

Siam Legal Phuket Provides Immigration Guidance for Travelers Affected by Middle East Flight Disruptions

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Siam Legal Phuket has issued immigration guidance for international travelers whose departures from Thailand may be affected by recent flight disruptions caused by security incidents in the Middle East. The advisory follows confirmation that Thailand?s Immigration Bureau will waive overstay penalties for certain foreign travelers who are unable to leave the country due to cancelled flights and airspace closures affecting key aviation hubs.

According to immigration authorities, the disruption stems from aviation instability affecting major transit hubs in the Middle East, including Dubai and Qatar, which has resulted in widespread flight cancellations and route adjustments. The Immigration Bureau reported that approximately 22 outbound flights and 12 inbound flights across around 10 airlines were affected following the incidents, leaving some passengers unable to depart Thailand as originally scheduled.

Thai immigration officials have confirmed that foreign nationals who can demonstrate confirmed onward

travel plans may receive relief from standard overstay penalties if their departure was prevented by these disruptions. The measure allows stranded travelers to remain temporarily in Thailand without incurring fines, provided they can show that their delay was caused by circumstances beyond their control and that they intend to depart once flights resume.

?Unexpected disruptions to international air travel can create immigration compliance issues for travelers who have otherwise planned their stay within the validity of their visa,? said Omar O Manee, Attorney at Law at Siam Legal Phuket. ?Thailand?s temporary relief measures acknowledge these circumstances, but travelers should still take practical steps to preserve documentation of their cancelled or rescheduled flights.?

In addition to the waiver of overstay fines, immigration authorities have indicated that travelers who need additional time to remain in Thailand may apply for a 30-day extension of stay with certification from their embassy confirming the disruption to their travel plans.

Such extensions may provide an interim solution while airlines restore flight availability or reroute affected passengers through alternative hubs.

Immigration officials also noted that the relief is conditional. Travelers must be able to present credible documentation demonstrating their disrupted travel arrangements, such as airline cancellation notices, rebooking confirmations, or updated itineraries. Maintaining these records is critical when addressing immigration status and may also be relevant for any future visa applications.

Under normal circumstances, overstaying a visa in Thailand results in a fine of 500 baht per day, capped at 20,000 baht, and prolonged overstays may lead to immigration blacklisting or restrictions on future entry. The current waiver provides a limited accommodation for travelers whose ability to depart Thailand has been directly affected by the aviation disruptions.

The Phuket law firm advises travelers experiencing flight cancellations or delays to remain proactive in managing their immigration status and to seek guidance if their permitted stay in Thailand is approaching expiration while travel routes remain unstable.

Siam Legal is a full-service law firm in Thailand with more than 20 years of experience advising foreign nationals, investors, and businesses on immigration, corporate, property, and dispute resolution matters. The firm maintains offices in Bangkok, Phuket, Chiang Mai, and Pattaya and provides legal support to international clients navigating Thailand?s regulatory and immigration framework.

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Siam Legal Phuket

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