

U.S. Embassy Bangkok

Consular Affairs Non-Immigrant Visa CO.Nx Webchat
March 30, 2010 • Unofficial Transcript

CO.NX Moderator (Jennryn): Welcome to the CO.NX webchat with Embassy Bangkok's Consular Affairs Section. Please submit your questions to the Consular Official by typing them in the white tab below and pressing the arrow button. Thank you all for joining us!

CO.NX Moderator (Jennryn): This webchat will be text-only.

CO.NX Moderator (Jennryn): This webchat will begin in about 10 minutes, at the 18:00 hours in Thailand. Thanks for joining early.

Consular Official: Hello, everyone. Thanks for joining us this evening.

Consular Official: We appreciate the high level of participation tonight and hope to answer many of the numerous questions posed.

Sanoma Kellogg 2: My husband has a B1/B2 US visa that is valid until late 2011; however, he has just gotten a new passport, while the visa is in his old passport. Will the US consulate transfer the visa to the new passport? Does he need an appointment to do this?

Consular Official: Good question. This is one that we receive often.

Consular Official 2: The consular section does not replace the old visa into the new passport. However, he can travel with the visa in the old passport together with the new passport as long as his name has not changed and the purpose of travel is consistent with the existing visa classification.

Nola: Can Non- Thai citizen apply too?

Consular Official: Yes, non-Thai citizens are permitted to apply in Bangkok.

Consular Official: Please keep in mind that we strongly urge all third-country applicants to apply in their home countries

Consular Official: The reason for this: often, third-country nationals are able to demonstrate the strongest ties to their home countries (instead of Thailand, if they are applying here).

Consular Official: These are great questions. We're getting lots of them, so will be doing our best to answer as many as possible.

Luke: What are the requirements and fees for Transit Visas?

Consular Official 2: A C-1 transit visa to the United States is the same \$131 visa application fee as most other visas. However, there are certain reciprocity fees that may be added depending on the country of your nationality. There is currently no reciprocity fee for Thai citizens.

Angkinun Jansasithorn: My nephew is 12 years old he plans to study secondary school. He needs to apply visa f1. Do he needs to have an interview? I am his aunt. I already got visa b1 for ten years. I will go with him.

Consular Official: Yes, your nephew will need to apply for a student visa, which means he will have to book an appointment and appear at an interview at the Embassy.

Consular Official: With very few exceptions, almost all applicants for a non-immigrant visa require an interview.

Rob: How much money of the bank account look ok for the embassy to pass the tourist VISA?

Consular Official: This is another question we often receive. There are no requirements regarding finances, but you do need to be able to establish that you have the resources to travel. You also need to be able to demonstrate strong ties to your home country (whether professional, social or other) that will compel you to return home after your travel to the United States has concluded.

michael 2: why are there no available appointments for 2010 and beyond for visa interviews

Consular Official 2: It depends on the type of visa; there are still appointments available for several classifications of visas during the month of April. Unfortunately, our appointment schedule has been oversubscribed for other classifications. We typically open interview appointments 2 to 3 weeks in advance; we are opening up interview appointments for late April and within the next few days. Also, please check the website often as there are cancellations that you may fill.

JUUB: I want to know How I get visa for go to USA

Consular Official: Thank you for this question. The process is an easy one. All the information you will need on the visa-application process can be found on our website. You can also book appointments on our reservations website: <https://thailand.us-visaservices.com/Forms/default.aspx>

Consular Official: Generally speaking, you will first need to buy a PIN, which will allow you to book an appointment. You will then fill out the required application forms (DS-156 and DS-157), which you will bring with you on the day of your interview.

Consular Official: Before you interview, you will need to pay the application fee at any participating Thai Post office.

Consular Official: On the day of your interview, you will proceed into the Embassy, after which our staff will input your application into our computer system. You will then have your interview; you will learn the result at the end of the interview (with very few exceptions).

Consular Official: I know the visa process can be very daunting for many. But here in Bangkok, over 80 percent of all applicants have received visas over the past year.

Leonard Koch: What about being sponsored by US citizen?

Consular Official 2: It is not legally possible for a US citizen to sponsor someone for a non-immigrant visa, financially or otherwise. The applicant must be fully qualified on their own. Such applicants must show that they have a residence abroad that they have no intention of abandoning by providing evidence of social, familial, and economic ties to their country of origin.

Consular Official: Grai -- Please see above (we think your question is addressed in response to that of michael 2)

Consular Official 2: We are receiving many questions and are doing our best to respond to as many of them as we can this evening. We appreciate your patience and participation.

Luke: Why do US affix same \$131 visa application fee for transit or stop-over passengers, where they don't plan to visit but due to flight connections need to enter the US airport premises only?

Consular Official: The \$131 fee is an application fee required for all applicants, regardless of visa type. The fee is used to cover the costs associated with accepting and processing visa applications.

Jhonny Sengdara: I purchased a pin number on-line last Thursday and have checked every day since then for an available appointment. The schedule has been full at least through the end of June when the pin expires. I was planning to go to the US in July and have been there twice before on a B1/B2 visa. When will appointments be available for B1/B2 visas? Thank you.

Consular Official: Jhonny: see some of our earlier responses. Demand for appointments right now is currently very high. If you have an emergency, or have legitimate business, educational or humanitarian reasons for travel, you can request an expedited appointment by emailing us at visasbkk@state.gov. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. But as we said earlier, we do our best to accommodate demand.

Trungjai Wiriyathamabhum: My son, 23 years old, will go to USA to join the workshop in Computer Science and I would like to travel with him. Do I need any any specific statements? My husband is a military doctor and covers all expenses. Can I pass for the tourist visa?

Consular Official: Good question as well. Aside from your fee receipt, application and passport, additional documentation is not required for a B1/B2 visa. Should you so desire, you may bring whatever additional documentation you feel might help establish your qualification for a tourist (or business visa). As we mentioned earlier, an important element here is the ability to establish strong ties to a residence abroad.

Consular Official: In your case, Khun Trungjai, you will need to show that you have established ties to Thailand (your home country).

Ivan: Good evening sir, I am a citizen of Russia in Thailand and stay more than a year as student. In last year received a Schengen visa in Bangkok. Also, I am a professional poker player; can I get a visa to attend WSOP n Las Vegas?

Consular Official 2: Please see the response to Nola's question, above, which would appear to apply to your situation as well. We strongly urge all third-country applicants to apply in their countries of origin/nationality.

Tanisa Potewiratananond: if I want to contact call center, do I have to contact in business day and during the office time like 8 to 5

Consular Official: Khun Tanisa -- Yes, you will have to call during business hours. Our call center is open from 8am-5pm, Monday through Friday, except on Thai holidays.

Consular Official: I would note that almost all information you will need can be found on our website, so please be sure to take a look there first before calling in. You should be able to find an answer fairly quickly.

Angkinun Jansasithorn: I am an aunt. I am not a parent of him. If I bring a letter of parent permission, it will be ok for him? or I should bring his parent also. What is the document that I should prepare for him to proof?

Consular Official: Khun Angkinun -- To respond to your follow-up: if your nephew is 12 years old, his parents should definitely accompany him to the interview. We require this to safeguard minors. We thank you for your understanding with this.

Grai Arkarataweechai: I have a question regarding the appointment for an interview, why there is no date(s) available for the interview in Bangkok or is it because of the demonstration in Bangkok?

Consular Official 2: Please see the response to Michael 2's question, above. Our appointment schedule is currently oversubscribed due to high demand. We are opening up new appointment and encourage potential applicants to check our website often for cancelations.

Consular Official 2: Grai: A point of clarification. Please check the appointment reservations website, which can be found at <http://thailand.us-visaservices.com>

Rujiwong: I was persuaded from a Thai restaurant owner in U.S. to work as her chef

Rujiwong: I wonder if I could get a working visa for 3 years according to the employment contract

Rujiwong: If can, what type of visa I should apply for and what documents from the employer's side and from my side I should prepare

Consular Official: K. Rujwong -- You will need a petition-based visa in order to work in the United States. What this means in practice is your prospective employer (or, more likely, your prospective employer's attorneys) will need to file a petition? If it's approved, you will then apply for your visa (using the approved petition). The process for a petition-based visa tends to take quite a bit longer than other types of visas, so please start the process as far in advance as soon as possible if you're interested.

Consular Official 2: We only have a few minutes left in tonight's webchat. We are working to respond to the most widely applicable questions and welcome further posts. Thank you for your participation.

Leonard Koch: I will be in Bangkok April 20th to May 7th. want to apply for a visitor visa for someone to visit me. I will be responsible. Should I bring any records with me and what else should I do?

Consular Official: Mr. Koch -- You will actually not be permitted to accompany the applicant to the interview. As I think we mentioned earlier, any visa applicant needs to establish their own qualifications for a visa. You (or anyone else) cannot legally "sponsor" someone, according to U.S. immigration law.

Consular Official: Again, we refer you back to our earlier comments about U.S. immigration law's requirement that each applicant establish strong ties to Thailand in order to qualify for most non-immigrant visas.

Consular Official 2: We have time for just one more question and answer.

Tran N Tien: I am working in Bangkok and my daughter is now learning at the Niva International School at grade 10. I have a plan to send my kid

Tran N Tien: to study in USA.

Tran N Tien: Could you please tell me what I need to prepare and own I can have visa for her right here or I have to apply or the visa in Viet Nam?

Consular Official: If you reside in Bangkok, your daughter can apply at the Embassy. She will first need to locate and apply to a school in the U.S. for your daughter. Once accepted, the school will issue a document (likely an I-20) which your daughter would then use when applying for her student visa.

Consular Official: More details are available on our website. Please keep in mind, too, that the same standards for other visas apply for student visas as well; applicants need to be able to establish strong ties to a residence abroad in order to qualify for a student visa.

Sanoma Kellogg: For those questions you are not able to answer tonight, is there somewhere we can get them answered? From the info on the website, it appears that only questions about a visa application in process will be answered, which leaves those of us caught between bureaucracies with no way to contact the US consulate for specific questions. An avenue to post questions would be greatly appreciated.

Consular Official: K. Sanoma -- Sure. If there's a question you have that is not answered on our website (or wasn't answered tonight), feel free to email us at visasbkk@state.gov. We hope, too, to be able to continue with these webchats on a more regular basis. We're eager to help and answer as many questions as possible.

Consular Official: Thank you all for joining us tonight. We're sorry we weren't able to get to some of you.

Consular Official: Again, we hope to do this again and chat with you soon.

Consular Official: Good night, khrap!

CO.NX Moderator (Jennryn): Thank you all for joining the CO.NX webchat today. This webchat is now closed. For additional webchats please visit the CO.NX events page: <http://co-nx.state.gov>. Khop Khun Ka!

Angkinun Jansasithorn: thank you ka

Sanoma Kellogg: Thank you--this was very useful!!

CO.NX Moderator (Jennryn): An unofficial transcript of this webchat will be available here within about 3-5 working days.