

INSURANCE FOR EXPATS MEXICO

CARSA INSURANCE BROKERS

The Expat's Guide to Insurance in Mexico

Clear, reliable answers in English. How private medical, life and property insurance really work in Mexico — and the costly mistakes to avoid.

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Prepared by the Carsa Insurance Brokers team · Mérida, Yucatán · Serving expats across Mexico

Why we wrote this guide

Insurance in Mexico works differently than in the U.S. or Canada, and many expats discover this the hard way — through a surprise hospital bill, a denied claim or a policy that didn't cover what they thought it would.

At Carsa Insurance Brokers, we believe informed decisions lead to better outcomes. That's why we put education first. This guide explains, in plain English and without insurance jargon, how coverage works here, what it really costs and where people usually go wrong — so you can choose with confidence and know exactly how to use your policy when you need it.

What you'll learn

- How private medical insurance works in Mexico
- Key differences vs. U.S. and Canadian systems
- How claims and hospital processes actually work
- Deductibles, coinsurance and coverage limits
- Life and home insurance for expats
- Common mistakes — and how to avoid them

Who this guide is for. Expats who live in Mexico as temporary or permanent residents — retirees, families, remote workers and homeowners. If you only spend a few months a year here, see the note in Chapter 2: private medical insurance in Mexico is designed for people who live here most of the year.

Inside

Ch.	Topic
1	Living in Mexico as an expat: risks, realities and why insurance matters
2	Private medical insurance in Mexico
3	Life insurance for expats
4	Home and renters insurance
5	Typical costs of medical care and insurance
+	Your checklist, glossary and FAQ

Living in Mexico as an expat: risks, realities and why insurance matters

Moving to Mexico is exciting. People come for the lifestyle, the culture, the climate and the cost of living. But living here full-time is not the same as visiting for a few weeks — and one of the biggest adjustments is understanding how healthcare, property and risk work.

This chapter isn't meant to scare you. It's here to help you see Mexico clearly, beyond the postcard version, so you can make confident decisions about your protection.

What no one tells you upfront

Most expats arrive with assumptions shaped by life in the U.S. or Canada:

- "If something happens, I'll just go to a hospital like back home."
- "My credit card or home policy will cover me."
- "If my house is damaged, insurance works the same as in my country."
- "If I get sick, I'll figure it out later."

Mexico is a fantastic place to live — but it operates differently. Public and private healthcare, insurance rules and administrative processes are not what you're used to.

Private healthcare

Excellent quality in major cities — but not cheap, especially for serious illness or surgery.

Public systems

Options like IMSS exist, but access, waiting times and quality can vary significantly.

Property and climate risks

Hurricanes, heavy rain, flooding, humidity, earthquakes and, in some regions, volcanic activity are real.

Language and paperwork

Claims, contracts and hospital processes are often in Spanish and require local know-how.

Why insurance matters more than most expats think

Many expats see insurance as "nice to have." In Mexico, it is often essential. Good coverage can mean the difference between:

- Choosing your hospital vs. being limited to public care
- Getting treated quickly vs. waiting
- Rebuilding after a storm vs. struggling for years
- Protecting your family vs. leaving them a financial burden

Real expat experiences

When things went wrong

"I thought I could just pay cash if something serious happened."

Lesson: a major medical event in Mexico can still cost tens of thousands of dollars.

"I didn't think my pre-existing conditions mattered."

Lesson: full disclosure and a well-structured policy are critical.

"I didn't think hurricanes were a real risk."

Lesson: climate risks in Yucatán and on both coasts are real and must be planned for.

When insurance worked as intended

"We set up a solid private medical plan as soon as our residency was in place."

Lesson: preparation makes all the difference.

"We insured our home at reconstruction value, not market value."

Lesson: understanding how home insurance works here protects your investment.

"We structured our life insurance with our family in mind."

Lesson: life insurance is about protection, not just money.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Living in Mexico full-time comes with real risks that differ from the U.S. and Canada.
- 2 Private healthcare is excellent — but major medical events are expensive without insurance.
- 3 Property and climate risks are real and must be taken seriously.
- 4 Coverage from home usually doesn't work the way you expect in Mexico.
- 5 Good insurance protects your choices, your lifestyle and your peace of mind.

Private medical insurance in Mexico

For most expats, private medical insurance is the most important policy they will buy in Mexico.

Who can buy it. Mexican private medical insurance is designed for foreigners with **temporary or permanent residency** who live in Mexico most of the year. If you only spend a few months here each year, a Mexican medical policy is usually not available to you — we'll tell you honestly and point you in the right direction.

How it works, in simple terms

1

Choose the right plan

With guidance on hospitals, limits and deductible

2

Pay your premium

Annual or in installments

3

Receive care

At a network or non-network hospital

4

Insurer pays its share

After deductible and coinsurance

Direct payment (pago directo)

- 1 You're diagnosed with an illness, or have an accident, and need surgery or hospitalization.
- 2 You submit the paperwork to schedule the procedure — allow about 7 business days for review.
- 3 The insurer approves the treatment and issues a letter of authorization.
- 4 You're treated at a network hospital. At discharge, the insurer reviews the final bill (this can take up to 8 hours).
- 5 You pay your deductible and coinsurance; the insurer pays the rest directly to the hospital.



Reimbursement (reembolso)

1 • Choose

You pick your doctor or hospital.

2 • Pay

You pay the full bill yourself.

3 • Submit

Send invoices (facturas), medical reports and test results.

4 • Get paid

The insurer reimburses the covered amount, minus deductible and coinsurance.

Network vs. non-network hospitals

Network hospitals usually allow direct payment. Non-network hospitals usually mean you pay first and request reimbursement. Which hospitals you can use depends on the plan you choose.

Understanding your costs (all figures in USD)

Deductible

Deductible: \$2,000
Hospital bill: \$10,000
You pay the first \$2,000.

Coinsurance

Coinsurance: 10%
Bill after deductible: \$8,000
You pay \$800; insurer pays \$7,200.

Annual limit

Limit: \$1,000,000
Cancer treatment: \$800,000
You're protected.

Example: a \$10,000 hospital bill

Item	Cost	You pay	Insurer pays
Hospital room	\$5,000	\$2,300 (\$2,000 deductible + 10%)	\$2,700
Surgeon fees	\$4,000	\$400	\$3,600
Medications	\$1,000	\$100	\$900
Total	\$10,000	\$2,800	\$7,200

How we help at claim time. Most problems happen after the policy is sold: a missing pre-authorization, an incomplete reimbursement file, a hospital bill that doesn't match the policy. We guide you through pre-authorizations, hospital admissions and reimbursement paperwork — in English — so you get the benefits you're paying for.

Tip: For every doctor visit, test or prescription, ask for an official invoice (*factura*) in your name. Without it, the insurer can't reimburse the expense.

What your policy covers — and when to use each option

Typically covered

Hospitalization, surgery, intensive care, cancer treatment and heart procedures.

Usually not covered

Cosmetic procedures, experimental treatments and undisclosed pre-existing conditions.

Use direct payment for

Emergency hospitalization and planned surgery.

Use reimbursement for

Procedures with less than 24 hours in hospital, and treatment that doesn't require hospitalization.

Emergency vs. planned care

In an emergency, call your insurer right away or report it at the hospital admissions desk. For planned procedures, always request pre-authorization first.

Waiting periods and pre-existing conditions

Some treatments have waiting periods. Pre-existing conditions — and conditions related to them — may be excluded or limited, so full disclosure is essential.

Common mistakes

- ✗ Choosing the cheapest plan
- ✗ Not declaring prior conditions
- ✗ Choosing an annual limit that's too low
- ✗ Losing paperwork or not asking for an invoice (factura) for every expense and test

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Know the difference between direct payment and reimbursement.
- 2 Your hospital access depends on the plan you choose.
- 3 Deductible, coinsurance and annual limit are the key numbers.
- 4 Understand waiting periods and pre-existing conditions.
- 5 A well-structured plan lowers your future costs.

Life insurance for expats

Life insurance protects your family, your assets and your financial legacy while you live in Mexico — whether you plan to stay long-term or eventually return home.

Term vs. permanent

Term life insurance

Affordable protection for a set period. No cash value.

Permanent life insurance

Lifetime coverage with a savings component.

Declined elsewhere for health reasons? There is still an option.

BMI Horizon is a whole life policy with **guaranteed issue** — no medical exams or evidence of insurability required — designed for people whose health doesn't allow them to qualify for traditional life insurance.

Issue ages	Coverage	Guaranteed
18 – 69	US\$100,000 – US\$500,000	Level protection, fixed premiums and cash values

Graded death benefit: years 2–5, premiums paid are refunded · year 6: 20% · year 7: 40% · year 8: 60% · year 9: 80% · after year 9: 100% of the sum insured.

Summary for information only; the policy conditions govern coverage.

Beneficiaries and payout

Your beneficiaries will need the death certificate, ID, the policy number and proof of relationship. Payment is usually made within a few weeks. If repatriation of remains is needed, we can recommend specialized providers.

Paying your premiums

In MXN or USD, by card or bank transfer. Not every insurer accepts foreign cards or foreign bank transfers — we'll tell you which do.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Life insurance protects your family.
- 2 Term is affordable; permanent offers lifetime coverage.
- 3 Keep beneficiaries up to date and choose an adequate sum insured.
- 4 Repatriation can be expensive — plan for it.
- 5 Health issues? Guaranteed-issue options exist.

Home and renters insurance

Home insurance in Mexico covers different risks than policies in other countries. Knowing what's included — and what needs additional coverage — is essential.

What home insurance can cover

Hurricanes and storms

Protection against severe weather, when included in your policy.

Flooding

Covered under specific conditions.

Fire

Fire damage to the structure and contents.

Earthquake

Important in central and Pacific regions.

Theft

Protection against break-ins.

Civil liability

If someone is injured on your property.

What's usually not covered

Wear and tear, poor maintenance, gradual humidity damage and properties used for short-term rentals such as Airbnb (these need a commercial policy).

Homeowners vs. renters

Owners insure the structure, contents and liability. Renters insure their belongings and liability — your landlord's policy does not protect your things.

Common mistakes

- ✗ Insuring based on market value
- ✗ Assuming the landlord covers everything
- ✗ Choosing the cheapest policy
- ✗ Not declaring valuables
- ✗ Renting on Airbnb with a regular home policy

Critical point: reconstruction value, not market value. Your home should be insured for what it would cost to rebuild it — not for what it would sell for. It's one of the most common — and costly — misunderstandings.

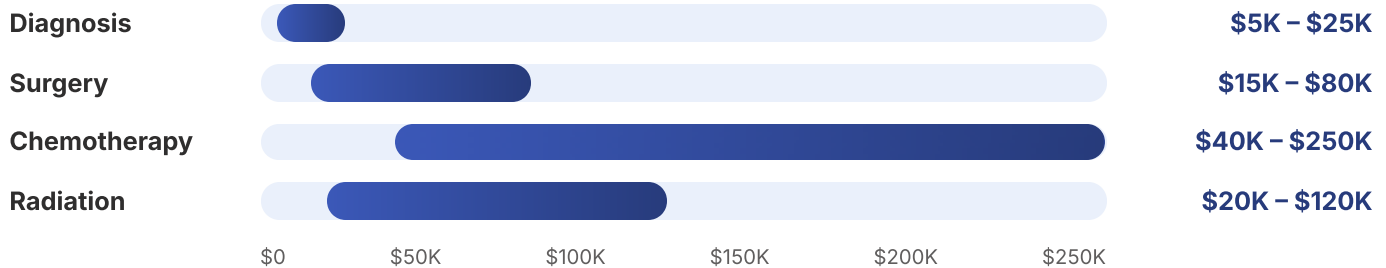
KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Insure at reconstruction value.
- 2 Mexico's climate and seismic risks are real.
- 3 Renters need their own insurance.
- 4 Check that hurricane coverage is included.
- 5 Short-term rentals require commercial insurance.

Typical costs of medical care and insurance

Mexico is less expensive than the U.S. — but it is not cheap. These are typical ranges at private hospitals, in U.S. dollars. Actual costs vary by city, hospital, diagnosis and treatment.

Cancer treatment



Heart attack

\$10K–\$40K

ICU care
Intensive care unit

\$20K–\$80K

Angioplasty
Procedure costs

\$70K–\$200K

Bypass surgery
Complete surgical procedure

Stroke

Emergency care: **\$15,000 – \$50,000**

Rehabilitation: **\$10,000 – \$60,000+**

Diabetes complications

\$10,000 – \$60,000+

Typical annual premiums

Private medical

\$2,000–\$10,000+

per year, by age, plan and deductible

Life (term)

\$300–\$3,000+

per year

Home

\$200–\$2,000+

per year

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1 Medical catastrophes are expensive.
- 2 Premiums are predictable; medical costs are not.
- 3 Mexico is cheaper — but not cheap.
- 4 Find the right balance between cost and protection.

Your Mexico insurance checklist

Before you move

- ✓ Plan your residency (temporary or permanent) — it's required for Mexican medical insurance
- ✓ Gather your medical records for full disclosure
- ✓ Plan your life insurance
- ✓ Decide your home or renters insurance strategy
- ✓ Prepare your documents (passport, residency card, proof of address)

After you arrive

- ✓ Set up private medical insurance once your residency is in place
- ✓ Secure home or renters insurance
- ✓ Review and update your beneficiaries
- ✓ Keep invoices (facturas) for every medical expense
- ✓ Get in touch with us — we'll be your insurance partner in Mexico

Why expats choose Carsa Insurance Brokers

We specialize in helping expatriates navigate the Mexican insurance system with clarity and confidence. We represent several of Mexico's leading insurers and take a consultative approach that puts your needs first. Our goal is simple: help you choose the right insurance — and understand exactly how to use it when you need it most.

Clear communication in English

Plain explanations, no confusing insurance jargon.

Support at claim time

We help you with hospital processes, paperwork and claims — not just the sale.

Nationwide, fully remote

Email, video calls and phone, wherever you live in Mexico — from Mérida to Mexico City, San Miguel de Allende, Puerto Vallarta and beyond.

Ongoing management

Renewals, policy reviews and changes as your life in Mexico evolves.

Insurance terms, simplified

Deductible

The amount you pay before the insurance starts paying.

Coinsurance

The percentage of costs you share with the insurer after the deductible.

Direct payment (pago directo)

The insurer pays the hospital directly.

Reimbursement (reembolso)

You pay first and the insurer pays you back.

Annual limit

The maximum the insurer will pay in one policy year.

Pre-existing condition

A health condition you had before getting insurance.

Waiting period

Time you must wait before certain coverage begins.

Sum insured

The total amount of coverage in your policy.

Premium

What you pay for your insurance coverage.

Beneficiary

The person who receives a life insurance payout.

Factura

An official Mexican invoice — required for reimbursement claims.

Questions expats ask us

Do I really need Mexican insurance if I have U.S. or Canadian coverage?

In most cases, yes. Health plans from home typically don't cover you in Mexico, or cover very little. If you live here, a Mexican policy is the reliable way to access private hospitals.

Can I buy Mexican medical insurance if I only spend part of the year here?

Usually not. Mexican private medical plans are for temporary or permanent residents who live in Mexico most of the year. Tell us your situation and we'll give you an honest answer.

Can I get insurance if I have pre-existing conditions?

Yes, but those conditions — and any related ones — will be excluded or limited. Full disclosure is essential.

How much does private medical insurance cost in Mexico?

Typically \$2,000–\$10,000+ USD per year, depending on age, coverage and deductible.

Does home insurance cover hurricanes in Yucatán?

It can, but your policy must specifically include hurricane coverage. When included, it typically represents about 70% of the total premium.

Can I pay with a U.S. or Canadian credit card?

Some insurers accept foreign cards and others don't. We'll confirm the payment options before you choose a plan.

How do I work with you?

Email us at info@insuranceforexpatsmexico.com or request a quote at insuranceforexpatsmexico.com. We'll review your needs and recommend the right coverage — no pressure.

Insurance in Mexico, clear and in English.

We help expats avoid costly mistakes when choosing insurance in Mexico — and explain exactly how your policy works.

Private medical

Compare plans from multiple insurers and learn how to use your policy — from network hospitals to pre-authorizations.

Life insurance

Coverage structured for your situation, whether you stay in Mexico long-term or eventually return home.

Property

Home and renters coverage with the right hurricane, earthquake and liability protection for your region.

Request your free consultation

Tell us where you live, your residency status and what you'd like to protect. We typically respond within one business day.

Email: info@insuranceforexpatsmexico.com

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Serving expats across Mexico with fully remote support.

This guide is for general information only and does not replace the terms of any insurance policy. Coverage, eligibility, prices and conditions depend on each insurance company and plan. Cost ranges are estimates in U.S. dollars and may change.