

# Newsletter:

## Tourism Business in Laos: A Guide for Investors and Entrepreneurs

### In Brief

In mid-2024, the Lao National Assembly introduced the **Law on Tourism (Amended) No. 63/NA, dated July 1, 2024**. This law establishes principles, regulations, and oversight measures to ensure the quality and sustainability of tourism activities across the country. Its goal is to promote Laos as a modern and competitive travel destination while preserving its rich natural, cultural, and historical heritage. The law also aims to foster international tourism links, strengthen regional cooperation, and contribute to economic growth in a sustainable and environmentally friendly manner<sup>1</sup>.

Under this law, tourism services are categorized into three distinct types<sup>2</sup>:

- 1. Land-based tourism:** Activities such as trekking, rock climbing, zip-lining, and cave exploration.
- 2. Water-based tourism:** Boating, kayaking, lifebuoy floating, diving, and rafting.
- 3. Aerial tourism:** Experiences like hot air balloon rides, paramotor flights, and skydiving.

### Key Takeaways

#### A. Business Requirements and Qualifications

To legally operate a tourism business in Laos, individuals or companies must fulfill the following criteria<sup>3</sup>:

- 1) Be a registered business entity under **Lao PDR laws**.
- 2) Maintain **an office** with adequate facilities and equipment.
- 3) Employ full-time or part-time tourism staff **licensed** by the Department of Tourism Business Management (Ministry of Information, Culture, and Tourism).
- 4) Develop a **detailed tourism program** with transparent pricing.
- 5) Open a **deposit account** at a commercial bank.
- 6) Meet the **minimum capital investment** required for each type of tourism business<sup>4</sup>:

◆ **Outbound Tour Operator:** 1,500,000,000 LAK

◆ **Travel Agency:** 1,000,000,000 LAK

◆ **Inbound Tour Operator:** 500,000,000 LAK

◆ **Specific Area Tour Operator:** 100,000,000 LAK

Foreign investors interested in the tourism sector must contribute at least 30% of the registered capital upfront. If this capital is not deposited following the issuance of the Enterprise Registration Certificate by the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, authorities may deny the license to operate the tourism business in Laos.<sup>5</sup>

#### B. Processing Time and Fees

◆ **Processing Time:** 9 working days<sup>6</sup>

◆ **Travel Agency:** 1,000,000,000 LAK<sup>7</sup>

#### C. Business License Validity & Renewal

A tourism business license in Laos is a **lifetime authorization**. However, businesses must renew their certification every **two years** to continue operations. This ensures compliance with evolving regulations and quality standards in the tourism industry<sup>8</sup>.

### Author



Tanadee Pantumkomon  
Partner  
[Tanadee.P@ilawasia.com](mailto:Tanadee.P@ilawasia.com)



Viphavanh Syharath  
Associate  
[ilawlaos@ilawasia.com](mailto:ilawlaos@ilawasia.com)

### Contact

ILAW LAOS CO., LTD.  
Chanthakoummene Road, Unit 7,  
Xiang Nguen Village,  
Chanthabuly District,  
Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR 0100

Tel: (+85620) 99282244

Email: [ilawlaos@ilawasia.com](mailto:ilawlaos@ilawasia.com)

Next../page 2....

## About us

ILAW LAOS CO., LTD. ("The Firm") is a prominent law firm in Laos, established in January 2021 and registered with the Ministry of Commerce under the enterprise number 01-00024891. The Firm is located at Vientiane, and was founded by Somphob Rodboon, Managing Partner. The Firm is a branch office of its parent company, ILAWASIA CO., LTD., which has been based in Bangkok, Thailand for over a decade.

Our partners and local attorneys were recently recognized and listed in the Asia-Pacific Legal 500 series and recently, the firm recognized as 'Leading Firms (Tier 2)' in the Legal 500 rankings during 2024 to 2025. Moreover, also recognized by AsiaLaw as 'Notable Firms' for the General Business Area during 2023 to 2024.

The firm is specializing in various legal services to meet the needs of both domestic and international clients. Our expertise spans across intellectual property, corporate and commercial law, and labour law.

## Final Thoughts

With its breathtaking landscapes, rich cultural heritage, and growing tourism industry, **Laos presents an exciting opportunity for investors and entrepreneurs.** By adhering to the legal framework and meeting operational requirements, businesses can contribute to a thriving tourism sector while reaping significant financial rewards. Whether you're looking to launch an adventure tour company, a luxury travel agency, or a niche cultural tourism business, Laos offers a promising and dynamic market to explore.

For businesses eager to dive into this thriving tourism business, ILAW LAOS offers expert legal counsel to navigate the complex regulatory landscape. ILAW LAOS is a one-stop service for legal consultation, providing a comprehensive range of services tailored for the tourism businesses. Our expertise includes:

- ◆ Company Setup
- ◆ Tourism License Application
- ◆ Direct-Sale Business Licenses
- ◆ Contract Negotiation e.g., insurance, service agreement, employment agreement

We ensure your business stays compliant and competitive, helping you seize opportunities without legal hurdles. Partner with us, and let's grow your business in Laos's evolving tourism businesses.

## References

- <sup>1</sup> Article 1 of Law on Tourism (Amended) No. 63/NA, dated July 1, 2024.
- <sup>2</sup> Article 61 (New) of Law on Tourism (Amended) No. 63/NA, dated July 1, 2024; Each type of tour guide service is defined in separate regulations.
- <sup>3</sup> Article 28 of Ministerial Decision on Tourism Business No. 607/MOICT, dated September 30, 2022.
- <sup>4</sup> Article 36 of Ministerial Decision on Tourism Business No. 607/MOICT, dated September 30, 2022.
- <sup>5</sup> Article 35 of Ministerial Decision on Tourism Business No. 607/MOICT, dated September 30, 2022.
- <sup>6</sup> Article 27 of Ministerial Decision on Tourism Business No. 607/MOICT, dated September 30, 2022.
- <sup>7</sup> Official Website: [Business Operating Licenses | License to operate Tour Operator](#)
- <sup>8</sup> Article 32 of Ministerial Decision on Tourism Business No. 607/MOICT, dated September 30, 2022.

*Remark: This newsletter is not intended to provide legal advice. It is for informational purposes only and should not be considered a substitute for professional legal consultation.*