Job is Affected by COVID-19 Pandemic in English: [HERE](#) and Thai: [HERE](#)
- Tips for Employers of Domestic Workers during COVID-19 Pandemic in English: [HERE](#) and Thai: [HERE](#)

IOM Thailand is monitoring border movements and providing assistance to migrants and the Royal Thai Government. For updates and information regarding IOM Thailand's response to COVID-19, please check here: <https://thailand.iom.int/iom-thailand-covid-19-response>

Thailand

Curfew in place in Thailand nationwide

Ref: [Prime Ministry's order, 2 April 2020](#)

The Prime Minister announced that from 3 April till further announcement, people in Thailand cannot leave their house from 10:00 PM to 4:00 AM, unless authorized documents provided. All public transportation in Thailand will close from 09:30 PM to 4:00 AM, from 3 April onwards. This includes taxi, Grab Taxi, BTS, MRT, and the airport rail link.

The Communicable Diseases Control Committee in each province is entitled perform necessary measures to control COVID-19 spreading. In other words, provincial committee can define the criteria on "necessary measures" as per their needs. The violations could result in imprisonment no exceed 2 years or fine of no exceed THB 40,000.

Starting from 1 April, the following provinces imposed limited opening hours for shops:

Bangkok: All stores and shops, including convenience stores, must remain closed from 00:00 am to 05:00 am, from 2 April 2020 until further notice. Twelve health check points have been set on roads to measure body temperature of travelers entering or leaving Bangkok.

Tak: All stores and shops, including convenience stores, must remain closed from 22:01 pm to 05:59 am. Public transportation services to and from Tak are suspended from 2 to 16 April.
Reference: [HERE](#)

Ranong: Visitors (including migrants) arriving in Ranong province are required to provide a medical certificate to prove they tested negative for COVID-19, and register online for 14-day quarantine (no website address had been provided at the timing of writing). Migrant workers in Ranong must wear a mask when they are outdoors at all times. The Governor stated that migrants not complying may be denied re-entry visas or border passes. Employers are asked to provide surgical masks for workers.
Reference: www.facebook.com/prd.ranong

Samut Sakorn (including Mahachai district): When outside, everyone must wear a mask. This is applicable in particular to employees in the services sector, including restaurants, shops and markets. Businesses are allowed to refuse to provide services to customers who do not comply with this regulation.
Reference : [HERE](#)

Phuket: All roads and ports to and from Phuket have been ordered to close, with exceptions for cargo transportation only, until 30 April. No other restrictions announced.
Reference : [HERE](#)

Exceptional permission for migrant workers to stay and work in Thailand

Ref: Cabinet Resolution on 31 March 2020

As reported in IOM's Flash Update published on 27 March, the Royal Thai Government has announced exceptions for migrant workers and their dependents to work and stay in Thailand without penalty until 30 June. This exception applies only to migrant workers registered on Name Lists before 31 March. The above deadline (30 June) may be subject to extension depending on future developments; IOM continues to monitor these announcements.

For MOU workers and cross-border seasonal work permit holders, a Cabinet Resolution dated 31 March grants an amnesty for those whose work permits are expiring. This allows these workers to continue to stay in Thailand in accordance with emergency announcements that apply in their respective locations. At the time of writing, the deadline for cross-border seasonal work permit holders was 30 April, while the deadline for MOU workers was 30 June. Both dates may be subject to extension.

Reference: <https://www.doe.go.th>

New registration rule for migrant workers in Thai fishing industry

Ref: Cabinet Resolution on 31 March 2020

The Royal Thai Government has opened work permit registration for migrant workers in Thai fishing industry starting from 31 March regardless of their channels of entering Thailand. To be eligible, workers will need to present at least one valid travel document, such as a passport. The worker is required to prepare the following three documents to complete the registration:

1. Employment contract with identification of payment method to the worker's bank account
2. Medical certificate
3. A document with details on the size of the vessel (which the worker may obtain from their employer).

Increased support on compensation plans*

*Two ceiling amounts were miscalculated in the Flash Update disseminated on 24 March. This issue has been corrected in the online version available [HERE](#). Updated and verified information is below.

A 31 March Cabinet Resolution approved additional compensation for workers affected by the COVID-19 situation, who are enrolled in the Social Security Fund (SSF), and who have been contributing to the Fund for no less than 6 months. The below calculations are based on the basic salary which is THB 15,000 per month. This has been summarized below.

1. Workers (including migrant workers) who must comply with 14-day self-quarantine requirements are entitled to 62% of the basic salary up to an amount not exceeding THB 9,300 per month, for a period not exceeding 3 months.

2. Workers (including migrant workers) of businesses suspended by the Royal Thai Government, such as pubs and entertainment venues, are entitled to 62% of their basic salary, up to an amount not exceeding THB 9,300 per month, for a period not exceeding 3 months.

3. Employees (including migrant workers) of businesses which close during the applicable period are entitled to 50% of their basic salary, up to an amount not exceeding THB 7,500 per month, for a period not exceeding 6 months.

4. Employees (including migrant workers) who are dismissed during the applicable period due to issues related to COVID-19, are entitled to 70% of their basic salary, up to an amount not exceeding THB 10,500 per month, for a 200-day period.

5. Employees (including migrant workers) who resign for reasons related to COVID-19 impacts, are entitled to 45% of their basic salary, up to an amount not exceeding THB 6,750 per month, for a 3-month period.

The Ministry of Labour is planning to issue more comprehensive compensation plans in the near future. IOM is closely monitoring new announcements.

Reference: [HERE](#)

COVID-19 Hotline for non-Thai nationals

A new hotline operated by the Office of International Cooperation, Department of Disease Control (OICDDC) provides free health-related information in English and Thai to non-Thai nationals. Users are required to cover the regular rate of calling.



OICDDC
Thailand

กระทรวงสาธารณสุข
กรมควบคุมโรค
Department of Disease Control

OICDDC HOTLINE
Regarding COVID-19

+66 968478209

For foreigner only
Thai citizen, please call 1422

From 8.00 AM - 8.00 PM

Reduction of the monthly contributions to the Social Security Fund

Employers and workers, including migrant workers, who have been contributing to the SSF for no less than 6 months, will be granted a reduction in the monthly contribution for March, April and May 2020. The reduction will amount to:

- For employers: from 5% to 4%
- For workers: from 5% to 1%

Moreover, the deadline for monthly SSF contributions for March, April and May will be postponed for three months, meaning that a contribution for March will be due by 15 July 2020, while for April and May, they will be due by 15 August 2020 and 15 September 2020, respectively.

Reference: [HERE](#)

Free testing for migrants, and free healthcare for migrants who test positive for COVID-19

For the following patients, individuals (including migrant workers) are eligible to receive medical tests and treatment for COVID-19 at NO cost and regardless of their nationality:

1. Confirmed cases of COVID-19; or
2. Patients under Investigation (PUI) who have developed relevant symptoms in combination with having a travel history or being in close contact with confirmed COVID-19 patients, and who subsequently test positive for COVID-19.

Eligible individuals can undergo medical examination at NO cost as per their insurance coverage:

- Migrant workers with a Social Security Card shall receive treatment at their registered hospital. Their medical costs will be covered by the Social Security Fund.
- Migrant workers with private health insurance shall receive treatment at their registered private hospital and their medical costs will be covered by their insurance.
- Migrant workers without any health insurance policy shall receive treatment at a public hospital. Their medical costs will be covered by the Thai national budget.

Myanmar

Mywadaddy - Mae-Sot border

There is no official announcement from the Government of Myanmar on border closures between Myanmar and Thailand. However, on 30 March, the Myanmar Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) posted on its Facebook page information regarding the management of returning migrants. Key points are summarized below:

- More COVID-19 positive cases were confirmed, including one returnee from Mywadaddy - Mae-Sot border.
- Returning migrants have to complete 14-day quarantine before returning to their respective communities and homes. The quarantine will be arranged by responsible Myanmar authorities (Ministry of Health and Sports, and the state and regional level governments), including the provision of basic needs support such as food, water, and healthcare.
- Due to concerns over capacity, the Government is encouraging Myanmar migrants to plan their return after 15 April 2020. By this time, the newly established Government-operated quarantine centers should be operational.

In response to the above requests from MOFA, the Myawaddy immigration officials issued a coordination letter to Thai immigration officials in Mae Sot. The letter asks the Government of Thailand to put the return of Myanmar migrants on hold until 15 April.

As of 3 April, the Myanmar-Thai border gates (Myawaddy-Mae Sot and Three Pagodas-Kanchanaburi) remain open and are receiving Myanmar returnees.

Reference: [HERE](#)

Cambodia

Measures to manage the Cambodian returnees from Thailand

Government of Cambodia

Reference No. 1007, 27 March 2020

The Government of Thailand ordered the closure of the Thailand-Cambodia border temporarily from 23 March till 30 April 2020. Thailand also declared a State of Emergency from 26 March to 30 April 2020. This led to the return of large numbers of Cambodian migrants from Thailand (for statistics on returning migrations, please [CLICK](#) for more information). The Ministry of Interior of Cambodia announced some key measures to strengthen the management and monitoring of the returnees' health conditions. These measures were issued to the Thailand-Cambodia Border Provincial Administration and are summarized below.

Thailand-Cambodia Border Provincial Administration should:

- Establish a working group in each province, led by the Deputy Governor of the province with support from key officials at city, district and commune levels.
- The group will coordinate work between the provincial authorities in both countries and be responsible for orderly return and mobility tracking.
- The group will guide returnees to undertake the mandatory 14-day quarantine. It will inform them that temporary shelter, food and other basic needs, including medicine, will be provided for returnees by the Government of Cambodia in border areas with Thailand.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Prime Minister's order to reinforce the response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Ref: No. 06/PM, 29 March 2020

The Prime Minister announced strengthened measures to respond to COVID-19 which entered into force on 1 April and will continue until 19 April. Key orders are summarized below:

- All Government officials must work from home, except those frontline officials crucial to the COVID-19 response.
- Facilities remaining open: Banks, health centres, electricity and water supply, supermarkets, restaurants (delivery only) and others. Residents are not allowed to go outside except for purchasing goods, medical appointments, or other necessary activities in the above-mentioned facilities.
- All public transportation services are suspended.
- Factories producing consumer goods can remain open. Employers shall manage their employees' movements between work and home and provide necessary welfare for the duration of the national lockdown. More instructions on necessary welfare will be provided by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare Unit soon.
- Surveillance of returning migrants during their 14-day quarantine is the responsibility of the village authorities and other key provincial stakeholders (such as Department of Social Welfare, Lao National Construction Fronts, and others).
- Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has been ordered to urgently assess necessary welfare for workers who are impacted by COVID-19. Measures are to be proposed to the Government for policy responses.

Private clinics and hospitals nationwide are ordered to close

Ref: 0770/MoH, 1 April 2020

Following the announcement from the Prime Minister of Lao People's Democratic Republic, all private clinics and hospitals must stop operating from 1 April 2020 until further notice. The remaining patients in private hospitals should continue to receive treatment through to their recovery. IOM will continue to monitor this decision.

COVID 19 Response

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OVERVIEW

As the number of COVID-19 cases increases across a growing number of countries in the Asia Pacific, IOM is concerned about the impacts on migrants, refugees, IDPs, returnees and other vulnerable groups. Migrants may be disproportionately vulnerable to COVID-19 transmission due to their living and working conditions and barriers and exclusion from health systems, public education and outreach. The mobility restrictions applied by various governments since the outbreak of the pandemic have had a complex and multifaceted impact on the global mobility context.

The announcement of wide-ranging business closures by the governor of Bangkok on Saturday, 21 March 2020 triggered a mass movement of migrants from Bangkok, Thailand to their home provinces within Thailand, as well as across borders to home countries: Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (the) and Myanmar. There continues to be an increase in returns seen, and it is expected that after the Government of Thailand's announcement of emergency decree measures additional migrants will return in the coming days.

This could lead to the seeding of new clusters in areas of return, transmission among returnees during crowded buses and border crossings, as well as those held in collective settings for quarantine. The majority of home communities are rural areas in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic (the) and Myanmar, which are unprepared for monitoring, testing or treating any COVID-19 cases that may arise. Unlike the patterns from other countries with the majority of cases starting in urban areas, in these three countries of return rural areas may drive transmission. While official border crossings have increasingly closed, this has instead been a subsequent increase in crossings at unofficial border points. There are also concerns regarding the economic impacts for migrants who have had to leave their employment or have lost their jobs. IOM is present in all four countries to monitor and support as much as possible with available resources and staffing.



IOM staff supporting the return of Cambodian returnees at the Poipet crossing point, 24 March 2020.

Download the full report [HERE](#)

For more information please contact ThailandLHD@iom.int