Protocol Guidelines for Foreign Ambassadors to Thailand

Appointment of a new Ambassador

The request for the agrément of a new Ambassador may be made either through the foreign mission in Thailand by sending a diplomatic note to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or through the Royal Thai Embassy in the sending State. The request should be accompanied by a curriculum vitae of a new Ambassador.

The Department of Protocol will send a return note to inform the mission in Thailand of the granted agrément or instruct the Royal Thai Embassy to inform the relevant foreign office of the granted agrément.

Arrival of a new Ambassador

The foreign mission should inform the Department of Protocol at least 7 days in advance of the date and time of the Ambassador’s arrival, flight number and any other related information as well as the names of the accompanying party so that customs arrangements and other courtesies will be made.

The Ambassador - Designate will be received on arrival in Bangkok by a high - ranking protocol official provided that the time of arrival is during normal office hours, between 0830 to 1630 hours on weekdays. The foreign mission is responsible for furnishing transportation on arrival in Bangkok for the Ambassador-Designate.

Calling at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after Arrival

An appointment with the Director - General of the Department of Protocol should be made at the earliest opportunity after the Ambassador - Designate arrives in Bangkok. This is in order to submit copies of relevant documents required for the request for an audience with His Majesty the King and for processing the commencement of ambassadorial duties.

Documents Required for the Request for an Audience with His Majesty the King and for Processing Commencement of Ambassadorial Duties

The Ambassador - Designate should bring to the Director-General of the Department of Protocol the following documents:

1. a copy of the Letters of Credence,
2. a copy of the Letters of Recall of his/her Predecessor,
3. a copy of the written speech which he/she will address to His Majesty the King.

N.B.:

(a) If the Letters of Credence and the Letters of Recall are in any other language than English, they should be accompanied by an English translation.
(b) The speech must be written in English and should not be longer than two pages.
During the call, the Director - General of the Department of Protocol will advise the Ambassador - Designate of the procedure to present the Letters of Credence to His Majesty the King.
A non - resident Ambassador may submit the required documents through the Royal Thai Embassy in the country where the Ambassador currently resides.

Request for the Royal Audience and the Commencement of Ambassadorsial Duties.

1) The Department of Protocol will submit the Letters of Credence and other relevant documents to the Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary, together with the formal request for an audience with His Majesty the King for the presentation of the Letters of Credence.
2) The Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary will submit all documents to His Majesty the King and will officially acknowledge their receipt to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
3) The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will inform the new Ambassador that the letter of notification from the Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary has been issued. The new Ambassador shall then be able to commence his/her official duties immediately from the date as stated in the letter of notification from the Office of His Majesty's Principal Private Secretary.
4) The Ambassador's order of precedence is established by the date of assumption of duties as stipulated in the Ministry's reply note.
5) In due course, the Director-General of the Department of Protocol will reconfirm in writing to the Ambassador-Designate the date and time of the Presentation of Credentials.

Ceremony of Presentation of the Letters of Credence

His Majesty the King has graciously designated His Royal Highness Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn to represent Him in granting an audience for the presentation of the Letters of Credence of the new Ambassadors.

The conversation with His Royal Highness Crown Prince should be conducted in English. (In case of conversation in French, a Thai-French interpreter will be provided by the Ministry).

1) The ceremony of the presentation of the Letters of Credence takes place at Ambara Villa, Dusit Palace.
2) On the day of the ceremony, the Royal Motorcade from the Palace with the Protocol official appointed by the Department of Protocol will call at the residence of the Ambassador to accompany him/her to the Palace.
   * In case of the Non-Resident Ambassador, the Royal Motorcade will call at the Hotel.
3) Only the Ambassador will be invited to attend the ceremony.
4) The attire for the ceremony will be morning coat, uniform or national dress. (Formal Dark Suit or Business Suit should not be worn for the ceremony.)
5) The Ambassador will carry with him/her the original Letters of Recall of his/her predecessor, the Letters of Credence and the written speech (addressed to His Majesty the King).
Upon arriving at the Palace Main Gate, only Royal vehicles will proceed to Ambara Villa.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs in white uniform and the Ambassador are expected to arrive at Ambara Villa not later than 45 minutes prior to the ceremony for rehearsal of the audience.

After the Ambassador in the Royal vehicle arrives at Ambara Villa, the Aide-de-Camp on duty and Royal Household officials will welcome the Ambassador and lead him/her to designated place in the Villa. The Ambassador will then be introduced to the Grand Marshal of the Court and will be invited to the holding room.

In the Ceremonial Hall, those in attendance (the Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.R.H Crown Prince’s Private Secretary, the Grand Marshal of the Court and the Lord Chamberlain) will be standing at each designated place and will remain there until the end of the ceremony.

After the ceremony, the Royal Household Official will lead the Ambassador to the room next to the Ceremonial Hall where the Ambassador will sign a visiting book. After that, the Ambassador will be ushered to the holding room.

As the ceremony concludes, the Ambassador is invited to a small vin d’honneur at which a congratulatory toast will be proposed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs followed by a photo taking which will be the last activity.

After the photo session, the Ambassador will then be invited to board the Royal vehicle which will leave Ambara Villa for the Residence/Hotel in the same procession. The official designated by the Department of Protocol will escort the Ambassador back to his/her residence.

**Formalities after the Assumption of Duties**

After the Ambassador has presented the Credentials to HRH Crown Prince as Representative of HM the King, the ambassador can request an audience with members of the Royal Family. Requests must contain a clear statement of the purpose and the topics to be raised. It is not customary to seek an audience with Their Majesties the King and Queen.

After the assumption of duties, the Ambassador can make courtesy calls on the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Ministers or other prominent persons for this occasion. All correspondence pertaining to the above should be addressed to the Protocol Division, Department of Protocol.

For the Ambassador who is not residing in Bangkok, the Department of Protocol will help him/her arrange the calls during his/her visit to present the Letters of Credence. The request for the said call should include, in advance, necessary information such as flight, date and time of arrival, and duration of stay in Bangkok.

With regard to calls on other members of the Diplomatic Corps, the Ambassador should consult with the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

**Termination of Mission**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall be notified of the termination of the tour of duty of the Ambassador. The Ambassador should apply through the Department of Protocol for a farewell audience with His Majesty the King and other Royal family members. On this occasion, the Ambassador shall wear a
dark suit or national costume. Should the Ambassador wish to have his/her spouse present at the audience, application attached with the curriculum vitae of his/her spouse should be made at the same time. For women, a suit with a skirt sufficiently long to cover the knees should be worn for the occasion.

The Ambassador can also make farewell calls on the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Ministers or other prominent persons for this occasion. All correspondence pertaining to the above should be addressed to the Protocol Division, Department of Protocol.

On the leaving day, the resident Ambassador will be seen off by a high-ranking protocol official provided that the time of departure is during normal office hours, between 0830 to 1630 hours on weekdays.