



Siam Legal International Law Firm Addresses Thailand Immigration Policy Changes as Thailand Considers Reducing Visa-Free Stays

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Siam Legal International, a full-service law firm in Thailand, has issued guidance regarding the government's proposed reduction of visa-free stays from 60 to 30 days for nationals of 93 countries.

The Ministry of Tourism and Sports has indicated support for shortening the visa-free period, which was extended to 60 days in mid-2024. The proposed change aims to close regulatory loopholes and reduce misuse linked to illegal activity, according to government officials. While government data suggests the average tourist stay is approximately 21 days, the adjustment could significantly impact long-stay visitors and individuals relying on repeated entries to Thailand.

"Immigration policy adjustments are common in Thailand and often reflect enforcement priorities rather than tourism restrictions," said Rex Baay, immigration specialist at Siam Legal International. "The key distinction here is between genuine short-term tourism and attempts at de facto long-term residence using visa-free

status. Those who have been relying on 60-day stays for remote work, extended tourism, or repeated re-entry cycles should reconsider their current approach."

The proposed changes would affect nationals from 93 countries currently eligible for 60-day visa-free entry. If implemented, visitors wishing to stay longer than 30 days would be required to apply for extensions under existing immigration procedures, potentially facing increased scrutiny and more structured compliance requirements.

Siam Legal International further notes that visa-free entry remains discretionary and subject to policy revision at any time. Immigration officers may apply heightened scrutiny to frequent or consecutive entrants, and long-term residents who have relied on visa-free entries as a workaround may face a higher risk of refusal at border checkpoints.

The firm emphasizes that while average short-term tourism may not be affected, the structural changes could impact how extended-stay visitors plan their time in Thailand. Extension applications are expected to become more compliance-focused, potentially requiring additional documentation and justification for longer stays.

For those intending to remain in Thailand beyond 30 days per entry, early planning becomes essential. The firm advises travelers to review their entry history and long-term plans, warning against assuming visa-free access guarantees extended or repeated stays. Individuals currently using the 60-day visa-free scheme should consider transitioning to appropriate long-term visa categories that align with their actual purpose of stay to reduce the risk of future complications.

Siam Legal International provides eligibility assessments, compliance reviews, and transition planning for those needing to adjust their immigration status. Established for over 22 years, Siam Legal International maintains offices throughout Thailand, including Bangkok, Chiang Mai, Pattaya, and Phuket. The firm's practice areas encompass corporate law, business registration, immigration services, property transactions, family law, litigation, and regulatory compliance, serving both local and international clients across all sectors.

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For more information about Siam Legal International, contact the company here: Siam Legal International
Rex Baay +662 254 8900 info@siam-legal.com
18th Floor, Unit 1806 Two Pacific Place, 142 Sukhumvit Rd, Khlong Toei, Bangkok 10110, Thailand

Siam Legal International

American-managed Thailand law firm with 22+ years? experience. Experts in corporate setup, BOI, FBL, family & divorce, property, litigation, immigration, notary, wills, contracts & due diligence across Bangkok, Phuket, Pattaya & more.

Website: <https://www.siam-legal.com/>

Email: info@siam-legal.com

Phone: +662 254 8900



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