

Immigration

Visa free entry, Most visitors from industrialized countries to Thailand may enter for a period of 30 days without obtaining a visa in advance.

Visa on arrival, Nationals of a few countries are granted 90 entry permits on arrival, without the need to apply for any visa.

Prior visa application ,Nationals of some countries are required to obtain visas before arrival.

Entry without visa, When a person enters without a visa or with a visa obtained at Don Muang International Airport, his passport will normally be stamped with a permit allowing the holder to stay in Thailand for 30 days. The immigration office may request to see evidence of an onward ticket and means to support oneself while in Thailand but such requests are rarely made unless the traveler's appearance raises suspicions. Extensions of up to seven days may be obtained upon application at an Immigration office.

Overstaying, A person who overstays his visa for a such period may pay a fine of Baht 500 per day at the airport. A person who overstays his visa for a long period may be taken to a District Court by the immigration authorities and fined up to Baht 20,000. The fine is normally reduced by half, if the person pleads guilty. Where the fine cannot be paid and in certain other situations a jail sentence may be imposed.

Tourist visas, Visitor Transit visas valid for a 60-day stay are routinely available for most nationalities at Thai embassies and consulates. The 30 and 60 day visas discussed above do not normally allow a person holding such a visa to work in Thailand, except that such a person may apply to the Labor Department for permission to do urgent and essential work for a period of 15 days (see previous Chapter) or apply for a work permit from the Ministry of Commerce to work for a Representative Office establish in accordance with the Ministry of Commerce regulations.

Non-immigrant visas, Persons wishing to stay in Thailand for more than 60 days should normally apply for a non- immigrant visa, since this type of visa initially permits a initial stay of 90 days and an application may be made to extend the stay for up to one, and in some cases, for two years.

The most common type of non-immigrant visas are Categories ' B ' and ' O ' Most businessmen intending to apply for a work permit will apply for a Category B visa and with such a visa he may, once in Thailand, apply for an extension of stay. In some cases, where the foreigner intends to work for an already established company, it is possible to apply for a Category BA visa, that is, a visa where the extension of stay has already been approved before the businessman arrives. Such visas are issued by Thai embassies and consulates only upon instructions from the immigration authorities in Bangkok. Most businessmen enter with a simple Category B visa and apply for an extension after arrival.

The other type of non-immigrant visa often issued is a Category "O" visa, "O" meaning "other." This visa is issued for dependents of a businessman, for those who wish to live with their Thai spouses, for foreign children of Thai mothers and for those who wish to live as retired persons in Thailand. While non-immigrant visas are usually available from Thai embassies and consulates without the need to present any proof, in applications for a Category B visa, the applicant may occasionally be asked for evidence that he is about to do business in Thailand. In case of an

application for a Category O visa, there may be a request that the applicant demonstrates that he has the means to live as a retired person or is related to a Thai national. To avoid delays, persons applying for these types of visas may wish to have the proof required available when making the application.

One Stop Service Center, Applicants in one of the following categories:

- . Are employed by a BOI promoted business,
- . Who personally invest 2 million Baht or more, or
- . Are employed by a company that has invested 30 million Baht or more,

provided that they meet the work permit criteria above and present proper documentation, may be granted visa extensions for a one or two year period and re-entry visas within three hours at the One Stop Service Center at the same time that they receive their work permits. Those who do not qualify for this fast track service, may apply for extensions as indicated below.

Application for extension of a visa, Applications for an extension of visa may be made at any immigration office in the area in which the applicant is living. An application fee is payable.

Businessmen applying for an extension must, in addition to presenting a valid passport, the forms provided by the immigration authorities and a passport photo, submit corporate, tax and certain personal documents.

Applications for extension are considered by an immigration committee and are granted where the extension appears to be in the interests of the country. In this respect, the amount of tax paid by the company and the applicant are considered. Normally, an unmarried businessman must show he has income of at least Baht 50,000 a month and pays income tax on the same.

An initial application may take a number of months to be considered, but during this time the applicant will be granted temporary monthly extensions until a decision is made.

Persons who are employed by companies sponsored by the Board of Investment, the Department of Mineral Resources or the Ministry of Commerce with respect to a representative office and other official offices, receive expedited processing.

If an extension is granted, it may be renewed by submitting another application. Documents already submitted need not be submitted again, unless there has been a change, but in any event current tax returns, balance sheets, and profit and loss statements must be submitted, as well as evidence that the work permit is still valid.

Each dependent of the applicant must file a separate application but the businessman and his dependent will have their applications processed together.

Generally, retired persons and relatives of Thai nationals may apply for extensions of their visas upon proof of the applicable status, means of support and payment of taxes.

Residence permits, Applications for permanent residence are normally considered after the applicant has been in Thailand for three years as a non-immigrant.

Reporting requirements All foreigners who change their addresses in Thailand must report the change to a local Immigration Office or police station.

Foreigners, other than those holding resident status, including businessmen holding non-immigrant visas and staying in Thailand over 90 days, must every 90 days report their address to the immigration authorities, even if there is no change.