

New Cinematography and Audiovisual Law

Mexico City, May 25, 2026

On May 22, 2026, the “Federal Law on Cinematography and Audiovisual (the “Law”) was published in the Federal Official Gazette (“DOF”), repealing the Federal Cinematography Law of 1992. The Law regulates the production, distribution, exhibition, and preservation of cinematographic and audiovisual works, and for the first time extends its scope to digital video-on-demand (“VOD”) platforms.

Scope of Application

The Law applies to cinematographic and audiovisual works intended for exhibition in movie theaters, alternative venues, and VOD platforms. The Law distinguishes between cinematographic works (which are primarily exhibited in theaters) and audiovisual works (which are primarily exhibited through other formats and spaces, such as streaming platforms).

Digital VOD Platforms as the Key Development

Historically, the old Cinematography Law regulated traditional cinema and, together with the Telecommunications and Broadcasting Law, regulated content on open and cable TV. However, digital content platforms were largely absent from specific regulation.

The Law defines digital video-on-demand platforms as online services that provide access to audiovisual and cinematographic content through subscription, pay-per-view, or advertising-based catalog models, under the provider’s editorial control. Social media platforms and user-generated content platforms where the provider lacks editorial responsibility are excluded.

The concepts of “editorial responsibility” and “catalog” are not defined in the Law. The line between platforms with a curated catalog and those with user-generated content is unclear, as the threshold of “control” or “curation” that determines whether a platform falls within the scope of the Law may not be clarified until the Regulations are issued.



The obligations imposed by the Law on VOD platforms operating in national territory are as follows:

1. National content section: VOD platforms must permanently offer a section with national cinematographic and audiovisual works that are part of their catalog. Those that, due to the nature of their content, do not have national works are exempt.
2. Accessibility: VOD platforms must make works available in their original subtitled version, with subtitles and audio description (for disabled people), as well as dubbing.
3. Age ratings: rights holders of cinematographic works are required to obtain a classification from the Ministry of the Interior ("SEGOB") under the AA, A, B, B15, C, and D categories, with the first four being informative and the latter two restrictive.

Regarding audiovisual works, VOD platforms must classify them by age in accordance with the forthcoming Regulations.

4. Compliance reports: both SEGOB and the Mexican Institute of Cinematography ("IMCINE") may request reports from VOD platforms.
5. Preservation copies: for national cinematographic and feature-length audiovisual works, producers, or in some instances the VOD platforms, must provide a copy of the work to the National Film Archive Trust (*Fideicomiso para la Cineteca Nacional*).

Exhibition in movie theaters

Movie theater exhibitors must reserve 10% of total exhibition time for national works, which must remain on the billboard for a minimum of 14 days and have promotional trailers shown at least 14 days before their premiere.

Dubbing

The dubbing of foreign works must be performed by performing artists in accordance with the Federal Copyright Law and the Federal Labor Law (you may consult the client alert on this reform prepared by Galicia [here](#)).

Sanctions

The Ministry of Culture or SEGOB may issue warnings, order a temporary or permanent closure, and impose fines ranging from MXN\$58,000 to MXN\$1,759,650 (USD\$3,400 to USD\$101,910) for non-compliance with certain specific obligations. Fines may be doubled in the event of a repeat offense.

Transitory Provisions

The Law entered into force on May 23, 2026, and the Regulations must be issued within a maximum period of 180 business days. SEGOB must issue the corresponding guidelines within no more than 220 business days. The deadlines and compliance criteria for VOD platforms will be defined upon issuance of the Regulations.

The Law has direct implications for companies operating digital video or content services in Mexico. We recommend reviewing business models in light of the VOD platform definition and monitoring the secondary regulation process, which will be key in determining the scope of applicable obligations.

For further information regarding the content of the Law, please do not hesitate to contact Xavier Careaga (TMT AI Counsel – xcareaga@galicia.com.mx).

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