TRAVEL SECURITY BRIEF

Mexico City, early December 2026

One adult business traveler · One city, up to five days · Fictional traveler, no personal names

This is a sample of the $95 travel-brief service: public sources cited, plus a contingency checklist. It is a planning compilation of official and public information current as of 16 November 2026. Conditions change; re-check the cited sources before departure.

1. Snapshot

Item	Current public picture
Country advisory	Level 2: Exercise Increased Caution in Mexico due to terrorism, crime, and kidnapping. Some areas of the country are higher risk. Issued 29 May 2026.
Mexico City	Exercise increased caution due to terrorism and crime. No CDMX-specific restrictions on travel by U.S. government employees.
Health	Altitude about 2,250 m (7,382 ft). Tap water is not safe to drink. Winter air pollution can be severe.
Early December weather	Official Tacubaya normals: typical December highs 22.4 °C (72 °F), lows 8.4 °C (47 °F), about 5 mm of rain and 1.2 rain days. Pack layers.
Transport	Do not hail taxis on the street. Use a hotel car, an authorized sitio stand, or a trusted ride-hail app, and confirm the plate before you get in. At AICM, use official taxi booths inside the terminals.
Emergencies	Dial 911. U.S. Embassy Mexico City: Presa Angostura 225, Col. Irrigación, Miguel Hidalgo, C.P. 11500. From Mexico: 55 2579 2000 (including after hours).

Enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at step.state.gov before travel so the embassy can send alerts and reach you in an emergency.

2. Official travel advisory

The U.S. Department of State rates Mexico Level 2: Exercise Increased Caution due to terrorism, crime, and kidnapping. The advisory was issued on 29 May 2026. Some areas of Mexico carry higher advice, including Level 4: Do Not Travel. This brief covers a stay inside Mexico City only; if plans add other states, read the full state-by-state advisory first.

Mexico City. The same advisory says to exercise increased caution due to terrorism and crime:

- There is a risk of violence from terrorist groups, cartels, gangs, and criminal organizations.
- Both violent and non-violent crimes occur throughout Mexico City.
- Use extra caution, especially at night, outside popular tourist areas where police patrol more frequently.
- Petty crime occurs frequently in both tourist and non-tourist areas.
- There are no specific restrictions on travel for U.S. government employees in Mexico City.

U.S. citizens are strongly advised to follow the same general restrictions that apply to U.S. government employees nationwide: do not travel between cities after dark; rely on dispatched vehicles from regulated taxi stands or app-based services such as Uber or Cabify, and do not wave down taxis on the street; avoid traveling alone, especially in remote areas. The advisory also states that many violent crimes take place in Mexico — including homicide, kidnapping, carjacking, sexual assault, and robbery — and that there is a risk of terrorist violence. If you encounter a road checkpoint, comply; fleeing or ignoring instructions can lead to you being hurt or killed.

Source note. The live advisory at travel.state.gov could not be opened on 16 November 2026 (Cloudflare challenge). Wording above is from the official page as archived on 14 July 2026, the latest successful snapshot found through mid-November. Live embassy pages fetched the same day still show Level 2 due to terrorism, crime, and kidnapping. Re-check the live advisory before departure.

3. Health notes

Altitude. The CDC Yellow Book (2026 edition) states that Mexico City is over a mile high — 2,250 m (7,382 ft) — and that healthy travelers from lower elevations, and people with heart or lung conditions, might need an acclimatization period. The State Department also flags Mexico City as high altitude. CDC's general "Travel to High Altitudes" page discusses altitude-illness risk above 8,000 ft; Mexico City sits slightly below that line. Even so, plan a lighter first day, drink bottled water, go easy on alcohol on arrival, and talk with a clinician before travel if you have heart or lung disease. Ultraviolet exposure is stronger at high elevation; use sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher.

Air quality. The Yellow Book says air pollution in Mexico City has decreased in recent years but can still be severe in the dry winter months, aggravating asthma and chronic lung and heart conditions. Check current air quality before outdoor activity and limit strenuous outdoor time if conditions are poor. Early December is in the dry season. The State Department likewise calls air pollution a significant problem in several major Mexican cities.

Water and food. The Yellow Book is direct: tap water in Mexico is not safe to consume. The State Department says bottled water should be requested at restaurants and hotels, ice may be made from tap water, and uncooked vegetables can make you sick. Avoid unpasteurized dairy (especially soft or fresh cheeses), raw or undercooked meat or fish, leafy greens, and raw fruit or vegetables unless you can peel them yourself. Travelers' diarrhea is common. Wash hands often.

Vaccines and notices (CDC Traveler View for Mexico, last reviewed 3 September 2026). See a clinician promptly — ideally a month ahead, which is tight for an early-December trip if this brief is read in mid-November. CDC recommends Hepatitis A for unvaccinated travelers one year and older; typhoid vaccine for most travelers; and being up to date on routine vaccines, including measles-mumps-rubella (MMR). Hepatitis B is recommended for unvaccinated travelers younger than 60. Yellow fever vaccine is not recommended and not required. Malaria prevention medicine is advised only for certain areas (Campeche, Chiapas, and southern Chihuahua); Mexico City is not on that list.

Care and insurance. Medicare, Medicaid, and most standard U.S. health plans do not cover care outside the United States. The State Department and the embassy warn that costs may be higher than expected, that most hospitals will not release patients until the bill is paid, and that hospitals usually require payment or a credit-card hold at admission. Buy travel health insurance that includes medical evacuation.

Sources: CDC Mexico Traveler View; CDC Yellow Book, Mexico (live page blocked 16 November 2026; text from the 13 October 2026 Internet Archive snapshot); CDC Travel to High Altitudes; State Department guidance as archived 14 July 2026; U.S. Embassy Medical Information.

4. Weather for early December

These are climate normals, not a forecast. Official 1991–2020 normals from Mexico's Servicio Meteorológico Nacional, Tacubaya Central (Observatory), station 9048 in Miguel Hidalgo, elevation 2,308.6 m. Issued 13 November 2026, fetched 16 November 2026.

December normal (Tacubaya Central)	Value
Average daily high	22.4 °C (72 °F)
Average daily low	8.4 °C (47 °F)
Average daily mean	15.4 °C (60 °F)
Average precipitation	5.0 mm (0.2 in)
Average days with rain	1.2

December is in the dry season. Days are typically mild; mornings and evenings are often cool enough for a jacket. Sunshine at this altitude is strong even when the air is cool. The State Department lists tropical storm and hurricane season as May to November, so early December sits after that window here. Check a current forecast in the days before departure.

Source: SMN normales climatológicas 1991–2020, estación 9048 Tacubaya Central (OBS), smn.conagua.gob.mx.

5. Getting around safely

From Mexico City International Airport (AICM). Mexico City's official visitor guide says to hire authorized taxis at the official booths inside the terminals, and not to accept rides from people in the arrival halls. Ride-hail apps such as Uber, DiDi, or Cabify "operate entirely legally," but because of federal regulations the meeting point is usually just outside the exit doors of both terminals. AICM's official taxis page lists authorized operators; the page body is script-rendered, and the page's own published description names TaxiRide, Yellow Cab, Sitio 300, and several others. Metrobús Line 4 also runs express service from Terminals 1 and 2 toward the Historic Center.

In the city. The State Department: do not hail taxis on the street. Use trusted ride-sharing apps, or book through the hotel or an authorized taxi stand (sitio). Confirm the driver's license plate and vehicle type before entering. Uber and Cabify are available and generally safe to use. There have been violent attacks on ride-share drivers by taxi drivers who see them as a threat; if your driver is drawn into a confrontation, leave the car and seek safety. The city government also notes a "Mi Taxi" module in the App CDMX that can verify an official pink-and-white taxi driver, share a trip, and reach a panic button.

Metro and buses. The city describes the Metro as Latin America's most extensive metropolitan railway (12 lines, nearly 200 stations) and the fastest way to cross the city, using the Integrated Mobility (MI) card. The State Department does not single the Metro out as off-limits. It does say public buses are generally safe in Mexico City, and that passengers should protect their belongings because theft is common. Use the same caution on Metro cars and in stations: bags closed and in front of you, phone off tabletops and out of back pockets. If you leave the city, travel between cities only during daylight; first-class or "executive" buses are described as the most direct and reliable.

If you drive. Hoy No Circula can restrict driving days and times, including for some rental cars, based on the plate number. Uninsured drivers in an accident may be arrested, regardless of fault. For a five-day business stay, taxis, ride-hail, and public transit usually remove that risk.

Sources: State Department guidance (archived 14 July 2026); Mexico City government, Getting Around; AICM authorized taxis page.

6. Crime trends and common scams

The notes below are generic, city-level guidance from official travel sources. They are not research on any named person, protest, or criminal group.

Mexico City. Violent and non-violent crime occur throughout the city. Petty crime is frequent in both tourist and non-tourist areas. Use extra caution at night, especially outside popular tourist areas with more routine police patrols. The Yellow Book lists pickpocketing, traffic, and vehicle crashes among risks for the central region that includes Mexico City. Mission Mexico has assisted U.S. citizens who were victims of armed robbery, carjacking, extortion, homicide, kidnapping, pickpocketing, and sexual assault. Territory disputes among criminal groups can injure bystanders. If you encounter an active shooter situation, the State Department says to flee or drop to the ground behind a hard barrier.

Robberies and taxis. Robberies happen often in cities. Criminals may force victims to withdraw money with a card, or pose as taxi drivers. Limit the cash you carry. Do not hail taxis on the street. Ask your bank, before you travel, how to freeze or cancel cards quickly.

Virtual kidnapping and hotel extortion. These schemes are common. In one version, criminals convince a family that a relative has been kidnapped when the person is actually safe but unreachable. In another, a caller tells someone who has just checked into a hotel that they are in danger and must pay a ransom, and tries to stop them from contacting police or family. Do not share travel plans, your room number, or personal or business details with strangers, including over a hotel phone. If someone claims a loved one has been kidnapped, try first to reach that person directly. If you receive a threat, end the call. If a caller says you are in danger in a hotel, tell the front desk, consider moving hotels, and decide whether to involve local authorities.

Cards, ATMs, and other scams. Use ATMs in safe, well-lit places, ideally inside a bank, and watch for skimming devices, which are popular in tourist areas. Check accounts for unauthorized charges. The State Department also lists common financial scams: requests to help with a money transfer, fake bank overpayments or inheritances, promises of free trips or luggage, online romance appeals for money, and timeshare-exit offers. The embassy adds: stay alert, beware of pickpockets and scam artists, and never leave a wallet, bag, phone, or passport unattended. Do not display expensive watches or jewelry, and be extra vigilant at banks and ATMs.

Drinks, nights out, and demonstrations. The State Department reports that rape and sexual assault are common in some resort areas, especially at night or early morning, and that criminals sometimes drug drinks. Closely monitor your drinks. Drink alcohol only in moderation; there are also reports of illness from contaminated alcohol. Demonstrations happen often and can block roads. U.S. citizens should not join them: Mexican law forbids political activities by foreigners, and participation can lead to detention or deportation. Avoid protest areas; they can turn violent.

Sources: State Department guidance (archived 14 July 2026); CDC Yellow Book, Mexico (2026 edition); U.S. Embassy World Cup 2026 guidance.

7. Hospitals with international patient offices

Call 911 for an ambulance. Not all emergency operators speak English; the State Department recommends seeking help from a Spanish speaker to place the call if you can. The two private hospital systems below run English-language international-patient pages and offices. That is not a promise that every emergency-room staff member speaks English, and it is not a ranking or a guarantee of outcome. The embassy’s medical page points to its Resource Navigator for broader lists and notes that hospital quality varies and that payment is usually required up front.

Centro Médico ABC (ABC Medical Center) — international patient services; Medical Tourism Advisor: +52 55 5230 8034. centromedicoabc.com

- Campus Observatorio: Sur 136 No. 116, Col. Las Américas, Álvaro Obregón, 01120, Mexico City. Tel. (55) 5230 8000.
- Campus Santa Fe: Av. Carlos Graef Fernández 154, Col. Santa Fe, Cuajimalpa, 05300, Mexico City. Tel. (55) 1103 1600.

Médica Sur — international medicine office; the hospital states it is part of the Mayo Clinic Care Network. Puente de Piedra 150, Col. Toriello Guerra, Alcaldía Tlalpan, C.P. 14050. International appointments: 55 5424 7200, ext. 3390, 4832, and 4831 (phone hours listed as Monday–Friday 8:00–19:00, Saturday 9:00–14:00). medicasur.com.mx/ms-intl/en/

Carry insurance details, a credit card that will work for a hospital hold, and a list of medicines and allergies. Ask for a written estimate and an itemized bill.

8. U.S. Embassy and emergency numbers

U.S. Embassy Mexico City — Presa Angostura 225, Col. Irrigación, Alcaldía Miguel Hidalgo, Ciudad de México, C.P. 11500. The consular-section entrance is at the corner of Legaria Street and Casa de la Moneda.

Need	Number or channel
Police, ambulance, or fire	911 (national number; operators receive your location)
U.S. citizen emergency, including after hours (from Mexico)	55 2579 2000
Same line from the United States	011 52 55 2579 2000, or +1 301 985 8843
American Citizens Services hours	Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Central Time, except U.S. and Mexican holidays
Passport appointments (from Mexico)	55 4163 8422 (window 7:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m., appointment only)
ACS email (general inquiries)	Mexico.ACS@gdit-gss.com
State Department 24/7 (U.S. or Canada / from abroad)	1-888-407-4747 / +1-202-501-4444
Mexico City non-emergency information (LOCATEL)	55 5658 1111
Mexico City Tourist Assistance Hotline	55 5286 7097 or 55 5286 9077, ext. 2104 or 2309, Monday–Friday 9 a.m.–6 p.m.
National tourist information	078 (from any phone in Mexico)

Save the embassy address and phone in your phone and on a paper card. Enroll in STEP. The embassy also points travelers to its WhatsApp channel “U.S. Citizens in Mexico.” Sources: embassy contact and Mexico City pages; Mexico City Emergency page.

9. Local laws and customs worth knowing

If you break local laws, even by mistake, you can be fined, expelled, arrested, or imprisoned. If you are arrested or detained, ask officials to inform the U.S. Embassy immediately.

- Passport. A passport book is required for air travel into Mexico and for domestic flights inside Mexico; a passport card is not enough to board a plane. It must be valid for the duration of the stay. Immigration decides how long you may stay and will stamp your passport; airports issue a digital Forma Migratoria Múltiple Digital (FMMD). Keep the stamp or any printed QR receipt. If you report a passport lost or stolen, it is no longer valid even if you later find it.
- Cash and goods. Declare cash of 10,000 USD or more on entry and on exit. The embassy also notes that items worth over $500 arriving by air must be declared.
- Drugs. Possession and use is illegal and can lead to long jail sentences or fines. This includes marijuana and medical marijuana, even with a U.S. permit.
- Vaping. It is illegal to bring e-cigarettes and vaping liquids into Mexico. Customs will confiscate them; you can also face delays, fines, or criminal charges. Check pockets and bags before you fly.
- Weapons. Do not bring firearms, ammunition, knives, swords, daggers, brass knuckles, fireworks, or explosives. U.S. carry permits are not valid in Mexico. Bringing firearms or ammunition without Mexican government permits is a serious crime by air, land, or sea.
- Alcohol. The legal drinking age is 18. Drink in moderation, watch your glass, and seek medical help if you feel ill.
- Politics. Foreigners are forbidden from political activities, including joining demonstrations.
- Same-sex relationships. There are no legal restrictions on same-sex relationships or events. There are occasional reports of violence against gay and lesbian people.

Sources: State Department guidance (archived 14 July 2026); U.S. Embassy World Cup 2026 guidance.

10. Contingency checklist

Print this page or save it offline. Leave a copy with your home contact. This is a preparedness list, not a promise of outcome and not live support during the trip.

Lost or stolen passport

Keep a paper copy and a secure digital photo of the biographic page, separate from the passport, and leave a copy with your home contact. If it was stolen, dial 911 if you are in immediate danger, then file a police report (denuncia) with the Ministerio Público — first responders do not handle crime reports. Call the embassy at 55 2579 2000, or request an urgent passport appointment as directed on mx.usembassy.gov. Passport windows are by appointment. A passport reported lost or stolen is void even if you find it later; do not try to fly on it.

Medical emergency

Dial 911 for an ambulance; have a Spanish speaker help with the call if you can. Go to one of the hospitals in section 7, or the nearest appropriate facility. Carry insurance cards, a credit card, and a medication list. Expect to pay or to have a card hold placed at admission. Call your insurer as soon as you can. For a serious injury or illness, or if you cannot resolve a billing dispute, call the embassy at 55 2579 2000. Payment remains your responsibility. If you feel suddenly ill after drinking, get medical help and tell staff what you consumed.

Robbery or theft

If a crime is in progress or someone is in danger, call 911. Once you are safe, file a denuncia with the Ministerio Público. Call your bank immediately and freeze or cancel cards. If your passport was taken, follow the passport steps above and notify the embassy. The embassy can help you report a serious crime, replace a passport, and contact family. Limit cash going forward and use ATMs inside banks.

Earthquake alert (SASMEX)

Mexico is an active earthquake zone. The official Mexican Seismic Alert System, SASMEX®, can give the public in Mexico City on the order of 20 to 120 seconds before stronger shaking arrives, depending on the epicenter. The official alert tone is designed to be distinctive and lasts one minute in Mexico City. It is sounded over city loudspeakers (C5), and is also carried on many radio and television stations and in the Metro. A quake does not always trigger an alert — for example if it is too far away or too small. Social media and consumer phone apps are not a reliable primary alert because of delays. Follow the official tone and the evacuation instructions posted in your building.

When the alert sounds, Mexico City's civil-protection guide says: stay calm; if you are on a lower floor and can leave, evacuate along the marked routes; do not run, shout, or push; if you are on a high floor and do not have time to get out, go to the pre-identified lower-risk area; if you cannot get out in time, stay there, away from windows, mirrors, and heavy objects; during shaking, do not use stairs or elevators; leave after the shaking stops if the route is clear. Afterward, go to the meeting point, follow official instructions, use your phone only as needed, and tell your home contact you are safe. Do not re-enter a building that looks damaged.

The official SASMEX operator site could not be opened live on 16 November 2026; the description above is from CIRES pages archived on 17 October 2026 and 6 June 2026, and from Mexico City's earthquake guide archived on 23 September 2025.

Communications check-in plan

Agree on this with one home contact before you fly. It is a schedule you keep, not tracking or live monitoring by the brief service.

- Share in advance: flight numbers, hotel name and address, a daily work area if known, and a scanned passport page.
- On arrival: send a short message once you are on the ground and again once you are in the hotel.
- Daily: one check-in at a set local time (for example 21:00 Mexico City time). A simple "OK" is enough.
- If plans change: send the new hotel or neighborhood before you move.
- If a check-in is missed: the home contact waits 30 minutes, then calls or texts you, then calls the hotel front desk, then calls the U.S. Embassy at 011 52 55 2579 2000 (from the United States) if they still cannot reach you and have reason for concern.
- If you feel threatened by a call about kidnapping: hang up, contact your home person directly, and call the embassy if needed. Your home contact should try to reach you directly before treating a third-party kidnapping claim as real.

What this brief does not include

This brief does not include tracking of the traveler, research on any named person or group, live monitoring during the trip, on-the-ground protection, or any guarantee of safety, outcome, or service from a hospital, airline, taxi, app, or government office. It does not replace a clinician's advice on vaccines or personal health, and it is not an offer of investigative or guard services.

Sources and fetch notes

Public sources were checked on 16 November 2026. Where a live page could not be opened, an archived official copy is cited. NCBI Bookshelf's Yellow Book chapter presented a CAPTCHA and was not used. Live CIRES and CDMX civil-protection URLs failed; archived official copies were used instead.

1. State Dept. Mexico Travel Advisory, issued 29 May 2026 — travel.state.gov (live page blocked 16 Nov 2026; text from Internet Archive, 14 July 2026).
2. U.S. Embassy contact — mx.usembassy.gov/contact/ — live, 16 Nov 2026.
3. U.S. Embassy Mexico City — mx.usembassy.gov/visas/u-s-embassy-mexico-city/ — live, 16 Nov 2026.
4. Embassy World Cup 2026 guidance — mx.usembassy.gov — live, 16 Nov 2026.
5. Embassy Medical Information — mx.usembassy.gov/medical-practitioners/ — live, 16 Nov 2026 (page dated 6 Apr 2021; payment practice only).
6. CDC Mexico Traveler View — wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/mexico — live, 16 Nov 2026; last reviewed 3 Sep 2026.
7. CDC Yellow Book 2026, Mexico — cdc.gov/yellow-book/.../mexico.html (live 403; Internet Archive 13 Oct 2026; chapter dated 23 Apr 2025).
8. CDC, Travel to High Altitudes — wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/travel-to-high-altitudes — live, 16 Nov 2026.
9. SMN normales 1991–2020, Tacubaya Central (OBS), station 9048 — issued 13 Nov 2026; fetched live 16 Nov 2026.
10. Mexico City, Getting Around — mexicocity.cdmx.gob.mx/e/getting-around/?lang=en — live, 16 Nov 2026.
11. Mexico City, Emergency — mexicocity.cdmx.gob.mx/e/emergency/?lang=en — live, 16 Nov 2026.
12. AICM taxis — aicm.com.mx/.../taxis — live, 16 Nov 2026; operator list from the official page's meta description (body is script-rendered).
13. Centro Médico ABC — centromedicoabc.com/en/ — live, 16 Nov 2026.
14. Médica Sur International Medicine — medicasur.com.mx/ms-intl/en/ — live, 16 Nov 2026.
15. CIRES / SASMEX® — cires.org.mx (live site failed; Internet Archive 17 Oct 2026 and 6 June 2026).
16. CDMX earthquake guide (Protección Civil) — live PDF failed; Internet Archive 23 Sep 2025.
17. STEP — step.state.gov.