



## Immigration news alerts

### COVID-19

COVID-19 (also previously referred to as 2019 Novel Coronavirus or 2019-nCoV) is a virus identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan, China. While it is unclear how easily this virus is spreading between people, authorities across the globe are issuing travel health notices related to this outbreak.

In this series of news alerts, we will provide you with immigration updates to keep you updated on the rapidly evolving situation within our region.

#### China

##### **Facilitative measures to support foreign experts in resuming work and production in Shanghai**

Shanghai Municipal Science and Technology Commission | 10 March 2020

To support foreign experts in resuming work and production, employers applying for work permits for foreign high-end talents above the age of 65 are exempt from the need to attach insurance documents, and materials relating to insurance commitments and third party commitments.

In addition, the approval time for the cancellation of a foreigner's work permit has been shortened from 10 working days to a maximum of 3 working days. If an employer and foreigner agree on the termination of the labour contract during the epidemic period (tentatively scheduled from February 2020 to April 2020), documents such as email loops, discussion records on WeChat, or certificates of dissolution with electronic signatures can be recognised if the foreigner cannot physically sign the certificate of dissolution.

Furthermore, if the foreigner's visa or residence permit expires during the epidemic period, and they have not left the country within the automatic extension period stipulated by the immigration department, they can apply for a foreigner's work permit in Shanghai.

For the complete list of measures, please refer to the link below.



[More information](#)

## Hong Kong

### **Department of Health (DH) to strengthen health quarantine arrangements on inbound travellers from overseas**

Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government Press Releases | 10 March 2020

Starting from 0.00 a.m. on 14 March 2020, the DH's Port Health Division officers will issue quarantine orders to people arriving in Hong Kong who have been to Italy, France (Bourgogne-Franche-Comte and Grand Est), Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia), Japan (Hokkaido), and Spain (La Rioja, Madrid and Pais Vasco) in the past 14 days, regardless of whether they are Hong Kong residents. They will be required to be quarantined at a quarantine centre.

Separately, the quarantine measures announced earlier for those who have been to South Korea and Iran in the past 14 days remain unchanged.



[More information](#)

## South Korea

### **Suspension of visa-free entry for Japanese nationals**

Ministry of Justice | 9 March 2020

Effective 9 March 2020, visa-free entry will be temporarily suspended for all Japanese nationals. This applies to all valid Japanese passports, including diplomatic and official passports.

Visas previously issued to Japanese nationals by the Republic of Korea's Diplomatic Missions in Japan will also be temporarily suspended. However, this does not apply to foreigners whose foreigner registration (including permanent residency) or domestic residence report is valid.

In addition, the Republic of Korea's Diplomatic Missions in Japan will enhance the screening of new visa applications for all foreign nationals.



[More information](#)

## Thailand

### **Announcement by the Employment Department**

One-Stop Service Centre for Visas and Work Permits | 9 March 2020

The Employment Department at the One-Stop Service Centre for Visas and Work Permits (OSSC) has announced that effective 9 March 2020, foreigners who have travelled or transited at any of the nine areas of concern listed below should refrain from attending to immigration matters at the OSSC until 14 days after their arrival:

1. Japan
2. Germany
3. South Korea
4. People's Republic of China (including Hong Kong and Macau)
5. Taiwan
6. France
7. Singapore
8. Italy
9. Iran

Foreigners who need to obtain their work permit booklet at the OSSC but have not fulfilled the 14 days requirement can appoint a representative to obtain the work permit booklet on their behalf so that they need not be physically present at the OSSC. The representative must arrange for the work permit holder to sign and cover their signature on the work permit with a clear sticker provided by the Employment Department.

Foreigners arriving from areas not on the abovementioned list are still required to visit the OSSC for to obtain the work permit booklet in person as usual.

For digital work permits and visas issued under Board of Investment (BOI) approval, the appointment date should be 14 days after arrival.

This announcement does not apply to applications for urgent work permits, work permit renewal, and work permit cancellation where the foreigner's physical presence is not normally required.

### **Announcement by the Immigration Bureau**

One-Stop Service Centre for Visas and Work Permits | 9 March 2020

The Immigration Bureau at the One-Stop Service Centre for Visas and Work Permits (OSSC) has announced that effective 9 March 2020, foreigners entering Thailand from any of the nine regions in the abovementioned list should postpone their applications for visa extension and/or re-entry permits until 14 days after their arrival if their physical presence is required, except for emergencies.

This announcement does not apply to immigration applications where the foreigner's physical presence is not required, such as 90-day report submission, visa cancellation, and transfer of visa endorsements to a new passport.

## Contact

Should you have any comments or questions arising from this newsletter, please feel free to contact me.



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