

Driving in Mexico & Renting Vehicles

All groups are responsible for their own ground transportation and transit around the San Diego – Tijuana region. Doxa can be a great resource to help provide information and possible solutions tailored for each group's needs. As with most things, an excellent mission trip starts with sound preparation. The information below is meant to help with that preparation.

Directions

- Here's a link to a customized Google Map that shows many points of interest for house building groups around Tijuana: bit.ly/doxamap
- While there have been recent advances in cell phone service throughout Tijuana, access often depends on the type of plan you have through your US carrier.
- If you have cell service in Tijuana, feel free to use Google Maps to navigate around. While not perfect, it does typically map correctly for the major roads and can get you close to where you're going.
- For navigation without GPS cell phones, there are written driving directions available for a few common routes taken by all groups.

Driving in Caravans

- It's often helpful to travel with headlights on to easily spot each other.
- A designated lead vehicle should be followed and everyone should remain in the caravan until arrival at destination.
- When merging or changing lanes, the last vehicle in the train can pull over and block traffic for everyone else to get over.
- Stick together, but not at the expense of safety!
- If you are planning to stop on the San Diego side for a meal before crossing the border, a good place to consider is Mile of Cars Way (exit 10 off I-5 freeway). There are many options for people to choose from and ample parking in the back for larger vehicles. Food options include In-n-Out, Chick-fil-A, Denny's, Panda Express, Starbucks, etc.

Driving in Mexico

- Safety is most important: seatbelts, speed, and awareness at all times!
- Please obey speed limits, be aware that all signs are in kilometers per hour.
- Use seatbelts in Mexico. Police are cracking down.
- A van or pickup truck full of people, gear, or construction material weighs a lot and takes a long time to stop. Please watch your distance!
- If you get pulled over by a police officer, speak English and be honest.
- If you get into an accident, pull over with the other vehicle and assess the damage. If needed, you can call the Mexican insurance company and they will send an adjuster to meet you at your location (information usually in glove box).

Helpful Items to Consider Including in Vehicles

- Sunscreen and hand sanitizer

- Copies of passports and medical waivers
- Large garbage bags
- First-aid kit
- Copies of all directions

Vehicle Strategy

- House building groups typically use a combination of pickup trucks and vans to transport people, gear, and construction materials.
- For transporting people, there are a wide array of local vendors who will rent 12 and 15 passenger vans. Many of these vendors are located near the San Diego airport and will meet you after your flight lands.
- For transporting gear and construction materials, it is easiest to use pickup trucks. However, there are very few vendors who rent pickup trucks and allow them to go to Mexico. If no pickup trucks are available for your desired trip dates, you can rent a 15-passenger van and request that all the seats be removed. While not ideal, this will suffice for transport of gear and construction materials.

Rental Vehicle Sources

- There are many rental vehicle vendors around San Diego, this list is just some of the most frequented by Doxa groups. If you mention you're with Doxa, they may give you a discount (not all do, but some do).
- Doxa
 - 2 pickup trucks available (White F250 and Red F350), long-bed crew cab models.
 - White F250 (seats 6 people) and Red F350 (seats 5 people).
 - Includes all needed insurance for US and Mexico.
 - Contact Alex (alex@doxaserves.org or 760-777-2690).
- Van rentals (12 and 15 passenger models)
 - Mission Rent-a-Van: Jason (858-688-3024, missionrentavan.com).
 - All-Star Van Rental: Mike or Jerry (619-297-5555, sandiegorentavan.com).
 - Sun Diego Van Rentals: Carlos or Ryan (619-298-5990, sundiegocarrental.com).
 - Sun Diego also rents smaller cars for use in Mexico.

Mexico Vehicle Insurance

- Whether driving your own vehicle or renting one from a vendor, it is recommended to get Mexico insurance. If renting a vehicle, Mexico insurance is typically provided by the renting agency for an additional fee. If using your own vehicle, you can purchase Mexico insurance online just for the days that you'll actually be in Mexico.
- Baja Bound is a popular provider and offered to donate a portion of all policies back to Doxa that are purchased through this link: <https://www.bajabound.com/?r=doxa>