

# Importing Foreign Plated Vehicles to Mexico

April 10, 2012

**This is a courtesy translation by the U.S. Consular Agency of the information provided by the Mexican Authorities during the meeting. The Consular Agency assumes no responsibility or liability for this information . Any doubts or questions regarding this information should be directed exclusively to the Mexican Customs English-speaking call center:**

**México            01 800 463 6728**  
**US & Canada    1 877 448 8728**



# Temporary Importation Governing Laws

According to Mexican Law, the temporary importation of vehicles, motorcycles, motor homes and boats is regulated by:

- Customs Law (Article 106 Fraccion IV, Paragraph a, V, Paragraph c y d)
- Bylaws of Customs Law (Articles 139, 143 y 144)
- General Rules for Foreign Commerce for 2011. (4.2.5., 4.2.6. y 4.2.7.)



The Mexican Army's Bank (Banjercito) is in charge of issuing temporary importation permits and stickers.

This bank is also responsible for charging and 'holding' the security deposit when a foreign vehicle enters Mexico. This deposit is always reimbursed when the vehicle is returned within the approved period of time.





# I. Temporary Importation of Vehicles

The application for a temporary importation of a vehicle can be done at:

1. **CIITEV Modules: Customs posts at any major US/Mexico border crossings.**  
Payment accepted in cash or debit/credit card in the name of vehicle owner.
2. **Mexican Consulates in the U.S., six months prior to the vehicle's entrance to Mexico:** Chicago, Illinois; Austin, Dallas and Houston, Texas; Los Angeles, San Bernardino and Sacramento, California; Albuquerque, Nuevo México; Denver, Colorado and; Phoenix, Arizona.
3. **By internet on the following websites: [www.banjercito.com.mx](http://www.banjercito.com.mx) ó [www.aduanas.gob.mx](http://www.aduanas.gob.mx) ,** between 10 and 60 days prior to the vehicle's entrance to Mexico

Payment only accepted by debit/credit card.



Formulario de Permiso de Importación Temporal de Vehículos (PIT) emitido por la Administración General de Aduanas. El formulario contiene los siguientes datos:

- Nombre de Aduana:** NUEVO LARSDC, TAMPS
- Clave:** 24
- Fecha de ingreso:** 20/11/2007
- Módulo de Expedición:** 650
- Datos del Importador:** VEGA LEMON
- Datos del Propietario:** VEGA LEMON, CLASE CAMIONETA
- Modelo:** MAZDA
- Forma de Garantía:** TDC
- Forma de Pago:** PAISANO
- Calificación:** 4697
- Período de validez:** Del 20/11/2007 al 19/11/2008
- Código de Barras:** 20022633
- Forma de Pago:** PAISANO
- Forma de Garantía:** TDC
- Forma de Pago:** PAISANO
- Forma de Pago:** PAISANO





# Procedure to renew or extend your temporary importation permit

You must petition in writing and in Spanish to any of the 49 customs offices in Mexico or directly to the central office (ACOA) in Mexico City:

Administración de Operación Aduanera “3”  
Av. Hidalgo No. 77 Módulo IV, Primer Piso.  
Col. Guerrero.  
C.P. 06300, México, D.F.

You must give notice to customs **within 15 calendar days** after you obtain or renew and FM3/FM2. Failure to do so will result in your vehicle being illegal and the loss of your security deposit. The following must accompany your written petition:

- Photocopy of your temporary importation permit
- Photocopy of your renewed immigration document issued by INM (FM3 or FM2)

**Note:** If you live in the Puerto Vallarta area you can go directly to the customs agency in the airport. Given the large volume of flight passengers during rush hour, the best time is between 9am-11am Monday through Friday.

Residencia	Aduana	Ubicación
Puerto Vallarta	Sección Aduanera	Aeropuerto Internacional Gustavo Díaz Ordaz Km. 7.5 carretera a Tepic, Col. Villa de las Flores. C.P. 48311



# Example letter for the renewal or extension your temporary importation permit



Aviso de prórroga ampliación, refrendo, canje de Calidad Migratoria.

\_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ de \_\_\_\_\_ 201\_\_

C. Administrador de la Aduana de \_\_\_\_\_  
Presente.

De conformidad con la Regla 4.2.7. de las Reglas de Carácter General en Materia de Comercio Exterior vigentes, me permito solicitar se actualice el registro de mi permiso de importación temporal de vehículos, en la base de datos del sistema importación e internación temporal de vehículos, en virtud de que el Instituto Nacional de Migración otorgó prórroga, ampliación, refrendo, canje a mi Calidad Migratoria, de acuerdo a lo siguiente:

#### Calidad Migratoria

Forma Migratoria No. \_\_\_\_\_ Calidad Migratoria \_\_\_\_\_

Característica Migratoria \_\_\_\_\_ Modalidad \_\_\_\_\_

#### Vehículo

Marca \_\_\_\_\_ Modelo \_\_\_\_\_

No. de serie \_\_\_\_\_ Permiso de importación  
Temporal de vehículos \_\_\_\_\_

Para tal efecto, anexo la siguiente documentación:

Copia simple del documento otorgado por el Instituto Nacional de Migración.

Copia simple del permiso de importación temporal de vehículos.

#### Atentamente

Nombre: \_\_\_\_\_

Domicilio: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ C.P. \_\_\_\_\_

Firma: \_\_\_\_\_ Correo Electrónico: \_\_\_\_\_

- For your renewal/extension notification you may use this format or a simple letter in Spanish.
- This letter must contain:
  - a. Vehicle characteristics (make, model, serial number/VIN)
  - b. Clear indication of immigration status: FM3/FM2, modality and card number.
  - c. Applicant's (vehicle owner) address in Mexico.
  - d. Attach photocopies of current immigration document and vehicle permit.
- To make sure your letter arrives in a timely manner please use a courier service. (UPS, Estafeta, DHL, etc.)
- Customs will contact you directly in case you need additional documentation: no news is good news!
- Keep a photocopy of everything sent (including courier waybill) for your own records.



# Permanent Importation

## What is a definitive importation?

Is the procedure by which a vehicle becomes nationalized in Mexico and can stay in the country for an unlimited period of time. This procedure is a legal importation and it is handled exclusively by a customs broker.

## What vehicles can be imported definitely?

- Brand new vehicles
- Used vehicles that are 8-9 years-old of year/model or manufacture date. Models '03/'04 for 2012
- Temporarily imported (vehicles already in Mexico under a temporary permit) used vehicles that are 8-9 years-old of year/model or manufacture date. Models '03/'04 for 2012
- Used vehicles considered as classic (cars that are more than 30 years old)

## Where can I import my vehicle?

This procedure is **ONLY** done at the Customs offices located at the major US/Mexican border crossings. In addition this procedure is done at the maritime customs offices of Cancun, Veracruz or Manzanillo.

For an authorized list of customs brokers and additional information please visit [www.claa.org.mx](http://www.claa.org.mx), [www.caaarem.org.mx](http://www.caaarem.org.mx), or by phone at 01 55 11 07 85 15 y 01 55 33 00 75 00.



# FAQ'S

## Who can legally drive a temporarily imported vehicle?

1. Importer (vehicle owner/registrar)
2. Spouse
3. Parents
4. Children
5. Siblings,
6. Another foreigner with on of the authorized immigration statuses: Tourist (FMM), Non-immigrant (FM3) all qualities, Immigrant only non-working (FM2 Rentista).
7. A Mexican national **ONLY** if one of the above people are also riding in the same vehicle.

## Can my employee drive my foreign plated vehicle, I have it here legally under my FM3?

**NO**, only the following people can drive a foreign vehicle that is temporarily imported in Mexico: spouse, parents, children, siblings and by another foreigner that has the same immigration status. If a clear relationship cannot be established by last name, a copy of marriage or birth certificate in the glove compartment is recommended.

## What is the difference between temporay and definitive importation?

**Temporary Importation.-** The vehicle will remain in Mexico for a limited period of time (time limited to duration of valid Immigration status – Tourist, Non-immigrant (FM3) and Non-working Inmigrant (FM2 Rentista).

**Definitive Importation.-** the vehicle will remain in Mexico for an unlimited period of time (getting Mexican Plates).

## Can I drive a Mexican plated vehicle?

Absolutely, in fact a growing number of ex-pats are simply buying cars in Mexico to avoid the complexities of Temporary and Permanent importation permits.



# FAQ'S

## **I just became a Mexican citizen by naturalization; can I still drive my foreign plated vehicle?**

Not anymore, the only recognized immigration statuses are: Tourist, Non-immigrant (FM3 – all types), and Non-working Inmigrant (FM2 Rentista). These 3 statuses give you the privilege of temporarily importing a foreign vehicle in Mexico.

## **My FM3/FM2 is current, does my US or Canadian vehicle registration need to be valid in order to legally drive my foreign vehicle in Mexico?**

Yes, your registration or plate 'stickers' must be current and renewed every year, according to your own state/province's DMV requirements. It may be inconvenient for some states and older vehicles that require emissions testing, but it is still a requirement by local transit police. Mexican Customs considers your vehicle legal as long as you keep you immigration status current... HOWEVER that does not exempt you from the laws of Secretary of Communications' as well as the applicable Transit Laws of each state or municipality. These laws require for all motor vehicles in transit to maintain a valid registration. Local transit police are completely in their right under Mexican law to sanction or detain a vehicle for not having a valid registration.

## **Is Onapafa recognized as a creditable organization? Are their import papers and paperwork legal?**

NO, the only recognized entity in Mexico for definitive importation of vehicles is the Mexican Customs Office (Aduana) which depends from SAT (Mexican IRS equivalent).

## **How old must a vehicle be before I can import it definitely (nationalize it/get Mexican plates)?**

The vehicle MUST be 8-9 years old. In the case of the year 2012 the vehicle must be a model 2003/2004. Therefore cars older than 2003 are no longer eligible and newer models must wait until they become 8 to 9 years-old. Brand new vehicles (of the year) and classic cars (older than 30 years) are also eligible for permanent importation.



# FAQ'S

**We have an old vehicle here with foreign plates, it is stored as it is basically a non runner. It will not make it back to the border to cancel the importation permit. We cannot sell it here. Is there somewhere local we can take it to dispose of it and get official paperwork to cancel the permit in our name?**

It is the responsibility of the temporary importer to return the car to its country of origin. If the car will not make it to the border a towing service can be contracted. The last recourse is to solicit a destruction or donation permit to the Legal Department at the Local SAT Administration Office. This permit allows for the destruction of the car. Another permit allows you to donate your vehicle to an organization authorized under the Mexican tax agency (SAT) as an unauthorized non-profit. The local SAT office is located on avenue Francisco Villa #1292, across from Costco in Puerto Vallarta.

**When one changes immigration status to an FM3 to leave a vehicle in Mexico. What is the procedure to get the deposit back that was made for the entry of the vehicle?**

The deposit charged by Banjercito will NOT be returned UNTIL the vehicle returns to its country of origin. This refund can be obtained by physically presenting the vehicle at any of the customs modules (CIITEV) located in the northern border of Mexico. HOWEVER, you must notify in writing with 15 calendar days of getting your FM3/FM2 to any Mexican Customs office (closest one is located in the PV airport). An example of this notification is located in page 7. This notification will ensure that your bond is put on 'hold' and it is not lost and deposited into the Mexican Treasury. This notification MUST also be made within 15 calendar days each time you renew your FM3/FM2.

**How do you make a foreign plated car that is currently temporarily imported a Mexican plated car? Permanent importation, not just temporary importation.**

The car must be 8 to 9-years-old at the time of the application. It can be done at any of the CIITEV modules located at the border or authorized sea ports. You must contract the services of an authorized customs agent to help with the procedure, more information on page 8.

**If you have an FM3 and you have legally brought a vehicle into the country, do you have to go back to Nogales and re-register the vehicle when your year is up or is there someplace to go in Puerto Vallarta that can handle the re-registration of the vehicle. I do not want to import the vehicle permanently.**

As long as your immigration status remains valid and you renew your FM3/FM2 every year, no further action is necessary. The only obligation before Mexican Customs is to notify in writing with 15 calendar days of getting your FM3/FM2 to any Mexican Customs office (closest one is located in the PV airport). An example of this notification is located in page 7.

**I have an FM3 and brought my car into Mexico just a little over a year ago. My car is a foreign plated 2005 model. I am driving to the States this summer and will re enter Mexico with the same car a month later. Will I have to pay any fees to bring it back to PV?**

No, as long as your immigration status remains valid, your temporary importation permit is valid despite of its expiration date. This temporary permit allows for multiple entrances (entradas multiples) so no additional fees or bonds are required.

**What is the process to renew a bond?**

The bond or 'vehicle return deposit' is not renewable, instead your obligation is to notify your changes in immigration status. You must notify in writing with 15 calendar days of getting your FM3/FM2 to any Mexican Customs office (closest one is located in the PV airport). An example of this notification is located in page 7. This notification will ensure that your bond is put on 'hold' and it is not lost and deposited into the Mexican Treasury. This notification MUST also be made within 15 calendar days each time you renew your FM3/FM2.

# FAQ'S

**Can I import a passenger car in my name with the RV permit still in place? I have NO INMIGRANTE (FM3) status.**

Yes, any of the aforementioned immigration statuses allows PER PERSON for 1 vehicle (car), 1 RV/motorhome and 1 recreational vehicle (ATV, Jetski, motorcycle, etc.).

**Can a passenger car registered in the USA be imported and nationalized at the border upon entry rather than using the temporary import permit process?**

Yes as long as the car is 8 to 9-years-old, at any of the CIITEV modules located at the border. You must contract the services of an authorized customs agent to help with the procedure, more information on page 8.

**My temporarily imported car was totaled (completed loss-perdida total) in a car accident. How do I get it off the registry so that I can bring another one into Mexico?**

You must notify in writing and in Spanish the central Mexican customs office in Mexico City (address on page 6). Please accompany your letter with a photocopy of your import permit, immigration document, insurance company's total loss statement, police/transit report and any other evidence of the loss. It is recommended you send this via courier and keep copies of everything including your courier waybill for your records.