

Non-Immigrant Visa “O-A” for purpose of retirement

The Royal Thai Embassies in certain countries such as USA, UK, and Australia have been authorized to issue a category “O-A” Non-Immigrant Visa, which is usually referred to as a “long stay” or “retirement” visa (to receive it you must apply at the Royal Thai Embassy/Consulate in your home country). Upon entry into Thailand anytime before the expiration date of this type visa, Thai Immigration will grant the holder a one year stay from that date.



Near the end of the one year period of stay, the holder can apply for subsequent one year extensions without having to leave Thailand.

Qualification

To qualify for a Non-Immigrant “O-A” Visa, you must be at least age 50 and have financial resources equivalent to 800,000 Thailand Baht. If you are married and your spouse is not yet 50 years of age, your spouse can obtain a Non-Immigrant Visa based on your qualifications. Acceptable evidence of financial resources can be by 1) having the equivalent of the 800,000 Baht on deposit in your bank, 2) having a monthly income equivalent to 65,000 Baht, or 3) a combination of funds on deposit and income (e.g., a monthly income equal to 30,000 Baht would be 360,000 Baht for the year, funds on deposit would need to be equal to at least 440,000 Baht to total 800,000 Baht at time of application).

CAUTION- *If you are being permitted to stay in Thailand for the purpose of retirement, you are strictly prohibited from working. Getting caught working (whether compensated or not) can result in a fine, imprisonment, and/or deportation.*

Documentation

If you plan to apply for an “O-A” type of visa, visit the Embassy/Consulate website in your home country or contact them to determine the documents and fees required. Generally, the documents are:

1. Completed Application for Visa (can be downloaded from Embassy/Consulate website or from Ministry of Foreign Affairs website)
2. Passport with at least 18 months validity.
3. Recent 2” X 2” passport type photograph.
4. Evidence of Financial Resources
 - a. Letter from Bank attesting to a balance equivalent to 800,000 Thai Baht.
 - b. Letter from pension provider or other sources showing the equivalent of 65,000 Thai Baht in monthly income, OR
 - c. Combination of a and b that shows when combined, the two will be equivalent to at least 800,000 Thai Baht.
5. Medical Certificate – Your Doctor may charge for providing the certificate or require a physical examination as part of the process. (Thai Embassy should have a copy of the certificate for download)
6. Police Report – Your local police agency may charge for the report or it may take an extended period to provide. (Thai Embassy in USA states that it must be a letter of verification stating that the applicant has no criminal record – the letter needs to be dated within 3 months of the application)
7. Accompanying Spouse, if applicable, will need to submit items 1 through 3
8. Accompanying Spouse, if applicable - you will need to provide a copy of your marriage license.

The Thai Embassy/Consulate will usually have a limit on how old documents 4, 5 and 6 can be, e.g., not more than 30, 60, days, etc. They may also require one or more of the document(s) listed to be notarized (Los Angeles Consulate states the financial information and the medical certificate must be notarized). Further, each Embassy/Consulate will usually have their own requirements for the number of photographs and copies of each document they will need. The following links are to Thai Embassy/Consulates in USA, UK, and Australia that offer the Non-Immigrant O-A:

For Embassy in USA requirements: <http://www.thaiembdc.org/consular/VISA/Non-Imglong.aspx> . For Los Angeles Consulate requirements www.thai-la.net/index-eng.htm . For Chicago Consulate requirements: www.thaichicago.net/clate/o-a.html. For New York Consulate requirements: www.thaiconsulnewyork.com/english/vnon-a.php.

See Embassy in UK requirements at: www.thaiembassyuk.org.uk/newversion/visa/visa_retirement.html. For the Hull Consulate requirements www.thaiconsul-uk.com/downloads-and-visas.aspx.

For Embassy in Australia requirements: http://canberra.thaiembassy.org/Loadform/OA_add.pdf . For Sydney Consulate requirements: www.thaiconsulatesydney.org/Consular_services/Visa/Longstay.html

TIP: *If you meet the age and financial requirements, you can choose to enter Thailand on a Visa Exemption or Tourist Visa and apply at an Immigration Office in Thailand. This is a two step process, usually done on the same day. First, you apply for a Non-Immigrant “O” Visa; receiving a 90 day stay. This is then immediately followed by applying for an extension of stay for purpose of retirement; receiving a one-year extension - when added to the 90 days, you will have about 15 months before needing to apply for another extension. Currently, if using the 800,000 on deposit to qualify, Thai Immigration requires it be on deposit in a Thai bank for at least 60 days before application for extension - if you show you have the funds on deposit, but they have not been there the full 60 days, Pattaya Immigration will still grant the Non-Immigrant “O” Visa (90 day stay) and advise you to return and apply for the extension when the 60 days have elapsed. Although there are two fees involved - one for the Visa application and another for the Visa extension, you will not be required to provide either a medical certificate or police report, thus avoiding the costs of these items in your home country. Which should you choose? As the Thai say, “Up to you.”*