



## Preparing for Immigration Relief: How to get a birth certificate for Mexican nationals

*Although we do not know yet if or when the President will take executive action on immigration (e.g. by announcing an “administrative relief” program), there are some documents you can gather now to help you prepare for an administrative relief program in the future. For example, you will likely be required to show proof of identity—that you are who you say you are. One way to show this is by submitting a copy of your birth certificate. Having an original or certified copy of your birth certificate also is important because, in most cases, it is a requirement to get other identity documents like a passport or driver’s license. Below is information for Mexican nationals about the process for getting a copy of their birth certificate.*

### **1. Who should I contact to get a certified copy of my birth certificate?**

Each country has a different process and requirements for obtaining a copy of a birth certificate. Generally, the Mexican Embassy or consulates are a good place for you to start to get information about the process and requirements for getting a copy of your birth certificate. Note that Mexican consular officers may provide you with information about the process, but they will not submit the request for you. Providing a copy of a birth certificate is not a service offered by Mexican consulates. The government agency in charge of that is the office of civil registry (“Oficina del Registro Civil” in Spanish) of the state in Mexico where your birth was registered.

If you were born in Mexico, there are two ways in which you can get a copy of your birth certificate. The fastest and easiest way to get a copy of your birth certificate is to contact a relative or friend who lives in the state where you were born and ask her to make an in-person request at the office of civil registry in the state where your birth was recorded. Birth certificates from Mexican states are considered public records, and everyone who has certain information about you, such as your full name, date of birth, place of birth, parents’ names, etc. can request a certified copy of your birth certificate and mail it to your U.S. address. Look at question 3, below to learn about what information you may be asked to provide to get a copy of your birth certificate.

Another option is for you to directly contact the office of civil registry of the state in Mexico where your birth was recorded and request a copy of your birth certificate. Some states in Mexico allow Mexican nationals living in the United States to get a copy of their birth certificate by submitting a request by phone. Other states allow Mexican nationals living in the United States to submit their request online by visiting the website of the office of civil registry of the state where their birth was recorded. The offices of civil registry often refer to the service of requesting a birth certificate by those living outside of their state of origin as “Actas Foráneas” in Spanish. Keep in mind that the processing time of *Actas Foráneas* generally takes between one to two months.

**NOTE:** If your birth was never registered with the office of civil registry, you will have to contact the Mexican embassy or consulate, and they can guide you in how to register your birth with the government of Mexico.

### **2. How do I contact the office of civil registry in the state where my birth was registered?**

The following website provides a list with contact information for the offices of civil registry of each

state in Mexico: <http://consulmex.sre.gob.mx/chicago/index.php/oficinas-registro-civil>. You can also find the website and phone number by searching online, using the name of the state you were born in and the words “oficina del registro civil.” For example, if you were born in the state of Michoacán you can search for “Michoacán Oficina del Registro Civil.”

Services such as *Actas Foráneas* (requesting your birth certificate when living outside of the state where your birth was recorded) can take up to a couple months, and you will have to pay service fees in addition to the mailing fees. If you are going to get a copy of your birth certificate mailed to a U.S. address, have it shipped by private delivery services such as Estafeta, UPS, DHL, or FedEx. It might cost a little more, but you can keep track of the package and it will be delivered faster.

### 3. What information do I need to provide to get a copy of my birth certificate?

Each office of civil registry has its own requirements and processes for getting a certified copy of a birth certificate. However, many offices will require you to have a photocopy of your birth certificate, because you will be asked for information written on your birth certificate to help the office of civil registry search for, and locate your birth certificate. This is especially true if you are making your request online. Information commonly requested includes:

- Your full name (first name, middle name, last name, second last name).
- Information about where to locate your birth certificate, such as the year in which your birth was recorded, the record (or book) number where your birth was recorded, and the office or court where your birth was recorded (“juzgado” or “oficialía” in Spanish).
  - For example, the office of civil registry in Mexico City (Distrito Federal) asks those requesting their birth certificate online to provide their “registry information” (or “datos registrales” in Spanish), which are found on the birth certificate.

Año de registro	Juzgado u Oficialía	Libro	Acta o Partida

Example:

JUZGADO	LIBRO	FOJA	AÑO DE REGISTRO
12	2	88	1972

- You may also be asked for other information, such as your Individual Identification Number (or CURP) or your parents’ full names.

If you do not have this information, you should call the office of civil registry to get information about how else you can get a certified copy of your birth certificate.