
Newsletter

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Thailand Entertainment Complex Legal Watch: Issue #2



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Following the introduction of the draft “Entertainment Complex Business Act B.E. ...” (the “**Draft Bill**”) and its review by the Ministry of Finance—previously discussed in ‘**Draft Bill for Entertainment Complexes: Thailand Moves Towards Legalized Casinos**’—Thailand is making significant strides toward the establishment of entertainment complexes featuring integrated casinos. With the legislative framework now taking shape, the Draft Bill has entered a critical phase in the approval process.

Current Status of the Draft Bill & Next Steps

On 13 January 2025, the Thai Cabinet approved the rationale of the Draft Bill, setting the Bill in motion for the formal legislative process. The Draft Bill is currently under review by the Council of State for 50 days, during which a second public hearing has taken place from 31 January to 14 February 2025. The Council of State will take into account the feedback received from the hearing in refining the Draft Bill before its next legislative step.

The information provided in this bulletin is summary in nature and does not purport to be comprehensive or to render legal advice.

Please contact our lawyers if you would like to obtain advice about specific situations.

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Unless the Council of State introduces significant amendments that require re-approval by the Thai Cabinet, the Draft Bill will proceed to the House of Representatives for legislative review.

The Draft Bill will go through three key stages in the House of Representatives:

- (i) Approval in principle;
- (ii) Detailed review by an ad hoc committee; and
- (iii) Final clause-by-clause vote.

There is no fixed timeframe for this process.

Once passed, the Draft Bill will be forwarded to the Senate. If approved, it will then be submitted for the King's signature and subsequently published in the Government Gazette.

The entire process can take several months to over a year, depending on the bill's nature, complexity, and any amendments or disagreements that arise during the legislative process.

Roadmap for Subsidiary Legislation

Recognizing the complexity of regulating entertainment complexes, the Thai government has announced plans to issue subsidiary legislation that will establish a detailed regulatory framework. While the draft regulations have yet to be released, they are expected to cover the following:

- **Entertainment Complex Licensing** - Designated locations for entertainment complexes, licensing criteria, limitations on number of entertainment complex licenses, application procedures, license fees, and renewal processes.
- **Entertainment Complex Operations** - Types and details of permitted entertainment businesses, operating hours, the location of service center, restrictions on alcohol sales and consumption, and designated smoking areas.
- **Management and Employment of Entertainment Complexes** - Regulations on changes to directors, executives, shareholders, or corporate structures, and the required proportions of Thai and foreign employees.
- **Casino Operations** - Proportions of the casino area within an entertainment complex, types of casinos, gameplay methods, entry fees for Thai nationals, persons prohibited from entering casinos, advertising and promotional restrictions, and player regulations.

These regulations are expected to take effect 180 days from the effective date of the Draft Bill.

What's Next?

As Thailand positions itself as a premier entertainment and tourism hub, the progress and direction of this legislative process are highly anticipated. With strong government backing and structured regulatory planning, the entertainment complex initiative is set to unlock new investment opportunities and significant economic growth. In this climate, stakeholders—including investors and businesses in the hospitality, real estate, and gaming sectors—should closely monitor these developments and prepare for potential opportunities ahead.

We will continue to track these legislative advancements and provide timely insights. For further inquiries or strategic consultation, please do not hesitate to reach out.