

**Beginning January 10, 2011, the U.S. Embassy and Consulates will process visas differently.**

Under the new procedures, most applicants will go to Applicant Service Centers (ASCs) prior to their consular section interview. The ASC staff will collect the applicant's biometric information that will be reviewed by the consular section prior to the applicant's interview. ASCs will be located in buildings separate from the U.S. Embassy and Consulates.

The new process will provide several advantages to applicants:

- Total visa application costs will go down. Applicants will no longer pay one fee to obtain information and schedule the appointment, another fee for the visa application, and a third fee for courier service. Instead, they will pay only one application fee that will cover the appointment, application, and courier fees. The current application fee will stay the same: USD140 for a tourist application, USD150 for petition-based cases (including temporary worker visas), and USD390 for treaty-trader and investor visas.
- Many applicants who are renewing their visas will no longer require an interview with a consular officer. These applicants can simply visit the nearest ASC in order to submit application documents and provide fingerprints. See the links below for more information on the Interview Waiver Program.
- Because the collection of biometric information will take place at the ASC, applicants who are required to visit both the ASC and the consular section should spend less time at the consular section than they have had to in the past.
- Applicants at the U.S. Consulates in Ciudad Juarez, Monterrey, and Nuevo Laredo will no longer pay a USD26 surcharge.

New Offsite Data Collection Service

**How will the new process be different from the current process?**

\*New Visa Services begin on January 10, 2011

Category	Current Service	New Service
Appointment Call Center	Applicant pays USD 1.25 per minute to schedule appointment.	Free service
Application Cost	USD 140 for tourist visa, USD 150 petition-based visa	No Change
Application Payment	Banamex	Banamex, Scotiabank, or Credit Card
DS-160 Online Application	Application must be completed on-line in one session	Application progress can be saved over several on-line sessions

Interview Waiver Program (IWP)	Not available	Many applicants who are renewing visas will not need to come to the Embassy or Consulate for an interview with a Consular Officer  *See below for qualification requirements
Appearing for your appointment	All Applicants  Appear at the Embassy to submit fingerprints, photo, application, and interview with a Consular Officer	Interview Waiver Program Participants Day 1: Appear at the ASC to submit fingerprints, photo, application  Non-Interview Waiver Program Participants Day 1: Appear at the ASC to submit fingerprints, photo, application Day 2: Appear at the Embassy to interview with Consular Officer
Passport/Visa Delivery	Pegaso with additional delivery fee	DHL with no additional delivery fee

## **\*Interview Waiver Program (IWP)**

Some applicants who are renewing their visas will not need two appointments. These applicants will only visit the ASC and will not need to visit the Embassy or Consulate.

If you meet all of the requirements below, you may be qualified for the Interview Waiver Program:

- You are applying with a Mexican passport;
- You are applying in the same visa category;
- Your visa is still valid or expired less than one year ago;
- You have never been arrested or convicted of a crime;
- You have never been deported from the United States, denied entry to the United States, or had any other problems or difficulties with U.S. Immigration or Customs authorities; and
- You do not have dual citizenship or your second country of citizenship is a Visa Waiver Program member (see [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without\\_1990.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html))

For IWP participants, the passport and application will be forwarded to the Embassy or Consulate for review by a consular officer.

*Please note - the Embassy or Consulate reserves the right to call in any applicant for an interview.* If an applicant does require an interview, a representative from the U.S. Embassy or Consulate will contact the applicant to arrange a date and time to come to the Embassy to speak with the Consular Officer.

## FAQ

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### **What is the new process for applying for a nonimmigrant visa to the United States?**

Before applicants can schedule an appointment, they will be required to complete the DS-160 online application and pay the visa application fee (MRV fee). If the applicant chooses to pay the MRV fee at Banamex or Scotiabank, each applicant will print a deposit slip with the correct amount of the MRV fee and the applicant's receipt number. The MRV fee can also be paid by credit card through the appointment website or by telephone. The appointment website will be available soon.

Whether the applicant schedules an appointment through the web site or through the call center, the DS-160 nonimmigrant visa application form bar code number and the MRV receipt number will be collected prior to the scheduling of the appropriate appointment for the ASC as well as the consular section appointment, if required.

During the scheduling process, applicants will have an opportunity to choose a convenient DHL location to pick up their passports with the approved visa.

#### **What is the difference between an Applicant Service Center (ASC) and a call center?**

An ASC is a facility contracted by the U.S. government to collect biometric data from visa applicants prior to submission to the consular section. The call centers provide other visa-related services, including making visa appointments, answering visa-related questions, collecting other applicant information, and assisting applicants in choosing a DHL location where the passport and visa can be picked up.

#### **How will the new process work?**

- Before making an appointment online or contacting the Call Center to make an appointment, applicants will download a deposit slip and pay the visa application fee at any Banamex or Scotiabank location. The fee can also be paid online or by telephone using a credit card.
- Applicants will have to provide an MRV receipt number and a DS-160 confirmation number prior to making an appointment online or at the call center. Applicants will be able to select a convenient DHL location near them to safely collect their passports and approved visas or Border Crossing Cards (BCCs.) There will no longer be a separate appointment-scheduling fee or a separate courier fee.
- The applicant will answer a series of questions either online or through a call center agent to determine whether the applicant needs just an ASC appointment or both an ASC and a consular section interview. If the applicant requires two appointments:

- The first appointment will be at the ASC, where digital photographs and fingerprints will be collected.
- For those applicants who will require a consular section interview, the appointment system will simultaneously book a second appointment at the Embassy or Consulate. At the second interview, the applicant will be interviewed by a Consular Officer.
- Applicants who qualify for visas will be able to collect their passports at the courier facility they designated when they scheduled their appointment.

### **Where is the ASC closest to me?**

The list of available sites will be available soon

### **What number do I call to make an appointment through the new process?**

Starting January 10th, you will be able to use one of 11 local telephone numbers across Mexico to schedule an appointment through a call center. There is also a local US number that can be used by applicants who are scheduling appointments from outside of Mexico. The list of phone numbers will be available soon.

### **Can I make an appointment online?**

Yes, an applicant can make an appointment online. The appointment website will be available soon.

### **When will the new process take effect?**

January 10, 2010

### **What if I made an appointment prior to January 10 that will occur after January 10?**

If you have scheduled an appointment for a date after January 10th, you will be contacted and assisted in rescheduling your appointment in the new system at no additional cost. Please ensure you provide a valid telephone number at the time you schedule your appointment. If your telephone number has changed, please contact the Call Center as soon as possible so that there will be no delays in contacting you.

### **What are the advantages of an Applicant Service Center (ASC) for Visa Applicants?**

- The visa application fee (MRV - Machine Readable Visa Fee) will now cover all costs associated with applying for a visa.\* This includes the cost for setting up the appointment and the courier delivery fee. The MRV fee will remain unchanged. For example, a person applying for a tourist visa will continue to pay USD 140 for the visa application, but will no longer have to pay an additional fee when calling to make an appointment or for courier delivery.

*\*Some non-Mexican applicants will continue to pay an issuance fee following approval of their visas (see [http://travel.state.gov/visa/fees/fees\\_3272.html](http://travel.state.gov/visa/fees/fees_3272.html) to see the reciprocity schedule).*

*\* Some recipients of "L" intra-company transferee visas will also continue to pay an issuance fee (see [http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types\\_1263.html#temp](http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/types/types_1263.html#temp) for L fee information)*

- Certain applicants who are renewing their visas will no longer have to visit the Embassy/Consulate for an interview with a Consular Officer. Some of these applicants

will still be required to appear at the ASC for fingerprinting. Others will not have to visit either the ASC or the Embassy/Consulate in person and will be able to send a representative to submit their applications at the ASC.

**What were the costs under the old process?**

Under the old process, applicants paid the application fee (USD 140 for tourists, USD 150 for petition based cases, USD 390 for treaty traders and treaty investors). In addition, they paid USD 1.25 per minute for visa information and to schedule the appointment. They also paid an \$80-135 MXP fee to have the passport delivered to the applicant's home.

**Won't the new process require many applicants to make trips to two separate locations?**

We estimate that one-quarter to one-third of applicants will need to visit only the ASC and not the Embassy or Consulate. Other applicants will need to visit two locations, the ASC and the Embassy/Consulate.

**What if I choose not to use the ASC?**

All applicants are required to use the ASC.

**What if I want the courier to deliver the passport to my home or office?**

Under the new process, applicants will pick up passports at a courier facility. We believe that this procedure provides the greatest security for visa applicants.

**Are the Applicant Service Centers (ASCs) being implemented only in Mexico?**

No. ASCs are part of a Global Support Strategy (GSS) that will be implemented at visa processing posts worldwide within the next two years. ASCs will be implemented in large volume visa processing countries to improve the applicant experience.

**The U.S. Consulates in Ciudad Juarez, Monterrey, and Nuevo Laredo have already been using ASCs. How will the process change at those posts?**

Many aspects of the process will seem similar to applicants. However, those applying at the U.S. Consulates in Ciudad Juarez, Monterrey, and Nuevo Laredo will no longer pay a surcharge for ASC processing. They will now pay only one visa application fee, just like the applicants at all of the other Mexico posts. In addition, the MRV fee and the completion of the DS-160 will be required prior to booking an appointment. Lastly, they will no longer arrange for DHL delivery of their documents while at the ASC. Instead, applicants will select the desired location for document pick-up as part of the appointment scheduling process. This will considerably shorten the time spent at the ASC.

**Is the ASC staffed by U.S. Government employees?**

No, ASC staff work for a company contracted by the U.S. Department of State, Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC). CSC is the same firm contracted to operate our current Visa Call Center.