

Issue of Thai Identity Card to Holders of the Thai Resident Certificate

Some district offices in Thailand are now able to issue a Thai Identity Card to foreign holders of the Thai Resident Certificate (Permanent Resident Status). The card looks like this:



Until this card became available some foreigners were required to present as many as five documents (passport, police registration booklet, household registration certificate, resident certificate and work permit) for some events such as opening a bank account. BY law, foreigners are supposed to carry their passports at all times as a form of immediate identification. The issue of the Thai Identity Card should now dispense with the need to carry any other form of identification unless requested to do so. There is no expiry date on my card (copy above).

To obtain the Thai Identity Card the applicant must personally visit the district office of the district in which they live because they have to be photographed and fingerprinted. They must take with them the following documents:

- Passport
- Thai Resident Certificate (a light-blue passport-size booklet or its replacement, a white booklet)
- Police Alien Registration Certificate (a burgundy-coloured oversized passport booklet)
- Household Registration Certificate
- Work Permit WP.4 (if one has been issued)

- A copy of the Marriage Certificate (if married to a Thai)
- The Birth Certificates of Thai-registered children

A Thai witness, with their ID Card, must accompany the applicant to the district office to verify the identity of the applicant.

The Thai Identity Card costs 60 baht.

During the years I served on the Foreign Chambers Coordinating Committee, we tried to have several issues simplified with relevant Thai government departments. The introduction of a Thai Identity Card to holders of the Thai Resident Certificate was one of those issues.

ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THE FOREIGN BUSINESS COMMUNITY

1. Introduction of a Business Visa for short-stay foreign business visitors. (see details ANNEX A). *(As distinct from the Non-Immigrant Visa 'B' (business and work) (required to obtain a Thai Work Permit), there exists a Three-Year Non-Immigrant Visa 'B' (Business only) which covers multiple entries during a valid period of three-years. This visa can only be obtained from a Thai embassy or consulate-general under Thai control for a fee the equivalent of THB 10,000. This visa is NOT listed on the Thai Immigration website but is on the Thai Foreign Ministry website.)*
2. The replacement of the 90-day reporting requirement. (see details ANNEX B). *(Our request was for this requirement to be replaced with one which required foreigners, except those holding the Thai Resident Certificate, to report to Thai Immigration only if they changed their place of residence. This has still not been approved. Foreign holders of the Thai Resident Certificate are NOT required to report their place of residence every 90 days.)*

3. Expansion of eligibility for the Non-Immigrant Visa Category O-A (Retirement Visa) to cover physically disabled foreigners under 50 years of age providing they meet the current minimum income criteria. (see details ANNEX C).

4. The re-introduction of the Retirement Category as an eligibility for the Resident Permit. (see details ANNEX D). *(Until cancelled in 2002 by Pol Capt Dr Purachai Piumsombun, the then Interior Minister in the first Thaksin administration, holders of the Retirement Visa could apply for the Thai Resident Certificate. This has NOT been reintroduced.)*

5. The replacement of the Royal Thai Police Alien Registration Certificate (a burgundy-coloured passport-size booklet) with an identity card renewable every five years as a form of identity. (see details ANNEX E). *(Until the issue of the subject Thai Identification Card, the Royal Thai Police Alien Registration Certificate (booklet) has been the particular Thai document identifying the permanent resident holder. The Identity Card should now be sufficient identification however, the Police booklet still has to be extended every year or every five years after the first extension.)*

6. The removal of the need for a work permit for foreigners who have been granted the Resident Certificate. (see details ANNEX F). *(The Thai Identity Card should now equate to the US Green Card or the cards issued by most countries to foreign permanent residents which allows them to work without the requirement of a Work Permit. However, this is an issue yet to be solved.)*

7. Removal of the need for foreigners holding the Resident Certificate to obtain a Non-Quota Immigrant Visa (Re-Entry Permit) before travelling abroad. (see details ANNEX G). *(At present, holders of the Thai Resident Certificate must present both the booklet and their passport to the Thai Immigration officer at the point of entry or departure and both are stamped. This procedure simplifies the check by the immigration officer to ensure that the holder of the Resident Certificate has not been absent from the Kingdom for 365 days or longer, thereby losing their permanent residence status.)*

8. The removal of the section – ‘Locality permitted to work (Province)’ on page 6 of the Work Permit (WP.4). (see details ANNEX H).

9. The reintroduction of the issue of emergency Re-Entry Permits by Thai Immigration offices at the international airports of Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Phuket. (see details ANNEX I).

Rather than include the Annexes in this e-mail, I've written, *in BLUE Italics*) a little additional information.

I reiterate, not all district offices in Thailand have the facilities to issue the subject Thai Identity card to foreign holders of the Thai Resident Certificate (those granted permanent resident status).

I should remind potential applicants that, although the card itself costs only THB 60, if they use the services of a law firm or company which assists in work permit and immigration issues to provide them with the Thai national to verify their identity, then they can expect to pay a service charge as well.