

# Mexico Immigration Guide 2020



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In Partnership With



# 2020 Mexico Immigration Guide

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## **Disclaimer**

The information presented in this guide has been carefully researched and double-checked. This guide has been published for general guidance and information. The publisher has endeavored to ensure that the information contained in this guide is accurate and up to date; however, the information is provided in good faith without guarantee. Immigration laws and rules can change, sometimes without notice, and variances may exist in how Mexican consulates and immigration offices interpret the regulations. The information contained in this guide is not intended to constitute personal, professional, legal, financial or investment advice, nor replace the services of professional advisors.

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## Get Practical Help with Your Move to Mexico

Applying for your visa is the start of a new adventure in Mexico. Mexperience and our partners can help you to realize your plans and make the most of your experience

### **Mexico Immigration Assistance Service make informed choices and get practical help**

Our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service](#), provided by email and telephone, will help you to map-out an approach that gives you the best chance of making a successful application and help you with practical matters as you make your way through the application procedures to obtain or renew a residency permit in Mexico

### **Auto Insurance**

#### **peace of mind when you're driving in Mexico**

Be sure that your foreign-plated car is properly insured in Mexico. Our [insurance partner, MexPro](#), offers [comprehensive and competitively priced auto insurance policies](#) which may be arranged immediately online

### **Mexico Home Insurance protecting your valuable asset**

Protect your valuable asset against unforeseen events including burglary, natural disasters, and third-party liabilities. [Our insurance partner, MexPro offers insurance solutions for your house in Mexico](#)

### **Mexico Health Insurance plans to ensure your health and wellbeing are covered**

Learn about Mexico's healthcare system and [how to arrange private healthcare plans to cover the needs of you and your family](#) in the event of ill-health, accidents or serious illnesses

### **Mexperience Mexico Newsletter**

Our free [newsletter about Mexico](#) brings you a monthly round-up of recently published stories and opportunities, as well as gems from our archives.

## Introduction to the 2020 Mexico Immigration Guide

Mexico has a long history of attracting and **welcoming foreign residents**. In 2012, Mexico enacted a sweeping immigration reform law that consolidated its immigration rules and qualification criteria for would-be residents and jobseekers and, more broadly, brought Mexico's immigration rules into closer alignment with international protocols.

Mexperience has been at the forefront of helping foreign nationals to migrate to Mexico and in recent years we have seen demand for relocation to Mexico swell as foreigners seek options for retirement and lifestyle change.

Our Mexico Immigration Guide has been updated annually since 2009 and working in collaboration with our partners this guide has become a go-to resource for those seeking clear, concise and updated information about matters relating to applying for and obtaining legal residency in Mexico.

**The 2020 edition is offered as a free eBook download.** The guide is co-sponsored by Mexperience and two of our partners: Yucatan Expatriate Services who we work with to provide **Immigration Assistance Services** to those who want to move to Mexico, and MexPro who we work with to offer comprehensive and **competitive auto and house insurance** in Mexico.

This latest edition has been completely revised and updated and is now fully integrated with resources on Mexperience.com. For this reason, the guide is best used on-screen —on your desktop screen or tablet is best— so that you can easily link through to cross references for the latest updates and further reading.

**Note:** **Red colored text** inside paragraphs can be clicked or tapped for further details.

This guide is crossed-checked with immigration experts and backed by more than a decade of readers' feedback as well as practical experience helping people to apply for legal residency in Mexico.

### **Mexico Immigration Assistance: make informed choices and get practical help**

Our **Mexico Immigration Assistance Service, provided by email and telephone**, will help you to map-out an approach that gives you the best chance of making a successful application and help you with practical matters as you make your way through the application procedures to obtain or renew a residency permit in Mexico.

## Mexico's Immigration System

Mexico's General Law of Population sets out the rights and obligations of foreigners, as well as the different statuses associated with foreign immigration.

Broadly, there are two kinds of immigration permit: Non-Immigrant and Immigrant:

**Non-Immigrant Permits** are for people who intend to visit Mexico for a specific purpose and then depart; and

**Immigrant Permits** are for people who wish to gain long term permanent residence in Mexico.

This comprehensive guide explains all the visa types, qualification criteria and procedures associated with them.

To supplement this guide, [consider using our Mexico Immigration Assistance Service](#) that provides highly practical assistance over the telephone and by email from experts specializing in immigration: they can help at every stage of the process, from helping you to choose the best visa for your needs, assisting with form-filling and letter writing, guiding you through the visa exchange procedures when you arrive in Mexico as well as renewals and problem-solving.

### Note about US dollar exchange rate quoted in this guide

This guide quotes US dollars throughout when referring to fees and other monetary sums required for qualification of residency in Mexico. The exchange rate used is \$19 Mexican pesos to \$1 US dollar.

See also '[Economic Solvency requirements and foreign exchange rates](#)' in the Residency Permit Essentials section of this guide.

### Note about Minimum Salary vs UMA

The income or savings you need to qualify for residency in Mexico will depend on whether the authority applies Minimum Wage or *Unidad de Medida y Actualización* (UMA) to the calculation. We understand that Mexican Consulates abroad and Immigration Offices in Mexico continue to use the Minimum Salary as a reference for calculations, so this edition of the guide continues to quote Minimum Salary calculations instead of UMA.

[Learn about the difference between Minimum Salary and UMA.](#)

## Mexico's Visitors Permit (FMM)

If the country that issued your passport is listed on [Mexico's 'No Visa Required List'](#) you don't need to pre-apply for a visa to visit the country; instead you can arrive in Mexico and complete a special visitor permit known in Spanish as a *Forma Migratoria Multiple*, or FMM. This permit is intended for stays in Mexico lasting up to 180 days or less, including:

**Leisure Trips** – For visitors who want to visit Mexico on vacation or leisure trips not lasting more than 180 days;

**Business Trips** – For business visitors who come to Mexico on a business trip not lasting more than 180 days and where the business visitor is not getting paid from inside Mexico;

**In-Transit** – For passengers in-transit through Mexico, the FMM can be issued for a maximum of 30 days.

**Volunteers** – If you are participating in non-remunerated voluntary work for no longer than 180 days, you can use a FMM to undertake that [voluntary work in Mexico](#).

See also: [Your Mexico Visitors Permit, FMM](#) and [Entry Requirements](#)

**Important:** If the country that issued your passport does **NOT** appear on [Mexico's 'No Visa Required List'](#) then you may need to contact a [Mexican Consulate](#) to apply for a visa before you travel to Mexico. See: [Do I need a visa to visit Mexico for further details](#).

### **Mexico Immigration Assistance: make informed choices and get practical help**

Our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service](#), provided by email and telephone, will help you to map-out an approach that gives you the best chance of making a successful application and help you with practical matters as you make your way through the application procedures to obtain or renew a residency permit in Mexico.

## Residency Visas: Temporary and Permanent

Mexico offers two types of residency permit: Temporary Residency (*Residente Temporal*) and Permanent Residency (*Residente Permanente*).

### Temporary Residency in Mexico

Mexico offers a **Temporary Resident Visa**, intended for people who wish to live in Mexico for more than 6 months. The Temporary Resident Visa is a renewable, long-term (more than six months) permit which gives non-immigrant temporary residency status to the holder.

The visa is always issued for one year initially, and can then be renewed for a further 1, 2, or 3 years; this visa can *optionally* give work permissions, and allows unlimited entries to, and exits from, Mexico.

There are various categories under which the Temporary Resident visas are granted, and these relate to the activities you intend to undertake while in Mexico. Under the terms of the Temporary Resident Visa, you are authorized to only undertake certain, specific, activities which may be **lucrative** or **non-lucrative**, depending on the visa's classification.

A key criterion that the Mexican authorities require for the issuance of a Temporary Resident Visa is that the applicant prove that they have sufficient funds to sustain themselves while in Mexico and/or a proven steady income. The financial requirements are based in Mexican pesos, and the **financial criteria were formalized** following the introduction of the new immigration law that was enacted in 2012.

**With a few exceptions, the Temporary Resident Visa cannot be issued to you in Mexico** and you must apply for it at a Mexican consulate outside of Mexico. This is a change to the rules before 2012, where Visitor Permits could previously be exchanged for Resident Permits if the person(s) fulfilled the criteria. **This article explains who can still apply for residency within Mexico.**

After living in Mexico for 4 years with a Temporary Resident card, holders may apply to exchange it for Permanent Residency. Some people allow the Temporary Residency card to expire after 4 years (*purposely* making their immigration status 'irregular') and then enter into a **regularization procedure** to re-apply for Temporary residency in Mexico; we don't recommend this, but we know of people who embark on this procedure as a means to avoid taking-up Permanent Residency in Mexico.

See also: **Detailed Requirements: Temporary Residency**

## Permanent Residency in Mexico

**Permanent Resident visas** are issued to foreign nationals who have the intention of living in Mexico for long periods of time (over six months) AND who intend to settle permanently (indefinitely) in Mexico.

The Permanent Resident Visa is intended for people seeking permanent residency status in Mexico. **You do not need to be a Temporary Resident first to become a Permanent Resident later, provided that** you fulfill one of the other requirements needed for permanent residency.

To apply for and be granted **Permanent Residency**, the applicants must:

- have certain close **family connections** in Mexico, **or**
- apply for **retirement status** and prove they have sufficient monthly income (or substantial assets) to support themselves, **or**
- have 4 *consecutive* years of regular status as **Temporary Resident**, **or**
- have 2 *consecutive* years of regular status as Temporary Resident where that Temporary Visa was issued through **marriage to a Mexican National** or marriage to a foreign permanent resident, **or**
- meet a minimum score **under the Points System**, **or**
- be granted residency on humanitarian grounds or through political asylum.

**With a few exceptions, the Permanent Resident Visa cannot be issued to you in Mexico** and you must apply for it at a Mexican consulate outside of Mexico. This is a change to the rules before 2012, where Visitor Permits could previously be exchanged for Resident Permits if the person(s) fulfilled the criteria. **This article explains who can still apply for residency within Mexico.**

See also: [Detailed Requirements: Permanent Residency](#)

## Converting Temporary Residency to Permanent Residency

The least bureaucratic way to gain residency in Mexico is to apply for and be granted permanent residency without first acquiring temporary residency—but qualification criteria are stricter for permanent residency. People who do not qualify for immediate permanent residency may, after four *consecutive* years as a temporary resident in Mexico, apply to automatically change their status to permanent resident.

See also: [Converting Temporary Residency to Permanent Residency](#)

## Lifestyle Planning

The type of visa you apply for will depend on your life stage and lifestyle plans in Mexico.

### Live part-time and not work

If you intend to live in Mexico part-time and not work, you might visit Mexico under the auspice of a Visitor's Visa. We recommend that regular part-time residents apply for a temporary resident visa to ease their passage across the border and prevent potentially being turned away.

See also: [Residing in Mexico on a FMM?](#)

### Live full-time and not work

If you intend to live full time in Mexico and not work (for example, [as a retiree](#)) then a Temporary or Permanent residency visa will work for you. Whether you choose temporary or permanent will depend on your longer-term goals, and whether you have the economic means to apply for permanent residency from the outset. (After four *consecutive* years of temporary residency, you can optionally apply to [exchange your temporary residency for permanent residency status](#).)

### Live part-time or full-time and work

To work legally in Mexico, you **must** have a temporary residency visa *with work permissions*, or permanent residency. Immigration authorities have been stepping-up enforcement with field officers making spot-checks at commercial premises across Mexico and detaining foreign residents working under the auspice of visitor visas (FMM) or temporary residency cards *without* work permissions.

See also: [Working Permits](#)

and [Obtaining work permissions on an existing residency permit](#)

## Seeking Citizenship

If you intend to apply for Mexican Citizenship, you must be legally resident in Mexico for at least five consecutive years (under the auspice of Temporary **and/or** Permanent Residency) before you can apply for citizenship. See the [Citizenship section](#) of this guide for more details.

## Rights and Obligations of Residency in Mexico

When you acquire legal residency in Mexico, you obtain certain rights and hold certain obligations.

### Rights & Obligations for Temporary Resident Card Holders

Temporary Resident cardholders carry the following rights and obligations:

- Reside in Mexico for more than 180 days, up to 4 years
- Register a Mexican-plated car in Mexico
- **Receive social security (from Mexico)**
- **Open bank accounts in Mexico**
- **Bring household goods from abroad** without paying duties
- **Import foreign-plated cars temporarily**
- **Travel freely in and out of Mexico**
- Optionally **obtain permanent residency after 4 consecutive years** of temporary residency

#### But...

- Temporary residents **cannot** vote in Mexico.
- Temporary residents **cannot** own land directly if it is located within 50 kilometers of the beach or 100 kilometers from the Mexican land border, **but they can own property near beaches and land borders through a trust, or through a Mexican corporation** and have legal right to the property in all but name.

#### And...

- Temporary Residents must inform their local immigration office of any change of employment (with a letter stating the new job), marital status (marriage, divorce, or death of spouse), nationality (new passport or letter of naturalization) and address (with a letter providing the new address) within 90 calendar days of the change. If this does not take place in such time frame, the temporary resident will be subject to penalties.
- There are currently no maximum or minimum times the holder of Temporary Resident card must be in Mexico during the course of a year; however, see **Time Limits on Residency Visas** for further information about rules, especially if you intend to **seek citizenship**.

## Rights & Obligations of Permanent Resident Card Holders

Permanent Resident cardholders carry the following rights and obligations:

- All the rights enjoyed by temporary residents, e.g. car registration, access to social security, travel freely in and out of Mexico, etc. – see previous section; but **note the important exception** about importing foreign-plated cars (see below)
- All the guarantees that the Mexican Constitution grants to all Mexicans, except for the political guarantees that are reserved exclusively for Mexican citizens.
- No need to renew the permanent resident status (although some INM offices request its renewal every 10 years to keep the photograph current). **If the holder is less than three years old**, he or she will have to renew *every year* until reaching 3 years of age; and then *every four years* until reaching the age of 18.
- The right to engage lucratively in any legal activity, without having to request the INM's permission. Notification of *job changes* is still required. If you are working under a professional designation (as an Engineer, Architect, etc.), you may be required to file your degree at the *Dirección General de Profesiones*. Check with INM.

**But...**

- Permanent residents **cannot** vote in Mexico.
- Permanent residents **cannot** own land directly if it is located within 50 kilometers of the beach or 100 kilometers from the Mexican land border, **but they can own property near beaches and land borders through a trust, or through a Mexican corporation** and have legal right to the property in all but name
- **Permanent** residents **cannot** import or keep **foreign-plated vehicles** in Mexico. This is a notable difference to rules for Temporary Residents who can import foreign-plated vehicles and keep them here while their temporary residency status is valid.

**And...**

- Permanent Residents must inform their local immigration office of any change of employment (with a letter stating the new job), marital status (marriage, divorce, or death of spouse), nationality (new passport or letter of naturalization) and address (with a letter providing the new address) within 90 calendar days of the change. If this does not take place in such time frame, the resident will be subject to penalties.

## Qualification Criteria for Residency in Mexico

If you intend to apply for residency in Mexico, you will need to fulfil certain criteria.

### Minimum Salary vs UMA

The income or savings you need to qualify for residency in Mexico will depend on whether the authority applies Minimum Wage or *Unidad de Medida y Actualización* (UMA) to the calculation. We understand that Mexican Consulates abroad and Immigration Offices in Mexico continue to use the Minimum Salary as a reference for calculations, so this edition of the guide continues to quote Minimum Salary calculations instead of UMA.

[Learn about the difference between Minimum Salary and UMA.](#)

### Economic Solvency (2020)

If you want to apply for residency in Mexico under the rules of 'economic solvency', you will need to demonstrate that you have sufficient means to support yourself. Under the present rules, 'economic solvency' tests include:

- Regular income from foreign pensions/investments
- Savings in cash or cash-like investments
- Ownership of real estate in Mexico
- Investment in Mexican companies/stock market

The detailed criteria vary depending on what type of visa you apply. The visa types and the detailed qualification criteria are described in [Detailed Requirements and Procedures by Visa Type](#).

*Examples:*

**Typically, for Temporary Residency** you will need to demonstrate savings in a bank account for at least the last 12 months of approximately US\$32,450, **OR** a regular income from a pension or investments of approximately US\$1,945 per month.

**Typically, for Permanent Residency** you will need to demonstrate savings in a bank account for at least the last 12 months of approximately US\$129,700, **OR** a regular income from a pension or investments of approximately US\$3,250 per month.

**Real Estate:** If you apply for temporary residency on the basis that you own real estate in Mexico, you will need a notarized document that demonstrates you own a residential property situated in Mexico worth at least ~US\$260,000 at fair market value.

**Investing in Mexico:** You can apply for temporary residency based on a plan to invest in a Mexican company: which can be your own Mexican company, or one listed on the Mexican stock market. Your investment must equal at least an equivalent of approximately US\$129,700

**Important:** You **cannot** 'mix' the different types of income/saving/assets. You need to show savings, **or** income, **or** assets (home), **or** an investment plan in Mexico.

See also: [Economic solvency requirements and foreign exchange rates](#)

See also: [Financial Qualification: Minimum Salary vs UMA](#)

### Economic Solvency: Additional Spouse

If you're applying for temporary or permanent residency based on economic solvency as a married couple, you will need to demonstrate the income **or** savings in the amounts stated in the criteria (see above for typical examples) **plus**:

**If you are applying based on your monthly income**, an *additional* 100 days minimum wage (approximately US\$540) *per month* for the dependent spouse; **OR**

**If you are applying based on your savings**, an *additional* 100 days minimum wage (approximately US\$540) *of total savings* for the dependent spouse.

**NB:** If you are applying as a couple, be prepared to show your marriage certificate which may also need to be **apostilled (legalized)** for it to be accepted as part of your application.

See also: [Applying for residency under the rules of 'Civil Partnerships'](#)

### Family Unit Applications

If you have *certain types* of close family connections in Mexico, you can apply for residency under auspice of their sponsorship. Depending on the type of family relationship, economic solvency criteria may apply although the levels are lower than those for non-family unit applications.

**Foreigners may apply for Temporary Residency (Residente Temporal) under the auspice of Family Unit if the foreign applicant is:**

- The spouse of a foreigner holding a temporary or permanent resident card; or

- The parent (mother/father) of a foreigner holding a temporary resident card; or
- The son or daughter of a foreigner holding a temporary resident card, *provided that* the son or daughter is a minor (under 18 years of age); or
- The son or daughter of the spouse of a foreigner holding a temporary resident card, *provided that* the son or daughter is a minor (under 18 years of age); or
- A foreign spouse of a Mexican National. (Foreign spouses may apply to convert their temporary residency into permanent residency after 2 years in Mexico.)

**Foreigners may apply for Permanent Residency (Residente Permanente) under the auspice of Family Unit if the foreign applicant is:**

- The parent (mother/father) of a foreigner holding a permanent resident card; or
- The son or daughter of a foreigner holding a permanent resident card, *provided that* the son or daughter is a minor (under 18 years of age); or
- The sibling of a foreigner holding a permanent resident card, *provided that* the sibling is a minor (under 18 years of age); or
- The son or daughter of the spouse of a foreigner holding a permanent resident card, *provided that* the son or daughter is a minor (under 18 years of age); or
- The son or daughter of a Mexican National in situations where the offspring are not entitled to Mexican Nationality and *provided that* the son or daughter is a minor (under 18 years of age); or
- The son or daughter of a spouse of a Mexican National *provided that* the son or daughter is a minor (under 18 years of age)
- The foreign parent of Mexican-born children; or
- The sibling of a Mexican National (including naturalized foreigners) *provided that* the son or daughter is a minor (under 18 years of age)

**Family Unit applications can be made in-country:** When you apply under the auspices of Family Unit you can, optionally, exchange a visitor's permit for a residency permit in-country. Read [Applications for residency from within Mexico](#) for details.

## Points System

Under Mexico's 2012 immigration reform law, a clause was added that would enable foreigners to apply for residency in Mexico under a points-based system, designed to attract highly educated/qualified individuals to fill key roles in Mexico's economy. However,

as of January 2020, this program has not been implemented and, therefore, Mexico does not currently offer a points-based application system in practice.

## Job Offers

See 'Working Permits' – next section.

## Other Criteria

You can apply for residency in Mexico on humanitarian grounds or seek political asylum. Mexico applies international protocols in matters related to these types of application for residency.

See also: [Detailed Requirements and Procedures by Visa Type](#).

## Working Permits

Not all temporary residency permits in Mexico carry working permissions. In order to work legally in Mexico under the auspice of temporary residency, your permit **must** carry work privileges in addition to residency.

## Job offers

You can obtain temporary residency with work privileges in Mexico under the auspice of a formal job offer. In all cases, **the employer** must petition the application on your behalf. When the application is accepted:

**If you are outside Mexico:** You must attend your nearest Mexican Consulate and obtain a Temporary Resident visa stamp in your passport which must be exchanged for a residency card when you arrive in Mexico.

**If you are in Mexico under the auspice of a Visitor Visa (FMM):** You will need to leave Mexico, attend a Mexican Consulate abroad and obtain a Temporary Resident visa stamp in your passport which must be exchanged for a residency card when you arrive back in Mexico.

**If you are in Mexico and already have a Residency Card:** You will need to attend a **local Immigration Office (INM)** to inform them of your change of employer; or if you don't have work permissions on the card, you will also need to apply for a change of status.

If you need assistance with the procedures related to obtaining work permissions in Mexico, [talk with our Mexico Immigration Assistance associates](#) who have extensive experience in this field.

**See also:** [Temporary Resident visa with work privileges](#) and [Obtaining work permissions on an existing residency visa](#).

### **Working for yourself in Mexico**

If you intend to live and work for yourself in Mexico, it is better to apply under the auspice of [economic solvency](#) or [Family Unit](#) and afterwards request work permissions.

**If you intend to move to Mexico and work independently**, we strongly recommend you [talk with our immigration assistance partners](#) who can assess your intentions and recommend an approach that will give you the best chance of a successful application.

#### **Mexico Immigration Assistance: make informed choices and get practical help**

Our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service, provided by email and telephone](#), will help you to map-out an approach that gives you the best chance of making a successful application and help you with practical matters as you make your way through the application procedures to obtain or renew a residency permit in Mexico.

## Residency Permit Essentials

*Practical matters related to applying for and holding a Mexican residency permit*

### Initial Applications

Before the 2012 immigration reforms, a foreigner could change from a visitor's permit to any other type of visa while in Mexico.

After November 2012 the rules changed and now, **only in a few specific circumstances (related to Family Unit or humanitarian reasons)** can foreigners exchange a visitor's permit (FMM) for a residency card inside Mexico. *Most people need to apply at a Mexican Consulate outside of Mexico.*

When applied for from overseas, the *Temporary and Permanent Resident Cards* themselves are not issued by foreign consulates. Instead, they process and pre-approve the application and place a *Visa (sticker)* in your passport. When you arrive in Mexico you have to attend your local immigration office **within 30 calendar days of your arrival in Mexico** and undertake a **procedure to exchange your temporary resident visa** (a passport sticker) for a Temporary Resident Permit (a plastic card).

The **visa sticker** placed into your passport by the consulate is valid for 180 days from its issue date. The applicant must enter Mexico within this time frame and start the "*canje*" (exchange) process within the 30 calendar days of their entry date to Mexico.

This visa carries a **consulate fee** that must be paid at the Mexican Consulate and another payment must be made in Mexico as **part of the *canje* (visa exchange) procedure**: the *canje* fee will depend on the type of visa that was approved by the consulate.

See also: [Resident Permit Fees](#)

**Renewals** or **changes from Temporary to Permanent Resident** status **must** be done in Mexico—renewals and changes cannot be done while the applicant is abroad. Also, '**regularization**' procedures, e.g. renewing expired residency card, must also be processed in Mexico.

### Leaving Mexico during a residency-related procedure

If you have a residency-related procedure in train at the immigration office in Mexico (for example, when you are exchanging your visa for a residency card, renewing a residency card, or replacing a lost card) you cannot leave the country until the procedure is complete.

If you need to leave the country while your residency paperwork is being processed, then you need to apply separately for an **exit/re-entry permit**, because you won't be in possession of your resident card that facilitates normal exit and re-entry to the country. You **commence the application for an exit/re-entry permit with an online form**

that you later print and take to your local INM office along with a photograph in a specific format (same as those for your visa), and a signed covering letter written in Spanish explaining the *force majeure* that requires you to leave the country. There is also a fee (about \$400 Mexican pesos) to obtain the permit, which you must pay at a local bank. It usually takes **3-5 working days to obtain an exit permit**, which you should arrange at the same local immigration office where your residency application is being handled; in true emergencies you may arrange this at an airport although you will need at least one clear working day to arrange the paperwork, so don't leave it until the last minute (you are likely to miss your flight if you do).

**Important:** If you are in the process of a 'regularization' procedure (see next section) then you **cannot** avail yourself of this exit/re-entry permit: you will have to remain physically in Mexico until the 'regularization' process has completed.

## 'Regularization' Procedures

If during the course of your residency application (or while you are legally resident in Mexico) you deliberately or inadvertently break the rules, then your immigration status may become what is legally termed as 'irregular' and if you wish to remain (resident) in Mexico you will need to enter in a 'regularization' process to remedy this.

**Examples of situations where your immigration status becomes 'irregular' include:** allowing your visa to expire; allowing your residency card to expire; entering Mexico as a tourist/visitor when you are legally resident; working illegally in Mexico.

Regularization procedures are more bureaucratically complex than regular applications and carry fines in addition to the regular fees and charges for visas. There are also time-limits for regularization; for example, if your residency card expired, you must enter into a regularization procedure **within 60 calendar days of its expiry date**—failure to do so forfeits your legal residency status and you have to leave the country and re-commence your residency application from scratch. (The only exception is for those people with **close family connections in Mexico**.)

**It's also important to note that when you are in the throes of a regularization process you cannot leave Mexico—even in an emergency.**

**Get assistance with regularization procedures:** due to complexities involved in these procedures, we recommend you seek assistance when entering a regularization process. Our **Immigration Assistance Service can provide relevant advice and practical help.**

## Residency Permit Fees 2020

These are the fees for residency-related permits for 2020

### Consulate Fees

When you apply for a visa at a **Mexican consulate**, the consulate will make a consular charge of US\$40 dollars (or local currency equivalent) for their service.

### Residente Temporal

The fees for exchanging a *Residente Temporal* visa (sticker) for a *Residente Temporal* card, **OR** renewing an existing *Residente Temporal* card for additional year(s) are:

- *Residente Temporal 1 year*: MXN \$4,271 (Mexican pesos)
- *Residente Temporal 2 years*: MXN \$6,400 (Mexican pesos)
- *Residente Temporal 3 years*: MXN \$8,106 (Mexican pesos)
- *Residente Temporal 4 years*: MXN \$9,607 (Mexican pesos)

**First Card:** Your *first Residente Temporal* permit is always issued for only one year.

**Renewals:** **Renewals** after the first year may grant an *additional* 1, 2, or 3 years of temporary residency – fees as above.

### Residente Temporal Estudiante

People applying for a *Residente Temporal Estudiante* (temporary resident permit as a student in Mexico) are charged the consulate fee (see above) but there are no charges to exchange the visa (sticker) for a card, and there are no charges to renew the card for additional year(s). However, note that **temporary residency as a student** carries additional restrictions which other temporary residents do not have.

### Residente Permanente

The fee for exchanging a *Residente Permanente* visa (sticker) for a *Residente Permanente* card is **MXN \$5,206 Mexican pesos**. This is also the fee when you convert a temporary residency card to a permanent residency card.

### Converting Residente Temporal to Residente Permanente

If after 4 *consecutive* years living in Mexico under the auspice of *Residente Temporal* **or** *Residente Temporal Estudiante* you apply to **convert your temporary residency card to a**

**permanent residency card**, you will need to pay **MXN \$1,325 Mexican pesos** in addition to the fee for the *Residente Permanente* card (see above).

### Exit/Re-Entry Permit

The fee for an Exit/Re-entry permit is **MXN \$437 Mexican pesos**. If you need to leave Mexico while a residency-related procedure is in-train, you will **need to apply for and pay for this permit**. Note that if you are in the throes of a 'regularization' procedure (e.g. expired or lost residency card), you **cannot** get this permit.

### Card Replacement Fee

If your Temporary or Permanent residency card becomes damaged or lost, you will need to apply for a new card and pay a replacement fee. This is currently **MXN \$1,365 Mexican pesos**. Residency card replacement procedures depend on where you lose your card (in Mexico or abroad) and you will need to enter into a bureaucratic process to get it replaced. You might consider using our **Immigration Assistance Service to help you**.

### Regularization Fee

If you need to enter a 'Regularization' procedure (for example, if your residency card has expired) then you will need to pay a 'regularization' fee of **MXN \$1,365 Mexican pesos** in addition to any other fees/fines. 'Regularization' procedures tend to be complex and you might consider using our **Immigration Assistance Service to help you**.

### Work Permission Fee on Residente Temporal Card

If you apply for work permissions on a Resident Temporal card, a fee of **MXN \$3,207 Mexican pesos** will be levied in addition to any other fees (e.g. visa sticker exchange fee, 'regularization' fee).

**NB:** If you hold a *Residente Permanente* card you don't need to pay this fee, but you **must inform the immigration office** about any changes to your work arrangements.

### Family Unit FMM Exchange Fee

If you apply to exchange a Visitor's Visa (FMM) in-country for a residential permit (*Residente Temporal* or *Residente Permanente*) under the Family Unit rules you will need to pay a fee of **MXN \$1,365 Mexican pesos** in addition the resident card fee listed above.

## Economic Solvency: Foreign Exchange Rates, Minimum Salary & UMA

### Foreign Exchange Rates

When you are applying for residency based on your economic solvency, you will be asked to show documentary evidence of your income, savings, or investments. Most applicants do this abroad at a Mexican Consulate: who assess the evidence, interview prospective residents and if the application is successful, they pre-approve the residency visa.

Mexican immigration law expresses the minimum income or savings requirements required for residency in **Mexican pesos**; however, when you apply for your residency visa via a Mexican Consulates abroad, they will express the required amounts in the **local currency** of the country where they are situated, and the income or savings they ask to see *may or may not reflect the current market exchange rates in relation to the amount required in Mexican pesos*. This can cause variations in the specific amounts asked for, and it's not uncommon for consulates' requirements to vary from one another.

If your income or savings balance is near the cusp of qualification, we recommend you contact your **nearest Mexican Consulate** to determine how it's currently applying the rules regarding financial criteria for residency applications. Every application is dealt with individually and the Consulate retains discretion on acceptance or denial of your residency application on a per-case basis.

### Minimum Salary vs UMA

The income or savings you need to qualify for residency in Mexico will depend on whether the authority applies Minimum Wage or *Unidad de Medida y Actualización* (UMA) to the calculation. We understand that Mexican Consulates abroad and Immigration Offices in Mexico continue to use the Minimum Salary as a reference for calculations, so this edition of the guide continues to quote Minimum Salary calculations instead of UMA.

[Learn about the difference between Minimum Salary and UMA.](#)

### Residing in Mexico using a Visitor's Permit?

If your Passport is issued by one of the many countries **on Mexico's 'no visa required' list**, then you can use **Mexico's Visitor Visa (FMM)** to enter Mexico for up to 180 days. There is no time limit to remain outside the country before re-entering using a *new FMM*—and thus obtaining another 180 days' leave to remain in Mexico. Some people have been using this flexibility to stay in Mexico longer-term; however, with today's computerized entry and exit systems, immigration officials at ports of entry have ready-access to your movements through Mexico, and 'perpetual visitors' —people who continuously enter, stay for a few

months, exit and then re-enter Mexico in short order with another FMM— may now have their intentions questioned at the port of entry. We have heard of cases where people have been turned away; if you intend to stay in Mexico longer-term, we recommend you consider applying for [temporary residency in Mexico](#).

## Exchanging Your Residency Visa for a Residency Card

When you are granted a residency visa at a Mexican Consulate abroad, you are issued with a **visa sticker** in your passport. This sticker grants you **one-time entry** to Mexico as a resident, and you **must** arrive at a port in Mexico within 180 calendar days of its issue date. You have **30 calendar days** from the *date of your arrival in Mexico* to attend your **local immigration office** and begin a process to exchange your resident visa stamp for a **residency card**. If you fail to initiate the exchange (*canje*) process in this time frame, the visa will become void and you will need to restart the application process.

See also: [The visa exchange \(canje\) process](#) for details about this important procedure.

## Entering and Leaving Mexico with a Residency Card

When you are legally resident in Mexico, you will need to undertake some special procedures each time you enter and leave the country.

**Foreigners with Resident Visa Stamps:** If you are arriving in Mexico with a resident **visa stamp** in your passport that was recently issued by a Mexican Consulate abroad, you will need to fill out [the Visitor's Visa \(FMM\)](#) on arrival, but show the immigration officer the page in your passport with the residency visa stamp and double-check that the officer ticks the box on the form that reads "*Canje*" (exchange) NOT "*Vistante*." If they admit you as a visitor/tourist, this will cause problems when you attend the immigration office to exchange your resident visa stamp for a residency card. You then have 30 calendar days to attend your local immigration office and exchange your resident visa stamp for a residency card.

**Foreign Residents with Resident Cards** – Foreign residents who are in possession of a *Residente Temporal* or *Residente Permanente* **card** (or one of the old FM3 or FM2 residency permits) need to present their passport and resident card to the Immigration Officer at the port of exit (e.g. airport or border crossing), accompanied by a completed [Visitor's permit \(FMM\)](#), which is used by the government to record statistics. There is no fee for this form. Upon your exit, this FMM document will be date stamped. You must keep safe the larger half of the form. (Give the smaller half of the form to the airline if you are flying out of the country.) When you return, you **must** present your resident card and the exit form's

date-stamped copy issued to you when you left to the Immigration Officer at port of entry, who will retain the exit-form copy. If you re-enter Mexico as a tourist (Visitor) when you have residency in Mexico, your residency status may become invalid.

**Mexican Nationals and Naturalized Foreigners** – If you are in possession of a Mexican passport, you will need to complete a form before you exit the country known as the *Formato Estadístico para Mexicanos* (FEM). The government uses this to record statistics of Mexican nationals traveling abroad. There is no fee for this form.

See also: [Procedures for entering and leaving Mexico](#)

### Time Limits on Visitor and Residency Permits

Time-limits exist on Visitor Permits and Temporary Resident permits. Permanent Residency permits never expire but may require occasional renewal, thus:

**Visitor Visa (FMM):** The **visitor visa is valid for a maximum of 180 days** from the date you enter Mexico. It cannot be extended beyond 180 days.

**Temporary Residency (Residente Temporal):** When you are granted a *Residente Temporal* visa, it's valid from 1 year to 4 years. Your **first** temporary residency card is *always issued for only one year* and must be renewed within the 30-day window before it expires. At the end of the first year, you can renew your temporary residency for a further 1, 2 or 3 years. When you renew for 3 years you won't have to return to the immigration office to renew it until it fully expires at the end of year 4; however, you must inform the immigration office of certain changes in your personal circumstances.

The temporary resident card allows the foreign resident to reside in Mexico indefinitely while the card is valid; there are no maximum or minimum times the holder must be physically present in Mexico during the year. At present, there is no problem renewing the card even if the applicant has spent most of the year abroad because the immigration office won't consider the time spent in Mexico as part of the renewal requirements. *However, if your goal is to acquire Mexican citizenship, then you should remain in Mexico most of the year.* Also, **temporary residency renewals must be processed in-country**: you cannot renew a residency card at Mexican consulates abroad.

**Permanent Residency (Residente Permanente):** When you are granted a *Residente Permanente* visa—whether you apply straight away and are granted permanent residency, or eventually obtain permanent residency after four *consecutive* years of living under the auspice of a temporary residence permit in Mexico—you are issued with a permanent residency card that carries **no expiry date**. Permanent residency never expires but can be

surrendered by the holder, or withdrawn by the *Secretaría de Gobernación*, at any time. Some states may run a [renewal process every 10 years to update the photograph](#).

## Renewing Your Residency Card

When you're living in Mexico and want to renew your Mexico residency permit (card) for further years, you **must** undertake the renewal process in-country: it cannot be done from abroad.

If you applied for and were granted permanent residency, then there is no need to renew your permit; however, the financial criteria for permanent residency are stricter than those for temporary residency, and some people also apply for temporary residency when they are not intending to settle permanently in Mexico or are not certain about their plans.

If you hold a temporary residency permit, your first permit is **always** issued for *only one year*. You must attend your local Immigration Office (INM) *within 30 days prior to the permit's expiration date* to apply for a renewal.

**Important:** We recommend that you do not leave applying for your residency renewal to the last minute. Applications entail form filling, bank payments, photographs, etc. The application needs to be reviewed at the local immigration office and the application formally **accepted and registered** on the system by the expiry date. If something is amiss, you will be turned away to correct something(s) on the application, and we therefore recommend you start the renewal process at the *beginning* of the 30-day window before the permit expires.

See also: [Procedures to renew a Temporary Resident Card](#) and [note about renewal of a Permanent Residency card](#) for details about this process.

## Lost/Stolen Residency Cards

If you are **inside** Mexico when you lose your residency permit, you'll need to attend your [local immigration office](#) to apply for a replacement; you can [find details here](#). If you are **outside** Mexico when the loss happens, you should contact your nearest [Mexican Consulate](#) for guidance. Note that these procedures apply to permits which have not expired—see next section about resident permit expiry. You will also need to pay a [card replacement fee](#). Consider using our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service](#) to discuss your situation and help you through the replacement procedure.

## Expired Residency Cards

If you hold a temporary resident card and let it expire, complex rules exist about getting it renewed and these vary whether you are inside or outside Mexico at the time when it expires.

**If you are abroad when the card expires**, you have **55 calendar days** to return to Mexico from the card's expiry date and, on arrival in Mexico, **5 calendar days** to attend the local immigration office to begin the renewal/regularization process. This is only for *regular renewals*; if you're at the end of your 4-year period as a temporary resident and intend to apply for permanent residency, this 55-day rule does not apply.

**If you're in Mexico when the card expires**, you will need to enter into a **'regularization' procedure** to get the residency status renewed. *You cannot leave Mexico* (even in an emergency) while this regularization procedure is in-train.

**Help with expired residency permits:** Consider using our **Immigration Assistance Service** to discuss your situation and help you through the regularization procedure. *We strongly recommend that if you hold a resident permit and you plan to remain living in Mexico you do not let it expire before applying for it to be renewed.* **Resident permits can be renewed** up to 30 days prior to their expiry date.

## Applying for Residency Under the Rules of 'Civil Partnerships'

Mexico's immigration law states that "*Concubinos*" (sometimes referred to in Spanish as "Union Libre" or in English, "Common-Law Union") can apply for residency in Mexico under the **Family Unit rules**. (This also includes same-sex civil partnerships.) We have no practical information about how the immigration ministry deals with this. If you are in Mexico making the application, we understand that you would probably need to apply to a local judge with evidence of your partnership and he/she would issue a certificate to this effect — a process that can take 3-6 months. If you are applying from abroad, you should contact the **Mexican Consulate** you intend to apply at for advice. The most assured way to apply for residency as a couple is to have a marriage certificate.

See also: **Qualification criteria: additional spouse**

## Resident Minors Traveling Alone

If you are the parent or guardian of resident minors (persons under the age of 18 years), you will need to undertake a special procedure if they are Mexican residents and not traveling with you. This procedure is part of an international protocol designed to protect minors traveling across borders.

If your child is a Mexican citizen (*including* dual nationals), or if your child is not Mexican but is a legal resident of Mexico (temporary, temporary student, or permanent), **and the child(ren) will be traveling alone**, they will need to **carry authorization to leave Mexico using the 'SAM' procedure**. When *either* or *both* parents, or the *legal guardian* travels with the child(ren), there is no need for this SAM authorization procedure to be undertaken.

See also: [Traveling with minors to Mexico](#)

## Getting Foreign Documents Legalized (Apostilled)

For certain legal procedures, usually related to immigration, residency, investment, or marriage (or a combination of these) it may be necessary to present Mexican authorities with foreign legal documents as part of application procedure—foreign birth certificates and foreign marriage certificates are the most common. Before the Mexican authorities will receive foreign-issued legal documents for processing, it's necessary to get these Apostilled.

See also: [Getting Foreign Documents Apostilled \(Legalized\) for Mexico](#)

## Importing Your Household Goods

When you move to Mexico, you may have personal goods and chattels you want to bring to Mexico with you. Normally, all goods crossing borders are subject to tariffs and duties; however, there is a procedure in place that allows new residents to import their personal goods without paying these duties: this is a **one-time allowance** that cannot be repeated.

*"Menaje de Casa"* is the name given to the household goods that a foreign citizen can import into Mexico free of duties.

The general rule is that these items must be at least six months old and that the importer needs to have a resident **card** (temporary or permanent). The importer will also need to hire the services of a Mexican customs broker to do the import: see [Further Resources](#) in this guide, where you will find a directory of custom brokers in Mexico.

**Important:** The visa sticker obtained at the Mexican Consulate is not the residency document that the customs broker will need to finalize the import of the *Menaje de Casa*; the customs broker will need the **resident card** that will be provided in Mexico at the local immigration office, **after the exchange ("*canje*") process** has taken place. Therefore, you should consider the time frame this procedure takes before shipping your household goods in order to avoid extra storage expenses at the port of entry while you wait for your

residency card to be issued: it typically takes 4-6 weeks to get the resident card from the date you submit your application for the exchange process.

Mexican Consulates issue the permit to import the *Menaje de Casa*. This is an obligatory permit for people who are granted a Permanent Residency visa, but optional for those who are granted a Temporary Resident visa. Expect to provide a detailed list of the items you wish to import and sign a letter to say that you will export the goods when your resident permit expires. There is a consular fee of around US\$140 (or local currency equivalent) for the permit. See Also: [How to relocate and move to Mexico](#)

### **Bringing Your Foreign-Plated Vehicle to Mexico**

Mexico's reformed immigration law enacted in 2012 changed the rules concerning the import of foreign-plated vehicles. For temporary visitors (tourists) and temporary residents, procedures remain straightforward; however, a significant change is that permanent residents are no longer allowed to drive a foreign-plated car into Mexico using a Temporary Import Permit (TIP). [Read this article for full details.](#)

**Note about Auto Insurance:** Your US or Canadian insurance policy is not valid in Mexico, so you need to purchase a policy that covers you while you're driving your vehicle here. Being adequately insured will prevent you from having to deal with potentially complex situations and facing substantial costs and expenses in the event of a mishap or serious accident. See the [Guide to Auto Insurance in Mexico](#) on Mexperience for details. Our partners MexPro offer [competitively priced insurance plans](#) that you can arrange online.

### **Mexico Immigration Assistance Service: Informed choices and practical help with your residency permit application and renewals**

When you're thinking about or actively planning a move to Mexico and need some detailed personal advice about the move, [our immigration assistance service can help you to map-out a strategy and approach that is suited to your personal circumstances.](#)

Immigration Assistance by phone/email differs from hiring an immigration lawyer as you don't have to be physically located in Mexico and the consultancy will enable you to speak/correspond with an expert in Mexican immigration matters about your specific circumstances.

The consultant will seek to assess your individual circumstances and suggest a proper course of action, based on your personal situation, that will have the best chance of leading to a successful application to retire, work, or invest in Mexico.

The immigration assistance service will also help you in practical ways: making the application, filling-out forms, writing letters in Spanish (using appropriate terms and phrases); and when you arrive in Mexico the service will continue to provide value by helping you through the procedures you need to deal with to exchange your visa for a residency card.

[Learn more about the Mexico Immigration Assistance Service here](#)

## Visa & Immigration FAQs

Mexperience regularly updates this 'Visas and Immigration' FAQ page online. It's a collection of questions we get asked with up-to-date answers based on the latest rules and our experience of [helping people to apply and acquire residency in Mexico](#).

### **Mexico Immigration Assistance: make informed choices and get practical help**

Our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service, provided by email and telephone](#), will help you to map-out an approach that gives you the best chance of making a successful application and help you with practical matters as you make your way through the application procedures to obtain or renew a residency permit in Mexico.

## Getting a Mexican Visa for the First Time

These are the steps you need to follow when you make an initial application for a visa at a Mexican Consulate abroad. You do not need to be a Temporary Resident first to become a Permanent Resident later: if you fulfill the requirements, you can request Permanent Residency from the outset of the application process.

To make the application, you need to visit a [Mexican Consulate](#). It does not have to be in your home country, but if you don't apply from your home country you will need to prove that your stay in a third country is legal, e.g. a visitor visa for that country.

For **all applications**, you will need to present the following documents (some consulates ask the applicant to make an appointment and others do not; this could be verified in each Consulate's website):

- Application form, which is available at any Mexican Consulate; some of them may have online versions on their websites for you to download, or they might email an application form to you. This form must be printed and physically signed by the applicant. In the case of minors, the person signing must be the parents or legal guardians;
- Original and copy of passport or other valid identity and travel document
- Original or certified copy of any documents requested for each type of visa (as described in the [Detailed Requirements by Visa Type section of this guide](#))
- One frontal picture, passport size, (minimum: 3.2 cm x 2.6 and maximum: 3.9 cm x 3.1 cm), in color with white background. The applicant must not be wearing glasses in the photo and hair must be behind the ears. Pictures should be taken in a specialized photography studio. Polaroid or cellular phone pictures will not be accepted
- Payment of the processing fee at the Mexican Consulate abroad: US\$40, or local currency equivalent.

In an interview with the Consulate's officer, the applicant will be asked to provide information such as personal data, purpose of the trip, and any other relevant information. During the interview, the officer will analyze the information and documents received and if he or she is satisfied with the application and decides to proceed, the visa will be issued within the following 10 business days. (Some Consulates issue the visa the same day of the application, depending on current work-loads). During the process, the applicant must allow themselves to be photographed and have their fingerprints scanned.

If the applicant is denied a visa, the authority will explain the reasons why. The applicant will be allowed to re-apply when the stated requirements are fulfilled.

## The Visa Exchange (Canje) Process

Foreigners who are granted a **Mexican visa (sticker)** in their passport at Mexican Consulate abroad need to apply at the local immigration office in Mexico for a **resident card**. This is known as the “*canje*” (visa exchange) process.

The procedure is composed of two steps:

1. Initial application at a Mexican consulate (described in the previous section)
  - Applying for the visa, providing supporting documentation depending on the visa type (as described in the [Detailed Requirements by Visa Type section of this guide](#))
  - Attending the interview
  - On approval, the placement of a **visa sticker** in the applicant’s passport

This visa sticker is valid for 180 days from the date of issue and you **must** enter Mexico before its expiry date. On your arrival in Mexico, you have **30 calendar days** to begin the process to exchange your passport sticker for a physical residency card:

2. At the INM Office in Mexico

When you begin the process, these are the documents to provide at the local immigration institute:

- Online form, which is available in this link: <https://www.inm.gob.mx/tramites/publico/estancia.html>. This form must have the applicant’s signature. In the case of minors, the person signing must be the parents or legal guardians
- Letter *in Spanish* requesting the “*canje*” (exchange) of the visa. If you need assistance with the exchange process (including writing letters) [consider using our Mexico Immigration Assistance Service](#)
- Original and copy of the applicant’s passport
- Original and copy of the visa sticker provided at the Mexican Consulate abroad
- Immigration Form FMM (provided at the port of entry).
- **Important:** Make sure the Immigration officer at the port of entry sees your visa from the consulate so that he/she marks the FMM with “*canje*” and writes 30 days, instead of 180 days of the regular FMM. **This is very important in order for your exchange process to run smoothly at the local 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)

- Some INM offices may also request a proof of address; usually a recent electricity, water, or telephone bill. *The bill does not necessarily have to be in the applicant's name*
- You need to apply at the closest INM office to the applicant's residential address in Mexico
- **Pay the fees**

**Your first temporary residence card always expires after one year:** The “*canje*” procedure only allows the applicant to get a temporary resident card for one year. The following year **when the applicant applies to renew the card**, he/she can request the card for an additional 1, 2 or 3 years.

**Important:** To make the payments for these visas, an office at the local immigration office will provide you with a form so that you can go to any local bank to deposit the payment. The bank will give the payee a receipt that must be taken to the local immigration office with your other papers. Payment is not made directly at the immigration office. Payment forms can also be downloaded here: <http://www.inm.gob.mx/gobmx/derechos/> ... **but be sure the download the correct payment form: if you pay the wrong account it's very difficult to get your money back.** If in doubt, cross check that you are using the correct form (account code) with the local immigration office *before* you make the payment at the bank.

**Follow the procedure, thus:**

- Once the applicant has submitted all the documents mentioned above at the INM office, he/she will get a document with a number (*pieza*) and a NUT (*Número Único de Trámite*); a password will also be sent to the e-mail the applicant provided in the application. The applicant will need the number and the password to follow up on the procedure online: <https://www.inm.gob.mx/tramites/publico/seguimiento-tramite.html>
- When a notification states “*Se emitió oficio*” and “*Registre los datos para la expedición de su documento migratorio aquí*”, the “*canje*” has been approved. The time frame of this is 5 to 15 working days, starting from the day that the documents are submitted until the day of the approval. Some INM offices may send you an e-mail letting you know it has been approved—but you should also check online as the emails are not always sent (or get sent to junk mail).

### Attend the Appointment

When the “*canje*” has been approved, the applicant must go the local immigration office to request an appointment to progress/complete the procedure.

On the day of the appointment, the applicant must be at the local immigration office 10 minutes before the appointed time and must take their passport and 3 pictures as follows:

- Two photos taken from the front.
- One photo taken from the right, showing the right profile.
- Applicant must not be wearing glasses and earrings in the photo and hair must be behind the ears.
- Pictures should be taken in a specialized photography studio. *Polaroid or cellular phone pictures will not be accepted.*

**Important:** Some offices request the photos with the documentation accompanying the application for the exchange (the requirements are the same at those listed above). Some offices request five pictures, instead of three: three frontal and two right-profiles. Check the process locally for details when you make your exchange.

During this appointment, the applicant must sign some documents and have his/her fingerprints taken.

### Receiving Resident Card

In some offices, the Residency Card is issued on the same day as the appointment. In other offices they will ask you to return to the local immigration office within a few business days after the appointment date to take possession of the card.

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## Important Information Relating to All Visa Applications

Regardless of the type of visa you apply for, the following requirements apply:

- The ability to **pay the fees for the requested visa**
- Valid passport or travel identity document (original and copy)
- One frontal picture, with face visible, no glasses; color, white background, passport size (minimum 3.2 cm x 2.6 cm and maximum 3.9 cm x 3.1 cm)
- Document proving legal entry if applying at a country different from the country or residence. For example, if you are Australian and apply for a visa at a Mexican Consulate in the USA, you will need to show the consulate your US Visa (or visa waiver, e.g. ESTA) to demonstrate that your stay in the US is legal.

### Applications

With the exception of **Family Unit applications**, all the visa types documented in the following section must be requested at the office of a **Mexican consulate abroad**. Once obtained, the visa stickers have a validity of 180 days (with a single entry in Mexico). Within those 180 days, the holder of the visa must arrive in Mexico and start the process to obtain the corresponding card at the local INM office within 30 calendar days after the applicant's arrival date in Mexico.

**Important!** Once the visa is obtained, it **must** be used on your subsequent entry to Mexico: you cannot get a resident visa and then enter as a tourist, leave and come back later using your resident visa sticker.

### Economic Solvency

Regarding proving 'economic solvency', it is important to mention that the financial options **cannot be combined**, is either one OR the other; the Mexican consulate representative will need to see either the full minimum income requirements OR the full minimum balance of savings/investments as described in this guide. The same applies in the case of Real Estate for the temporary resident visa; it has to be the full financial value from real estate only, not combined with income and/or savings.

### Economic Solvency for Temporary Residency Renewals

According to the immigration law, economic solvency does not need to be demonstrated for **temporary residency card renewals**. However, we are hearing of cases where immigration offices in some Mexican states are exercising their right to request additional information and asking applicants for recent bank statements when they apply for renewal of temporary residency. Therefore, you should be prepared to demonstrate your 'economic solvency' when you renew your temporary residency in case it is called for.

### Apostille

All legal documents such as birth and marriage certificates, when issued outside of Mexico, should have an **official apostille or legalization and must be translated into Spanish** by a certified translator, authorized by the INM office of each State in Mexico.

### Variations by Consulate and Local Office

Consulates and local immigration offices broadly follow the same procedures; however, we have observed from experience that variances do exist between consulates and local immigration offices in different states. To save time, pre-check the requirements with the Mexican Consulate you are dealing with and, when you come to Mexico to exchange your visa sticker (or renew an existing residency card) speak to your local *'tramitador'* (person assisting you) before applying. **Our Mexico Immigration Assistance Service can also help you through the process.**

### Important Note About 'Economic Solvency' Qualification Criteria Calculations

Mexican Immigration Law stipulates minimum financial requirements per visa by multiplying the country's current minimum daily salary (in 2020 this is \$123.22 pesos) by "x" to calculate an amount in Mexican pesos as the minimum requirement for any given visa type.

Mexican Consulates abroad quote criteria amounts **in the foreign currency where they are based**, e.g. dollars, euros, pounds, yen, etc. which may or may not equate to the multiples cited in law. There are also inconsistencies in US dollar amounts requested between different consulates in different US cities. We have no control or influence over this. The amounts stated in this guide are those as set out by Mexican Law, the amounts as interpreted by Mexican Consulates around the world may vary.

**See also:** [Economic solvency requirements and foreign exchange rates](#)

**See also:** [Minimum Salary vs UMA Calculations](#)

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## Detailed Requirements and Procedures by Visa Type

### Minimum Salary vs UMA

The income or savings you need to qualify for residency in Mexico will depend on whether the authority applies Minimum Wage or *Unidad de Medida y Actualización* (UMA) to the calculation. We understand that Mexican Consulates abroad and Immigration Offices in Mexico continue to use the Minimum Salary as a reference for calculations, so this edition of the guide continues to quote Minimum Salary calculations instead of UMA.

[Learn about the difference between Minimum Salary and UMA.](#)

### Visa Type: Temporary Resident Visa

To acquire the Temporary Resident Visa (*Residente Temporal*), the applicant must provide the following:

- The original and a copy of the document proving legal visitor status, if the applicant is not a national of the country where he or she is applying for the visa
- The stated documents that prove eligibility for the visa using one of the following scenarios:

#### Economic Solvency

- Original and copy of statements as proof of investments or statements of bank savings accounts with a monthly average balance equivalent to **five thousand days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$32,450 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the past twelve months.

OR

- Original and copy of bank statements with a monthly income or pension (free of liens) greater than the equivalent of **three hundred days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$1,946 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the past six months.
- **If you are applying as a married couple**, with one of you as economic dependent, you will also need to show your Marriage Certificate **which may need to be apostilled**; and you'll need to show an **additional 100 days of minimum salary as described here**.

### Family Unit

If the applicant is applying for a temporary resident visa based on a family relationship, the following situations apply:

#### Relationship with a Foreigner with a Temporary Resident Visa or Temporary Resident Visa for Study Purposes

- If the applicant is married or lives with a foreigner that has a temporary resident visa or temporary resident visa for study purposes, he or she must show a marriage license or proof of domestic partnership or equivalent legal document issued by the competent authority of the applicant's country of origin (original and copy)
- If the applicant has a foreign child that has a temporary resident visa or a temporary resident visa for study purposes, he or she must show the child's birth certificate (original and copy)
- If the applicant has a foreign father or mother with a temporary resident visa or temporary resident visa for study purposes (provided the applicant is under age and is not married), the applicant must show his or her birth certificate (original and copy)

#### OR

- If the applicant is son or daughter of the spouse or concubine of a foreigner with a temporary resident visa or temporary resident visa for study purposes (provided the applicant is a minor and is not married) the applicant must show his or her birth certificate and the parent's marriage license or domestic partnership papers (original and copy)
- Temporary resident visa, or temporary resident visa for study purposes (original and copy) of the foreign relative
- Proof of economic solvency, which is either:
  - Original and copy of proof of investments or bank accounts with a monthly average balance equivalent to **one hundred days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$650 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous twelve months

#### OR

- Original and copy of documents showing that the applicant is employed with a monthly income or a pension (free of liens) greater than the equivalent of **one hundred days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN),

approximately US\$650 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous six months

### Married or Living with a Foreigner with a Permanent Resident Visa

In this case, the applicant must provide the following:

- Marriage license or proof of domestic partnership or equivalent legal document issued by a recognized authority of the applicant's country of origin (original and copy)
- Permanent resident visa (original and copy) of the foreign partner
- Proof of economic solvency, which is either:
  - Original and copy of proof of investments or bank accounts with monthly average balance equivalent to **one hundred days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$650 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous twelve months

OR

- Original and copy of documents showing that the applicant is employed with a monthly income or a pension (free of liens) greater than the equivalent of **one hundred days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$650 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous six months

### Relationship with a Foreigner Living in Mexico with a Temporary Resident Card or Temporary Resident Card for Study Purposes

- If the applicant is married or lives with a foreigner that has a temporary resident card or temporary resident card for study purposes, he or she must show a marriage license or proof of domestic partnership or equivalent legal document issued by the competent authority of the applicant's country of origin (original and copy)
- If the applicant has a foreign child that has a temporary resident card or a temporary resident card for study purposes, he or she must show the child's birth certificate (original and copy)
- If the applicant has a foreign father or mother with a temporary resident card or temporary resident card for study purposes (provided the applicant is under age

and is not married), the applicant must show his or her birth certificate (original and copy)

OR

- If the applicant is son or daughter of the spouse or concubine of a foreigner with a temporary resident card or temporary resident card for study purposes (provided the applicant is a minor and is not married) the applicant must show his or her birth certificate and the parent's marriage license or domestic partnership papers (original and copy)
- Valid temporary resident card or temporary resident card for study purposes (original and copy) of the foreign relative, **AND**
- In cases where the applicant has a relationship with a foreign person holding a temporary resident card for study purposes, provide a letter from the institution where the person is studying stating his education is in process and continues

#### **Married or Living with a Foreigner with a Permanent Resident Card**

In this case, the applicant must provide the following:

- Marriage license or proof of domestic partnership or equivalent legal document issued by a recognized authority of the applicant's country of origin (original and copy)
- Permanent resident card (original and copy) of the foreign partner

#### **Married or Living with a Mexican Citizen**

In this case, the applicant must provide the following:

- Marriage license or proof of domestic partnership or equivalent legal document issued by a recognized authority of the applicant's country of origin (original and copy)
- Document proving Mexican citizenship of the applicant's partner:
  - Birth certificate
  - Voter's card

OR

- Passport

**Important:** If the applicant is married to a Mexican Citizen, he/she should apply for a 2-year Temporary Resident Card before getting the **Permanent Resident Card**.

### Temporary Resident by Job Offer

Also known as 'Visitor with Permission to Engage in Lucrative Activities or Job Offer' these types of visas must be requested at the Immigration Institute in Mexico and applications **must** be initiated by the future employer. The requirements are:

- Original and copy of the identification of the individual or the legal representative of the corporation, public institution, academy (artistic, sports or cultural) if the representative Mexican or the resident card if the representative is a foreigner
- That the foreign person requesting the visa does not have an open procedure (i.e. some other visa application in process) at the Immigration Institute.
- Original letter of the job offer presented on the employer's letterhead, stating the activities that the applicant will perform according to the classification of the *Sistema Nacional de Clasificación de Ocupaciones*, the period of time the job will last, the address of the workplace and the salary or fees to be paid
- Copy of the proof of registry of the employer (*Constancia de Inscripción de Empleador*) filed with the Immigration Institute
- Copy of the passport or identification and travel document of the foreigner requesting the visa

Once the Immigration Institute in Mexico has approved the visa, **then the applicant must go to a Mexican Consulate outside of Mexico** — usually within the next 15-30 days, depending on the instructions provided by the Immigration office — for an interview and to get his/her visa stamped in the passport.

**Once obtained**, the visa has a validity of 180 days (with a single entry to Mexico). Within those 180 days, the holder of the visa must come to Mexico and obtain the visa card; he/she must start the application at the Immigration Institute within 30 days of his/her arrival in Mexico (within 30 days of the date stamped on the entry visa by the immigration official at the port of entry). [See the \*Canje Procedure\* in this guide for further details.](#)

### Real Estate

- Original and copy of the legal document proving ownership of real estate by the applicant with a value of more than **forty thousand days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$260,000 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD).

## Investor

- Original and copy of the legal documents proving that the applicant owns shares in a Mexican Corporation with a value of more than **twenty thousand days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$129,700 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD). These legal documents may be: deed of incorporation filed in Public Records, contract of purchase and sale of shares, contract of transmission of shares, to name a few.
- Original and copy of the legal document stating that the applicant owns real estate in Mexico through a foreign corporation with a value of more than **twenty thousand days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$129,700 USD (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD).
- Original and copy of documents proving the development of economic activities in Mexico, such as contracts, invoices, receipts, business plans, permits, and registry before Social Security showing the employment of at least 3 people.

## Invitation Letter

Original invitation letter from an organization or a public or private institution inviting the applicant to participate in a **non-lucrative** activity in Mexico. The letter should contain the following information:

- Applicant's full name and nationality
- Corporate name of the organization or private institution
- Registration number and purpose of the organization or private institution
- Full address and contact details of the organization or private institution
- Explanation of the activity to be carried out or the project in which the applicant will be participating. The activity must be related to the purposes of the organization or institution that extends the invitation
- Estimated duration or the approximate date of completion of the activity
- A statement of responsibility for the applicant while in Mexico and a commitment to ensure his return to his country of origin or residence, and
- A copy of the official ID (with signature) of the person who has signed the invitation letter.

- In order to prove that the organization inviting the applicant has the sufficient economic resources to pay for his or her expenses while in Mexico, **the organization must show** the original and copy of proof of investments or bank accounts with monthly average balance equivalent to **five thousand days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$32,426 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD), for the previous twelve months.
  - Public institutions or those private institutions that belong to the SEN are not required proving economic solvency.
- Original and copy of the documents in which the applicant attests that he or she has the experience, capability, skills or knowledge necessary to participate in the activity or project for which he or she has been invited.
- In the event that the organization inviting the applicant will not be covering the expenses of the applicant's stay in the country, then **the applicant must show:**
  - Original and copy of proof of investments or bank accounts with monthly average balance equivalent to **five thousand days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$32,426 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous twelve months

**OR**

- Original and copy of documents showing that the applicant is employed with a monthly income or a pension (free of liens) greater than the equivalent of **two hundred days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$1,300 USD (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous six months.

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### Temporary Resident Student

In all of the following cases, the applicant must provide the following:

- Original and copy of the document proving legal status, if the applicant is not a national of the country where he or she is applying for the visa.

The applicant must also present the corresponding documents in the following various situations:

#### Requirements:

Original letter from the institution that belongs to the SEN by which the applicant is accepted containing:

- Full name of the applicant
- Level, grade and study area
- Name of the course
- Date of beginning and term
- Cost of the course
- Data of the education institution
- Economic solvency to pay for the cost of the course and the costs of living in Mexico while the course takes place; this will be proven with:
- Original and copies of proof of investments or savings in bank accounts with a monthly average balance equivalent to **one thousand days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$6,485 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous three months

#### OR

- Original and copies of documents showing that the applicant is employed with a monthly income or a pension (free of liens), or a scholarship greater than the equivalent of **one hundred days of general minimum wage** Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$650 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous three months
- Economic solvency can be proved by documents of the applicant or of his parents or legal guardians (provided the applicant is younger than 25 years of age) or by letter from the institution where the courses or studies will take place stating the applicant has been granted with a scholarship.

### Scientific Research in Mexican Territorial Waters

Copy of the notification by which Mexico's diplomatic representation in the applicant's country of residence has notified the applicant that the SRE (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) received authorization from the competent Mexican authorities to participate in scientific research projects and/or sample collection in the territory or territorial waters of Mexico.

The notification must contain the following information:

- Full name and nationality of the applicant
- Official name of the corporation or public or private institution that has invited the applicant to participate in the research
- Explanation of the activity or the project in which the applicant will be participating and
- Estimated duration or the approximate date of completion of the activity to be performed

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## Visa Type: Permanent Resident Visa

### Minimum Salary vs UMA

The income or savings you need to qualify for residency in Mexico will depend on whether the authority applies Minimum Wage or *Unidad de Medida y Actualización* (UMA) to the calculation. We understand that Mexican Consulates abroad and Immigration Offices in Mexico continue to use the Minimum Salary as a reference for calculations, so this edition of the guide continues to quote Minimum Salary calculations instead of UMA.

[Learn about the difference between Minimum Salary and UMA.](#)

In all of the following cases, the applicant must provide the following:

- Original and copy of the document proving legal status, if the applicant is not a national of the country where he or she is applying for the visa.

The applicant must also present the corresponding documents in the following various situations:

#### Pensioners

- Original and copy of proof of investments or bank accounts with a monthly average balance equivalent to **twenty thousand days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$129,700 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous twelve months

#### OR

- Original and copy of documents showing that the applicant has a pension (free of liens) greater than the equivalent of **five hundred days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$3,250 (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the past six months.
- **If you are applying as a married couple**, with one of you as economic dependent, you will also need to show your Marriage Certificate **which may need to be apostilled**; and you'll need to show an **additional 100 days of minimum salary as described here**.

### Family Unit

The applicant may apply for a permanent resident visa based on one of the following relationships with a Mexican citizen:

- **If the applicant has a Mexican child**, the applicant must show the child's birth certificate (original and copy)
- **If the applicant has a Mexican father or mother** (*provided the applicant is under age and is not married and has no right to apply for the Mexican citizenship*), the applicant must provide his or her birth certificate (original and copy)
- **If the applicant is the child of the spouse or concubine of a Mexican citizen** (*provided the applicant is under age and is not married*), the applicant must show his or her birth certificate and his parents' marriage license or domestic partnership papers (original and copy)
- **If the applicant is the sibling of a Mexican Citizen**, the applicant must show either his or her birth certificate (original and copy) and that of his or her sibling (original and copy).

**All applicants** in this category must also provide:

- Document proving Mexican nationality:
  - Birth certificate
  - Voter's card

**OR**

- Passport (original and copy)

### Relationship with a foreigner who holds a permanent resident visa (sticker)

The permanent resident "visa" is the **sticker** placed in the passport by the Mexican Consulate *before* it's exchanged for a Resident Card. **If the foreigner has exchanged this for a Permanent Residence Card already (likely), read this procedure instead.**

**If the applicant has a foreign child** that has a permanent resident visa, the applicant must provide:

- The foreign child's birth certificate (original and copy)

**If the applicant has a foreign father or mother** with a permanent resident visa (provided the applicant is under age and is not married), the applicant must provide:

- The applicant's birth certificate (original and copy)

If the applicant is the child of the spouse or concubine of a foreigner with a permanent resident visa (*provided the applicant is under age and is not married*), the applicant must provide:

- The applicant's birth certificate (original and copy)
- The marriage license or domestic partnership papers (original and copy) of the spouse or concubine

If the applicant is the sibling\* of a foreigner with a permanent resident visa, the applicant must provide:

- The birth certificates of the applicant and the sibling (original and copy)

In all cases, the applicant must provide:

- The permanent resident visa of the spouse, concubine, sibling, child or parent (original and copy)

\*This option **only** applies if the applicant (sibling) *is a minor and is not married and is under the sibling's legal representation*.

In addition, the applicant must prove economic solvency in one of the following ways:

- Original and copy of proof of investments or bank accounts with monthly average balance equivalent to **one hundred days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$650 USD (considering an exchange rate of 19 USD per MXN) for the previous twelve months

OR

- Original and copy of documents showing that the applicant is employed with a monthly income or pension (free of liens) greater than the equivalent of **one hundred days of general minimum wage** in Mexico (123.22 MXN), approximately US\$650 USD (considering an exchange rate of 19 MXN per USD) for the previous six months

### Applying in Mexico at the INM based on a relationship with a foreigner who holds a permanent resident card

The permanent resident "card" is the plastic card which is given to the foreigner **after making the exchange ("canje") of the "visa" stamp** (placed in the applicant's passport by the Mexican Consulate). If the foreigner has a Permanent Residence Card, the application process is identical to that described above in **"Relationship with a foreigner who holds a**

**permanent resident visa**", **except** that the "economic solvency" requirement is not applied, and you will also need to present:

- FMM
- Online form that can be found here:  
<https://www.inm.gob.mx/tramites/publico/estancia.html>
- Letter in Spanish requesting the change of status
- Formato básico (basic format):  
[http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato\\_Basico.pdf](http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato_Basico.pdf)
- Permanent resident card of the relative
- **Payment of the visa.**

#### **Applying in Mexico at the INM based on a relationship with a Mexican**

If the foreigner is parent of a Mexican-born child, is son/daughter of a Mexican national (under 18 years), is son/daughter of the spouse of a Mexican National (under 18 years), or sibling of a Mexican national (including naturalized foreigners) the application process is identical to that described above in "Family Unit", **except** that the "economic solvency" requirement is not applied, and you will also need to present:

- FMM
- Online form that can be found here:  
<https://www.inm.gob.mx/tramites/publico/estancia.html>
- Letter in Spanish requesting the change of status
- Formato básico (basic format):  
[http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato\\_Basico.pdf](http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato_Basico.pdf)
- Mexican ID of the relative
- **Payment of the fee**

#### **Points System**

*As of January 2020, details of the points system have not been published in the Official Gazette. Therefore, there is currently no route to seeking residency in Mexico via this proposed Points System*

**The Points System** is an alternate method for foreigners to acquire permanent resident status in Mexico. This system will establish selection criteria to attract foreign investors or people with high competence in areas such as science, technology, sports, arts and

humanities or others who the Mexican government deems would strengthen and promote the development and competitiveness of Mexico.

The selection criterion may include, among others, the following categories:

- Education level
- Work experience in areas of interest to the country that have high demand and low supply
- Work experience in other areas
- Investor
- Skills in science and technology
- Acknowledgements and international awards
- Spanish language proficiency
- Knowledge of Mexican culture

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will issue the categories in the “General Administrative Provisions” which will be published in the Mexican Official Gazette (as of January 2020 this document has not been published). They will also issue a document defining the weighting of points corresponding to each category, as well as the minimum score required to enter through this method.

The Ministry will review the Point System every three years, and if necessary, will publish addendums, modifications or any other relevant changes in the Mexican Official Gazette.

An applicant who wishes to enter the country through the Point System must apply for their visa at a Mexican consular office, attaching the pre-qualification form duly completed and attaching the required documents proving that they meet the requirements of the category.

### **Minimum Salary vs UMA**

The income or savings you need to qualify for residency in Mexico will depend on whether the authority applies Minimum Wage or *Unidad de Medida y Actualización* (UMA) to the calculation. We understand that Mexican Consulates abroad and Immigration Offices in Mexico continue to use the Minimum Salary as a reference for calculations, so this edition of the guide continues to quote Minimum Salary calculations instead of UMA.

[Learn about the difference between Minimum Salary and UMA.](#)



## Visa Type: Others

Numerous other visa types exist for specialized purposes, including:

- Visitor visa without permission to engage in lucrative activities
- Long-term (10 years) visitor visa without permission to engage in lucrative activities
- Public Interest visas
- Visas for visitors invited by the Mexican government for special events
- Visas for drivers of freight (goods) vehicles
- Humanitarian and refugee visas

If you wish to inquire about a visa type not listed here, contact your nearest [Mexican Consulate](#). Alternatively, use our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service](#) for further detailed help and advice.

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## Procedures to Renew a Temporary Resident Card

Foreign residents who intend to renew their residency status should make the request one month before their current resident card expires and should present the application to the INM by filing out an online form that can be found at the INM website:

<https://www.inm.gob.mx/tramites/publico/estancia.html>

The temporary resident card is good for between 1 and 4 consecutive years. The first residency card is always issued for only one year. After 4 *consecutive* years with a temporary resident card, the foreign resident must apply to get permanent resident card or leave the country.

**Important:** Take note that Temporary Residency is renewed based on the fact that the applicant's activities in Mexico remain *consistent with the activity that the visa was originally granted for*: if the applicant obtained a Temporary Residency permit as an employee, he/she *cannot* change the status to "self-employed"; if the applicant got Temporary Residency because of a work permit, it cannot be changed to "*rentista*" (e.g. pensioner applying based on economic solvency). If you need assistance with a change in your circumstances, our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service can provide detailed advice about this](#).

### Minimum Salary vs UMA

The income or savings you need to qualify for residency in Mexico will depend on whether the authority applies Minimum Wage or *Unidad de Medida y Actualización* (UMA) to the calculation. We understand that Mexican Consulates abroad and Immigration Offices in Mexico continue to use the Minimum Salary as a reference for calculations, so this edition of the guide continues to quote Minimum Salary calculations instead of UMA.

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### Note about Permanent Residency card renewals

Mexican immigration law states that a Permanent Resident card never has to be renewed; however, we have found that some immigration offices request its renewal every 10 years, because it is the foreign resident's primary identification in Mexico and the picture on the card may require updating.

## Documentation required to renew a Temporary Resident card:

- The website form mentioned above, filled out, printed, and signed
- A personal signed letter *in Spanish* requesting the renewal
- **If you are an officer of a company**, you must submit a request from the company and include the following legal documents:
  - Copy of the *Acta Constitutiva* (deed of incorporation)
  - Copy of the company's last tax report
  - Copy of official identification (*IFE/ INE*) of legal representative of the company or his temporary or permanent resident card if he is not Mexican
- **If you are a professional**, you must provide proof of accreditation, legalized and stamped with an *apostille* (an official stamp and ribbon affixed by the country that issued the document), your tax ID (RFC) and your last tax report.
- **If you are working for a Mexican corporation:**
  - Copy of the *Constancia de Inscripción de Empleador* (proof of registry of employer), issued and approved by the INM
  - Copy of the company's last tax report
  - Copy of official identification (*IFE/INE*) of legal representative of the company or his/her temporary or permanent resident card if he/she is not Mexican
- **If you are renewing per Family Unit**, you must provide the legal documents that prove the relationship (described in the previous section under Family Unit visas).
- **In all cases**, you must provide three color photos with white background, infant (*infantil*) size (2.5 x 3 cm):
  - Two photos taken from the front
  - One photo taken from the right, showing the right profile
  - Applicant must not be wearing glasses or earrings in the photo and hair must be behind the ears
  - Pictures should be taken in a specialized photography studio. Polaroid or cellular phone pictures will not be accepted

**NOTE:** Some INM offices are requesting five pictures, instead of three: three frontal and two right profiles. Check your application requests locally for details.

- Original and copy of the two front pages of the applicant's passport (or the pages containing the photo and biographical information)

- The applicant's original resident card
- Formato básico (basic form):  
[https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/45629/Formato\\_Basico.pdf](https://www.gob.mx/cms/uploads/attachment/file/45629/Formato_Basico.pdf)

### Economic Solvency for Temporary Residency Renewals

According to the immigration law, **economic solvency** does not need to be demonstrated for temporary residency card **renewals**. *However*, we are hearing of cases where immigration offices in some Mexican states are exercising their right to request additional information and asking applicants for bank statements when they apply for renewal of temporary residency. Therefore, you should be prepared to demonstrate your 'economic solvency' when you renew your temporary residency in case it is called for.

## Procedures to Change from Temporary to Permanent Residency Status

Documents needed to change from a temporary resident status to permanent resident status:

- This website form <https://www.inm.gob.mx/tramites/publico/estancia.html> duly completed
- A personal signed letter *in Spanish* requesting the change
- **If you are an officer of a company**, you will only be able to change to permanent status once you have had 4 previous *consecutive* years with a temporary resident card. You must submit a request from the company and include the following legal documents:
  - Copy of the *Acta Constitutiva* (the deed of incorporation)
  - Copy of the company's last tax report
  - Copy of official identification (*IFE/INE*) of legal representative of the company or his/her temporary or permanent resident card if he/she is not Mexican
- **If you are a pensioner**, you must provide investment or savings statements or bank statements proving sufficient income to live in Mexico **in the amounts described in the previous section**: this requirement is not necessary when changing to permanent resident status after four *consecutive* years with a temporary resident card—but **see this cautionary note**. It is worth mentioning that, depending on the internal policies of the Immigration office where the application is taking place, Spanish translations of the financial documents, carried out by certified translators approved by the INM, might be requested.

- **If you are working for a Mexican corporation**, you will only be able to change to permanent status once you have had 4 previous consecutive years with a temporary resident card. You must provide the *constancia de inscripción de empleador* (proof of registry of employer), issued and approved by the INM along with:
  - Copy of the company's last tax report
  - Copy of official identification (*IFE/ INE*) of legal representative of the company or his/her temporary or permanent resident card if he/she is not Mexican
- **If you are applying via Family Unit**, you must provide the legal documents that prove the relationship ([described in the previous section](#)).

## Obtaining Work Permissions on an Existing Resident Permit

When a resident that is living in Mexico under the auspice of a Temporary Resident permit **without permission to work** gets a job offer then he/she has to either:

- Notify immigration if the resident is a Permanent Resident; **or**
- Request a permission to work of the resident is a Temporary Resident.

**We encourage you to get a work permit before engaging in any lucrative activity in Mexico:** if you get caught working illegally (with a FMM, expired temporary resident card, or temporary card without a work permissions), you may be forced to spend some nights at the local immigration office until you get legal advice; you can be deported from the country, and you will be subject to fines.

**Important:** If you intend to work for yourself, read the [section about self-employment in this guide](#) and seek assistance with your application **before** you make the request. Advice about self-employment in Mexico can be obtained from our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service](#).

### Volunteering

It is worth mentioning [that a foreign person can volunteer or undertake religious training without a work permit, and simply use the visitor's visa \(FMM\)](#), **but if the nature of work changes to lucrative**, i.e. remunerated/paid, he/she will need to get a work permit first.

### Temporary Residents

If you currently hold a temporary resident card **without work privileges** and subsequently wish to begin working in Mexico (or are offered a formal job), you need to request work

permissions **before** you begin generating an income here. There is an **additional fee to pay to obtain work permissions** on an existing *Residente Temporal* card.

The applicant seeking work permissions must provide the following:

- Online form, which is available at this link:  
<https://www.inm.gob.mx/tramites/publico/estancia.html>
  - i. This form must be signed by the applicant
- Letter *in Spanish* signed by the resident requesting the work permit
- Original and copy of the passport
- Original Temporary Resident Card
- “Formato básico” (basic form):  
[http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato\\_Basico.pdf](http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato_Basico.pdf)
- Original and copy of the identification (IFE/INE) of the individual or the legal representative of the corporation, public institution, academy (artistic, sports or cultural) if the representative is Mexican or the resident card if the representative is a foreigner
- Original letter containing the job offer on the company’s official letterhead, stating the activities that the applicant will perform according to the classification of the *Sistema Nacional de Clasificación de Ocupaciones*, the period of time the job will last, the address of the workplace, and the salary or fees to be paid
- Copy of the proof of registry of the employer filed with the Immigration Institute (*Constancia de Inscripción de Empleador*)
- The employer’s last tax payment
- **Payment of the fee for the work permit**

**NOTE:** If the applicant applies to be working for him/her self without any formal employee, and the request is approved, then he/she will have to commit with the INM that, after getting the work permit, he/she will go to SAT (Mexico’s Tax Office) and apply to get a Tax ID.

## Permanent Residents

Permanent residents who want to start working **only have to submit a notification to their local immigration office** and no payment has to be made, because one of the rights of a permanent resident is be able to engage in any legal economic activity.

**The applicant must provide the following:**

- Online form, which is available at this link:  
<https://www.inm.gob.mx/tramites/publico/estancia.html>
  - i. This form must be signed by the applicant.
- Letter signed by the resident notifying the change of activity (from non-working to working) and specifying the activities to be performed and the address where the applicant will be working
- Original and copy of the applicant's passport
- "Formato básico" (basic form):  
[http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato\\_Basico.pdf](http://www.inm.gob.mx/complementos/FORMATO/Formato_Basico.pdf)
- Original and copy of the identification (IFE/INE) of the individual or the legal representative of the corporation, public institution, academy (artistic, sports or cultural) if the representative is Mexican or the resident card if the representative is a foreigner
- Original letter of the job offer in letterhead of the employer, stating the activities that the applicant will perform according to the classification of the *Sistema Nacional de Clasificación de Ocupaciones*, the period of time the job will last, the address of the workplace and the salary or fees to be paid
- Copy of the proof of registry of the employer filed with the Immigration Institute (*Constancia de Inscripción de Empleador*)
- Last tax payment of the employer

**NOTE:** If the applicant applies to be working for him/her self without any formal employee then he/she will have to commit with the INM that, after getting the work permit, he/she will go to SAT (Mexico's Tax Office) and apply to get a Tax ID.

## The Application Process

After filling out, printing and signing the appropriate web forms, the applicant or his or her agent must go to the offices of INM and present the forms, the proper documentation, and identification. The applicant (or his or her agent) can check with the INM officer periodically or can check on the website to see when the visa card has been approved.

When the visa card has been approved, the applicant goes to the INM, provides the NUT (*número único de trámite* or "unique procedure number") and requests an appointment to be held with an INM officer. During this appointment, the applicant will have his or her fingerprints taken and will provide his or her official signature. The resident cards are issued in the local INM office and the applicant can pick them up five business days after the appointment. (Local variations of the precise procedure and time scales may apply.)

## Proof of Registry for Employers

Individuals or corporations that wish to hire foreign employees or that issue job offers to foreigners must file their proof of registry (*Constancia de Inscripción de Empleador*) with INM. This will allow them to prove their legal information and faculties of the legal representative so that when they hire other foreigners in future, they won't have to present all their legal information again, but instead only a copy of their proof of registry. In order to obtain this file, they should present the following documents:

### Corporations:

- Deed of incorporation, by laws and amendments
- Powers of the legal representative and his/her valid identification
- Proof of legal address in the company's name, not older than 30 days
- Tax ID (RFC)
- Last tax report (annual and monthly)
- List of foreign employees and their nationality. (The company must also have at least 5 Mexican employees registered at the IMSS.)

### Individuals:

- Valid identification with picture
- Proof of legal address in his/her name, not older than 30 days
- Tax ID (RFC)
- Last tax report (annual and monthly)

Employers should notify the Immigration Institute within the 30 days following any change in legal address or legal representation, attaching proof of the changes. Annually they should update the information corresponding to tax reports.

### **Mexico Immigration Assistance: make informed choices and get practical help**

Our **Mexico Immigration Assistance Service, provided by email and telephone**, will help you to map-out an approach that gives you the best chance of making a successful application and help you with practical matters as you make your way through the application procedures to obtain or renew a residency permit in Mexico.

## Mexican Citizenship

### Do you need Mexican citizenship?

Permanent residency in Mexico bestows nearly every privilege a Mexican citizen enjoys. However, citizenship takes your legal status in Mexico to the next level. [This article on Mexperience](#) discusses some of the principal matters related to seeking and acquiring Mexican citizenship (also known as 'naturalization').

**Key reasons why people seek to exchange their permanent residency status for Mexican citizenship include:**

- Remove the need to keep the *Secretaría de Gobernación* updated with your personal circumstances (e.g. address changes, civil status, change of employer, etc.) and thus reduce the bureaucratic burden of residency;
- Be able to own property [can own property near beaches](#) and land borders without the need to hold these in a trust or a Mexican corporation, as temporary and foreign residents must. (Some foreigners who have become naturalized Mexicans continue to choose to hold property in a trust for [Estate Planning purposes](#).)
- Be able to vote in national elections;
- Ensure that residency status cannot be revoked. If you have Mexican citizenship, your legal residency status is not subject to being summarily withdrawn;
- Some people wish to acquire Mexican citizenship so that they may renounce their current citizenship

**Note about residency requirement when you're a Naturalized Mexican:** If you become a Naturalized Mexican Citizen (i.e. a foreign national who applies for and gets granted Mexican Citizenship) and you subsequently reside outside of Mexico for *5 or more consecutive years*, you legally lose your Mexican Citizenship. We are not sure how this is tracked and enforced, but this restriction is explicitly documented in the legislation which governs 'Naturalization' of foreigners as Mexican Citizens. Natural Mexican Citizens (Mexicans by birth) **never** lose their nationality, regardless of how long they might live outside of Mexico.

#### **Mexico Immigration Assistance: make informed choices and get practical help**

Our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service, provided by email and telephone](#), will help you to map-out an approach that gives you the best chance of making a successful application and help you with practical matters as you make your way through the application procedures to obtain or renew a residency permit in Mexico.

## Ten Routes to Acquire Mexican Citizenship

Mexico allows its citizens to hold more than one passport, but you should check with the policy of your current nationality to ascertain whether you will need to surrender your other passport (nationality) when you acquire Mexican citizenship.

There are ten (10) methods to become a naturalized Mexican or a Mexican citizen. They are as follows:

### 1. Certificate of Mexican Nationality by Birth

This document is issued to Mexicans at birth. Citizens holding these certificates are Mexican Nationals. They may exercise all the rights and duties for which Mexican citizenship is required. Mexican Nationals are allowed by their government to hold one other passport, but no more than two in total.

#### Requirements

- Original and copy of the application DNN-1, which has to be filled out with a typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print (see Attachments)
- Documents listed below
- Payment as outlined below

#### Documents

The following documents must be presented with the DNN-1:

- Certified copy of birth certificate issued by the Mexican Civil Registry office.
- If you were born abroad, you will need a certified copy of the birth certificate issued by the Mexican Consulate, any diplomatic representative abroad or a certified copy of the birth certificate issued by the Mexican Civil Registry with the foreign birth certificate attached. You will also need to submit a certified copy of the Mexican parent(s) birth certificate. If you were born of Mexican naturalized parents, you will also need the letter of naturalization. This is valid only if the parents were naturalized before your birth.

If the birth certificate is requested after the first year of age, you will have to submit the following documents:

- Certified copy of marriage license issued by a Mexican Civil Registry office, if the parents married in Mexico before the birth of the child
- Certified copy of an older siblings' birth certificate issued by a Mexican Civil Registry office, if the sibling was born in Mexico and registered within the first year of age

- Certified copy of parent(s) birth certificate issued by a Mexican Civil Registry office during the first year of age
- Certification issued by the immigration authorities with the date of admission to the country of the foreign parent(s), if in Mexico before the birth of the child
- Notarized religious certificate if notarized within the first year of age, issued in national territory
- Original and copy of official valid identification
- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bare-headed and taken within 30 days of the submission of the forms
- Proof of payment

### **Fees & Timescales**

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

## **2. Declaration of Mexican Nationality by Birth**

This document is issued to Mexicans born within Mexican national borders or abroad of Mexican parent(s) who are over 18 years of age and desire to hold Mexican nationality, and who have received or used another nationality before March 20th 1998.

### **Requirements**

- Original and copy of the application DNN-2, which has to be filled out with a typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print (see Attachments).
- Documents listed below
- Payment as outlined below

### **Documents**

The following documents must be presented with the DNN-2:

- Certified copy of birth certificate issued by the Mexican Civil Registry office
- If you were born abroad, you will need a certified copy of the birth certificate issued by the Mexican consulate, any diplomatic representative abroad or a certified copy of the birth certificate issued by the Mexican Civil Registry with the foreign birth certificate attached. You will also need to submit a certified copy of the Mexican parent(s) birth certificate

- If the birth certificate is requested after the first year of age, you will have to submit the following documents:
  - Certified copy of marriage license issued by a Mexican Civil Registry office, if parents married in Mexico before the birth of the child
  - Certified copy of an older siblings' birth certificate issued by a Mexican Civil Registry office, if the sibling was born in Mexico and registered within the first year of age
  - Certified copy of parent(s) birth certificate issued by a Mexican Civil Registry office during the first year of age
  - Certification issued by the immigration authorities with the date of admission to the country of the foreign parent(s), if in Mexico before the birth of the child
  - Notarized religious certificate if notarized within the first year of age and in national territory
- Original and copy of official valid identification
- Original and copy of official document issued prior to March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1998, proving other nationality
- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bare' headed
- Proof of payment

### **Fees & Timescales**

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

### **3. Naturalization from Mexican Descent**

This document is issued to foreigners who have proven to be linear descendants of a Mexican by birth and having proof of residency with Temporary or Permanent Residency for two years immediately prior to the date of the application (the Temporary Resident status for study purposes is not valid for this process).

### **Requirements**

- Being of age and in full exercise of their civil rights

- Original and copy of the application DNN-3, which has to be filled out with typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print (see Attachments)
- Documents listed below
- Payment as outlined below

## Documents

The following documents must accompany the DNN-3 form:

- Original and two copies of the Temporary or Permanent Resident Card. These documents must demonstrate consecutive residency in the country for two years immediately prior to the date of the application. This document must be valid for at least six months after filing the application and lists the Unique Code of Population Registry (*Clave Única de Registro de Población*) (CURP). Exempt of this rule will be those linear descendants in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade of a Mexican by birth, as long as they do not have other nationality at the moment of requesting the Mexican citizenship; or as long as their rights by birth were not recognized. In this case, they will have to prove that the State where they were born, does not consider them as nationals there or in any other State, through the presentation of a proof issued by the competent authority, duly legalized or with the *apostille* and translated into Spanish.
- Certified copy and two copies of foreign birth certificate issued by the appropriate Civil Registry office, legalized by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative or with an *apostille* from a competent authority. The foreign document must be translated into Spanish by an authorized translator of the judicial federal entity in Mexico. This step is exempt if the applicant has been recognized as a refugee by the Interior Ministry (*COMAR*)
- Certified copy and two additional copies of the applicant's relative Mexican birth certificate issued by a Mexican Civil Registry office or by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative
- Original and two copies of the passport or valid travel identification
- Letter under oath with two copies, stating the number of exits and entries to and from the country for the two years preceding the filing of the application, used to calculate the days the applicant was absent from the country
- Original and copy of no criminal record certificate issued by competent authority at the federal and local entities in your place of residency.

To obtain the federal document you must present yourself at the "Órgano Administrativo Desconcentrado de Prevención y Readaptación Social" located in Calle Tlalpan No. 2962, Colonia Espartaco, Delegación Coyoacán, C.P. 04870, México D.F.; phone number: +52 (555)

242 81 00, ext. 18287 or +52 (555) 128 41 00. Office hours: Mon-Fri 09:00 to 18:00 hours. The documents you will need to carry are: original and copy of immigration form, passport and birth certificate with apostille or legalization and translation to Spanish.

The place to obtain the local document will vary from City to City.

**Important:** the validity of these certificates goes from 2-3 months. Please verify this with the issuing authority.

- **Proof that you can speak Spanish**, that you know the history of the country and are integrated into the national culture. **See Mexican Citizenship Exam**. Minors, those aged 60 and over, and refugees are not required to take the exam, but there's still an interview that needs to take place with an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the applicant will need to speak Spanish at some point of the interview.
- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bare' headed
- Proof of payment

#### Fees & Timescales

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

#### 4. Naturalization by Marriage

This document is issued to a foreign man or woman who marries a Mexican man or woman. Foreigners have to prove they have been residing in Mexico with Temporary or Permanent Residency by "family unit" and that the couple has lived together under conjugal arrangements in Mexico for at least two years prior to the application date (the Temporary Resident status for study purposes is not valid for this process).

#### Requirements

- Being of age and in full exercise of their civil rights
- Original and copy of the application DNN-3, which has to be filled out with typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print (see "Attachments" page).
- Documents listed below
- Payment as outlined below

#### Documents

The following documents must accompany the DNN-3 form:

- Original and two copies of the Temporary or Permanent Resident Card. The document must demonstrate consecutive residency in the country for two years immediately prior to the date of the application. This document must be valid for at least six months after the filing the application and lists the Unique Code of Population Registry (*Clave Única de Registro de Población*) (CURP)
- Certified copy and two additional copies of foreign birth certificate issued by the appropriate Civil Registry office and legalized by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative or an *apostille* from a competent authority. The birth certificate must be translated into Spanish by an authorized translator of the judicial federal entity in Mexico. This step is exempt if the applicant has been recognized as a refugee by the Interior Ministry (*COMAR*).
- Original and two copies of the passport or valid travel identification
- Certified copy and two copies of Marriage Certificate or attached marriage certificate issued by the Mexican Civil Registry abroad. In both cases the certificate has to be dated at least two years prior to the application date.
- In order for the spouse to prove Mexican Nationality he/she must submit one of the following documents:
  - Certified copy and two additional copies of his/her birth certificate, issued by the Mexican Civil Registry office or by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative according to the applicable circumstances
  - Certificate of Mexican Nationality
  - Naturalization Letter
- Declaration under oath submitted to the Interior Ministry by the Mexican spouse stating they have been living together and have established their conjugal address in Mexico for at least two years prior to the application date. It will not be necessary for the spouse to make this declaration if living abroad by commission or instruction of the Mexican Government
- Original and two copies of the Mexican spouse's valid identification with picture and signature
- Letter under oath with two copies, stating the number of exits and entries to and from the country for the two years preceding the filing of the application, used to calculate the days the applicant was absent from the country
- Original and copy of 'no criminal record' certificate issued by competent authority at the federal and local entities in your place of residency

To obtain the federal document you must present yourself at the “Órgano Administrativo Desconcentrado de Prevención y Readaptación Social” located in Calle Tlalpan No. 2962, Colonia Espartaco, Delegación Coyoacán, C.P. 04870, México D.F.; phone number: +52 (555) 242 81 00, ext. 18287 or +52 (555) 128 41 00. Office hours: Mon-Fri 09:00 to 18:00 hours. The documents you will need to carry are: original and copy of immigration form, passport and birth certificate with apostille or legalization and translation to Spanish.

The place to obtain the local document will vary from City to City.

**Important:** the validity of these certificates goes from 2-3 months. Please verify this with the issuing authority.

- **Proof that you can speak Spanish**, that you know the history of the country and are integrated into the national culture. **See Mexican Citizenship Exam.** Minors, those aged 60 and over, and refugees are not required to take the exam, but there’s still an interview that needs to take place with an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the applicant will need to speak Spanish at some point of the interview.
- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bare-headed
- Proof of payment

### Fees & Timescales

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

### 5. Naturalization by Residency

This document can be issued to foreigners who demonstrate legal residence in Mexico with temporary or permanent residency, for at least the last five years prior to the application date (the Temporary Resident status for study purposes is not valid for this process). It is worth mentioning that the years with the old FM3 visa **do not count** in the naturalization process; however, years with the old FM2 visa **do count**.

### Requirements

- Being of age and in full exercise of their civil rights
- Original and copy of the application DNN-3, which has to be filled out with typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print (see “Attachments” page).

### Documents

In addition, these documents must accompany the application:

- Original and two copies of the Temporary or Permanent Resident Card issued by the Interior Ministry, with the current immigration status. This document must demonstrate consecutive residency in the country for five years immediately prior to the date of the application. This document must be valid for at least six months after the filing the application and lists the Unique Code of Population Registry (*Clave Única de Registro de Población*) (CURP)
- Certified copy and two additional copies of a foreign birth certificate issued by the appropriate Civil Registry office, legalized by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative or an *apostille* from a competent authority. The document must be translated into Spanish by an authorized translator of the judicial federal entity in Mexico. This step is exempt if the applicant has been recognized as a refugee by the Interior Ministry (*COMAR*)
- Original and two copies of the passport or valid travel identification
- Letter under oath with two copies, stating the number of exits and entries to and from the country for the two years preceding the filing of the application, used to calculate the days the applicant was absent from the country
- Original and copy of 'no criminal record' certificate issued by competent authority at the federal and local entities in your place of residency

To obtain the federal document you must present yourself at the "Órgano Administrativo Desconcentrado de Prevención y Readaptación Social" located in Calle Tlalpan No. 2962, Colonia Espartaco, Delegación Coyoacán, C.P. 04870, México D.F.; phone number: +52 (555) 242 81 00, ext. 18287 or +52 (555) 128 41 00. Office hours: Mon-Fri 09:00 to 18:00 hours. The documents you will need to carry are: original and copy of immigration form, passport and birth certificate with apostille or legalization and translation to Spanish. The place to obtain the local document will vary from City to City.

Important: the validity of these certificates goes from 2-3 months. Please verify this with the issuing authority.

- **Proof that you can speak Spanish**, that you know the history of the country and are integrated into the national culture. **See Mexican Citizenship Exam**. Minors, those aged 60 and over, and refugees are not required to take the exam, but there's still an interview that needs to take place with an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the applicant will need to speak Spanish at some point of the interview.
- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bareheaded
- Proof of payment

## Fees & Timescales

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

## 6. Naturalization by Having Mexican Children

Document issued to a foreigner who can prove that he or she has Mexican children by birth and has legal residence in Mexico with a temporary or permanent resident card for at least the last two years prior to the application date (the Temporary Resident status for study purposes is not valid for this process).

### Requirements

- Being of age and in full exercise of their civil rights
- Original and copy of the application DNN-3, which has to be filled out with typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print (see “Attachments” page)

### Documents

In addition, these documents must accompany the application:

- Original and two copies of the Temporary or Permanent Resident Card issued by the Interior Ministry, with the current immigration status. This document must demonstrate consecutive residency in the country for two years immediately prior to the date of the application. This document must be valid for at least six months after the filing the application and lists the Unique Code of Population Registry (*Clave Única de Registro de Población*) (CURP)
- Certified copy and two additional copies of a foreign birth certificate issued by the appropriate Civil Registry office, legalized by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative or an *apostille* from a competent authority and translated into Spanish by an authorized translator of the judicial federal entity in Mexico. This step is exempt if the applicant has been recognized as a refugee by the Interior Ministry (*COMAR*)
- Original and two copies of the passport or valid travel identification
- Certified copy and two additional copies of the child’s/children’s birth certificate(s) issued by the Mexican Civil Registry according to applicable circumstances
- Letter under oath with two copies, stating the number of exits and entries to and from the country for the two years preceding the filing of the application, used to calculate the days the applicant was absent from the country

- Original and copy of 'no criminal record' certificate issued by competent authority at the federal and local entities in the applicant's place of residency

To obtain the federal document you must present yourself at the "Órgano Administrativo Desconcentrado de Prevención y Readaptación Social" located in Calle Tlalpan No. 2962, Colonia Espartaco, Delegación Coyoacán, C.P. 04870, México D.F.; phone number: +52 (555) 242 81 00, ext. 18287 or +52 (555) 128 41 00. Office hours: Mon-Fri 09:00 to 18:00 hours. The documents you will need to carry are: original and copy of immigration form, passport and birth certificate with apostille or legalization and translation to Spanish.

The place to obtain the local document will vary from City to City.

Important: the validity of these certificates goes from 2-3 months. Please verify this with the issuing authority.

- **Proof that you can speak Spanish**, that you know the history of the country and are integrated into the national culture. **See Mexican Citizenship Exam**. Minors, those aged 60 and over, and refugees are not required to take the exam, but there's still an interview that needs to take place with an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the applicant will need to speak Spanish at some point of the interview.
- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bare-headed
- Proof of payment

### Fees & Timescales

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

### 7. Naturalization (Current Custody or Adoption by Mexican Parents)

This document can be issued to minors who demonstrate that they have been adopted or are descended up to the second degree from or are **currently in the custody** of Mexicans. (See #8 for applicants who were *previously* in the custody of Mexicans.) Legal residence in Mexico with Temporary or Permanent Resident status for at least the last one year prior to the application date must be proven (the Temporary Resident status for study purposes is not valid for this process).

### Requirements

- Original and copy of the application DNN-3, which has to be filled out with typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print (see Attachments) by the adopters or the adopted parties or by the person holding custody.
- In the case of one of the parties residing abroad, a special power of attorney issued by the closest consulate is required.
- If the application is issued with a public notary abroad, the document has to be certified by a Mexican notary.

## Documents

In addition, these documents must accompany the application:

- Original and two copies of Temporary or Permanent Resident Card issued by the Interior Ministry, with the current immigration status which must demonstrate consecutive residency in the country for one year immediately prior to the date of the application. This document must be valid for at least six months after the filing the application and lists the Unique Code of Population Registry (*Clave Única de Registro de Población*) (CURP)
- Certified copy and two additional copies of a foreign birth certificate issued by the appropriate Civil Registry office, legalized by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative or an *apostille* from a competent authority and translated into Spanish by an authorized translator of the judicial federal entity in Mexico. This step is exempt if the applicant has been recognized as a refugee by the Interior Ministry (COMAR)
- Original and two copies of the passport or valid travel identification
- In order for the adopter, adopted or custodian to prove Mexican Nationality, they must submit one of the following documents:
  - Certified copy and two copies of birth certificate, issued by the Mexican Civil Registry office or by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative according to the applicable circumstances
  - Certificate of Mexican Nationality
  - Naturalization Letter
- Original and two copies of custodian's official valid identification with picture and signature
- Certified copy by the appropriate authority accrediting legal adoption
- Letter under oath with two copies, stating he/she has not had exits and entries to and from the country for one year prior to the application date

- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bare' headed
- Proof of payment

### Fees & Timescales

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

### 8. Naturalization (Previous Custody or Adoption by Mexican Parents)

Document issued to minors who demonstrate having been adopted or descended up to the second degree or **had been in the custody** of Mexicans. (See #7 for applicants who are currently in the custody of Mexicans.) They must also be able to prove legal residence in Mexico with Temporary or Permanent Resident status for at least the last one year prior to the application date (the Temporary Resident status for study purposes is not valid for this process).

### Requirements

Original and copy of the application DNN-3, which has to be filled out with typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print (see Attachments).

### Documents

- Original and two copies Temporary or Permanent Resident Card issued by the Interior Ministry, with the current resident status. The document must demonstrate consecutive residency in the country for one year immediately prior to the date of the application. This document must be valid for at least six months after the filing the application and lists the Unique Code of Population Registry (*Clave Única de Registro de Población*) (CURP)
- Certified copy and two additional copies of a foreign birth certificate issued by the appropriate Civil Registry office, legalized by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative or an *apostille* from a competent authority and translated into Spanish by an authorized translator of the judicial federal entity in Mexico. This step is exempt if the applicant has been recognized as a refugee by the Interior Ministry (COMAR)
- Original and two copies of the passport or valid travel identification
- In order for the adopter, adopted or custodian to prove Mexican Nationality they must submit one of the following documents:

- Certified copy and two copies of birth certificate, issued by the Mexican Civil Registry office or by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative according to the applicable circumstances
- Certificate of Mexican Nationality
- Naturalization Letter
- Certified copy by the appropriate authority accrediting legal adoption
- Letter under oath with two copies, stating he/she has not had exits and entries to and from the country for one year prior to the application date
- Original and copy of 'no criminal record' certificate issued by competent authority at the federal and local entities in the applicant's place of residency

To obtain the federal document you must present yourself at the "Órgano Administrativo Desconcentrado de Prevención y Readaptación Social" located in Calle Tlalpan No. 2962, Colonia Espartaco, Delegación Coyoacán, C.P. 04870, México D.F.; phone number: +52 (555) 242 81 00, ext. 18287 or +52 (555) 128 41 00. Office hours: Mon-Fri 09:00 to 18:00 hours. The documents you will need to carry are: original and copy of immigration form, passport and birth certificate with apostille or legalization and translation to Spanish.

The place to obtain the local document will vary from City to City.

**Important:** the validity of these certificates goes from 2-3 months. Please verify this with the issuing authority.

- Proof that you can speak Spanish, that you know the history of the country and are integrated into the national culture. A questionnaire on general culture and history of Mexico will be administered for that purpose. It is recommended that you read Minimal New Mexican History (*Nueva Historia Mínima de Mexico*) condensed version published by the *Colegio de Mexico* or the study guide attached to this document. At the age of 60 you are not required to take the test, but there's still an interview that needs to take place with an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the applicant will need to speak Spanish at some point during the interview.
- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bare' headed
- Proof of payment

### Fees & Timescales

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

## 9. Naturalization for Providing Outstanding Services

The full title of this manner of naturalization is “Naturalization Certificate for providing outstanding services or work in the cultural, social, scientific, technical, and artistic, sports or business fields.” It is a document issued to foreigners who have demonstrated providing outstanding services or work and who can prove legal residence in Mexico with Temporary or Permanent Resident status for at least the last two years prior to the application date (the Temporary Resident status for study purposes is not valid for this process).

### Requirements

- The applicant must be of legal age and in full exercise of their civil rights.
- Original and copy of the application DNN-3, which has to be filled out by typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print.

### Documents

- Original and two copies of Temporary or Permanent Resident Card issued by the Interior Ministry, with the current immigration status which demonstrates consecutive residency in the country for two years immediately prior to the date of the application. This document must be valid for at least six months after the filing the application and lists the Unique Code of Population Registry (*Clave Única de Registro de Población*) (CURP)
- Certified copy and two copies of foreign birth certificate issued by the appropriate Civil Registry office, legalized by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative or an *apostille* from a competent authority translated into Spanish by an authorized translator of the judicial federal entity in Mexico. This step is exempt if the applicant has been recognized as a refugee by the Interior Ministry (*COMAR*)
- Original and two copies of the passport or valid travel identification
- Attach any and all documents issued by Universities or Public Institutions accrediting the services rendered or outstanding work
- Letter under oath with two copies, stating the number of exits and entries to and from the country for two years prior to the application date. This letter will be used to calculate the days the applicant was absent from the country
- Original and copy of no criminal record certificate issued by competent authority at the federal and local entities in your place of residency

To obtain the federal document you must present yourself at the “Órgano Administrativo Desconcentrado de Prevención y Readaptación Social” located in Calle Tlalpan No. 2962,

Colonia Espartaco, Delegación Coyoacán, C.P. 04870, México D.F.; phone number: +52 (55) 5242 8100, ext. 18287 or +52 (55) 5128 4100. Office hours: Mon-Fri 09:00 to 18:00 hours. The documents you will need to carry are: original and copy of immigration form, passport and birth certificate with apostille or legalization and translation to Spanish. The place to obtain the local document will vary from city to city.

**Important:** the validity of these certificates goes from 2-3 months. Please verify this with the issuing authority.

- **Proof that you can speak Spanish**, that you know the history of the country and are integrated into the national culture. **See Mexican Citizenship Exam**. Minors, those aged 60 and over, and refugees are not required to take the exam, but there's still an interview that needs to take place with an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the applicant will need to speak Spanish at some point of the interview.
- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bare-headed
- Proof of payment

#### Fees & Timescales

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

#### 10. Naturalization (Descendant of Latin America or the Iberian Peninsula)

This document is issued to a foreign person that proves is from a Latin American country of from the Iberian Peninsula. Foreigners have to prove they have been residing in Mexico with Temporary or Permanent Residency for at least two years prior to the application date (the Temporary Resident status for study purposes is not valid for this process).

#### Requirements

- Being of age and in full exercise of their civil rights
- Original and copy of the application DNN-3, which has to be filled out with typewriter or by hand in black ink and legible print (see "Attachments" page).
- Documents listed below
- Payment as outlined below

## Documents

The following documents must accompany the DNN-3 form:

- Original and two copies of the Temporary or Permanent Resident Card. The document must demonstrate consecutive residency in the country for two years immediately prior to the date of the application. This document must be valid for at least six months after the filing the application and lists the Unique Code of Population Registry (*Clave Única de Registro de Población*) (CURP)
- Certified copy and two additional copies of foreign birth certificate issued by the appropriate Civil Registry office and legalized by the Mexican diplomatic or consular representative or an *apostille* from a competent authority. The birth certificate must be translated into Spanish by an authorized translator of the judicial federal entity in Mexico. This step is exempt if the applicant has been recognized as a refugee by the Interior Ministry (*COMAR*).
- Original and two copies of the passport or valid travel identification
- Letter under oath with two copies, stating the number of exits and entries to and from the country for the two years preceding the filing of the application, used to calculate the days the applicant was absent from the country
- Original and copy of 'no criminal record' certificate issued by competent authority at the federal and local entities in your place of residency

To obtain the federal document you must present yourself at the "Órgano Administrativo Desconcentrado de Prevención y Readaptación Social" located in Calle Tlalpan No. 2962, Colonia Espartaco, Delegación Coyoacán, C.P. 04870, México D.F.; phone number: +52 (555) 242 81 00, ext. 18287 or +52 (555) 128 41 00. Office hours: Mon-Fri 09:00 to 18:00 hours. The documents you will need to carry are: original and copy of immigration form, passport and birth certificate with apostille or legalization and translation to Spanish.

The place to obtain the local document will vary from City to City.

Important: the validity of these certificates goes from 2-3 months. Please verify this with the issuing authority.

**Proof that you can speak Spanish**, that you know the history of the country and are integrated into the national culture. **See Mexican Citizenship Exam**. Minors, those aged 60 and over, and refugees are not required to take the exam, but there's still an interview that needs to take place with an officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the applicant will need to speak Spanish at some point of the interview.

- Two frontal passport size pictures (4.5 x 3.5cms) with white background, no glasses, bare-headed
- Proof of payment

### **Fees & Timescales**

<https://sre.gob.mx/naturalizacion-costos-y-tiempos>

**Note:** The replacement is a certified copy of the original document.

## Mexican Citizenship Exam

Most foreigners reading this guide will be taking the citizenship route by first becoming residents of Mexico: Naturalization by Residency (#5 in the list above). Over the years, the process of testing applicants in this category has changed and is always subject to further change.

In December 2017, significant changes were introduced to the examination given to people as part of their application for citizenship; however, the *rules of applying for citizenship have not changed*.

**Until the end of December 2017**, applicants needed to study 100 questions; 5 of those questions were presented in an exam and applicants needed to get 3 of the 5 questions correct to pass the exam.

**Since January 2018**, a new *Test of Mexican History and Culture* has been introduced, wherein the applicant must prove his/her knowledge of Mexican history in a new exam, based on the study guide presented here:

<https://sre.gob.mx/component/phocadownload/category/16-nacionalidad-y-naturalizacion?download=159:guia-de-estudios>

**Exam Exemptions:** Where the applicant is considered by the Ministry of the Interior as:

- being a minor (under 18 years of age); or
- being over sixty years of age; or
- being a refugee

...proving that they can **speak some Spanish** during the naturalization interview will suffice.

**Exam Format:** The new examination presents “multiple choice” answers for each question, and also contains an additional element for applicants who are not from Spanish-speaking countries which requires those applicants to read a short essay in Spanish and answer questions about it—also in a “multiple choice” question-and-answers format.

The process of applying for citizenship is subject to delays and while three months is the official time the process is said to take, applicants should be aware that it might take longer — a year or more — especially if the Immigration Institute delays in giving a positive result.

See also: [Becoming a Naturalized Mexican](#)

## Mexico Immigration Assistance Service

While this guide covers the most important aspects of immigration in Mexico, Mexperience working in association with our partners can **assist you personally by telephone/email**

Our **Mexico Immigration Assistance Service** offers personalized consultancy and practical help by telephone/email/text, for example:

- Consultation and advice regarding which resident visa best suits your plans and situation
- Practical assistance with the application procedure, including a detailed list of the documents you need, assistance completing application forms and preparation of required accompanying letters written in Spanish—all customized to your individual needs and situation
- The service also provides practical support as you make your way through the application procedure at a Mexican Consulate abroad and/or at immigration offices in Mexico
- Help and assistance in the renewal or replacement of your existing resident card
- Assistance and advice if you need to 'regularize' your immigration status, for example if your resident card expired, or was lost or stolen
- Troubleshooting and problem solving

The **package includes advice and support of up to 3 hours** on any/all of the following services:

- Consultation about the best approach for residency application in Mexico based on your individual circumstances
- Practical assistance with the application of residency visas for Mexico
  - Living, Studying, Working, Retirement, Investment
- Help with existing Residency Card Renewal
- Help with residency 'Regularization' procedures
- Help with replacement of lost or stolen residency cards
- Advice and assistance with applications for Mexican Citizenship
- Assistance to resolve complex situations and troubleshooting

### Request your immigration assistance package

Talk to an expert so you can **make informed choices about your approach and get practical help that assists you** through the entire application process

**Click/tap here for details of the service and to request your consultation**

## Further Resources

### Mexico Immigration & Visas Assistance

Our [Mexico Immigration Assistance Service, provided by email and telephone](#), will help you to map-out an approach that gives you the best chance of making a successful application and help you with practical procedures as you make your way through the application process to obtain legal residency in Mexico.

### Mexico Insurance

Get quotes online for insurance solutions that give you peace of mind for driving, home and health in Mexico

### Auto Insurance

Be sure that your foreign-plated car is properly insured in Mexico. Our [insurance partner, MexPro, offers comprehensive and competitively priced auto insurance policies](#) which may be arranged immediately online

### Home Insurance

Protect your valuable asset against unforeseen events including burglary, natural disasters, and third-party liabilities. [Our insurance partner, MexPro offers insurance solutions for your house in Mexico](#)

### Health Insurance

Learn about Mexico's healthcare system and [how to arrange private healthcare plans to cover the needs of you and your family](#) in the event of ill-health, accidents or serious illnesses

## Mexperience References

Click or tap the links below to read guides and articles on Mexperience.com

[Immigration & Visas FAQs \(updated regularly\)](#)

[Articles and Mexican Visas & Immigration](#)

[Guide to Mexico Auto Insurance](#)

[Guide to Mexico Home Insurance](#)

[Guide to Health Insurance in Mexico](#)

[Guide to Medical Evacuation in Mexico](#)

[Mexico Essentials](#)

## Useful Websites

Here is a list of useful third-party websites related to visas and immigration

Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores (SRE)

<http://www.gob.mx/sre>

Instituto Nacional de Migración (INM)

<http://www.gob.mx/inm>

Confederación Latinoamericana de Agentes Aduanales (Customs Agents)

<http://www.claa.org.mx/>

Comisión Mexicana de Ayuda a Refugiados (COMAR)

<http://www.comar.gob.mx/es/>

## Get Practical Help with Your Move to Mexico

Applying for your visa is the start of a new adventure in Mexico. Mexperience and our partners can help you to realize your plans and make the most of your experience

### **Mexico Immigration Assistance Service make informed choices and get practical help**

Our **Mexico Immigration Assistance Service, provided by email and telephone**, will help you to map-out an approach that gives you the best chance of making a successful application and help you with practical matters as you make your way through the application procedures to obtain or renew a residency permit in Mexico

### **Auto Insurance**

#### **peace of mind when you're driving in Mexico**

Be sure that your foreign-plated car is properly insured in Mexico. Our **insurance partner, MexPro, offers comprehensive and competitively priced auto insurance policies** which may be arranged immediately online

### **Home Insurance**

#### **protecting your valuable asset**

Protect your valuable asset against unforeseen events including burglary, natural disasters, and third-party liabilities. **Our insurance partner, MexPro offers insurance solutions for your house in Mexico**

### **Health Insurance**

#### **plans to ensure your health and wellbeing are covered**

Learn about Mexico's healthcare system and **how to arrange private healthcare plans to cover the needs of you and your family** in the event of ill-health, accidents or serious illnesses

### **Mexperience Mexico Newsletter**

Our free **newsletter about Mexico** brings you a monthly round-up of recently published stories and opportunities, as well as gems from our archives.