

Guidance for foreign journalists who wish to work in Thailand

1. Introduction

A member of the media who wishes to receive permission to work in Thailand as a correspondent in a representative office of a foreign news, newspaper, television, radio or magazine agency or as a representative of such agency in Thailand, and who wishes to live in Thailand for up to one year or over without having to extend his/her visa every three (3) months, can file a request (together with the required documents listed under section 2) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for approval through the MMOS (MFA Media Online Service) website at <http://mmos.mfa.go.th>. After approval is granted, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will authorize the issuance of the so called “media visa” (“Non-Immigrant” visa category “M”) to the *accredited* applicant and, thereafter, issue letters of acknowledgment to the relevant governmental agencies in order for the applicant to obtain the necessary documents enabling him/her to work in Thailand as an accredited member of the media.

Members of the media who have to enter Thailand for ad hoc or short-term work can apply for “Non-Immigration” visa category “B” at any Royal Thai Embassy or Royal Thai Consulate-General around the world. For more information on the location of Royal Thai Embassies and Royal Thai Consulates-General, please go to www.thaiembassy.org.

2. Getting the Accreditation Started

A member of the media wishing to be accredited can sign-up at the MMOS website (<http://mmos.mfa.go.th>) and follow the website’s instructions in applying for the accreditation. The following *required* document can be prepared in advance for submission (i.e. uploaded) through the online process:

2.1 A letter of introduction or assignment issued by the headquarters of the applicant’s agency confirming the appointment and job title of the applicant addressed to the “Director-General of the Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs”. However, the original letter is required to be sent to the Ministry as well.

2.2 Detailed profile of the agency including but not limited to its background, scope of work, circulation, list of owners and editors, and names of related publications (if available).

2.3 A photo of the applicant (not more than six (6) months old).

2.4 A copy of the applicant's passport (with a validity of not less than six (6) months).

2.5 At least three (3) pieces of work by the applicant (with proper credits given) during the past one (1) year prior to the date of application. If these samples are not in Thai or English, their translations are needed.

For members of the media wishing to bring members of their immediate family as dependants into Thailand, the following additional documents are *required*:

2.6 Dependants' names and details of their relationship to the applicant must be specified in the letter of introduction or assignment as per 2.1 as well.

2.7 Photos of dependants (not more than six (6) months old).

2.8 Copy of dependants' passports (with a validity of not less than six (6) months).

2.9 Copy of dependants' documents showing their relationship with the applicant, for example marriage certificate or birth certificate.

Note: *The file size of these documents should not exceed 2 Mb each and the required file formats are PDF, JPG, video or audio.*

3. Process and Procedure

Following the applicant's submission of the duly completed application form and all the required documents, the applicant will be contacted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the following:

3.1 To schedule an interview at a Royal Thai Embassy, Royal Thai Consulate-General or at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok, Thailand.

3.2 Once the application has been approved, the applicant will be contacted to apply for a media visa at a Royal Thai Embassy or Royal Thai Consulate-General convenient to the applicant.

3.3 The applicant will be given a reference number to be used for applying for a media visa.

3.4 Upon entry into Thailand using the media visa issued, the applicant will have to contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (applicant will be reminded by the Royal Thai Embassy or Royal Thai Consulate-General issuing the media visa) to receive other necessary documents required for working in Thailand as an accredited member of the media, namely:

3.4.1 *Extension of visa and period of stay* – initially the media visa obtained by the applicant is valid for three (3) months with a single entry permit. Upon arrival in Thailand, the applicant will be granted a three (3) months stay in Thailand. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will issue a letter addressed to the Immigration Bureau, Royal Thai Police, requesting the extension of the applicant's visa and period of stay to a maximum period of one (1) year.

3.4.2 *Work permit* – the second letter issued will be addressed to the Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour, to obtain a maximum period of one (1) year work permit for the applicant.

3.4.3 *Press card* – the third letter issued, if necessary for the applicant, will be addressed to the Department of Public Relations, Office of the Prime Minister, to obtain a maximum period of one (1)-year press card for the applicant.

4. Renewing the Accreditation

Members of the media continuing to work for the same agency and wishing to extend their visa and period of stay as well as to renew their work permit and press card can do so by submitting the following documents to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the MMOA:

4.1 A letter of assignment issued by the headquarters of the applicant's agency confirming the extension of assignment and job title of the applicant addressed to the "Director-General of the Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs". The original letter is required to be sent to the Ministry as well.

4.2 A photo of the applicant (not more than six (6) months old).

4.3 A copy of the applicant's passport (with a validity of not less than six (6) months) along with pages containing the current Thai visa and latest period of stay extension stamp.

4.4 A copy of all the relevant pages of the applicant's work permit.

4.5 A copy of the applicant's press card.

4.6 At least three (3) pieces of work by the applicant (with proper credits given) during the past one year prior to the date of application. If these samples are not in Thai or English, their translations are needed.

For members of the media wishing to renew visas and period of stay for their dependants, the following additional documents are *required*:

4.7 Dependants' names and details of relationship to the applicant must be specified in the letter of assignment as per 4.1 as well.

4.8 Photos of dependants (not more than six (6) months old).

4.9 Copy of dependants' passports (with a validity of not less than six (6) months) along with pages containing the current Thai visas and latest period of stay extension stamp.

Note: *The file size of these documents should not exceed 2 Mb each and the required file formats are PDF, JPG, video or audio.*

5. Getting the Documents

After receiving the three (3) letters, the applicant is required to contact the relevant agencies to get the extension of visa and period of stay, work permit and press card, namely:

5.1 Immigration Bureau, Royal Thai Police

One-Stop Centre for Visa and Work Permit

18th Floor, Chamchuri Square Tower

319 Phyathai Road, Pathumwan

Bangkok 10300

Tel. : +66 (0) 2209 1100

or

The Government Complex Commemorating His Majesty the King's 80th Birthday Anniversary

3rd Floor, Tower B, South Wing

Chaeng Watthana Road, Laksi

Bangkok 10210

Tel. : +66 (0) 2142 2222

5.2 Department of Employment, Ministry of Labour

One-Stop Centre for Visa and Work Permit

18th Floor, Chamchuri Square Tower

319 Phyathai Road, Pathumwan

Bangkok 10300

Tel. : +66 (0) 2209 1100

or

The Ministry of Labour

Mitmitri Road, Dindaeng

Bangkok 10400

Tel. : +66 (0) 2245 5801

5.3 Department of Public Relations, Office of the Prime Minister

Foreign Office, Ground Floor

9 Soi Aree Samphan, Rama VI Road, Phyathai

Bangkok 10400

Tel. : +66 (0) 2618 2323 ext. 1113

6. Do(s) and Don't(s)

Below are some recommendations to help expedite the accreditation process:

6.1 *Do* apply at least one (1) month in advance for both new and renewing applicants. The time taken to process each application may vary.

6.2 *Do* submit as much information as possible to help in verifying the applicant's status as a member of the media.

6.3 *Do* apply in advance before coming to Thailand. It is always advisable for all new applicants to have the accreditation process approved before entry into Thailand. This is to help the applicant save time and money in traveling in and out of Thailand to get a media visa ("Non-Immigrant" visa category "M") once the accreditation has been approved.

6.4 *Don't* use other types of visa. Do not apply for a "Non-Immigrant" visa category "B" (for business) or "O" (for others) as other categories of visas (other than category "M" to work in Thailand as a member of the media) will not be accepted.

7. Checklist for required documents

For a new applicant:

1. Letters of introduction or assignment issued by agency's headquarters and addressed to the "Director-General of the Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs".	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Agency profile.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. A photo (not more than six (6) months old).	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Copy of passport (with a validity of not less than six (6) months).	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. At least three (3) pieces of work in the past one (1) year with translation into Thai or English (if necessary).	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional documents for applicant with dependents:

6. Photos of dependents (not more than six (6) months old).	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Copies of dependents' passports (with a validity of not less than six (6) months).	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Copies of dependents' documents showing their relationship with the applicant. For example, marriage certificate, birth certificate, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>

For renewing applicant:

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|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Letters of assignment issued by agency's headquarters and addressed to the "Director-General of the Department of Information, Ministry of Foreign Affairs". | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. A photo (not more than six (6) months old). | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Copy of passport (with a validity of not less than six (6) months) along with pages containing visa and latest period of stay extension stamp. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Copy of work permit (all relevant pages). | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Copy of press card. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. At least three (3) pieces of work in the past one (1) year with translation into Thai or English (if necessary). | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Additional documents for applicant with dependents:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 7. Photos of dependents (no more than six (6) months old). | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Copies of dependents' passports (with a validity of not less than six (6) months) along with pages containing visa and latest period of stay extension stamp. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

FAQ

1.	<u>I am a foreign correspondent. I am assigned to work as correspondent in Thailand for the next 4 months, what procedures do I have to undergo?</u>
	<p>We suggest you to file a request (together with the required documents) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for approval through the MMOS (MFA Media Online Service) website at http://mmos.mfa.go.th. After the approval is granted, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will authorize the issuance of the so called “media visa” (“Non-Immigrant” visa category “M”), and, thereafter, issue letters of acknowledgment to the relevant governmental agencies in order for the applicant to obtain the necessary documents enabling you to work in Thailand as an accredited member of the media.</p> <p>A member of media wishing to be accredited can sign-up at the MMOS website (http://mmos.mfa.go.th) and follow the website’s instruction in applying for the accreditation. The <i>required</i> document can be prepared in advance for submission (i.e. uploaded) through the online process, namely the MMOA (MFA Media Online Accreditation). For the list of required document, please refer to the guidance (http://www.mfa.go.th/web/2676.php).</p>
2.	<u>I am a foreign reporter who is going to be based in Thailand, but I have entered into Thailand with a Tourist visa, what should I do?</u>
	<p>The Thai Immigration Law will not allow any tourist visa holders to work in Thailand as a member of the media. It is advisable for you to file a request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for approval through the MMOS (MFA Media Online Service) website at http://mmos.mfa.go.th.</p> <p>After the approval is granted you will have to exit Thailand to obtain the “media visa” (“Non-Immigrant” visa category “M”), and, thereafter, issue letters of acknowledgment to the relevant governmental agencies in order for the applicant to obtain the necessary documents enabling you to work in Thailand as a foreign media.</p> <p>Changing category of visa in Thailand is not possible.</p>
3.	<u>I am a foreign media based in Thailand and I want to renew my visa, work permit, and press card, what should I do?</u>
	<p>Members of media continuing to work for the same agency and wishing to extend their visa and the period of stay as well as to renew their work permit and press card can do so by submitting the required documents to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the online process, namely the MMOA (MFA Media Online Accreditation). For the list of required document, please refer to the guidance (http://www.mfa.go.th/web/2676.php).</p>

4.	<u>I am a foreign media based in Thailand with a work permit, but I am holding a “Non-Immigration” visa category “B”, what should I do?</u>
	For the media who had been accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs before 1 August 2010 and holding a “Non-Immigration” visa category “B” will be deferred to work in Thailand as a member of the media and to renew visa. However, if you apply for accreditation after 1 August 2010, you should apply for a “Non-Immigration” visa category “M” as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will not accept other category of visa other than category “M” to work in Thailand as member of media.
5.	<u>I have stayed in Thailand for a while, but my family members are planning to move to Thailand to live with me, what should I do?</u>
	For members of media wishing to bring members of their immediate family as dependants into Thailand, we suggest you to file a request (together with the required documents) to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for approval through the MMOS (MFA Media Online Service) website at http://mmos.mfa.go.th . After the approval is granted, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will offer the accredited applicant “Non-Immigrant” visa category “O” for your family members, and, thereafter, issue letters of acknowledgment to the relevant governmental agencies in order for the applicant to obtain the visa. For the list of required document, please refer to the guidance (http://www.mfa.go.th/web/2676.php).
6.	<u>I am a foreign media and want to enter Thailand for a certain event. Do I need to file a request for accreditation?</u>
	For members of media who have to enter Thailand for ad hoc or short-term work can apply for “Non-Immigration” visa category “B” at any Royal Thai Embassy or Royal Thai Consulate-General around the world. For more information on the location of Royal Thai Embassies and Royal Thai Consulates-General, please go to www.thaiembassy.org .
7.	<u>I am a freelance reporter, and I am going to be based in Thailand, what should I do?</u>
	An assignment letter from any company that you have made contributions to is necessary for your application procedure. Other than that, you can file a request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs normally via the MMOS (MFA Media Online Service) website at http://mmos.mfa.go.th .

8.	<p><u>I have filed an application for my accreditation, but my company orders me to travel to Thailand immediately, can I file a request for a tourist visa or Non-Immigrant visa category “B” for the time being?</u></p>
	<p>The Thai Immigration Law will not allow any tourist visa holders to work in Thailand as a member of the media. You can travel to Thailand by applying for tourist visa or “Non-Immigration” visa category “B” at any Royal Thai Embassy or Royal Thai Consulate-General, but after the approval is granted, you will have to exit Thailand to obtain the “media visa” (“Non-Immigrant” visa category “M”), and, thereafter, issue letters of acknowledgment to the relevant governmental agencies in order for the applicant to obtain the necessary documents enabling you to work in Thailand as a foreign media.</p> <p>Changing category of visa in Thailand is not possible.</p>
9.	<p><u>I have received my visa from the embassy and have arrived in Thailand. However, I have not applied for visa extension yet, but need to travel out of the country to work on an urgent event in a neighboring country, what should I do?</u></p>
	<p>The First visa you will receive from the Royal Thai Embassy or the Royal Thai Consulate-General will be a single entry visa. If you travel out of the country, you will not be able to return to Thailand. You have to request for a “Re-entry permit” at the Immigration Bureau. With the Re-entry permit, you can return to Thailand, however, you have to come back before your visa expires (3 months from your first arrival).</p>
10.	<p><u>I have entered Thailand with a “Non-Immigration” visa category “B” and is going to register in order to be stationed in Thailand, how can I register?</u></p>
	<p>For the media who apply for accreditation after 1 August 2010, you can apply for a “Non-Immigration” visa category “M” as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will not accept other category of visa other than category “M” to work in Thailand as member of media.</p> <p>Changing category of visa in Thailand is not possible.</p>
11.	<p><u>I am a foreigner who had been granted “resident” status and I want to work as a media, do I need to register?</u></p>
	<p>You will have to file a request for work permit and press card, but a visa application is not necessary. You have to file a request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for approval through the MMOS (MFA Media Online Service) website at http://mmos.mfa.go.th.</p>

12.	<u>I have a Thai wife and I am holding a “Non-Immigration” visa category “O”. I want to work as a media, how can I register?</u>
	<p>The Thai Immigration Law will not allow “Non-Immigration” visa category “O” holders to work in Thailand as a member of the media. You have to file a request to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for approval through the MMOS (MFA Media Online Service) website at http://mmos.mfa.go.th. After the approval is granted, you will have to exit Thailand once to obtain the “media visa” (“Non-Immigrant” visa category “M”), and, thereafter, issue letters of acknowledgment to the relevant governmental agencies in order for the applicant to obtain the necessary documents enabling you to work in Thailand as a foreign media.</p> <p>Changing category of visa in Thailand is not possible.</p>
13.	<u>I have already been accredited and working as a media in Thailand, but I have to return to my country for several months, and will not be back in Thailand before my visa expires, what is my best way out?</u>
	<p>According to Thailand’s immigrant regulation, you will only be allowed to apply for visa extension within the 3 months before your visa expires. So you can not apply for renewal earlier than 3 months. If you have to leave Thailand and cannot apply for renewal on time, you may have to file a new request for a new visa, work permit and press card. You have to contact the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to inform us when you will be returning to Thailand. With our MMOS (MFA Media Online Service), all of your information will be stored on our database, thus, filing a request for a new visa application would be more convenient.</p>
14.	<u>I have based in Thailand before, and had to return to my country for health problem. Now I have fully recovered, and wish to renew my visa to continue working in Thailand?</u>
	<p>If you can not return to Thailand before your visa expires and fail to file a request for visa renewal on time, it will be necessary for you to file an application for a new visa. Although, with our MMOS (MFA Media Online Service), all of your information will be stored on our database, thus, filing a request for a new visa application would be more convenient.</p>
15.	<u>How long does it take for a media accreditation to be processed?</u>
	<p>The process approximately takes one month on a case-by-case basis. However, as there might be complications, it is advisable for you to file a request earlier than the indicated period of time.</p>

16.	<u>Due to an unforeseen complication, I filed a request for my visa renewal one week before it expires. Will I be able to get accredited on time? What should I do?</u>
	It is highly possible that the Ministry will not be able to process your visa renewal on time. Please be reminded that we are not responsible for the delay of your visa extension, if your visa expired before getting extended, you will have to apply for a new visa, and you may have to pay a fine for your overstay. We strongly suggest you to file a request for your visa renewal as soon as possible. Nonetheless, it must be within the last 3 months before your visa expires.
17.	<u>I have been working as a media in Thailand for some time, now I will quit my current news agency and move to new one. What I should do?</u>
	When you quit your current news agency, your visa and work permit will immediately be terminated. You have to apply new visa and work permit. The procedure will be similar to the first application. With our MMOS (MFA Media Online Service), all of your information will be stored on our database, thus, filing a request for a new visa application would be more convenient.
18.	<u>Can I obtain visa at Royal Thai Honorary Consulate-General?</u>
	No. Honorary Consulate-General have no authority to issue you “Non-Immigration” visa category “M”. You can obtain visa only at Royal Thai Embassy or Royal Thai Consulate-General. For more information on the location of Royal Thai Embassies and Royal Thai Consulates-General, please go to www.thaiembassy.org .

Process for Foreign Media who wish to work in Thailand (Residing overseas).

1. Prepare necessary documents.



2. Register through MMOS website.
(<http://mmos.mfa.go.th>)



3. Wait for our reply.



4. You will receive an e-mail from MFA,
advising your next step.



5. Go to Royal Thai Embassy/Royal Thai Consulate-General to have an interview.



6. Wait for result.



7. The result will be sent to you by e-mail.



8. Obtain your visa (Non-Immigrant visa category “M” Single Entry) at agreed Royal Thai Embassy/Royal Thai Consulate-General.



9. Fly to Thailand.



10. Contact MFA through MMOS website for accreditation.



11. Wait for results.



12. You will receive a contact from MFA when the letters are ready.



13. Receive 3 letters from Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



14. Contact the relevant agencies to get visa extension, work permit, and press card.



Process for renewal.

1. Prepare necessary documents.



2. Register through MMOS website.
(<http://mmos.mfa.go.th>)



3. Wait for result.



4. You will receive a contact from MFA when the letters are ready.



5. Receive 3 letters from Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



6. Contact the relevant agencies to get extension of visa, work permit, and press card.



Process for Foreign Media who wish to work in Thailand (Staying in Thailand holding other type of visa).

1. Prepare necessary documents.



2. Register through MMOS website.
(<http://mmos.mfa.go.th>)



3. Wait for our reply.



4. You will receive an e-mail from MFA.



5. Come to Ministry of Foreign Affairs to have an interview.



6. Wait for result.



7. The result will be sent to you by e-mail.



8. Fly out of Thailand to obtain your visa.



9. Obtain your visa (Non-Immigrant visa category “M” Single Entry) at agreed Royal Thai Embassy/Royal Thai Consulate-General.



10. Fly back to Thailand.



11. Contact MFA through MMOS website for accreditation.



12. Wait for result.



13. You will receive a contact from MFA when the letters are ready.



14. Receive 3 letters from Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



15. Contact the relevant agencies to get extension of visa, work permit, and press card.

