



OSAC Country Security Report

Mexico

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This report is intended to supplement the U.S. Department of State Mexico Travel Advisory and Mexico Country Information Page.

Embassy & Consulate Contact Information

U.S. Embassy Mexico City

Paseo de la Reforma 305, Colonia Cuauhtémoc, 06500, Ciudad de Mexico, Mexico.

Tel: 55-5080-2000 (From Mexico) or 011-52-55-5080-2000 (From the U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000, press "0", and ask the switchboard operator to connect you to the duty officer. Hours: 8:30am-5:30pm.

U.S. Consulate General Ciudad Juárez

Paseo de La Victoria #3650, Fracc. Partido Senecú, 32543, Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico.

Tel: 656-227-3000 (From Mexico) or 011-52-656-227-3000 (From the U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000. Hours: 8:00am-5:00pm.

U.S. Consulate General Guadalajara

Progreso 175, Colonia Americana, 44160, Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico.

Tel: 33-3268-2100 (From Mexico) or 011-52-33-3268-2100 (From the U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000. Hours: 8:00am-4:30pm.

U.S. Consulate General Hermosillo

Monterey, Esqueda 141, El Centenario 83260, Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico.

Tel: 662-289-3500 (From Mexico) or 52-662-289-3500 (From the U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000. Hours: 7:00am-5:00pm.

U.S. Consulate General Matamoros

Constitución No. 1, Colonia Jardín, 87330, Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico.

Tel: 868-208-2000 (From Mexico) or 011-52-868-208-2000 (From U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000. Hours: 8:00am-5:00pm.

U.S. Consulate General Mérida

Calle 60 No. 338-K x 29 y 31, Colonia Alcalá Martín, 97050, Yucatán, Mexico.

Tel: 999-942-5700 (from Mexico) or 011-52-999-942-5700 (From the U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000. Hours: 7:30am-4:30pm.

U.S. Consulate General Monterrey

150 Avenida Alfonso Reyes, 66196, Santa Catarina, Nuevo León, Mexico.

Tel: 81-8047-3100 (From Mexico) or 011-52-81-8047-3100 (From the U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000. Hours: 8:00am-5:00pm.

[U.S. Consulate General Nogales](#)

Calle San Jose s/n, Fracc. Los Alamos, 84065, Nogales, Sonora, Mexico.

Tel: 631-980-0522 (From Mexico) or 011-52-631-980-0522 (From the U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000. Hours: 8:00am-5:00pm.

[U.S. Consulate General Nuevo Laredo](#)

Paseo Colón 1901, Colonia Madero, 88260, Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, Mexico.

Tel: 01-867-714-0512 (From Mexico) or 011-52-867-714-0512 (From the U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000. Hours: 7:00am-4:00pm.

[U.S. Consulate General Tijuana](#)

Paseo de las Culturas s/n, Mesa de Otay, Delegación Centenario, 22425, Tijuana, Baja California, Mexico.

Tel: 664-977-2000 (From Mexico) or 011-52-664-977-2000 (From the U.S.).

Emergencies: 011-52-55-5080-2000. Hours: 7:30am-4:15pm.

OSAC Country Chapters

- **Mexico City:** The Mexico City Country Chapter is active, meeting quarterly.
- **Ciudad Juárez:** The Ciudad Juarez / Chihuahua Border Region Chapter is active, meeting biannually.
- **Guadalajara:** The Guadalajara Country Chapter is active and meets two to three times per year.
- **Hermosillo:** Hermosillo does not currently have an active OSAC chapter, but interested private-sector security managers may participate in the Nogales Country Chapter.
- **Matamoros:** The Matamoros Country Chapter is working to reengage its membership after an extended period of inactivity.
- **Mérida:** The Yucatán Peninsula Country Chapter is active and meets once or twice per year.
- **Monterrey:** The Monterrey Country Chapter is active and meets quarterly.
- **Nogales:** The Nogales-Border Region Country Chapter is active, meeting quarterly.
- **Nuevo Laredo:** Nuevo Laredo does not currently have an active OSAC chapter.
- **Tijuana:** The Tijuana Country Chapter is active, meeting quarterly.

Contact [OSAC's Americas team](#) with any questions.

Mexico Travel Advisory

Mexico's [Travel Advisory](#) is unique in that each individual state—as well as Mexico City, which functions like an independent state in many regards—receives its own advisory level. Mexico's Travel Advisory no longer includes an overall level for the entire country. Each state's advisory

lists the reason for its designation, as well as areas of particular concern. At the date of this report's publication, 6 states are designated at Level 4 (Do Not Travel), 7 states are designated at Level 3 (Reconsider Travel), 17 states are designated at Level 2 (Exercise Increased Caution), and 2 states are designated at Level 1 (Exercise Normal Precautions). Read the entire Travel Advisory when planning travel to multiple states.

- Review OSAC's report, [Understanding Mexico's Travel Advisory](#)

Crime

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Mexico City, Ciudad Juarez, Matamoros, Nogales, Nuevo Laredo, and Tijuana as being **CRITICAL**-threat locations; Guadalajara, Hermosillo, and Monterrey as **HIGH**-threat locations; and Mérida as a **MEDIUM**-threat location for crime directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests.

The U.S. Department of State has included a Crime "C" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Mexico, indicating that there may be widespread violent crime and/or organized crime present in the country, and that local law enforcement may have limited ability to respond to serious crimes.

Mexico suffers from high rates of crime, exacerbated by its low rate of criminal convictions. Most crime in Mexico goes unreported or simply cannot be accurately captured due to large number of individuals who have "disappeared." According to preliminary data from the Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security (SESNSP), the national homicide rate increased marginally from 23.29 homicides per 100,000 residents in 2023 to 23.35 in 2024. Although there is no evidence of criminals specifically targeting foreign or U.S. businesses and personnel, criminals will target victims based on the appearance of affluence, vulnerability, or lack of awareness. Armed robbery, kidnapping, car theft, credit card fraud, and various forms of residential/street crime are daily concerns. Criminals can easily resell jewelry (including expensive watches) and cellular phones in illegal markets. Although Mexico has strict gun-control laws, criminals often carry handguns, knives, and increasingly high-caliber weapons.

Be careful of cash transactions on the street. A hurried transaction for merchandise often leaves the customer with shoddy or counterfeit goods, out-of-circulation valueless currency, or incorrect change. Some vendors will accept U.S. dollars, but at their own exchange rate.

Organized criminal groups continue to cause significant levels of violence throughout parts of the country. Mexico continues to experience a combination of conditions that collectively degrade the security environment in certain areas. The government has captured some of its most wanted criminals, which has fragmented criminal groups. The fragmentation of organized criminal groups has led some groups to be less organized and disciplined. The northern half of Mexico has been a higher-threat area, primarily due to organized criminal conflicts and competition for drug trafficking routes to the U.S. However, other regions that see inter-cartel conflict also see increases in violence like in the states of Colima, Zacatecas, and along the Guatemalan border in Chiapas, for example.

Various groups have splintered into smaller gangs, which have branched out into different illegal business activities, leading to associated violence spreading across Mexico. One common practice is for gangs to charge protection fees or add their own tax to products/services, with the threat of violence for those who fail to pay. Charging businesses for the ability to operate is another common scheme. Extortionists have targeted foreign and U.S. companies, attacking some for not responding to demands. Security conditions can significantly increase operating costs. Some criminal groups mandate that individuals or even whole communities work for them as lookouts or couriers. Others will threaten municipal and state administrators into accepting corrupt practices. Beheadings, lynching, torture, and other gruesome displays of violence, as well as high numbers of forced disappearances, have become routine occurrences in some locations. Criminals have killed numerous journalists and bloggers for reporting on these incidents.

Regarding cartel violence, wrong-place/wrong-time incidents present the greatest threat to personal safety. The best ways to reduce the risk is to practice good personal security habits, especially maintaining a high-level of situational awareness and promptly departing from potentially dangerous situations. The Government of Mexico continues to engage in efforts to combat transnational criminal organizations (TCOs). To combat violence, the federal government has deployed military troops and the National Guard throughout the country. The location and timing of armed engagements are unpredictable. The vast majority of those killed in such engagements have been members of TCOs and Mexican security forces, but innocent bystanders have died in shootouts between TCOs and Mexican officials.

At present, the two largest TCOs in the country are the Jalisco Cartel New Generation (CJNG) and the Sinaloa Cartel. Each group has a nationwide presence, although the CJNG has engaged on a more aggressive campaign to expand into new territory. The Sinaloa Cartel, while once the dominant TCO in the country, has its largest presence in the northwestern region of the country and has suffered from internal competition for leadership since the arrests of key leaders Joaquín Guzmán Loera's in 2016 and Ismael Zambada Garcia in 2024. Other TCOs in the country with a significant presence include the Gulf Cartel and Northeastern Cartel, based in the states of Tamaulipas; and Familia Michoacana, based in Michoacan and Mexico State. Local groups, like the Santa Rosa de Lima Cartel in Guanajuato or the Juarez Cartel/La Linea, have smaller geographical footprints but contribute heavily to violence in the areas in which they operate.

The frequency of residential break-ins has declined over the last decade. Homes with heightened security make harder targets. Homeowners should vet domestic staff and avoid keeping large quantities of cash at home.

Credit card security remains a concern, particularly in tourist areas. There have been reports of criminal use of credit cards. There are numerous reports in which criminals skimmed U.S. credit/debit card numbers, stealing the money in their debit accounts, or fraudulently charging their credit cards. In addition to skimming, the risk of physical theft of credit or debit cards also exists. Criminals may also acquire card data manually when cards are handed to or left momentarily with employees of businesses. Try to use ATMs in bank branches during business

hours. Portable credit card terminals are commonly used in Mexico. Always request the establishment bring a portable credit card terminal to charge a credit card in your physical presence.

A variety of road conditions exists throughout the region. Toll (*cuota*) highways are comparable to U.S. interstate highway standards with multiple traffic lanes and broad paved shoulders. These toll highways are designated on maps with an “D” after the highway number (i.e. 57D). The *cuotas* generally have better lighting, frequent police patrols, fewer access points (on/off-ramps), and are generally a safer method of overland transit, but their isolation leaves travelers vulnerable to crime, especially at night. Speed, nighttime travel, weather (especially the summer rainy season), unfamiliarity with the road, lack of lighting, and other elements are contributing factors to serious traffic accidents and incidents on highways. Reduce the risk of carjacking by limiting intercity travel to daylight hours.

Drivers on roads and highways may encounter government checkpoints, which often include a military staff. The government has deployed National Guard and military personnel to combat organized criminal groups. Police also set up various administrative checkpoints in and around cities (e.g., speed control, sobriety checkpoints) and along the highways (e.g., vehicle registration checkpoints). However, criminal organizations sometimes erect their own unauthorized checkpoints and have killed/abducted motorists who fail to stop and/or pay a “toll.” Likewise, self-defense groups have established checkpoints in their communities and have shot and wounded travelers who fail to stop. Additionally, in states like Michoacán and Guerrero, protesters can often set up checkpoints or take over official toll booths and demand motorists pay a fee to cross them. They can get violent if denied. When approaching a checkpoint, regardless of whether it is official, cooperate and avoid any actions that may appear suspicious or aggressive.

It is common for strangers to approach vehicles asking for directions or change, handing out flyers, washing windows, or selling goods. Be alert, lock doors, and keep windows up far enough in case they are not well intentioned. When stopped in traffic, leave adequate distance between vehicles to escape. Do not stop to assist strangers whose vehicles appear broken down. Park inside a residential or hotel compound, in a parking lot with an attendant, or at least within view of the location of your visit.

Visitors should travel by intercity bus only during daylight hours, and only by first-class conveyance whenever possible. Although there have been several reports of bus hijackings and robberies on toll roads, buses on toll roads have experienced a lower rate of incidents than second- and third-class buses that travel on less secure, libre highways. There have been occasional reports of significant security incidents (apart from theft) on tourist buses in/around Mexico City and to nearby tourist destinations.

The Embassy does not recommend using libre taxis, those that pick-up fares on the street after customers hail them; they may have criminal links. Sitio (radio-dispatched) taxis are far safer, more reliable, and worth the added expense. Patrons cannot hail these types of taxis from the street; they must order them by phone or meet at a designated taxi stand. Sitio taxis in Mexico

City most often have meters and government registrations. In addition, the Embassy recommends that government employees use ride-sharing apps that allow consumers to verify the driver and vehicle number. Note that not all platforms operate in all areas.

The issue of femicide, defined as killing a woman because of her gender (as opposed to any killing of a woman) has been a major issue in Mexico, and is a federal offense punishable by 40 to 60 years in prison. It is also a criminal offense in all states distinct from homicide. According to SESNSP, in 2023 there were 3,429 women and girls murdered in Mexico, with 851 of those cases deemed femicides by authorities. In 2024, femicides declined slightly, with 845. Rape and sexual assault are serious problems in some resort areas. Many incidents occur at night or during the early morning hours, in hotel rooms, on hotel grounds, or on deserted beaches. Assailants have drugged the drinks of victims before assaulting them.

The following section regarding areas of criminal concern is separated by consular district. To locate which consular district a particular location falls within, visit the [Find Your Consular Location](#) webpage. Also consider the [Map of Restricted Areas](#), which reflects the Travel Advisory restrictions.

Mexico City Consular District

Mexico City can be visited without major issue by following travel recommendations that would be applicable in many large Latin American cities. The city has made some gains regarding citizen security in recent years, with overall homicides decreasing since 2019. The homicide rate in 2024 was estimated to be 11.01 homicides per 100,000 residents. This marks a slight increase from 2023 when the homicide rate was 10.42 homicides per 100,000.

Neighborhoods (or *colonias*) of the city that tend to be safer for visitors include Polanco, Santa Fe, Lomas de Chapultepec, Coyoacan, La Condesa, Reforma, San Rafael, San Angel, Roma, Navarte, Juarez, and Cuauthemoc. However, violent crime may occur throughout the city. Therefore, it is recommended to maintain a low profile and exercise increased situational awareness, especially when moving between locations. Many OSAC members navigate the city using rideshare apps, like Uber or DiDi, but it is less common for executive/VIP travelers. The main types of crimes that short-term visitors suffer in Mexico City are petty street crime, including pickpocketing, robbery, mugging, or scams that target tourists. Most of these are crimes of opportunity, so limiting those opportunities is key, by being mindful of the locations you visit, who you engage with, how you transit the city, and how you appear to others.

In Mexico City, municipal buses, rapid transit buses (Metrobus), and the Metro (subway) are generally safe to use. City buses and the Metro may be crowded. Passengers should be on the alert for pickpockets and other thieves, especially on the most crowded, busiest routes during rush hour. Avoid non-municipal buses (micros).

- Review OSAC's Benchmarking Report, [Mexico City Travel SOPs and Executive Protection](#)

The U.S. Department of State lists Guerrero as a Level 4: Do Not Travel location. In Guerrero (incl. Acapulco, Taxco, and Zihuatanejo), homicides increased by about 25% from 2022 to 2023, after seeing decreases from 2019 to 2022. The state homicide rate remained steadily high in 2024 at an estimated 47 homicides per 100,000. Guerrero has areas that are largely controlled by local criminal groups, with turf wars and clashes causing violence. The state maintains control in some tourist destinations, but is in a constant struggle with criminal groups.

Clashes between criminal groups and government security forces or rival criminal groups are not uncommon, especially in rural areas of the *Tierra Caliente*. Inhabitants of rural areas have been displaced due to violence. In the southern part of the state, groups of thieves operate, as well as self-defense groups. They often set up *retenes* (roadblocks) and force drivers to step out for inspection, which can lead to theft or assault. It is advised to avoid driving across Guerrero.

In October 2023, Hurricane Otis rapidly strengthened to a Category 5 storm before making landfall near Acapulco, devastating the city. While infrastructure has recovered somewhat, organized crime maintains a strong presence in the city. Violence may occur throughout, including in the hotel zone, where homicides are not uncommon.

Michoacán (incl. Morelia, Zamora, and Lázaro Cárdenas) remains violent and the U.S. Department of State lists it as a Level 4: Do Not Travel location. Shootouts between security forces and criminal groups are not uncommon, particularly near the border with Jalisco and Guanajuato, as well as in the areas surrounding Apatzingán, Zamora, and Uruapan. Michoacán has a history of armed self-defense groups that engage criminal groups and government security alike. Attempts in 2023 to reassemble some self-defense groups to combat criminal organizations like CJNG and Los Viagras in parts of Michoacan, saw violent responses from organized crime.

In the state of Guanajuato (incl. Leon, Salamanca, and San Miguel de Allende), violence remains high, leading Guanajuato to be the state with the highest number of recorded homicides since 2018. In 2024, Guanajuato led Mexican states in total homicides with 3,167. Efforts by the Jalisco Cartel New Generation (CJNG) to impose themselves on the state has led to ongoing violence with the Santa Rosa de Lima Cartel (CSRL) in recent years. Local criminal groups often engage police, with 60 police officers reported killed in the state in 2023 and 61 in 2024, more than any other Mexican state. Fuel theft has also contributed to the high levels of violence in the state of Guanajuato. Popular tourist destinations like San Miguel de Allende and Guanajuato City do not experience such high levels of crime compared to other parts of the state. Yet, due to the high levels of violence in other parts of the state, travelers should exercise caution while visiting.

The state of Chiapas (which includes Tuxtla Gutiérrez and San Cristobal de las Casas) has seen a sharp rise in violence since 2022. The Sinaloa Cartel and CJNG have maintained an ongoing conflict for control of trafficking routes between Mexico and Guatemala leading to increased violence in areas near the border. Additionally, Chiapas is home to the indigenous political movement known as the Zapatistas, or EZLN, which led an armed uprising in 1994 and still exists in the state, as well as other armed paramilitaries.

The small state of Morelos (which includes Cuernavaca) has also seen sharp increases in violent crime in the past two years, with government officials also caught in corruption scandals. Several municipalities have seen concerning increases in homicide rates as well as increases in vehicular robbery and extortion on roadways heading south, out of Mexico City into Morelos state. Morelos' 2024 homicide rate is estimated at 73.99 homicides per 100,000 residents, the second highest state homicide rate in the country and triple the national average.

The central states of Hidalgo (incl. Pachuca) and Puebla (incl. Puebla, Tehuacán, and San Martín Texmelucan) struggle with TCO conflict and fuel theft, particularly in an area known as the Red Triangle. Reporting indicates municipalities that have pipelines passing through them typically have higher indices of crime.

Veracruz (incl. Veracruz, Xalapa, and Coatzacoalcos), and many states in central Mexico, see higher rates of cargo theft and vehicle robbery are common on highways between the Port of Veracruz and Puebla.

Ciudad Juárez Consular District

Crime and violence remain serious problems throughout the state of Chihuahua, particularly in the south and in the Sierra Mountains, including Copper Canyon. Most of the state is off-limits to U.S. government personnel. While there is no indication criminals specifically target U.S. citizens, violence and crime rates remain at critical levels in this area of Mexico. Those traveling to Ciudad Juárez and the city of Chihuahua must guard against robbery, carjacking, theft, and burglary. A significant number of homicides in each city are targeted cartel/gang-related actions, where the perpetrators generally avoid injuring innocent bystanders. Most violent crime occurs outside the city center of Ciudad Juarez, especially to the east and south, however it is not uncommon for incidents to occur throughout the city.

While not common, carjackings can occur in the state of Chihuahua. Most carjacking plays out where the assailants block the victim's vehicle with another vehicle. These incidents can occur during the day and at night in all areas of the state. Living or working in a location with access-control measures decreases the chances of carjacking. If you are traveling with a personal vehicle, you should not leave valuables in the vehicle, especially not in plain view.

The Chihuahua state government and Ciudad Juárez city government have taken steps to reduce extortion with mixed results. Large businesses (including manufacturing plants) are not immune to extortion. A frequent method of extortion involves a telephone call in which the perpetrators threaten harm to the person/business if they do not pay for protection. These phone calls are often random and can originate from outside of the state, sometimes from inside Mexican prisons. Overall, about 95% of extortions are thought to go unreported.

In 2024, large migrant flows saw increased stress on Ciudad Juarez as a major port of entry between the U.S. and Mexico. Migrants are common targets of extortion and kidnapping as organized crime groups coerce migrants to use their smuggling services or target victims for trafficking purposes. Migrants do not pose a major threat to travelers, but at times their large

numbers and occasional protests have led to disruptions or closures at pedestrian, vehicular, and railroad border crossings. Migrant numbers at the border decreased significantly in early 2025. Travelers moving between the U.S. and Mexico should check CBP's [Border Wait Times](#) webpage and adjust their travel accordingly.

In 2024 the state of Chihuahua (whose border with the U.S. runs from New Mexico to the Big Bend of Texas) recorded an estimated 2,067 reported homicides. This was a decrease from 2023, when the state registered 2,122 homicides. Homicide numbers have been steady over the last three years. About half of homicides in the state occur in Ciudad Juarez, which has the second highest number of homicides among Mexican cities with 988, or about 48% of homicides in the state.

Guadalajara Consular District

From 2018 to 2023, the state of Jalisco saw a 60% decrease in crimes, with vehicular robbery, robbery of businesses, robbery of individuals, home robberies, cargo theft, and bank robbery all seeing at least a 50% reduction. Violent crime has also seen reductions in recent years, however, to a lesser degree. The homicide rate in 2024 fell to 21.06 homicides per 100,000 from 23.13 in 2024. However, the state has one of the highest number of reported disappearances in the country.

Guadalajara experienced high numbers of discoveries of clandestine graves with human remains in 2023. Local authorities attribute these numbers almost exclusively to fighting between and within organized crime groups. Since 2020, the homicide rate in Guadalajara has decreased slightly to about 16 homicides per 100,000 residents.

Robbery, auto-part theft, and virtual extortion are the most frequently reported non-violent crimes in Guadalajara's consular district. Crimes of opportunity are common. Thieves often operate in heavily congested areas to steal bags, electronics, and jewelry. Occasionally, they use motorcycles to escape. In the weeks leading up to the winter holiday season, the Guadalajara metropolitan area typically experiences an increase in crime.

Auto-part theft is prevalent in the Guadalajara Metropolitan area. Thieves usually target easy-to-remove parts (e.g. spare tires, side mirrors), side molding, and grilles. These thefts usually occur after dark from cars parked on the street. Parking in pay lots is the easiest way to reduce the risk of auto-part theft. Carjacking commonly involves the threat of force. Late-model trucks and SUVs are often, but not exclusively, targets. Thieves rarely harm victims who do not resist. Reducing travel in rural areas and non-toll highway roads, especially after dark, can significantly reduce the threat of carjacking.

In the state of Jalisco, violence is primarily concentrated around the border with the states of Colima and Michoacan, where the CJNG (based in Jalisco) is engaged in violent conflict with smaller local groups. High levels of organized crime and violence, with reports of local crime groups running illegal roadblocks and checkpoints remains a key concern. Violent territorial disputes between criminal groups have increased along the corridor between Tuxpan and the

border with Michoacan. These confrontations are likely to continue for the foreseeable future or until a truce between local organizations is formed. Lastly, the Altos region of Jalisco, including Lagos de Moreno and Teocaltiche, has seen occasional violent incidents between CJNG and the Sinaloa Cartel in 2023 and 2024.

The state of Colima (Mexico's smallest state by population) has received attention due to having the highest state homicide rate in Mexico in 2023 and 2024, falling from 111 to 101 per 100,000 residents, about five times the national average. While the violence largely transpires between rival drug trafficking organizations, there is potential for collateral casualties. Its capital, Colima City, registered an estimated homicide rate of 136 homicides per 100,000 people for 2024, with the port of Manzanillo also having a homicide rate of over 123 per 100,000. As a result, the U.S. Department of State lists Colima as a Level 4: Do Not Travel location.

Security-related statistics for the state of Nayarit (incl. Tepic) have been improving over recent years, and has seen a change from State Department Level 3 Travel Advisory to Level 2.

Aguascalientes continues to be one of Mexico's safest states. However, disappearances have significantly increased in the state, suggesting a potential shift in security in the state.

Hermosillo Consular District

Violent crime in Sonora and Sinaloa (incl. Mazatlán), particularly involving the illegal drug trade, continues to be a concern. Violent crimes such as armed robbery, homicide, assault, burglary, vehicle theft, economic fraud, and petty crime occur throughout the Hermosillo consular district. Sinaloa remains among the top states in Mexico for TCO violence.

The U.S. Department of State lists Sinaloa as a Level 4: Do Not Travel location. This is due to widespread criminal activity and violence. In 2024, following the arrest of Mayo Zambada, the Sinaloa Cartel's most senior figure, Sinaloa experienced an intense and ongoing period of violence as rival factions in the Sinaloa Cartel fought for control. The state capital of Culiacan has experienced the majority of crimes associated with the conflict, but violence has occurred throughout the state, including in Mazatlán. There have been a large number of homicides, kidnappings, and car thefts associated with the conflict.

Sinaloa saw a sharp 82% increase in homicides in 2024. Increasing from 562 in 2023 to an estimated 1,022 homicides in 2024. The state also saw a 13% increase from 2022 to 2023. The state has a long history with organized crime and drug production, and has served as a base for the Sinaloa Cartel. As a result, the Sinaloa Cartel has a strong presence in the state and impacts the levels of violence. When high ranking members of organized crime are arrested the TCO may exert high levels of violence in retaliation.

The state of Sonora has seen annual decreases in homicides since 2021. In 2024, it registered an estimated 1,443 homicides, or about 45 homicides per 100,000 persons. A large proportion of those homicides occurred in the cities of Ciudad Obregon and Guaymas. Sonora, whose

northern border meets the southern border of Arizona, is divided between the Hermosillo and Nogales Consular Districts. Due to its border access, it registers high levels of trafficking-related crime and violence. While rates of violent crime in localities like Ciudad Obregon and Guaymas are documented to be high, one should not presume other parts of the consular district are immune from the same type of activity. Efforts to assess the security environment using statistics are impeded by the fact that many crimes go unreported. In general, this violence targets those involved in or opposing the illegal drug trade. While victims of this type of violence are typically involved in illegal activity, there is the potential for bystanders to experience collateral damage. Mass clandestine grave sites have been found by volunteer groups and Sonora ranks in the top three Mexican states for the number of these sites. Therefore, use any reported national crimes statistics for trend analyses and not as statistical representation.

Matamoros Consular District

The U.S. Department of State lists the state of Tamaulipas as a Level 4 location, and heavily restricts travel of U.S. government employees in the Matamoros consular district to a small radius around the consulate. Violent crime, such as murder, armed robbery, carjacking, kidnapping, extortion, and sexual assault, including gun battles and blockades, are widespread in the Matamoros consular district. Armed criminal groups are known to target private automobiles traveling through Tamaulipas, often taking passengers hostage and demanding ransom payments. Federal and state security forces have limited capability to respond to violence in many parts of the state.

The primary security threat stems from TCOs and the ongoing turf war between rival factions of the Gulf Cartel, the Northeast Cartel, remaining Zetas cells, and the Mexican security forces. CJNG has also made some moves into Tamaulipas as well. In the past year gun battles have occurred throughout the state of Tamaulipas. Often when engaging with rival criminal groups or Mexican security forces, criminals will create road blockades in order to limit law enforcement response.

The security situation in Reynosa is consistently violent. Rolling gun battles between police elements and TCOs occur daily in Reynosa. Many of these gun battles result in the death of cartel members and police alike. Carjacking and kidnapping occur with similar frequency in Reynosa as well. While Matamoros has been a violent place, criminal control in the city is stronger which has led to lower levels of violence compared to Reynosa where competing criminal factions more regularly come into conflict. The highways from Matamoros and Reynosa towards San Fernando and Ciudad Victoria are frequently the scene of shootouts involving criminal groups. San Fernando and the surrounding area remain a point of contestation for criminal groups.

Generally, crime is underreported and not tracked with any consistency. There were 412 recorded murders in Tamaulipas in 2024. Most of these murders link directly to TCO violence. Additionally, in 2024 there was an estimated 2,472 cases of aggravated assaults, 104 extortions, and 79 kidnappings. Again, these data likely do not capture all criminal incidents. Lastly, the

state has long been a major hub for migrant trafficking and smuggling, with migrants being kidnapped regularly, a practice that has grown in recent years.

Mérida Consular District

According to Government of Mexico statistics, Yucatán (incl. Mérida and Valladolid) and Campeche are among the safest states in Mexico. U.S. companies find these states eager to help them establish business. Reports of extortion or bribery by state and municipal police in either state are rare.

The city of Ciudad del Carmen in Campeche experiences some low-level crime, as it has a high concentration of foreign businesses associated with the oil and gas sectors. Additionally, U.S. military and Mexican Navy report piracy of commercial vessels on an infrequent basis in the Gulf of Mexico.

Security forces are able to maintain law and order in the state of Quintana Roo (incl. Cancún, Cozumel, and Playa del Carmen, and the “Mayan Riviera”). Though, corruption and trustworthiness amongst individual police in Quintana Roo varies greatly. Crime and TCO activity has increased in recent years, including incidents resulting in the injury or death of U.S. citizens.

TCOs often operate with impunity in Quintana Roo and sometimes carry out violent acts in popular tourist locations. The diverse opportunities for illicit enterprise have attracted cells of major organized criminal groups like the Jalisco Cartel New Generation (CJNG), Sinaloa Cartel, Los Zetas, and the Gulf Cartel, as well as smaller local groups that maintain operations in the state. These groups engage in violent competition over illicit markets. This violence is specifically targeted against other TCO members, local residents, and local authorities and rarely results in injury or death of the estimated 15 million travelers that visit the state each year. Of note, the Tulum Chief of Police was assassinated by members of a criminal group in March 2025.

Quintana Roo saw a decrease in homicides in 2024 with an estimated 689 total, down from 740 in 2023. Cancun has largely seen marginal changes in violent crime over the past year. Cancun’s airport (CUN) remains a key transit point for human smuggling and trafficking, as well as movement of other illicit cargo. South of Cancun, Tulum has seen continued concerns around crime since 2023. Travelers to the area are advised to exercise increased caution as incidents have occurred in tourist areas, including in central Tulum. Although the groups operating in the state do not target travelers or members of the private sector, there remains a risk of violent and non-violent crime to visitors in Cancun, Tulum, and Playa del Carmen.

The U.S. Department of State’s Mexico [Travel Advisory](#) guidance advises travelers to exercise increased caution in Quintana Roo due to crime, specifically in downtown areas of Cancun, Tulum, and Playa del Carmen after dark, and to remain in well-lighted pedestrian streets and tourists zones. Cancun’s Hotel Zone is a built-up stretch of land, approximately 30 km long, separate from the rest of the city and accessible only at the northern and southern ends.

OSAC members operating in Quintana Roo report that TCOs have become more emboldened in recent years. OSAC security staff and their management are forced to tolerate cartel activity or, at the very least, to turn a blind eye to their activities and acquiesce to their demands out of fear for their safety, their coworkers, and family members. OSAC members report having to pay large sums to TCOs to have their permission, or *derecho de piso*, to operate their officially licensed business. TCOs are emboldened enough to meet with human resources staff from large corporations to mandate who is hired to specific positions to facilitate the sale of drugs.

Some visitors to Quintana Roo have reported incidents of being threatened with arrest by street-level police to extort cash in lieu of arrest. Travelers report paying bribes up to \$900 directly to police for actual or perceived violations of local laws.

At times, the Mexican federal government has sent the Army, Navy, and/or the National Guard to Quintana Roo to assist local law enforcement with security in the state, especially around key tourist areas. These increased deployments generally last a few weeks before security presence returns to previous levels.

Monterrey Consular District

There is significant risk of crime in the Monterrey consular district. Violent crime (e.g., homicide, kidnapping, sexual assault, and armed robbery) and non-violent crimes (e.g., financial scams, extortion, vehicle thefts, residential break-ins, and petty drug crimes) continue to be a serious concern for those living or working in the district. Organized criminal elements contribute to the high level of crime in the region. While many of those killed in organized crime-related violence were similarly involved in criminal activity, innocent bystanders have also been harmed.

U.S. travelers have fallen victim to criminal activity including homicide, kidnapping, carjacking, and highway robbery, and have been caught between gun battles. There is no evidence that criminal elements specifically target U.S. citizens or other foreign visitors, unless they have some connection to drug trafficking. However, anyone who projects the perception of wealth and is unfamiliar with the area can easily become a target of opportunity.

Nuevo Leon saw about a 13% increase in homicides in 2024, with an estimated 1,599 total homicides. Most of those occur in the greater Monterrey metro area and surrounding municipalities. This is fairly consistent with data from recent years. Those traveling on the highways from Monterrey to the U.S. border along highways 85, 54, or 40 should do so with caution and only during daylight hours.

Residential burglary in Monterrey, including more affluent neighborhoods, occurs and is most common during the day and on weekends or holidays when houses are vacant. Thieves often gain entry through unsecured entryways, by tricking domestic employees, or by using force to access homes that appear vacant. Vehicle theft, carjacking, armed robbery, and theft of parts from parked vehicles all remain common in Monterrey and throughout the consular district. OSAC has also received reports of virtual kidnapping and extortion in the consular district.

Within Monterrey's consular district, the state of Zacatecas remains off limits to U.S. government personnel with the exception of air travel to and from the City of Zacatecas. High rates of violence in the state derive from TCO competition between CJNG and Sinaloa Cartel, with most violence concentrated in Zacatecas City, Fresnillo, Valparaiso, Jerez, and Guadalupe. The state has seen significant decreases in homicides from 2022 to 2024, declining by about 60%. The homicide rate in Zacatecas doubled between 2020 and 2021, and the state led the country in assassinations of police officers in 2022.

Coahuila has continued to make progress on improving security in the state. This year saw a further decline in homicides with only 131.

Nogales Consular District

Crime in the Nogales Consular District, which is comprised of northern Sonora along the U.S.-Mexico border, was more prominent in San Luis Rio Colorado, small towns along highways 2 and 43, and around Nogales to a lesser extent. Crime is widespread in this region and those traveling should do so with caution and during daylight hours only.

San Luis Rio Colorado reached a new record number of homicides in 2024 with 243, an increase on the previous record set in 2023 at 189 homicides. The city serves as a key border crossing for the movement of licit and illicit goods. Additionally, it serves as a key point for human trafficking and smuggling which has become increasingly valuable to organized criminal groups in Mexico. Migrants are regularly kidnapped in the surrounding area.

Nogales saw an increase in homicides with 87 total, slightly greater than the 2022 and 2023 totals. Vehicular robbery remains an issue in Nogales and there was an increase in reported extortion, however, extortion likely remains underreported. Other crimes remain a concern but have shown a slight downward trend in recent years. That being said, no area of Nogales is immune from violent crime. In order to remain safe, it is recommended to remain in the area between El Periferico highway and Avenida Obregon, and avoid the outlying suburban areas. The violent crimes that do occur in this area generally happen after dark. Travel through the city only during daylight hours. Avoid walking after dark. Most businesses close by 2200, so there is little reason to be out late. Avoid bars and nightclubs, which provide a dangerous mix of guns, drugs, and cartel personnel.

Reports of residential burglaries in the Nogales consular district remained at a similar level since 2022, with higher rates in San Luis Rio Colorado and Agua Prieta. These crimes are most common during the day and on weekends or holidays, when houses are vacant. Thieves often gain entry through unsecured entryways, by tricking domestic employees, or using force to access homes that appear to be vacant.

The theft of vehicles, carjacking, and theft of parts from parked vehicles remain one of the most prevalent crimes in the Nogales consular district. There were 562 reported vehicle thefts in 2024 in Nogales and San Luis Rio Colorado alone, a 65% increase from 2023. TCOs look to steal

heavy-duty pick-up trucks and SUVs for their ability to carry heavy loads at high speed across difficult terrain.

The areas along highways 2 and 43 has also seen several violent incidents in small towns including Caborca, Altar, and Santa Ana. These incidents generally relate to conflicts between criminal groups that are looking to consolidate trafficking routes to the U.S.-Mexico border. Highway 15 serves as the main route between Nogales and Hermosillo and it is only recommended to use this route during the day.

For visitors to Puerto Peñasco, it is advised to utilize the Lukeville port of entry (POE) and arrive via highway 8. If the Lukeville POE is closed, it is generally advised to defer travel to a later time. Taking alternative routes to Puerto Peñasco via highways 2 or 43 is not advised due to increased risks to travelers from local criminal groups operating in the area. When a POE closes, please check with the U.S. Department of State for further guidance.

Mexican laws prohibit ownership of personal firearms. Most firearms belong to Mexican law enforcement and military officers via legitimate means, and narco-trafficking criminal elements via illegitimate means. Most narco-trafficking elements possess weapons of various size, including assault rifles, grenades, and belt-fed machine guns. However, the most common weapons involved in narco-related crimes are 9-mm pistols and 7.62-caliber assault rifles.

[Nuevo Laredo Consular District](#)

There is serious threat of crime throughout Nuevo Laredo's consular district in Tamaulipas and Northern Coahuila. In Nuevo Laredo and surrounding parts of Tamaulipas, armed criminal groups target public and private passenger buses, often taking passengers hostage and demanding ransom payments. Non-violent crimes (e.g. financial scams, vehicle thefts, petty drug crimes) are also a serious concern. Local law enforcement has limited capability to respond to the violence that occurs throughout the region.

Reported homicides have decreased substantially in Nuevo Laredo and some other parts Tamaulipas. However, the absence of municipal police; the inability to form a reliable, vetted state police force capable of maintaining law and order; and an inconsistent presence of federal forces continue to make Nuevo Laredo's security environment volatile. The risk of violent crime, such as murder, armed robbery, carjacking, kidnapping, extortion, and sexual assaults persists. Gang activity, including spontaneous rolling gun battles, is a major concern.

The Northeast Cartel (*Cartel del Noreste*; CDN) is predominant in Nuevo Laredo. In recent years, firefights have taken place throughout the consular district, often directly tied to CDN members. Gun battles generally occur after dark, but some have occurred in broad daylight, on public streets, and close to public venues. Arrests or extraditions of leading cartel figures have led to gun battles with federal security forces. Firefights have included targeted violence against the U.S. Consulate in the city, leading to authorized departure of non-essential staff and family members in 2022. While cartel violence in the city does not specifically target U.S. or

other foreign travelers, escalating violence in the aftermath of cartel arrests can lead to greater risks of collateral harm.

Tijuana Consular District

While Tijuana has high levels of reported crime, most visitors and organizations that operate in the city do not regularly report being victims of violent crime. Most violent crime in the city is highly targeted and involves individuals that are involved with local TCO cells. While violent crime is concentrated in Tijuana's outskirts (especially to the south and east of the city center, and the Las Playas de Tijuana neighborhood to the west), targeted violent crime does occur in urban and upscale suburban neighborhoods.

Compared to other parts of the city, the central areas east and north of the Periferico y/o Libramento Sur highway, and west of Highway 2 are generally seen as lower risk, including the neighborhoods of Zona Centro, Zona Rio, and La Cacho. Individuals in Tijuana traveling to Ensenada or Valle de Guadalupe should only drive during daylight hours, and it is recommended to take the toll road, Highway 1D.

Tijuana hosts a thriving tourism industry, and the city is also home to a growing U.S. expat community, including many that regularly commute to the San Diego, California metro region. Organized criminal groups do not tend to target U.S. citizens uninvolved in drug trafficking. However, crimes of opportunity do occur, including pickpocketing and robbery, sometimes at gunpoint. In the event an incident does occur in a central or touristic part of the city, Tijuana's Tourism Police tend to flood the zone to reinforce security. The Tourism Police have increased their presence in locations vital to tourism in recent years in a push to maintain order. Tourists that drink to excess, violate Mexican law, or seek out illicit goods or services put themselves at increased risk of lawful arrest or becoming a victim of crime.

In 2024, Tijuana had the largest number of reported homicides of all municipalities in Mexico with 1,594, a decrease from 1,648 in 2023. Street-level crime related to drug-trafficking organizations is a regular occurrence but does not commonly impact tourist areas significantly. Daylight, proximity to authority, and proximity to witnesses does not deter targeted cartel violence. Attacks on police have occurred, including during daylight hours in central parts of the city.

TCOs in the consular district are involved in narco-trafficking and human smuggling. Three rival cartels battle for control of Baja California criminal operations: the Sinaloa Cartel, CJNG, and remnants of the Arellano Félix Organization (AFO). Infighting is common and increases insecurity. Drug-related violence in Baja California and Baja California Sur (incl. Los Cabos) rarely affects those uninvolved in the drug trade. Violence has continued to increase in the Mexicali Valley and areas east and south of Mexicali. Rival TCO factions operate in this area and engage in high-order violence.

Baja California Sur remains one of the safest states in Mexico. Popular tourist locations like San Jose del Cabo and Cabo San Lucas register very low rates of crime, very low levels of perceived

insecurity among residents, and visitors generally only need to be wary of petty street crime or scams that target tourists. Virtual kidnapping has been reported by U.S. citizens, and individuals should be wary of unsolicited contacts.

Kidnapping Threat

The U.S. Department of State has included a Kidnapping “K” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for several states in Mexico including Baja California, Chihuahua, Colima, Jalisco, Mexico state, Morelos, Puebla, San Luis Potosi, Sonora, Tamaulipas, and Zacatecas. The “K” indicates that criminal or terrorist individuals or groups have threatened to and/or have seized or detained and threatened to kill, injure, or continue to detain individuals in order to compel a third party (including a governmental organization) to do or abstain from doing something as a condition of release.

The number of kidnappings reported throughout Mexico, while difficult to determine, is concerning. Most cases go unreported to authorities, as the popular belief is that the police may be involved or are unable to resolve the situation. Victims of traditional kidnappings are physically abducted and held captive until a ransom is paid. Most cases reported to U.S. Mission Mexico have been kidnapping for ransom (KFR). In some KFR cases, the captors receive a ransom and set the victim free; in others, the captors kill the victim despite having received a ransom. Kidnappings for ransom in the Yucatán Peninsula remain an anomaly.

Express kidnappings may occur, but are still uncommon, and even less common among tourists or visitors. Express kidnappings take advantage of the 24-hour industry-wide withdrawal limit placed on ATM cards, holding victims for 24-48 hours to maximize withdrawal amounts. A common modus operandi for express kidnappings is to target passengers using libre taxis; two or three armed accomplices will enter the taxi a few minutes into the trip. The term “express kidnapping” also applies to the kidnapping of random victims held for brief periods where kidnappers demand only small ransom amounts. A typical scenario may last for several hours and settle for the peso-equivalent of a few hundred or thousand dollars. Few official U.S. government employees have suffered this type of crime, but many Mexican-national employees of the Mission either have been victims themselves or know a victim.

Virtual kidnapping (*secuestro virtual*) has increased in recent years. These extortion telephone calls vary in style, but the methodology is often the same. In these cases, there is no actual kidnapped individual. The victim is actually a person who receives a telephone call. Callers say that they have kidnapped a loved one and often include a crying/pleading voice immediately after answering the call but before the kidnapper gets on the phone. Callers intend to confuse the victim and trick them into giving away important information. The voice will usually be crying and/or hysterical, making it difficult to identify and increasing the likelihood that the victim will believe it is their loved one. Criminals use fear and timing against victims. They plan their calls to coincide with times when it is difficult to contact the victim (e.g., when children are on their way to/from school, or when someone is on a flight).

Alternatively, the callers will obtain the cell phones of two family members. They will call both victims at the same time and claim to have kidnapped the other. They use fear and the threat of violence to keep both victims on the line while they urge them to pay a ransom. Once the kidnappers have obtained as much money as they feel they can, they end the call. They may demand that the victims deliver the ransom in person, which can turn into a real kidnapping, or that they send the money electronically. Variations use callers claiming to be lawyers or police looking to get a family member out a bad situation. They pressure the target to pay them to waive charges or to bribe alleged corrupt officials to free their loved one and avoid a long, expensive judicial process.

Virtual kidnappers call Mexican and international numbers alike, and often use information obtained from social networking websites. Some originate from Mexican prisons. A variation affecting travelers at hotels is an extortion-by-deception scheme, wherein extortionists call a victim and convince them to isolate themselves from family/friends until they receive a ransom. The criminals coerce the victim (by threat of violence) to remain isolated and to provide phone numbers for the victim's family/loved ones. The criminals contact the victim's family and extract a ransom. Often, the callers make statements to suggest surveillance. To reduce the likelihood of receiving a virtual kidnapping call, answer the phone with only a "hello" and make the other person ask for you by name. Ensure that you know the details of your family's itinerary and contact information (e.g. landline and cell phone numbers). Never provide personal information to someone who calls or approaches you, and do not post personal information on social networking sites.

Vary routes/times and be alert to possible surveillance, noting any individual who appears out of place. When hiring domestic help, vet them by identifying references. Ensure that they receive training not to volunteer information to strangers or to allow access to workers without prior authorization.

Terrorism

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Mexico City, Ciudad Juárez, Guadalajara, Hermosillo, Matamoros, Mérida, Monterrey, Nogales, Nuevo Laredo, and Tijuana as being **LOW**-threat locations for terrorism directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests. The U.S. Department of State has not included a Terrorism "T" Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Mexico.

The U.S. Mission Mexico focuses on Mexico as a potential transit country for foreign terrorist groups to conduct operations against the U.S. There are no known foreign terrorist organizations operating/residing in or transiting through Mexico, and there is no evidence that any terrorist group has targeted U.S. citizens in Mexico.

Mexico does not provide safe haven to terrorists or terrorist groups. However, the nature of the border and its ready access to human traffickers, lax immigration controls, the abundance of fake Mexican travel documents, and Mexico's geographic location potentially make the

country an attractive transit point for transnational terrorists. These vulnerabilities make cross-border transit of people and goods a key concern. Businesses conducting cross-border trade should be aware of this vulnerability, as terrorist and criminal organizations could use legitimate business transport to traffic people or items across borders. To mitigate this risk, U.S. Customs and Border Protection operates [the C-TPAT \(Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism\)](#) program in Mexico.

Local authorities cooperate with relevant U.S. government agencies on persons of interest. Criminal organizations have used terror-like tactics (e.g., car bombs, grenades, explosive drones, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs)) to attack each other and security forces. Though they commit gruesome acts of violence designed to terrorize, the purpose of these acts is criminal in nature, directed largely at rival gangs, or civilians that they want to coerce for a particular illicit purpose, like extortion. These criminal groups are profit-motivated and do not act in favor of a larger political agenda.

In February 2025, the U.S. Department of State designated six Mexican TCOs as Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTOs) and Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGTs). This includes the Cartel de Sinaloa, Cartel de Jalisco Nueva Generación (CJNG), Cartel del Noreste (CDN), La Nueva Familia Michoacana, Cartel del Golfo (CDG), and Carteles Unidos. The Central American street gang Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and Venezuelan prison gang Tren de Aragua were also designated as FTOs. Both of these groups are thought to have a minor presence in parts of Mexico.

In relation to the FTO designations U.S. organizations should be aware of criminal penalties associated with providing material support to FTOs. The primary criminal statutes OSAC members need to be aware of regarding FTOs include [18 U.S.C. § 2339 A-D](#). These statutes define [material support](#) as including (tangible or intangible) property, monetary instruments, lodging, training, advice, equipment, transportation, and other goods or services. This can include paying extortion demands (or *derecho de piso*) to criminal groups designated as FTOs. Compliance departments should ensure that an organization does not knowingly, or unknowingly, provide material support to any FTO or FTO-affiliated entity.

Political Violence and Civil Unrest

The U.S. Department of State has assessed Mexico City, Ciudad Juárez, Guadalajara, Hermosillo, Matamoros, Nogales, Nuevo Laredo, and Tijuana as being **HIGH**-threat locations for political violence directed at or affecting official U.S. government interests; and has assessed Mérida and Monterrey as a **MEDIUM**-threat location.

The U.S. Department of State has not included a Civil Unrest “U” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Mexico. Civil unrest can develop quickly without prior notice, often interrupting logistics and services. Avoid demonstration activity, as even those planned to remain peaceful have the potential to turn violent.

Elections/Political Stability

Mexico is a multi-party, presidential democracy featuring a federal system of 32 states. Mexico transitioned away from the hegemonic rule of the Party of the Institutional Revolution (PRI) in 2000. Transitions of power, including those between rival political parties, have been peaceful. Presidents serve single, six-year terms. Incidents of electoral violence, including murders of candidates, occur regularly at the municipal level.

Free and fair elections most recently took place with the June 2024 general elections. Claudia Sheinbaum of the MORENA party won by a wide margin to maintain her party's occupancy of the presidency. MORENA also won large majorities in Mexico's legislature, and several governorships. The 2024 general election was the most violent in Mexico's modern history, with dozens of candidates assassinated. Municipal politicians face higher risks of political violence than those at state or federal levels. Most political assassinations are targeted with the only risk to bystanders being wrong place, wrong time incidents.

Mexico will hold its first ever judicial election in June 2025, following reforms in 2024. The judicial elections are opposed by certain segments of society and protests have occurred in opposition to the reforms. Judicial candidates have faced threats and physical violence, including assassination.

Protests & Demonstrations

Political violence against Mexican politicians is common and stems from widespread corruption. Violence against indigenous groups, not uncommon in the southern states of Chiapas and Oaxaca, is usually tied to land disputes.

Peaceful demonstrations of all sizes gather regularly in Mexico City at the Monument to Independence (popularly known as the *Angel*), near the U.S. Embassy, to protest government policies, labor, social issues, and, occasionally, U.S. policies. Some protestors will march from the *Angel* along Paseo de La Reforma to the *Zocalo* in the Historic Center, sometimes passing the Monument to the Revolution. These protests often affect traffic during peak commuting hours on and near Paseo de La Reforma, the city's primary avenue. Most demonstrations are peaceful. However, even demonstrations intended to be peaceful may turn confrontational and escalate into violence. Outside of Mexico City, groups associated with teachers' unions and those protesting alleged human rights violations in Guerrero have used checkpoints as a way of raising money for their causes.

Protesters in Mexico may block traffic on roads, including major thoroughfares, or take control of tollbooths on highways. Those who encounter protesters demanding unofficial tolls generally may pass upon payment. Non-Mexican nationals should avoid participating in demonstrations and other activities that authorities might deem political, as Mexican law prohibits political activities by foreign citizens and such actions may result in detention and/or deportation.

Anti-U.S./Anti-Western Sentiment

There is no generalized anti-U.S. sentiment towards U.S. citizens or interests (official or non-official). However, comments by Mexican politicians alleging U.S. interference in local political affairs and financing opposition groups can increase anti-U.S. rhetoric on social media, often tied to historical sensitivities relating to the U.S.-Mexico relationship. While this could lead to unsavory encounters, U.S. interests are generally not targets of political violence. Many Mexican citizens have visas for entry into the United States, and frequently travel there for both business and pleasure.

Law Enforcement

911 is the emergency services number throughout Mexico. When driving on a toll road or any other major highway, contact the Green Angels (*Angeles Verdes*), a fleet of trucks with bilingual crews, by dialing **078**.

Law enforcement capabilities have improved due to increased security funding and professionalism, however, the embassy has received reports of police corruption and police involvement in criminal activity. Generally, police receive low wages, are vulnerable to corruption, and receive less training than their U.S. counterparts.

The Government of Mexico dissolved the Federal Police (Policía Federal, PF) and stood up the National Guard (*Guardia Nacional*) in 2019 whose mission, make-up, and mandate differs across Mexican states. The National Guard is not self-sufficient and relies on the army (SEDENA) and navy (SEMAR) to conduct policing and security functions, and to combat organized criminal groups. The National Guard is composed of personnel from SEDENA, SEMAR, and the disbanded Federal Police, as well as new recruits who sometimes lack experience and training.

- The Attorney General's Office (*Fiscalía General de la República*, FGR) is responsible for investigating and prosecuting federal crimes. The State Prosecutor General's Office (*Fiscalía General de Justicia del Estado*, FGE) of each state/city oversees investigating and prosecuting state and local crimes. The Interior Ministry (*Secretaría de Gobernación*, SEGOB) oversees the Mexican Immigration Service (INAMI), whose officers have the right to detain suspected undocumented aliens and may deport them without formal deportation proceedings.
- The Finance and Public Credit Ministry (*Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público*) deploys customs officers (*Aduana*) to borders and international airports to interdict contraband. Under the current administration the military has taken up a greater security role at [ports of entry](#).
- The Bank of Mexico (*Banco de México*) operates its own security division charged with enforcing banking and monetary laws, including cases of counterfeiting, fraud, and money laundering.

- State-level police (*Policía Estatal*) jointly respond to crimes with municipal police and support state prosecutors to conduct investigations. State police in border states have specialized groups that work with the FBI on kidnapping and other sensitive investigations. State police operate under the direction of the state's governor.
- Municipal Police (*Policía Municipal*) mainly patrol and conduct crime prevention in many but not all municipalities. They are the primary responders when summoned through 911, to include traditional police calls like traffic violations and incidents in residential communities.
- Transit Police (*Policía de Tránsito*) are responsible for overseeing and enforcing traffic safety compliance on roads and highways. Response to even minor car accidents can take a long time.

Police Response

Generally, Mexican police must concentrate their limited resources on urban areas, but response times are usually high, and police prioritize cases of active threats or violent crime. Levels of professionalism vary greatly among police agencies. Consequently, citizens are often indifferent to police authority.

Reporting crimes can be a long, frustrating experience. Victims must make a complaint (*denuncia*) to police or the local branch of the State Prosecutor's Office (*Ministerio Público*). When making a *denuncia*, the burden of proof is on the individual to substantiate that a crime occurred. Even after filing a *denuncia* properly, the complainant must ratify it several days later. Satisfying this requirement is not practical for many visitors on short stays.

Police rarely investigate non-violent or minor property crimes. Crimes against foreigners are likely to get more attention from the authorities than crimes against Mexican citizens. Despite the substantial obstacles to reporting a crime, the U.S. Mission encourages all U.S. victims of crime to report the crime to the local prosecutor's office and the American Citizen Services office of the Embassy or nearest Consulate.

Not all uniformed police perform investigative functions or can take *denuncias*. In some cases, their roles are to patrol and prevent crimes. The Tourism Police specifically polices tourist areas and is commonly the only unit that speaks English. Its main purpose is to enhance the safety of tourist areas by deterring crime and responding to accidents. Tourist police cannot take *denuncias* but can assist travelers in contacting authorities who can.

Travelers with Special Considerations

For [specific traveler concerns](#) in Mexico, review the local laws and circumstances on the Department of State's Country Information Page.

- [Women Travelers](#)
- [LGB Travelers](#)

- [Travelers with Disabilities](#)
- [Student Travelers](#)
- [Faith-Based Travelers](#)

Rule of Law, Arbitrary Detention, Official Harassment, Corruption, & Transparency

The U.S. Department of State has/not included a Risk of Wrongful Detention “D” Indicator on the Travel Advisory for Mexico.

In some instances, U.S. citizens have become victims of harassment, mistreatment, or extortion by law enforcement and other officials. Authorities have cooperated in investigating some cases, but one must have the officer's name, badge number, and patrol car number to pursue a complaint effectively. Note this information if you have a problem with police or other officials. Offering a bribe to a public official to avoid a ticket or other penalty is a crime. Cooperate with the police if they stop or question you.

The general perception is that most victims do not report crimes due to fear of reprisals by TCOs or the police, the belief that police are corrupt, or the feeling that nothing would come from such reports. The net result is that most crimes go unreported or uninvestigated. Reporting crime can be a bureaucratic, time-consuming process, and is widely perceived to have limited effectiveness. Federal and state security forces have limited capability to respond to violence in many areas.

Mexican law requires all federal- and state-level appointed or elected officials to disclose their income and assets, statements of any potential conflicts of interests, and tax returns. The Public Administration Secretariat monitors disclosures with support from each agency. Regulations require disclosures at the beginning and end of employment, as well as annual updates. The law requires declarations be made publicly available unless an official petitions for a waiver to keep the filing private. High-ranking public officials must include information related to their spouses and dependents to prevent conflicts of interest, but this information is to remain private.

The law provides for freedom of expression, including for the press. Most newspapers, television stations, and radio stations are privately owned. Media monopolies, especially in small markets, at times constrain freedom of expression. The government has minimal presence in the ownership of news media, but remains a significant source of advertising revenue for many media organizations, which at times influences coverage.

Journalists can criticize the government and discuss matters of general interest with no restrictions. Politicians publicly discredit and criticize such journalists, however. Independent media were active and express a wide variety of views without restriction, but often self-censor due to fear of reprisal. Reports have shown that the government has used spyware against some activists and journalists. Journalists report they are aware of unspoken red lines in

covering organized crime and that crossing lines, such as mentioning the name of an alleged assailant, could result in personal harm. Journalists in Mexico are frequently killed or subject to physical and cyberattacks, harassment, and intimidation in response to their reporting. High levels of impunity, including for killings or attacks on journalists, result in self-censorship and reduced freedom of expression and the press.

The government does not restrict or disrupt access to the internet or block or filter online content. Freedom House notes concerns about online manipulation tactics, high levels of violence against digital reporters, and investigations surrounding abusive surveillance practices.

The law provides for freedom of expression, and the government generally respects this right. There are no government restrictions on academic freedom or cultural events. The law provides for the freedoms of peaceful assembly and association, and the government generally respects these rights.

Cybersecurity

Social engineering of data for scams, kidnapping, and extortion schemes is a cybersecurity issue in the region. Police indicate that in most kidnapping and extortion cases, the victims were targets because of the large amount of personal information available on social media accounts. Mexican citizens are usually the targets of this type of cybercrime, but tourists are not immune to criminal exploitation based on their social media activities.

In 2023, reports uncovered that the Mexican government has used spyware against some citizens, including activists and journalists. This has included the Israeli software known as Pegasus.

Import/Export Restrictions

Illegal firearms trafficking from the United States to Mexico is a major concern, and the Department of State warns all U.S. citizens against taking any firearm or ammunition into Mexico. Those caught entering Mexico with any type of weapon, including firearms or ammunitions, will face severe penalties, including prison time.

It is illegal for travelers to bring electronic cigarettes (vaping devices) and all vaping solutions to Mexico. Customs will confiscate vaping devices and solutions and travelers could be fined or arrested.

There are no known issues for importing satellite phones.

A country-specific listing of items/goods prohibited from being exported to the country or that are otherwise restricted is available from the U.S. International Trade Agency [website](#).

Additional resources and reports can be found in the [OSAC Traveler Toolkit](#).