COUNTRY GUIDE



AMERICAS

Mexico.

Mexico's Código Penal Federal contains a provision on failing to help an injured or endangered person, punished with community-service days rather than prison. Federal civil-protection law formally recognizes registered volunteer groups and a national network of community volunteer brigades, and federal income tax law allows deductions for donations to authorized recipients, within a cap. A federal law also sets out how the federal government supports civil society organizations.

DUTY TO HELP A STRANGER

Limited

PROTECTION FOR HELPERS

None found

GIVING AND SERVICE

4 programs and laws

Is there a legal duty to help a stranger?

LIMITED

Article 340 of the Código Penal Federal sets 10 to 60 days of community work for anyone who finds an abandoned minor unable to care for themselves, or an injured, disabled or endangered person, and does not promptly notify the authorities or does not give necessary help when able to do so without personal risk. Article 341 separately covers a person who runs over someone, even accidentally, and fails to help or call for help. This is the federal code; state criminal codes were not reviewed in this guide.

Código Penal Federal (texto vigente, última reforma DOF 13-03-2026) (Cámara de Diputados del H. Congreso de la Unión (Mexico))

Are people who help protected?

NONE FOUND

No federal statute specifically shielding people who help a stranger in good faith from civil liability was found in the texts reviewed. Ley General de Protección Civil does provide official recognition, training and coordination for registered volunteer groups, but that is not a liability shield. This guide does not review state laws.

Ley General de Protección Civil (última reforma DOF 21-12-2023) (Cámara de Diputados del H. Congreso de la Unión (Mexico))

How the government promotes giving and service

Registered volunteer groups under the Ley General de Protección Civil

Chapter X (arts. 51 to 53) provides for Grupos Voluntarios that carry out rescue, firefighting, shelter and emergency medical tasks. Registered groups have a right to official recognition and, where applicable, information and training. People who want to do rescue work are directed to join such groups or register individually with civil-protection units.

CÁMARA DE DIPUTADOS DEL H. CONGRESO DE LA UNIÓN (MEXICO)

Red Nacional de Brigadistas Comunitarios

Articles 54 and following of the same law create a national network of trained volunteers who coordinate with civil-protection authorities on tasks such as alerts, evacuation, preventive measures and temporary shelters. The law defines civil protection itself as a 'solidary and participatory' action.

CÁMARA DE DIPUTADOS DEL H. CONGRESO DE LA UNIÓN (MEXICO)

Tax deduction for donations (Ley del Impuesto sobre la Renta, art. 151)

Individuals may deduct non-onerous, non-remunerative donations made to authorized recipients, including certain federal, state and municipal entities and organizations authorized by the tax authority. The total is capped at 7% of the prior year's accumulable income, and 4% for donations to government bodies, subject to the conditions in the law and SAT rules.

CÁMARA DE DIPUTADOS DEL H. CONGRESO DE LA UNIÓN (MEXICO)

Ley Federal de Fomento a las Actividades Realizadas por Organizaciones de la Sociedad Civil

Article 1 states that the law's purpose includes promoting the activities of civil society organizations, setting the bases on which the federal public administration will support those activities, and coordinating federal bodies with beneficiary organizations.

CÁMARA DE DIPUTADOS DEL H. CONGRESO DE LA UNIÓN (MEXICO)

Ways to give and volunteer

Giving in Mexico runs through a mix of the national Red Cross, food banks and many small civil associations; religious groups also run many local services and are not listed here. Start by checking that a group is an authorized donee before you give.

Check a charity before you give

The tax authority publishes a directory of organizations authorized to issue tax-deductible receipts; search its site for the donatarias autorizadas list (the site may block automated tools).

SAT, authorized donee organizations (donatarias autorizadas)

Give your time

Cruz Roja Mexicana
The national Red Cross society, which recruits volunteers for first aid and emergency response.

Cemefi (Centro Mexicano para la Filantropia)
A long-standing nonprofit that promotes philanthropy and volunteering and publishes information on accredited organizations.

United Nations Volunteers (UNV)
The UN volunteer program, with a search for volunteer assignments including in Latin America.

Give money, blood or a donation

Banco de Alimentos de Mexico (BAMX)
The national network of food banks, which accepts food, money and volunteer time.

CENATRA (Centro Nacional de Trasplantes)
The federal health body that runs organ and tissue donation and the national transplant system.

Cruz Roja Mexicana

The national Red Cross society, which accepts donations for emergency and ambulance services.

In an emergency or a crisis

Find A Helpline: crisis and emotional support lines in this country
A directory of free crisis and emotional support lines, run by ThroughLine. No single national line could be confirmed for this guide, so check the line you choose before you rely on it.

Before you act

- **Fake collection drives spike after earthquakes and hurricanes, so give through established groups and not through unknown social media accounts. Before donating to a local association, look it up in the SAT donee directory and ask for an official receipt. Foreign visitors should check immigration rules before doing unpaid work with a local group.**

This list does not cover local religious charities, neighborhood groups or a full directory of every state. Checked 2026-10-28. Listing an organization is not an endorsement, and none of them has endorsed this site. Some official sites block automatic checks, so a link may need a second try.

One thing worth knowing

Mexico's civil-protection law names volunteers in its structure: registered volunteer groups and a national network of community brigades, with the law describing civil protection as solidary and participatory action.

What this does not mean

All quotations are this guide's own English translations of the Spanish texts. The criminal provision reviewed is federal and its penalty is community service, not prison; state codes and how courts apply these provisions were not reviewed. The tax rule shown is a summary of article 151 and does not cover every condition or SAT rule. This is a plain-language summary of public sources, not legal advice, and it does not rank countries. No government named here has endorsed this site. Not reviewed by a lawyer. Statutes were read in public sources and may have changed. Last checked October 26, 2026.

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