



Global Immigration alert

June 2024

Thailand

Thailand announces upcoming immigration policy changes, including updated visa regulations

Executive summary

The government of Thailand recently announced several amendments to its immigration policies, including new visa regulations impacting business visitors, among others. While the exact date of implementation of the new amendments is not yet known, it is expected that they could go into effect in the coming months.

Key developments

The recently announced amendments include the following:

- ▶ Nationals of over 90 countries will be permitted to enter Thailand for business and tourist purposes using only their valid passport (i.e., without obtaining a visa prior to arrival) and remain for up to 60 days per trip. It is expected that the government of Thailand will also expand the list of permitted business visitor activities (i.e., the activities that may be performed lawfully in Thailand without a Thai work authorization document).
- ▶ Thailand has created a new visa, called the “Destination Thailand Visa” (DTV), which will be valid for up to five years and allow remote workers and other eligible foreign nationals to enter Thailand for up to 180 days per entry (with the possibility of extending their stay for an additional 180-day period). To qualify, applicants will need to show proof that they have at least THB 500,000 (approx. USD 13,540) and seek to enter Thailand for an authorized purpose (including engaging in remote work, freelance work, business travel, trainings and seminars, receiving medical treatment, participating in sports competitions).
- ▶ Students will be permitted to extend their student visa (i.e., ED visa) for one year upon graduating from their

educational course of study, to enable them to seek out employment in Thailand. Currently, students are not eligible to extend their ED visas or convert to a Non-Immigrant Type B visa from within Thailand.

- ▶ Retirees holding Non-Immigrant Type O-A visas (which are valid for one year and can be renewed annually provided the visa holder continues to satisfy eligibility requirements) will be required to hold health insurance coverage in the amount of THB 40,000 (approx. USD 1,082) for outpatient care (i.e., at outpatient departments) and THB 400,000 (approx. 10,824) for inpatient care (i.e., at inpatient departments), down from THB 3,000,000 (approx. USD 81,180) currently.
- ▶ Nationals of additional countries will be eligible to obtain Non-Immigrant Type O-X (retirement) visas, which are valid for up to 10 years. The list of additional countries has not yet been released. Currently, only nationals of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States are eligible to obtain Type O-X visas.

The Thai government further announced that it will streamline its Non-Immigrant Visa subtypes from 17 subtypes to the seven following subtypes: B (Business), L-A (Labor), O (L-A Retirement), ED (Education), F (Official), M (Mass Media) and O (Others).

Finally, the government announced plans to introduce “e-visa services” (i.e., online application facilities) for certain visa

types at all Thai embassies and consulates worldwide before the end of calendar year 2024.

The authorities are expected to release further details about the amendments above in the coming months.

Impact on employers

These amendments are being introduced with the aim of making Thailand a more attractive destination for qualifying professionals, students and retirees. Employers may consider the new amendments as part of their international mobility, immigration and talent strategies.

Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.

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ED None

ey.com

Siriporn Thamwongsin

Partner - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: +66 2264 9090 77090
Email: siriporn.thamwongsin@th.ey.com

Wai Ph'ng Ng

Director - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: +66 2264 9090 21025
Email: wai-ph'ng.ng@th.ey.com

Puangphet Theerawattananon

Associate Director - People Advisory Services, Global Immigration
Tel: +66 2264 9090 21032
Email: Puangphet.Theerawattananon@th.ey.com