

FM-T Tourist Visa FAQs

Will I need a visa to go into Mexico?

Depending on nationality, you may need to obtain a visa at a Mexican Consulate in advance of your visit to Mexico (see question #3) or you may only need to obtain an FM-T (tourist visa) at the port of entry (see question #2).

For a list of countries that do not need a visa, visit the National Immigration Institute of Mexico's website at www.inm.gob.mx/EN/index.php?page/not_need_visa/.

Note: This option also applies for permanent legal residents of the USA, Canada, or Japan, regardless of nationality.

For a list of countries that will need a visa, visit the National Immigration Institute of Mexico's website at www.inm.gob.mx/EN/index.php?page/need_visa/.

If you fall in this category, see question #3.

What is a FM-T and how do I get one?

Mexico has a tourist fee they charge visitors. If you are either staying in Mexico longer than 72 hours or traveling past the Border Zone, you will need to pay the Tourist Card fee (roughly \$28 U.S. dollars). The card, known as the Migratory Tourist Form (FMT), is valid for six months (180 days) with multiple entries. Make sure you ask for the full 180 days even if you plan to stay only a short time. You never know if you may return in those 180 days.

APU has come to an agreement with the INM (National Immigration Institute) to register our participants in advance and obtain a waiver of the fee. Participants who do not meet the deadline will have to obtain a FM-T on their own and pay the fee.

Regularly, FM-Ts are obtained at the border. Though in the last few years the INM has been graciously allowing us to register late participants at camp, we strongly encourage you to make sure that all your participants turn in their documents before the assigned deadline to avoid delays and complications.

I am a citizen of another country (not U.S.) and I want to visit Mexico. Where and how can I get a tourist visa to visit Mexico?

You must contact the nearest Mexican Embassy or Consulate to apply for your visa and migration form. In this case, you must submit:

1. Passport or valid identification and travel document.
2. Proof of economic solvency with one of the following documents:
 - a. Proof of stable employment or independent activity in your place of residency, accrediting a minimum monthly income of U.S. \$500, or
 - b. Proof of real estate ownership duly registered in your name, or
 - c. Copy of your bank or securities account statement with average annual balance of at least U.S. \$2,000, or
 - d. Copy of an international credit card

Citizens of Belize, Jamaica, El Salvador, and Malaysia do not need a visa, but they must go to the Mexican Consulate to obtain a stamp on their passport. If you are a permanent legal resident of Canada or Japan, you won't need a visa regardless of nationality.

For family members (spouse, children, or parents) to accompany you, you must prove their status as well.

As tourist, you will be able to remain in Mexico for 180 days.

For more information, visit the National Immigration Institute of Mexico's website at www.inm.gob.mx/EN/index.php/.

What if people in my team were born in another country but are citizens of the U.S., or Canada, or Mexico?

There are two categories of U.S. visas for foreign nationals entering the country. Immigrant visas are issued to foreign nationals who intend to live permanently in the United States, while nonimmigrant visas are for foreign nationals wishing to enter the U.S. on a temporary basis, whether for tourism, medical treatment, business, temporary work, study, or other similar reasons.

Those who fall under the second category (nonimmigrant) must also adhere to the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS), also known as Special Registration, put in place after September 11 to keep track of those entering and leaving our country in order to safeguard U.S. citizens and America's borders. Those who leave the United States, including for visits to Mexico, Canada, and adjacent islands, must appear in person on the date of departure before an inspecting officer at a designated port of departure and leave through a designated port. Failure to appear in person on the date of departure before an inspecting officer may result in denial of admission to the United States at a later date.

Nonimmigrant alien visitors subject to NSEERS registration at the port of entry include:

- Certain citizens or nationals of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, and Syria as designated by the DHA Secretary in the Federal Register.
- Nonimmigrants who have been designated by the State Department.
- Any other nonimmigrant, male or female regardless of nationality, identified by immigration officers at airports, seaports, and land ports of entry in accordance with 8 CFR 264.1(f)(2).

For more information, see the U.S. Immigration and Customs website at www.ice.gov/pi/specialregistration/.

What will happen if I don't get my team roster and documents in on time?

If for some reason your complete roster and documents are not in by your assigned camp deadline, you will have to go through the normal process of obtaining a FM-T at the border as you go into Mexico (see questions #1 and #2). You may be able to do this at camp if Mexican Immigration allows us to do it as they did last year. If this is the case, you will be notified through our mailings before the camp. Either way, you will still need originals of valid passports or birth certificates and state-issued photo IDs, plus the \$25 processing fee.

What will happen if a participant didn't make it into the final roster and documents were not turned in?

That participant will have to obtain a FM-T at the border as your team drives into Mexico, or at camp. This will delay the entire team. That is why we encourage you to make sure that every participant has all his or her documentation in before the assigned deadline.

Can I fax documents instead of mailing copies?

No. When faxed, pictures on IDs come out blurry and Mexican Immigration will not accept illegible copies of documents. You can mail copies or email scanned documents to moreg@apu.edu.

What are the penalties for staying in Mexico for more than 72 hours without a FM-T?

If Mexican Immigration decides to do check-ups, they may deport individuals without a FM-T who have been in the country for more than 72 hours without leaving Mexican territory. Crossing the border to get a burger does not re-start

the 72-hour limit.

Do minors require permission from their parents to travel to Mexico?

Yes. Mexican law requires that any non-Mexican citizen under the age of 18 departing to Mexico must carry notarized written permission from a parent or guardian not traveling with the child to or from Mexico. This permission must include the name of the parent, the name of the child, the name of anyone traveling with the child, and the notarized signature(s) of the absent parent(s). The State Department recommends that the permission should include travel dates, destinations, airlines, and a brief summary of the circumstances surrounding the travel. The child must be carrying the original letter (not a facsimile or scanned copy) as well as proof of the parent/child relationship (usually a birth certificate or court document) and an original custody decree, if applicable. Travelers should contact the Mexican Embassy or closest Mexican Consulate for current information.

You will find the Consent to Travel form in the Registration Manual.

I called the Mexican Consulate and they told me I didn't need anything. What should I do?

Even though some Mexican Consulates may state that you don't need a FM-T or any other kind of special paperwork, we have received our instructions from the Director of the National Immigration Institute (INM) headquarters in Tijuana, Baja California, and must obey the rules and regulations stated by the Mexican government. We have a special agreement with Mexican immigration officials that have taken into consideration our special circumstances and decided that this is the route that we have to follow. In case of an emergency (such as a natural disaster or national security threat), they want us to be registered through them so that they are able to locate us and bring aid. In case of an accident (such as a car accident that may or may not involve local citizens), they want to be able to say that they are aware of our presence in the country. They also consider it better to be registered due to the nature of the activities that we do.

What do I need to know about traveling back to the United States?

The following summarizes information available on the Department of Homeland Security's website. For more information and full details, visit www.dhs.gov.

Land/Sea Travel for U.S. and Canadian Citizens

Beginning January 31, 2008, the United States will end the practice of accepting oral declarations of citizenship at the border.

U.S. travelers will be required to present one of the following documents: a passport issued by the U.S. government, a passport card, a valid trusted traveler program card (FAST, NEXUS, or SENTRI), an enhanced driver's license (EDL), a military ID with official travel orders, or a U.S. Merchant Mariner document.

Canadian travelers will be required to present one of the following documents: a passport issued by the government of Canada, a valid trusted traveler program card (FAST, NEXUS, or SENTRI), or an EDL.

- U.S. and Canadian children under the age of 16 will be able to present a birth certificate or other proof of citizenship. See the CBP website for more information about children traveling with a school or religious group, social organization, or sports team.
- Children ages 18 and under will only be required to present proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate.
- U.S. citizens ages 19 and older must present documentation that proves both identity and citizenship. Identification documents must include a photo, name, and date of birth. View the complete list of acceptable documents at www.cbp.gov.

Land/Sea Travel for Lawful Permanent Residents

Lawful permanent residents may continue to present their Form I-551, Permanent Resident Card. More information is available at www.cbp.gov.

Land/Sea Travel for Mexican Citizens

Mexican citizens, including children, must present a passport with a nonimmigrant visa or a laser visa border crossing card. There is little to no expectation of change under these new requirements.

Passport Card for U.S. Citizens

The new U.S. Passport Card is in full production and is now being distributed. The Passport Card is a convenient, wallet-sized document for land and sea travel between the United States and Mexico, Canada, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. It is not valid for international travel by air. The Passport Card is available for \$45 for first-time adult applicants and \$35 for children under 16. Adults who currently have valid passports can apply for the passport card by mail for \$20.

Beginning in June 2009, travelers will be required to present a single Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative-compliant document denoting both citizenship and identity when entering the United States through a land or sea border.

Information on how to apply for a U.S. Passport Card or the traditional passport book is at <http://travel.state.gov>.

Air Travel for U.S. Citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents

All U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents, including children, must present a passport or secure travel document when entering the United States by air.

Air Travel for International Citizens

All international visitors, regardless of country of origin, must present a passport or secure document when entering the United States by air.

US-VISIT biometric procedures apply to international travelers holding a non-U.S. passport or visa with these limited exceptions.

Disclaimer: *As we have experienced in the past, laws can change without previous notice and the process could be modified. If this happens, we will inform you as soon as possible.*

For more information returning to the U.S. from Mexico, you may contact Mexico Outreach at (626) 812-3027.