Mexico Immigration Guide 2017

Written by Álvaro Molina and Adriana Cruz
Mexico Immigration Guide

2017

Table of Contents

Immigration to Mexico .............................................................................................................. 8
  Introduction to the Mexican Immigration System................................................................. 8
Beginning the Process ................................................................................................................. 9
  Types of visas.......................................................................................................................... 9
  Visitor visa without permission to engage in lucrative activities ......................................... 9
  Visitor visa to realize adoption procedures........................................................................ 10
  Visitor visa with permission to engage in lucrative activities ........................................... 10
  Temporary resident visa....................................................................................................... 11
  Temporary resident student visa ......................................................................................... 12
  Permanent resident visa...................................................................................................... 13
Initial Applications ................................................................................................................... 14
  Visas that must be processed at a Mexican Consulate abroad ........................................... 14
  Visas that can be processed at the Immigration Institute in Mexico ................................... 14
Pictures of Resident Cards ....................................................................................................... 15
  Permanent Resident Card .................................................................................................. 15
  Temporary Resident Card ................................................................................................. 15
Getting a Mexican Visa for the First Time ............................................................................... 16
  “Canje” Process .................................................................................................................. 17
Requirements for Each Type of Visa ..................................................................................... 20
  Visitor without permission to engage in lucrative activities ............................................ 20
    Real Estate (in Spanish, Arraigo, meaning “roots” or “ties”) ......................................... 20
    Economic solvency............................................................................................................ 20
Invitation Letter

Driver or operator of freight automobiles seeking access to the country for the sole purpose of loading or unloading goods

Humanitarian causes

Public interest

Scientific research or specimen collection in national territory or territorial waters of Mexico

Studies

Participation in events supported by the Federal Government as well as related independent institutions

Long Term Visitor Visa without Permission to Engage in Lucrative Activities (10 years)

Economic solvency

Frequent traveler

Prominent person

Relative of a Mexican

Relative of Foreigner with Temporary or Permanent Resident visa

Relative of a diplomat officer or consul accredited by Mexico

Supervisor of a foreign company with branches in Mexico or staff of commercial offices or Mexican companies abroad

Visitor to realize adoption procedures

Temporary Resident Visa

Economic solvency

Scientific research in Mexican territorial waters

Invitation Letter

Family unit

Relationship with a foreigner with a temporary resident visa or temporary resident visa for study purposes

Married or living with a foreigner with a permanent resident visa
Relationship with a foreigner living in Mexico with a temporary resident card or temporary resident card for study purposes.......................... 35
Married or living with a Mexican citizen........................................... 36
Real Estate ....................................................................................... 36
Investor ............................................................................................ 37
Temporary Resident Student .............................................................. 37
Requirements.................................................................................. 37
Permanent resident visa..................................................................... 39
Pensioners......................................................................................... 39
Family unit ......................................................................................... 39
Relationship with a foreigner who holds a permanent resident visa....... 40
Relationship with a foreigner who holds a permanent resident card....... 42
Points System................................................................................... 42
Relevant additional information.......................................................... 42
Visitor with permission to engage in lucrative activities or Temporary Resident by job offer ................................................................. 44
Requesting the Visa Card................................................................... 45
Renewing visa status......................................................................... 46
Documents needed to renew the temporary resident card:.................. 46
Documents needed to change from a temporary resident status to permanent resident status:....................................................... 48
Getting a job in Mexico....................................................................... 50
Temporary Residents......................................................................... 50
Permanent Residents......................................................................... 51
The Application Process..................................................................... 52
Proof of Registry for Employers.......................................................... 52
Visa Issuing Fees - 2017 ..................................................................... 54
Points System.................................................................................... 57
Mexico Immigration Guide

FULLY REVISED AND UPDATED FOR 2017

Immigration to Mexico

Introduction to the Mexican Immigration System
The agency in the Mexican government responsible for issuing visas is called the Instituto Nacional de Migración (National Institute of Immigration), a division of the Secretaría de Gobernación (Secretary of the Government). The INM is responsible for accepting and/or rejecting visa applications from foreigners who wish to live in Mexico. Another agency, the Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (Secretary of Exterior Relations or SRE, also called the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), is responsible for monitoring immigrants within its borders. The SRE is also responsible for many other areas of life in Mexico, including issuing Mexican passports, naturalization of foreigners, international extraditions, monitoring foreign investments in Mexico, monitoring Human Rights and Democracy and issues relating to Mexicans outside of the borders, among others.

Throughout this guide, we will refer to “foreigners” as meaning non-Mexicans who are living full or part-time as residents of Mexico. In Mexican legal nomenclature and governmental publications, “foreigners” are referred to as extranjeros.

All foreigners will interact with one or both of these agencies in the process of getting legal permission to travel to Mexico, to reside in Mexico for any length of time or to become a Mexican citizen.

The purpose of this guide is to carefully spell out the various ways that a foreigner can legally reside in Mexico, and how to attain the appropriate permissions.
Beginning the Process

Types of visas

There are six ways for a foreign national to come to and stay in Mexico.

Foreigners, as visitors, may come into Mexico for a maximum period of 180 days. While most visitors can easily apply for a visitor visa, citizens from certain countries will need to request the Entry Permit (*permiso de internación*) before arriving at the border (see Attachment B).

The different types of visitor visas are:

Visitor visa without permission to engage in lucrative activities

This visa will be granted to those who can prove one of the following:

- They have enough economic resources to pay for their stay while in Mexico
- They are frequent travelers with reasons to return to their home country
- They are a researcher, scientist, humanitarian, artist, sportsman, journalist of national or international prestige, or prominent person
- They are a spouse, concubine or equivalent, son, daughter, father, mother or sibling of a Mexican, a temporary or permanent resident, and are not trying to establish themselves permanently in Mexico (in the case of siblings, it only applies if the applicant is under the age of 18 years old and is not married and is under the sibling’s legal representation).
- They are a spouse, concubine or equivalent, son, daughter, father, mother or sibling of a person occupying a diplomatic or consular position in Mexico (in the case of siblings, it only applies if the applicant is under the age of 18 years old and is not married and is under the sibling’s legal representation).
- They are a supervisor of a foreign company with branches in Mexico or executive staff in branches or commercial offices of Mexican companies abroad
- They have an invitation from an organization or public/private institution to participate in non-lucrative activities in Mexico
- They are the driver of cargo transportation that needs to enter Mexico with the sole purpose of loading and unloading merchandise
- Visitor with permission to engage in lucrative activities by job offer
- Temporary resident visa by job offer, or by family unit
- Permanent resident visa by points system, or by family unit

Pictures of Resident Cards

Permanent Resident Card

Front

Back

Temporary Resident Card

Front

Back
“Canje” Process

The “canje” process is the one by which a foreigner who holds a Mexican visa in his passport, granted at a Mexican Consulate, applies at the INM in Mexico for a resident card.

The procedure is composed of two steps:

1. At a Mexican consulate (mentioned in the above section)
   - Applying for the visa
   - Interview
   - Printing the visa in the applicant’s passport

Once the applicant enters Mexico, he/she has 30 days to do the following:

2. At the INM Office in Mexico
   These are the documents to provide at the Immigration Institute:

   - Online form, which is available in this link: [http://www.inm.gob.mx/index.php/page/Solicitud_de_Estancia](http://www.inm.gob.mx/index.php/page/Solicitud_de_Estancia). This form must have the applicant’s signature. In the case of minors, the person signing must be the parents or guardians.
   - Letter in Spanish requesting the “canje” (exchange) of the visa.
   - Original and copy of the applicant’s passport.
   - Original and copy of the visa provided at the Consulate.
   - Immigration Form FMM (provided at the port of entry). Make sure the Immigration officer sees your visa from the Consulate so that he marks the box “canje” and writes 30 days, instead of 180 days of the regular FMM. This is very important in order for your process to run smoothly at the Immigration office.
   - “Formato básico” (basic form). This form is provided at the INM or online at [http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato_Basico.pdf](http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato_Basico.pdf)

Immigration fees (2017):

- TEMPORARY RESIDENT CARD: $3,715 Mexican pesos (for one year*)
About the Authors

Álvaro Molina
Alvaro completed his legal studies at the Law Faculty of the Marist University of Merida in 2015, which included a half-year stay at the University of Lincoln in England as an exchange student. Having worked part-time as an intern from as early as his second year of law school in the offices of “Puerto y Pino, Abogados”, he developed valuable skills and experience in the fields of Notary Law, Corporate Law, Immigration Law and Intellectual Property Law. Previous to his legal career, he supported his mother in the set-up and development of a successful chain of retail dancewear stores that now counts with five different locations, two of them in the United States. A self-taught English speaker, Alvaro is always eager to help clients navigate the Mexican legal system, especially for international clients, who might not be familiar with its often-over-regulated nature.

Adriana Cruz
After receiving her B.A. in International Business from the University of Mayab, Adriana began her professional activities in project management and public relations with the garment industry. That experience gave her the basis for her next position as project manager for the formation of a business association between Yucatecan, American and Italian companies. There she learned to take advantage of and appreciate cultural diversity while managing a complex project. She also developed an excellent understanding of a wide range of business activities conducted in English and Italian, as well as her native Spanish. Adriana has also worked for the Yucatan State Government where she managed the business promotion program for the State of Yucatan, helping to establish diverse expatriate businesses in Yucatan, relocating executives, smoothing institutional relationships and navigating the logistics for these and other diverse projects.

Adriana is a key member of the YES team. She serves as the main interface to foreign clients, managing and coordinating their projects, managing their properties, producing on-time legal and accounting documents, arranging visas, monitoring projects and more.
Thank You for Previewing
The 2017 Mexico Immigration Guide
Click here to purchase the complete version on Mexperience.com