U.S. DOMESTIC PROCESS STARTS MID-2025 FOR U.S.-MEXICO-CANADA AGREEMENT 2026 MANDATORY SIX-YEAR REVIEW

The U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) has a 16-year term ending July 1, 2036, unless the signatory countries agree to extend it. This is a major innovation: Past pacts remained in effect indefinitely. As former U.S. Trade Representative Bob Lighthizer often noted, businesses do not sign contracts that last forever because, invariably, it is necessary to update terms or rethink a deal as conditions change. The USMCA requires reviews by the signatory countries every six years to decide whether it should be modified, extended for a longer period as-is, or terminated. USMCA Article 34.7 lays out the process for this review.[1] **The deadline for the first international review is July 1, 2026.**

The USMCA implementing legislation that the U.S. Congress approved in 2020 establishes a domestic process starting in fall 2025 to prepare for the international six-year review process.[2] Thus, the 2026 USMCA review in practice starts in 2025. Given the statute lists dates by which the domestic process must commence, it is possible that the domestic process could start earlier in 2025.

- **Notice of U.S. public comment period by October 4, 2025:** At least 270 days before a USMCA six-year review commences, USTR must open a public comment period via Federal Register notice on USMCA's operation. This process must include at least one public hearing.

- **USTR report to Congress on recommendations no later than January 2, 2026:** At least 180 days before the review commences, USTR is to report to Congress on USTR's assessment of the operation of the USMCA, precise recommendations for action at the review, and the U.S. position on whether to extend the USMCA's effective date.

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[1] **Article 34.7: Review and Term Extension**

1. This Agreement shall terminate 16 years after the date of its entry into force, unless each Party confirms it wishes to continue this Agreement for a new 16-year term, in accordance with the procedures set forth in paragraphs 2 through 6.
2. On the sixth anniversary of the entry into force of this Agreement, the Commission shall meet to conduct a "joint review" of the operation of this Agreement, review any recommendations for action submitted by a Party, and decide on any appropriate actions. Each Party may provide recommendations for the Commission to take action at least one month before the Commission's joint review meeting takes place.
3. As part of the Commission's joint review, each Party shall confirm, in writing, through its head of government, if it wishes to extend the term of this Agreement for another 16-year period. If each Party confirms its desire to extend this Agreement, the term of this Agreement shall be automatically extended for another 16 years and the Commission shall conduct a joint review and consider extension of this Agreement term no later than at the end of the next six-year period.
4. If, as part of a six-year review, a Party does not confirm its wish to extend the term of this Agreement for another 16-year period, the Commission shall meet to conduct a joint review every year for the remainder of the term of this Agreement. If one or more Parties did not confirm their desire to extend this Agreement for another 16-year term at the conclusion of a given joint review, at any time between the conclusion of that review and expiry of this Agreement, the Parties may automatically extend the term of this Agreement for another 16 years by confirming in writing, through their respective head of government, their wish to extend this Agreement for another 16-year period.
5. At any point when the Parties decide to extend the term of this Agreement for another 16-year period, the Commission shall conduct joint reviews every six years thereafter, and the Parties shall have the ability to extend this Agreement after each joint review pursuant to the procedures set forth in paragraphs 3 and 4.
6. At any point in which the Parties do not all confirm their wish to extend the term of this Agreement, paragraph 4 shall apply.

[2] See 19 U.S.C. 4611, available at https://www.congress.gov/116/plaws/publ113/PLAW-116publ113.pdf.