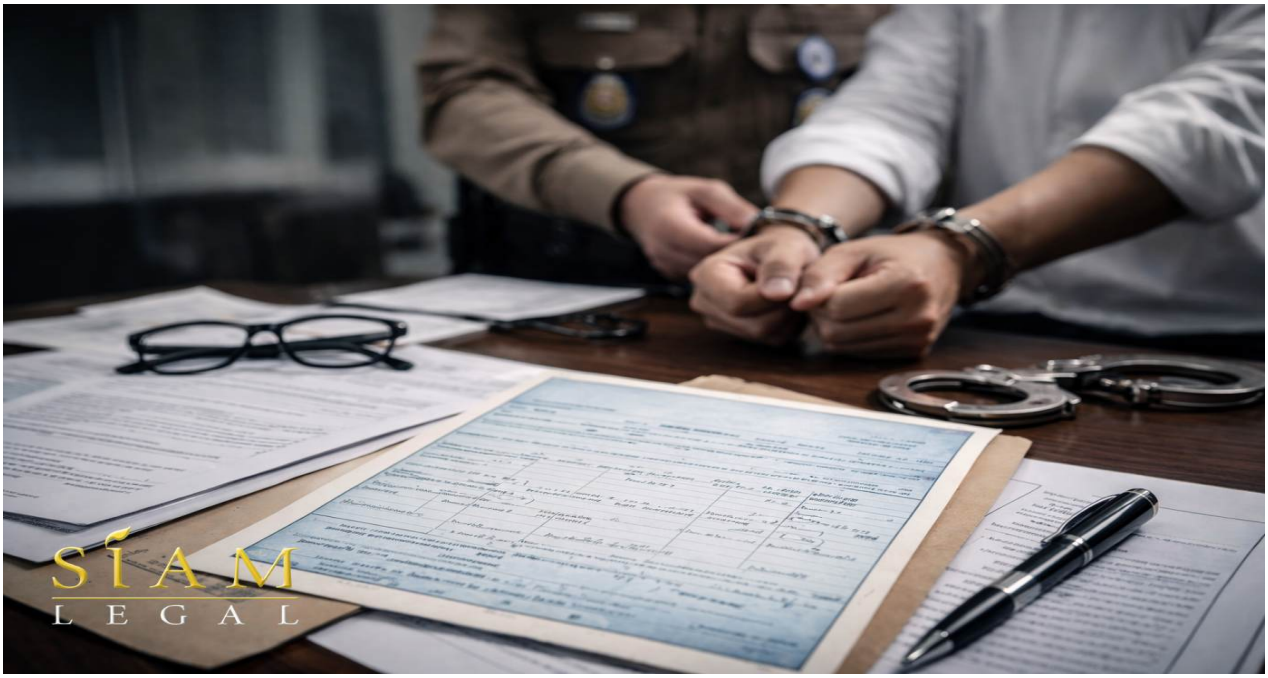

Siam Legal Chiang Mai Warns of Legal Risks Following Arrests Over Falsified Residency Documents

February 18, 2026

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Siam Legal Chiang Mai has issued a legal advisory following the arrest of six government officials, including two deputy district chiefs, in connection with the alleged falsification of permanent residency and population registration documents in Chiang Dao district. The law firm emphasizes the serious legal consequences for foreign nationals who may unknowingly rely on improperly issued documentation.

The arrests, conducted by the Central Investigation Bureau, Anti-Corruption Division, and Department of Provincial Administration, represent part of a coordinated enforcement action targeting officials accused of abusing their authority to certify false residency and nationality documents. The Criminal Court for Corruption and Misconduct issued warrants for the arrests, reflecting heightened scrutiny of civil registration processes in Northern Thailand.

Investigators uncovered falsified permanent residency records, birth certificates, and related population registration documents during their investigation. These findings underscore a critical risk for foreign

residents, as fraudulent documentation can invalidate nationality status even years after issuance, potentially affecting individuals and families who have built their lives in Thailand.

The recent arrests follow an earlier investigation into bribery linked to citizenship applications for foreigners and stateless persons in the region. Authorities have confirmed that the investigation will expand to review additional civil registration records, marking this documentation integrity as a priority enforcement area for Thai immigration and nationality oversight.

"Foreign nationals seeking permanent residency or citizenship in Thailand must understand that these processes require strict adherence to legal and documentary requirements," said Apichart Mattayanuwat, Managing Partner at Siam Legal Chiang Mai. "Using falsified documents or engaging corrupt intermediaries, whether knowingly or unknowingly, exposes applicants to severe long-term legal risks including criminal prosecution and revocation of their legal status."

The officials arrested face charges including certifying false official documents, abuse of authority, and supporting falsified population records. Both officials who create fraudulent documents and applicants who use them may face criminal liability under Thai law. Moreover, Thai nationality obtained through improper means can be revoked at any time, leaving individuals and their families in legally vulnerable positions.

The Chiang Mai law firm assists clients with lawful residency applications, document verification, and compliance review to ensure all submissions meet Thai legal standards. The firm emphasizes that legitimate pathways exist for obtaining residency and citizenship, and that proper legal guidance can help navigate these complex processes without risk.

Foreign nationals currently holding residency or citizenship documentation are encouraged to verify the legitimacy of their papers, particularly if they were obtained through unofficial channels or guaranteed approval schemes. Such promises are often indicators of fraudulent operations that can have devastating consequences for applicants.

For those seeking residency or citizenship in Thailand, or those concerned about the validity of existing documentation, professional legal consultation can provide clarity on lawful procedures and help ensure compliance with Thai immigration and nationality laws.

Siam Legal Chiang Mai maintains offices throughout Thailand and has served the international community for over 20 years, providing English-speaking legal assistance across all practice areas, including immigration, corporate compliance, and civil registration matters.

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Siam Legal Chiang Mai

Siam Legal Chiang Mai offers corporate, family, litigation, property, and immigration services. Our English-speaking lawyers assist with company setup, visas, contracts, due diligence, land registration, and personal legal matters in Northern Thailand.

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