

Thailand

Immigration country brief



The purpose of this Immigration Country Brief is to serve as a resource and provide a general overview of the immigration requirements related to business visitors and employment authorization in Thailand. The information contained in this document is provided as a resource only and should not be construed as legal advice. If you have any further enquiries regarding the applicability of this information, please contact Crown's Immigration Manager, Asia.

Overview: Business visas

Individuals who wish to enter the Kingdom of Thailand to engage in business activities should apply for a business visa at the Thai embassy at home country prior to entry. Foreigners who wish to have the right to live and work in Thailand must secure a Work Permit.

Visa types

Non-immigrant B Visa

Summary: For foreign travelers with a legitimate business need to travel to Thailand. Applicant should submit their applications at the Thai embassy in the applicant's country of origin.

Maximum stay: A business visa is endorsed by the Thai Embassy or Thai Consulate abroad. It typically permit a period of stay of 90 days.

Typical processing time: Generally 3 business days to a week. Varies by applicant citizenship and Consulate.

Activities permitted as a business visitor include:

- Attending meetings or conferences
- Participating in an exchange or training program
- Negotiating deals or signing trade agreements or execute contracts
- Undertaking business exploration missions including learning and researching of Thai customers' market

- Conducting site visits and observing business operations
- Speaking at a one-off conference
- Representing a foreign firm by coming to the country to consult and provide expertise on its products within their initial period of guarantee
- Representing a foreign firm by coming to provide expertise on setting up machinery as part of the contract execution

Overview: Employment authorization

All foreign nationals who wish to work or undertake gainful employment in Thailand are required to obtain work authorization.

Work permit types

Non-immigrant B Visa + Work Permit (Board of Investment)

Summary: This is the process for Thailand Board of Investment (BOI)-registered companies. Applicants with positions in these companies can use the One Stop Service Center (OSSC) in Bangkok. The benefit of OSSC is that it offers a one-stop location for the post arrival immigration processes, thus significantly reducing the processing time. Foreigners applying under this approach must first secure a non-immigrant B visa at the Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate-General in their country of origin prior to entry to Thailand. After arrival, they will need to complete the post arrival work permit and visa extension processes at the OSSC.

Maximum stay: It grants the holder the right to work in Thailand for up to two years, provided the criteria are met.

Processing time: Pre-arrival process takes approximately one-two months. In addition, the post-arrival process generally takes two days.

Dependents: Dependents are permitted to study, however they are not allowed to work on a dependent status.

Limitation or special requirements: Any documents not in English must be translated into English by a professional translator whom is approved by applicable foreign embassy.

Non-Immigrant B Visa + Work Permit (Standard)

Summary: This is the standard route for companies that do not qualify for One Stop Service Center (OSSC) processing. Foreigners who apply for work authorization under this approach must first apply for a non-immigrant B visa at the Royal Thai Embassy or Consulate-General in their country of origin. After arrival, they will need to apply for their work permit and visa extension at the relevant authorities.

Maximum stay: It grants the holder the right to work in Thailand for up to two years, provided the criteria are met.

Processing time: Pre-arrival process takes approximately one-two months. In addition, the post-arrival process generally takes one-two months.

Dependents: Dependents are permitted to study, however are not allowed to work on a dependent status.

Limitation or special requirements: Any documents not in English must be translated into English by a professional translator whom is approved by applicable foreign embassy.

This list is not all-inclusive; other visa classifications may exist. The above are the most common employment-related work permits.

Additional information and resources

- Thailand Immigration Bureau: www.immigration.go.th