

Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada

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Responses to Information Requests

Responses to Information Requests (RIR) respond to focused Requests for Information that are submitted to the Research Directorate in the course of the refugee protection determination process. The database contains a seven-year archive of English and French RIRs. Earlier RIRs may be found on the UNHCR's [Refworld](#) website.

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SLV103771.E

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El Salvador: Whether citizens can obtain or replace their Sole Identity Document (Documento Único de Identidad, DUI) from Canada; requirements to obtain, replace and renew DUIs from within El Salvador and the United States; format and appearance of DUI

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

El Salvador's Ministry of Foreign Relations (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores) emphasizes on its website that those consular representatives that are based in foreign countries [translation] "DO NOT ISSUE DUIs," that is, Sole Identity Documents (Documento Único de Identidad, DUI), and that the DUI centres (*duicentros*) in the United States (US) are responsible for issuing the DUIs (El Salvador 29 June 2010). The website of the National Register of Natural Persons (Registro Nacional de las Personas Naturales, RNPN) indicates that since there are no DUI centres in any European country, the individual can obtain a DUI by going to a DUI centre in El Salvador or the United States, and provides a list of their locations (El Salvador n.d.b). Similarly, in correspondence with the Research Directorate, an official at the Canadian Embassy in El Salvador noted that the DUI can be obtained only in El Salvador and certain places within the United States (Canada 9 June 2011).

However, a July 2011 newspaper article in *El Mundo*, a San Salvador-based newspaper, reports that since 28 June 2011, the issuance of DUIs through the DUI centres in the US has been suspended because the contract with Docusal, the private-sector company that maintained centres in Maryland, Los Angeles and New York, expired (*El Mundo* 5 July 2011). *La Prensa Gráfica*, another San Salvador-based newspaper, notes that on 7 July 2011, the Ministry of Foreign Relations and the RNPN signed a cooperation agreement that will make it possible to issue the DUIs in the US through the consulates; a start date for this process was not provided, although it is expected to be within the [translation] "following months" (*La Prensa Gráfica* 7 July 2011).

The website of the Embassy of El Salvador in Washington indicates that a person can request a DUI from the RNPN if they already had a card but it is not in their possession (El Salvador n.d.a). The RNPN states on its website that a DUI can only be replaced if it is lost, missing or stolen, and that the only document required to replace it is a receipt from any [translation] "authorized financial institution" demonstrating that the new DUI has been paid for (*ibid.* n.d.d).

The RNPN lists the following locations for DUI centres in the United States: Central Islip, New York; Woodbridge, Virginia; and Los Angeles, California (El Salvador n.d.c). The DUI centre locations in El Salvador are

- Ahuachapán in Ahuachapán department;
- Sonsonate and Acajutla in Sonsonate department;
- Santa Ana, Chalchuapa, and Metapan in Santa Ana department;
- San Salvador, Soyapango, Galerías Escalón, Ilopango, Ciudad Delgado, Mejicanos, Apopa, and San Marcos in San Salvador department;
- Zacatecoluca in La Paz department;
- Santa Tecla, Hiper Mall Las Cascadas, Lourdes Colon, and Puerto de la Libertad in La Libertad department;
- Chalatenango and Nueva Concepcion in Chalatenango department;
- Cojutepeque in Cuscatlán department;
- Sensuntepeque in Cabañas department;
- Usulután and Santiago de María in Usulután department;
- San Miguel 1 and San Miguel 2 in San Miguel department;
- San Francisco Gotera in Morazán department; and
- La Unión and Santa Rosa de Lima in La Unión department (*ibid.*).

Starting July 2011, the German company Mühlbauer ID Services GmbH is taking over responsibility for issuing DUIs in El Salvador from Docusal (*Elsalvador.com* 29 Apr. 2011; *La Página* 28 June 2011).

Requirements for the DUI

The official website for DUIs, Dui.com.sv, which is run by Docusal, lists the following requirements for obtaining a DUI in El Salvador [translation]:

DUI for the first time (if you just turned 18)

- Original proof of birth certificate
- Completed application form (available for free at the DUI centre)
- Any of the following documents:
 - Identity card for minors
 - Passport
 - Driver's license
 - If none of the above-mentioned documents are available, the requestor must be accompanied by one of his or her parents and their DUI

DUI for the first time (older than 18)

- Original proof of birth certificate
- Completed application form (available for free at a DUI centre)
- Any one of the following documents:
 - Passport
 - Driver's license
 - Personal Identity Card or Identity Card Certificate
 - Electoral Identity Card
 - If none of the above-mentioned documents are available, the requestor must be accompanied by two witnesses each with a DUI ...

Replacement of the DUI

- Proof of payment (from an authorized financial institution)
- Completed application form (available for free at a DUI centre)
- DUI (in case of deterioration)

Renewing the DUI

- Original proof of birth certificate
- Proof of payment
- Completed application form (available for free at a DUI centre)
- Documentation that supports the Modification of Information

Anyone who obtained their DUI for the first time between 2001 and 2004 can renew it during their month of birth.

Anyone who obtained their DUI for the first time from 2005 onwards, can renew it in the month it expires. (Dui.com.sv n.d.a)

Dui.com.sv also lists the following requirements for obtaining a DUI from the United States [translation]:

DUI for the first time (if you just turned 18)

- Copy of original birth registration issued within the last two years
- Completed application form (available for free at a DUI centre)
- Any of the following documents:
 - Proof of payment
 - Salvadoran or foreign (USA) passport
 - If none of the above-mentioned documents are available, the requestor must be accompanied by one of his or her parents and their DUI
 - In case of lack of representation by the parents, he or she must be accompanied by two relatives as witnesses each with their DUI

DUI for the first time (older than 18)

- Proof of payment
- Copy of original birth registration issued within the two years
- Completed application form (available for free at a DUI centre)
- Any of the following documents:
 - Salvadoran or foreign (USA) passport
 - A valid Salvadoran driver's license
 - Personal Identity Card or Identity Card Certificate
 - Electoral Identity Card
 - Salvadoran naturalization card issued by the General office of Migration
 - If none of the above-mentioned documents is owned, the requestor must be accompanied by two witnesses each with a DUI

- Valid Documents Issued by Foreign Authorities
 - Foreign passport that shows you are Salvadoran
 - Permanent residence card with photo
 - Temporary residence card
 - Work permit card
 - Refugee travel document
 - Work permit document issued by immigration services ...

Replacement of the DUI

- Proof of payment
- Completed application form (available for free at a DUI centre)
- DUI (in case of deterioration). (Dui.com.sv n.d.b)

According to the Dui.com.sv website, the DUI is free the first time a citizen requests from within El Salvador (ibid. n.d.c). If it needs to be renewed, modified or replaced, the cost is \$10.31. The price for a DUI in the US is \$35.00, and must be paid each time a DUI is requested (ibid.).

Information on the different formats of the DUI, including images of the cards, is attached to this Response.

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

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Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources: The Canada Border Services Agency did not have information for this Response. The Embassy of El Salvador in Ottawa did not reply within the time constraints of this Response. Attempts to contact the Registro Nacional de las Personas Naturales were not successful.

Internet sites, including: Asociación Latinoamericana de Educación Radiofónica; El Salvador - Embassy in Los Angeles, Ministerio de Gobernación; *El Salvador Ahora.net*.

Attachment

El Salvador. N.d. Registro de las Personas Naturales (RNPN). "Nuevo Formato de DUI." Translated by the Translation Bureau, Public Works and Government Services Canada. <http://www.rnpn.gob.sv/rnpn2/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=169%25avisos-ciudadano&catid=25%3Athe-cms&Itemid=76> [Accessed 20 July 2011]

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