

## TYPES OF THAI VISAS

There are several types of visas which permit a holder to stay or depart (in the case of persons holding Permanent Resident (Immigrant) status) – a Resident Permit.

**NO visa permits the holder to work in Thailand. Even the holder of a Resident Permit must also hold a Thai work permit to work in Thailand.**

### Visa on Arrival

A Visa on Arrival is granted to visitors from most countries worldwide. It is in the form of an entry stamp stamped in the visitor's passport and it states how long the passport holder is permitted to remain in Thailand. It is sometimes referred to a Transit Visa when, in fact, it is NOT a visa at all. It is simply a Thai Immigration entry stamp which indicates the length of time you are permitted to remain in Thailand.

The length of stay granted to visitors depends on the country from which they come. Visitors from some countries (such as most African nations) are permitted to stay only 15 days while others (such as those from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States of America) are permitted to stay up to 30 days.

Visas on Arrival CANNOT be converted to any other type of visa simply because, as stated above, it is NOT a visa as such.

Visas on Arrival may be extended by completing and lodging an Application for Extension of Stay at the Immigration Bureau in Soi Suan Plu, South Sathorn Road.

### Tourist Visa

Tourist Visas must be applied for by the visitor at a Thai embassy or consulate abroad. A Tourist Visa stamped in a passport allows the passport holder to stay in Thailand for 60 days from his/her date of arrival.

A very recent change to Thai Immigration regulations enables Tourist Visas to now be extended by 30 days by completing and lodging an Application for Extension of Stay at the Immigration Bureau in Soi Suan Plu, South Sathorn Road. This increases the period for a tourist to stay in Thailand to a total of 90 days (with the extension).

Because it **IS** a visa, a Tourist Visa may be converted to a Non-Immigrant Visa at the Immigration Bureau if the application can be supported by documentary evidence as described in the classes of non-immigrant visas below.

### Non-Immigrant Visa Class 'B'

A Class 'B' (standing for 'business') Non-Immigrant Visa can only be gained in two ways:

- a. By applying for the visa, supported by the necessary documentation, at a Thai embassy or consulate abroad or

- b. By converting a Tourist Visa by submitting an application, supported by the necessary documentation, to the Immigration Bureau.

An application for a Non-Immigrant Visa Class ‘B’ must be supported by the following documentation:

- a. A letter from the company proposing to employ the applicant.
- b. A photocopy of the company’s registration and taxation documentation signed by an authorized director(s) and stamped with the company’s seal.
- c. A photocopy of the applicant’s passport signed by the applicant.
- d. TWO (2) passport-size photographs of the applicant.

As soon as possible after their arrival in Thailand or their gaining of a Non-Immigrant Visa Class ‘B’ within Thailand, the visa holder’s prospective employing company must submit an application for a Work Permit for the visa holder to the Alien Occupational Control Division, Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare.

A Non-Immigrant Visa Class ‘B’ may be extended by the holder by completing and submitting to the Immigration Bureau the same documentation as that listed above plus one of the following:

- a. A copy of the receipt showing that an application for a Work Permit has already been submitted to the Alien Occupational Control Division or
- b. A letter of explanation from the prospective employing company as to why they have not yet submitted an application for a Work Permit to the Alien Occupational Control Division and why the visa should be extended.

After gaining a Thai Work Permit, the holder can gain an extension to this visa only if they are able to show (using their employer’s monthly income tax returns and Revenue Department receipts) that they are in receipt of a monthly salary exceeding the following levels dependent on the nationality of the work permit holder. These levels will be increased in mid-2004 as shown below:

<b>Citizens of the Nations Below</b>	<b>Rate prior to 10 Jul 03</b>	<b>Current Rate effective 10 Jul 03</b>
Japan, USA, Canada	THB 40,000	THB 60,000
European nations, Australia	THB 35,000	THB 50,000
Korea, Taiwan, United Kingdom, Singapore, Hong Kong	THB 35,000	THB 45,000
Malaysia	THB 30,000	THB 45,000
India, Middle Eastern nations	THB 30,000	THB 35,000
Mainland China, Indonesia, The Philippines	THB 25,000	THB 35,000
Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia, African nations	THB 20,000	THB 25,000
Journalists	THB 12,000	THB 20,000

### **Non-Immigrant Visa Class ‘O’**

A Class ‘O’ (standing for ‘others’) Non-Immigrant Visa Class may be issued to any one of the following persons:

- a. The spouse or children of a person granted a Non-Immigrant Visa Class ‘B’ who intends to work in Thailand.
- b. A retiree.
- c. A minister of religion.

Female spouses of Thai nationals and their dependants are also issued with this type and category visa until they gain their Permanent Resident (Immigrant) status.

Male spouses of Thai nationals or those foreigners who can justify supporting Thai nationals are required to show evidence that they are financially independent as follows:

- a. That they have a minimum credit balance of THB 400,000 in a Thai bank at all times or,
- b. That they are in receipt of a minimum guaranteed monthly income of THB 40,000 from offshore sources or,
- c. That they are employed by a properly registered business entity in Thailand and are in receipt of a minimum income of THB 40,000 per month. In this case such foreigners will need a Non-Immigrant Visa Category ‘B’ and NOT a Category ‘O’.

### **Non-Immigrant Visa Class ‘O-A’**

This is a special Non-Immigrant Visa requiring more detailed support. See the separate document relating to this category of visa.

### **Non-Quota Immigrant Visas or Quota Immigrant Visas**

Non-Quota Immigrant Visas or Quota Immigrant Visas are only issued to persons who have been granted Permanent Residence (Immigrant) status in Thailand and live permanently in the Kingdom. For details on the requirements for Permanent Residence status see the separate document on Thai Permanent Residence (Immigration) Status. Such visas permit the Permanent Resident to leave the Kingdom for no longer than 365 days without losing their Permanent Resident status. Absence from Thailand for longer than 365 days results in the cancellation of Permanent Residence status.

A Non-Quota Immigrant Visa or Quota Immigrant Visa, either Single or Multiple Entry, must be applied for at the Immigration Bureau by the Permanent Resident before he/she leaves the country. The visa is stamped in both the person's passport and their Permanent Residence Certificate (a passport-size dark-blue booklet). This enables the Thai Immigration authorities to check on the Permanent Resident's length of absence from Thailand.

If a Permanent Resident wishes to absent himself/herself from the Kingdom for a period of longer than 365 days without losing their Permanent Residence status, then they MUST return to Thailand to apply for another 365 day Non-Quota or Quota Immigrant Visa.

The only documentation required to support an application for this type of visa is the applicant's Passport, Permanent Residence Certificate and TWO (2) passport-size photographs of the applicant.

When a foreign Permanent Resident has to replace their passport with a new one, the Immigration Bureau will NOT make any entry in the new passport to indicate that the holder holds Permanent Resident status. This can create difficulty when the Permanent Resident needs to produce the passport and photocopies of it to gain certain documentation such as a driver's licence, bank passbook or similar document. The new passport will contain NO date of entry nor evidence of how long the passport holder may remain in Thailand. The cheapest way of clearing up this query is for the Permanent Resident to also provide photocopies of their Police Registration booklet and their Household Registration Certificate. The Transport Department, bank or other entity should then realize that the new passport holder also a Permanent Resident. The more expensive way is to have a Non-Quota or Quota Immigrant Visa stamped in their new passport.

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