

May 23, 2017 90-Day Reporting Experience at Chamchuri Square

As a business visa holder employed by a BOI-approved company I am required to report every 90 days to an Immigration office to submit documents attesting to my current employment and residence status in Thailand.

Although it has been announced there would be online reporting, a visit to the Immigration Department website will show this is not yet available and is not offered as an option on the Bureau of Immigration website: <http://www.immigration.go.th/nov2004/en/base.php?page=90days> although in 2015 or 2016 an on-line facility was trialled. [I understand that subsequently an enhanced version of on-line 90 day reporting has been launched; anecdotally, I understand with mixed response]

Using registered mail is not regarded as an efficient method. Consequently I had to make a trip to the closest office for this purpose - at Chamchuri Square in Bangkok where the Board of Investment has a One-Stop Service Centre for Visas and Work Permits.

Before my visit to the BOI Office I had to complete two forms. One was the TM.47 Form and the other form was for "additional information." Much of the information requested in the later form was either optional (ex. Personal social media information), already requested in TM.47 or provided in my passport or TM.6 departure Card which were required submittals for my reporting visit. The two forms took approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Visit to BOI

Arrived at BOI offices at Chamchuri Square level 18 at about 10am. Proceeded to Information Desk where they briefly reviewed my forms, identified a place on the form that required a minor addition, issued me a queue number and then informed me the number of the counter I was to be called to. A Thai gentlemen standing next to me provided a bit of translation for me as the young woman at the counter did not quite understand my questions. I can only assume he worked there although he was not wearing a uniform or badge.

At about ten minutes after 10am I was ready to wait my turn in line. My queue number was 14 numbers ahead of the current queue number at my counter. At approximately 10:50 my number was flashed. The lady at the counter called over an intern to observe as I submitted to her my two forms and the passport. She was requesting in Thai I do something on the form. Again the man who translated for me earlier appeared and explained to me that I needed to write-in the Tambon (sub-district). On my form I had already inserted the District – Khlong Toei. In none of my documents received from my landlord or on packages mailed to me did I ever see the Tambon indicated so I had to call my Juristic Person who did not know the answer. During the call the lady at the counter asked if I had my Work Permit, which I had fortuitously brought with me. My complete address in Thai was in the Work Permit (including the Tambon) and she accepted this (even though the address in the Work Permit would more likely be the tambon of the work address, not my residential address). She concluded with returning my passport with a reminder notice indicating the date of my next reporting. Nothing was added to my Passport.

The total time at the counter was about 5-7 minutes and everyone who attended to me was polite and courteous. It was just before 11am when everything was finally complete. Thus total time for this exercise was:

Travelling time to and from BOI: 60 minutes

Form completion time: 30 mins

Time at BOI: 60 mins.

Total: 150 minutes, two hours and thirty minutes.

This was the quickest and least complex visit to any government office in Bangkok during my past nine years here in Thailand. However, it is still a large amount of time considering the objective is to merely report my current employment and residency status in Thailand. I believe many foreigners working in Thailand would prefer to fulfill their reporting requirements online, particularly those living some distance from a relevant office.

Furthermore it would be less effort for both the foreign worker and Immigration Office if reporting was only necessary when a change in employment or residency status occurred, rather than having to do it every 90 days.