



Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand

3 April 2019

H.E. General Prayuth Chan-ocha
Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand
Office of the Prime Minister
Government House
Pitsanuloke Road
Bangkok

COVID 19 – ESSENTIAL MEASURES – VISA AND WORK PERMIT

Your Excellency,

Your Government has responded quickly to the COVID 19 situation. The Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand greatly appreciates these initiatives. We have taken many steps, not only in support of government measures, but also to protect and safeguard the health and safety of all participants in the economy, including respect for the government officials who are keeping the machinery of government functioning, of foreign investors who are long-term participants in Thailand and thus very much part of the economy, and all others.

I write now with an urgent request. The processes for visa and work permit renewal still very much rely on in-person visits and hard-copy documents delivered to the visa and work permit offices. This is compounded, especially in the case of non-immigrant visas, by the need to compile hard-copy back up or supporting documents, collected (in-person) from a very wide range of different government offices and institutions, in preparation for the visits for visa and work permit renewal. While social distancing measures are in place, even in high priority locations such as Chamchuri Square's OSOS Centre, a valued staff member can wait an entire day and not conclude business, having to come back the next day. This needlessly exposes the staff member and government officials.

We thus urgently propose that an essential way to deal with the situation is to grant an immediate extension of two months (initially) for all visa and work permit holders.

To illustrate, Department of Business Development has allowed deferring the holding of AGMs. That is an essential immediate step, other consequences will need to be covered later. There is no permission required and no paperwork for this deferral.

We will continue to support and work with your Government on measures to protect people, to prevent failure and to keep important institutions in place.

Sincerely yours
Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce in Thailand

Stanley Kang, Chairman