



# British Embassy Bangkok

## Thailand: Information about visa overstay and deportation

If you overstay your visa in Thailand you may be fined, detained and deported. You can find detailed advice below on this process and how the British Embassy can help you.

**If you have been arrested for overstaying your visa, or know someone who has, please call us on +66(0)2 305 8333 (24 hours).**

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## **Overview**

Overstaying your visa in Thailand is illegal. If you do so you run the risk of being arrested, imprisoned and fined. You may also be banned from returning to Thailand depending on how long you have overstayed your visa.

The Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) is the final location you will be held in detention, before returning to the UK, if you have been arrested in Thailand. The main Bangkok Immigration Detention Centre is known as IDC Suan Phlu. The duration of time spent detained in IDC Suan Phlu varies depending on your personal circumstances but on average a detainee is held for between 3-6 weeks.

## **Conditions**

The IDC suffers from overcrowding and as a result detainees often remain in their cells for up to 22 hours a day. During your time in IDC you will not have access to your personal belongings including your electronic devices, phones, tablets etc. However, there is a public phone available which detainees are offered use of, when spending time outside of their cell.

## **First stage – Arrest and transportation**

When you are arrested, you will be taken to the nearest police station to be processed. The arresting police station will then notify the Embassy of your arrest. We will aim to contact you within 48 hours after we are notified. Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, we will do this either by telephone or video call.

You will then be transferred to IDC in Bangkok. If you are arrested outside of Bangkok, you will be transferred by bus along with other detainees. Transfer can take up to two weeks depending on where you are arrested in Thailand. In those two weeks you will remain detained at the arresting police station.

## **Stage Two – Arrival at IDC**

Once you arrive at IDC, you will be assessed by a doctor. It is important to make them aware of any health conditions you have and any medication you may need during your detention. Upon your arrival, the Embassy will be notified by Immigration staff. We will then aim to contact you within your first week of detention. The Embassy Consular team will assist with facilitating your deportation but there are several requirements and processes to be completed and approved by Thai immigration before you can return home.

All new detainees are required to have their fingerprints taken and sent to the Royal Thai Police (RTP) for a criminal record check. This is to enable RTP to verify you have no outstanding legal concerns, before approving your departure from Thailand. This process can at times take up to 4 weeks.

If you do not have a valid UK passport the Embassy will assist you in applying for an Emergency Travel Document. If you require financial assistance to help pay the costs of your deportation, for example flights, transport or travel documents, we can contact your family or friends on your behalf to ask for assistance. The Embassy cannot cover deportation costs.

## **Stage Three - Deportation**

Your flight ticket will be booked by either the Immigration officers or by Embassy staff. If you have access to funds, it is often possible to make your flight reservation from within the IDC. There are additional fees (often subject to change, with little notice) for services such as transportation to the airport. These will be explained to you at the time of making departure bookings. You will be escorted along with your belongings to the airport by Immigration staff, who will remain with you throughout check in and security and wait with you in a designated holding room until your boarding time is announced.

### **Impact of Covid-19**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there are additional procedures in place to ensure the health and safety of detainees held at the IDC. You will firstly be taken to a separate facility to quarantine for a minimum of 14 days. You will require health clearance with a negative Covid result from the Thai authorities before you are transferred to the main facility. Embassy staff can still visit you virtually whilst you are in quarantine.

There are also additional costs due to airline and UK entry requirements. These include pre-departure COVID testing and COVID travel package. The pre-departure COVID test will be administered by Thai authorities inside the detention centre. The COVID travel package will need to be booked prior to your departure. The Embassy can provide you or your family and friends with the information needed in order to book this.

Please visit [Entering the UK: Before you leave for the UK](#) page for more information.

### **Returning to the UK (deportation)**

You may need help when you arrive in the UK, for example if you have medical needs. You should tell Embassy staff as soon as possible.