

## New Rules for Immigration in Mexico

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The Mexican legal system has been constantly simplifying the rules for immigration into Mexico over the past few years. The Mexican Migration Law (*Ley de Migración*) was issued on May 25, 2011, substituting the rules included in the Mexican General Population Law (*Ley General de Población*), becoming the new legal framework for Mexico's immigration rules.

Although the Mexican Migration Law was valid since 2011, the new rules to apply it were still pending. Such rules are now approved and will enter into full force and effect in early November, 2012. Among others, the new rules provide six different types of visas, classified according to the activity intended to be performed in Mexico by the foreigner applying for each such visa, or the time he or she is planning to stay in the country. Such visas will be the only valid document to be issued for foreigners to enter into the country, and are classified as follows:

	Description	Requirements
<b>VISITOR'S VISA NOT ALLOWING THE PERFORMANCE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES</b>	For foreigners entering Mexico for a maximum period of 180 days.	At least one of the following: - The existence of reasons to return to the foreigner's country; - Evidence of enough solvency to cover the expenses of the stay; or - Invitation letter from a chamber of commerce, association, company or financial institution.
<b>VISITOR'S VISA ALLOWING THE PERFORMANCE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES</b>	For foreigners entering the country for a maximum period of 180 days and who will be performing economic activities.	- Application filed by the public or private institution in Mexico employing the foreigner. - The employer will be required to file the necessary documents in order to prove the labor relationship.
<b>VISITOR'S VISA FOR ADOPTION PROCEDURES</b>	For foreigners who will enter the country to perform adoption-related procedures.	- Evidence of the existence of an international adoption procedure.
<b>TEMPORARY RESIDENT VISA</b>	For foreigners who are planning to stay in the country for a maximum period of 4 years.	At least one of the following: - Evidence of enough solvency to cover the expenses of the stay; - Kinship with a national citizen, temporary or permanent resident; - Invitation from an organization or public or private institution in the country, to participate in non-

		compensated activities; or - Owning real estate in the country with a value that exceeds forty thousand days of the minimum wage in force in the Federal District (as of late 2012, this would amount to approximately US\$200,000); or - Having investments in Mexican companies that exceed twenty thousand days of the minimum wage in force in the Federal District (as of late 2012, this would amount to approximately US\$100,000), or employing Mexican individuals.
<b>TEMPORARY STUDENT VISA</b>	For foreign students planning to stay in the country for the duration of their academic studies or investigation projects, lasting at least 180 days.	At least one of the following: - Letter of acceptance to a Mexican academic institution; or - Evidence of sufficient solvency to cover the expenses of the stay.
<b>PERMANENT RESIDENT VISA</b>	For foreigners who are planning to stay in the country for an indefinite period of time.	At least one of the following: - Kinship with a national citizen or permanent resident; - Evidence of being retired and having enough monthly income to cover its expenses; - Being granted with political asylum by the Mexican government.

In order to apply for any of the above mentioned visas, in addition to the payment of the applicable fee, foreigners require visiting a Mexican Consulate for an interview and completing and submitting their application for the visa they are requesting, together with their passport and the appropriate supporting documentation. In case the Mexican Consulate considers it appropriate based on the interview and the documentation received, it will issue the corresponding visa within the 10 (ten) business days following the date of the interview.

The process to obtain a “visitor’s visa not allowing the performance of economic activities” may be narrowed down to showing the passport and completing a short form stating the purpose of the visit at the port of entry to the country. This will only be applicable for citizens from certain countries as indicated by the National Migration Institute: [http://www.inm.gob.mx/index.php/page/Paises\\_No\\_Visa/en.html](http://www.inm.gob.mx/index.php/page/Paises_No_Visa/en.html).

The visas granted before the issuance of these new rules will continue to be valid, and will be transferred into their respective equivalents under the new visas. More specifically, the visas obtained under the previous non-immigrant status as business visitors, investors, technician or scientific visitors, retiree visitors, professional visitors, trust position visitors and board member visitors will now be considered as “visitors not allowed to perform economic activities”. Additionally, the visas obtained under the previous immigrant status will now be considered as “temporary resident visas”.

By simplifying the types of visas offered and reducing the requirements, the Mexican government aims to facilitate foreigners' access to Mexico. Consequently, foreigners looking to conduct business in Mexico will face a friendlier and more efficient procedure to enter into our country.

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