

The Final Adios

Death in Mexico

Information for foreigners in Mexico ...
to assist family and friends in carrying out your final wishes.

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No hay reglas fijas.

March, 2008

BE PREPARED ... DO IT NOW.

Register with your consulate. This can be done on line.
If you have not already registered, go to:

U.S. Citizens –

www.travel.state.gov

Information provided is protected under the Privacy Act.

Canadian Citizens

www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/mexico-city/menu-en.asp

Alie Bourgeois-Charbonneau - Senior Consular Agent,
cancun@canada.org.mx

Others countries: Check on line.

GET YOUR “DOCS” IN A ROW !

Documents needed at time of death

- Birth Certificate
- Marriage certificate (if applicable)
- Papers of separation, divorce (if applicable)
- Death Certificate of spouse (if applicable)
- Next of Kin (NOK) or designated person Identification document(s).
- Will

It has been recommended that all documents should be accompanied with an “*apostille*” along with an official translation of the document. An *apostille* refers to the legalization of a document for international use under terms of the 1961 Hague Convention. Mexico and U.S. have signed this agreement, Canada has not.

In the U.S., the *apostille* may be obtained from the State where the document was issued. In all states you can apply on line. Whether you do this in person or “on line” the issuing state will need your copy of the document requiring an *apostille*.

For Canadians, documents are notarized and go through a process of “authentication” and “legalization”. This is the Canadian equivalent of the *apostille* and is done by a notary public in Canada.

An *apostille* with your documents will help facilitate their acceptance by Mexican authorities.

NEXT OF KIN OR NOK

Before **Next of Kin** (NOK), travel to Mexico in the event of death of a family member, the NOK Identification Document(s) should be translated and have an *apostille* attached. This is necessary so that the NOK can identify and claim your remains and do other business (ie. fideicomiso) connected with the estate.

The relationship between deceased and NOK must be clear. Most officials here will recognize the NOK if the papers available make sense. In the case of several different family names, you might want to consider writing out all information about your NOK, names, relation to you, etc. and have this paper translated and notarized here in Mexico and kept with your other pertinent documents.

If you don't choose kin, prepare an affidavit stating who you do wish to be the person responsible for your remains and goods. Have the affidavit translated and notarized. This person must also present an authenticated document of identification.

If a U.S. citizen dies in Merida and does not have necessary documentation, the U.S. consulate can intervene to assist if the Consulate has information about the deceased registered with them. For Canadians, being registered with the Canadian Embassy will be a help and the Honorary Consul in Cancun may be able to facilitate receiving information from Canada if needed.

GETTING DOCUMENTS TRANSLATED

All documents, with *apostille* or without, must be translated into Spanish.

There are two lawyers in Merida recognized by the Mexican authorities as translators of legal documents from English to Spanish. Both offices are in Centro.

Lic. Raul Ballote - Senior Law Partner
Calle 62 #313A x 35 y 37
Ph: (999) 920 – 2011
Assistant: Pilla Marcin

Lic. Charles Goff
Calle 35 #518 x 62 y 64
Ph: (999) 925 – 2921

WHAT IS YOUR “WILL”?

It is recommended that you have a Mexican Will to distribute possessions in Mexico. Mexican authorities are interested only in how your worldly goods with you in Mexico are being handled upon death.

This Mexican Will could be a translation of your U.S./Canadian Will. Or it could be a simple statement of your wishes of who should inherit Mexican goods.

Have this paper translated and notarized in Mexico.

Each Will should mention the existence of any other Will.

If you own property (real estate) through a *fideicomiso*, the transfer of this property to your designated beneficiary is already taken care of in that document.

The bank issuing the *fideicomiso* will transfer title to beneficiary on presentation of the *Certificado de Defuncion* (Death Certificate) and relevant identification.

STATE YOUR WISHES

Cremation requires the approval of a family member or a document which clearly indicates that it is your wish to be cremated.

You may indicate this to your Consulate when registering. Or you may write out your wishes, have the paper notarized/translated (either of the

Lawyer/translators can do this) and keep this statement with your other documents.

If you expect to be buried in Mexico, keep in mind that a burial spot in Mexico is usually “rented” for 3 to 10 years. At the end of that time, the body is exhumed and the bones are moved to another place.

Returning your body to your home country can be an expensive process and requires additional paper work. You must choose a funeral home in your country to receive the remains.

DEATH HAPPENS

This section is for those you leave behind

When death occurs in a hospital: the hospital will issue a written statement of circumstances of the death. You then contact a Funeral Home, and then the Consulate.

When death occurs in the home: Attending physician will issue the written statement of circumstances of death. You then call the Funeral Home, then the Consulate

In a Hotel (for tourists or when traveling) First, call your Consulate and they will contact the police.

FUNERAL HOMES

One of your best supports through the process of moving from death through cremation or burial, will be the funeral home. The U.S. Consulate has a complete list of funeral homes throughout the Yucatan area.

The Funeral Home can assist you through the process because this is the time when you will have to show all relevant documents with translation and *apostille*.

As helpful as they want to be, most Funeral Homes are not bilingual and you may want to have a Spanish speaking person with you.

The Funeral Home will assist you in getting the actual Death Certificate which is obtained at the Civil Registry.

The written statement of circumstances of death from attending physician or hospital, is shown at the Civil Registry and they issue the official Death Certificate or ... *Certificado de Defuncion*.

For a small extra fee, the Civil Registry will supply you with as many copies as you feel you will need here in Mexico and when you return to the U.S. or Canada. The Civil Registry is on Calle 65 x 64 y 66, across from the Pemex Station.

FUNERAL HOMES IN THIS AREA

Funerales Perches
Calle 59 - Ph: 923-0922, *Merida*

Funeraria Poveda
Calle 65 – Ph: 923-8333, *Merida*

Funeraria Reyes Rodriguez - *Progreso*
Calle 31 – Ph: (993)5 - 2461

The U.S. Consulate has a complete list of funeral homes throughout the Yucatan Peninsula

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Fill out the attached Emergency Personal Information Sheet (Yellow). Keep it updated and readily accessible.

We suggest putting this yellow sheet on your refrigerator.

- The U.S. Consulate advises having a piece of ID on you at all times so that should something happen, like an accident, officials will know to contact your consulate.

- A trusted friend in Merida should also have the keys for your house (and car). They should know where all documents and personal papers are kept as well as all contact information for NOK. And visa versa.

- If you have a Bank Account in Mexico, make sure you have named a beneficiary with the bank.

- Make sure you have some funds on hand, available to friends or NOK, to pay for the services of the Funeral Home and other expenses.

*Having your document in order isn't just a good idea,
it is a gift to those you leave behind.*

ON LINE

Find this information @
www.yucatanliving.com
click on ... "The Final Adios"

For additional copies of this info., contact Lorna-Gail at
lg5050@hotmail.com

Thanks to all who helped us compile this information.