

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Press Center

FACT SHEET: Treasury and Commerce Announce Regulatory Amendments to the Cuba Sanctions

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Amendments Implement Changes Announced by the President on December 17 Related to the Easing of Cuba Sanctions

WASHINGTON - On December 17, 2014 the President announced a set of diplomatic and economic changes to chart a new course in U.S. relations with Cuba and to further engage and empower the Cuban people. The U.S. Department of the Treasury and the U.S. Department of Commerce today are announcing the forthcoming publication of the revised Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR) and Export Administration Regulations (EAR), which implement the changes announced on December 17 to the sanctions administered by Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) and Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS). The changes take effect tomorrow, when the regulations are published in the Federal Register.

These measures will facilitate travel to Cuba for authorized purposes, facilitate the provision by travel agents and airlines of authorized travel services and the forwarding by certain entities of authorized remittances, raise the limits on and generally authorize certain categories of remittances to Cuba, allow U.S. financial institutions to open correspondent accounts at Cuban financial institutions to facilitate the processing of authorized transactions, authorize certain transactions with Cuban nationals located outside of Cuba, and allow a number of other activities related to, among other areas, telecommunications, financial services, trade, and shipping. Persons must comply with all provisions of the revised regulations; violations of the terms and conditions could result in penalties under U.S. law.

To see the Treasury regulations, which can be found at 31 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), part 515, please see [here](#). To see the Commerce regulations, which can be found at 15 CFR parts 730-774, please see [here](#). The regulations will be effective as of Friday, January 16. Major elements of the changes in the revised regulations include:

Travel –

- In all 12 existing categories of authorized travel, travel previously authorized by specific license will be authorized by general license, subject to appropriate conditions. This means that individuals who meet the conditions laid out in the regulations will not need to apply for a license to travel to Cuba.
- These categories are: family visits; official business of the U.S. government, foreign governments, and certain intergovernmental organizations; journalistic activity; professional research and professional meetings; educational activities; religious activities; public performances, clinics, workshops, athletic and other competitions, and exhibitions; support for the Cuban people; humanitarian projects; activities of private foundations or research or educational institutes; exportation, importation, or transmission of information or information materials; and certain authorized export transactions.
- The per diem rate previously imposed on authorized travelers will no longer apply, and there is no specific dollar limit on authorized expenses. Authorized travelers will be allowed to engage in transactions ordinarily incident to travel within Cuba, including payment of living expenses and the acquisition in Cuba of goods for personal consumption there.
- Additionally, travelers will now be allowed to use U.S. credit and debit cards in Cuba.

Travel and Carrier Services –

- Travel agents and airlines will be authorized to provide authorized travel and air carrier services without the need for a specific license from OFAC.

Insurance –

- U.S. insurers will be authorized to provide coverage for global health, life, or travel insurance policies for individuals ordinarily resident in a third country who travel to or within Cuba. Health, life, and travel insurance-related services will continue to be permitted for authorized U.S. travelers to Cuba.

Importation of Goods –

- Authorized U.S. travelers to Cuba will be allowed to import up to \$400 worth of goods acquired in Cuba for personal use. This includes no more than \$100 of alcohol or tobacco products.

Telecommunications –

- In order to better provide efficient and adequate telecommunications services between the United States and Cuba, a new OFAC general license will facilitate the establishment of commercial telecommunications facilities linking third countries and Cuba and in Cuba.
- The commercial export of certain items that will contribute to the ability of the Cuban people to communicate with people within Cuba, in the United States, and the rest of the world will be authorized under a new Commerce license exception (Support for the Cuban People (SCP)) without requiring a license. This will include the commercial sale of certain consumer communications devices, related software, applications, hardware, and services, and items for the establishment and update of communications-related systems.
- Additional services incident to internet-based communications and related to certain exportations and reexportations of communications items will also be authorized by OFAC general license.

Consumer Communications Devices –

- Commercial sales, as well as donations, of the export and reexport of consumer communications devices that enable the flow of information to from and among the Cuban people – such as personal computers, mobile phones, televisions, memory devices, recording devices, and consumer software – will be authorized under Commerce's Consumer Communication Devices (CCD) license exception instead of requiring licenses.

Financial Services –

- Depository institutions will be permitted to open and maintain correspondent accounts at a financial institution that is a national of Cuba to facilitate the processing of authorized transactions.
- U.S. financial institutions will be authorized to enroll merchants and process credit and debit card transactions for travel-related and other transactions consistent with section 515.560 of the CACR. These measures will improve the speed and efficiency of authorized payments between the United States and Cuba.

Remittances –

- The limits on generally licensed remittances to Cuban nationals other than certain prohibited Cuban Government and Cuban Communist Party officials will be increased from \$500 to \$2,000 per quarter.
- Certain remittances to Cuban nationals for humanitarian projects, support for the Cuban people, or development of private businesses will be generally authorized without limitation. These general licenses will allow remittances for humanitarian projects in or related to Cuba that are designed to directly benefit the Cuban people; to support the Cuban people through activities of recognized human rights organizations, independent organizations designed to promote a rapid, peaceful transition to democracy, and activities of individuals and non-governmental organizations that promote independent activity intended to strengthen civil society in Cuba; and to support the development of private businesses, including small farms.
- Authorized travelers will be allowed to carry with them to Cuba \$10,000 in total family remittances, periodic remittances, remittances to religious organizations in Cuba, and remittances to students in Cuba pursuant to an educational license.
- Under an expanded general license, banking institutions, including U.S.-registered brokers or dealers in securities and U.S.-registered money transmitters, will be permitted to process authorized remittances to Cuba without having to apply for a specific license.

Third-Country Effects –

- U.S.-owned or -controlled entities in third countries, including banks, will be authorized to provide goods and services to an individual Cuban national located outside of Cuba, provided the transaction does not involve a commercial exportation of goods or services to or from Cuba.
- OFAC will generally authorize the unblocking of accounts of Cuban nationals who have permanently relocated outside of Cuba.
- OFAC is issuing a general license that will authorize transactions related to third-country conferences attended by Cuban nationals.
- In addition, a general license will authorize foreign vessels to enter the United States after engaging in certain trade with Cuba.

Small Business Growth –

- Certain micro-financing projects and entrepreneurial and business training, such as for private business and agricultural operations, will be authorized.
- Also, commercial imports of certain independent Cuban entrepreneur-produced goods and services, as determined by the State Department on a list to be published on its website, will be authorized.

“Cash in Advance” –

- The regulatory interpretation of “cash in advance” is being redefined from “cash before shipment” to “cash before transfer of title to, and control of,” the exported items to allow expanded financing of authorized trade with Cuba.

Supporting Diplomatic Relations and USG Official Business –

- The President announced the reestablishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba. To facilitate that process, OFAC is adding a general license authorizing transactions with Cuban official missions and their employees in the United States.
- In addition, in an effort to support important U.S. government interests, an expanded general license will authorize Cuba-related transactions by employees, grantees, and contractors of the U.S. government, foreign governments, and certain international organizations in their official capacities.

Support for the Cuban People –

- Exports and reexports to provide support for the Cuban people in three areas: improving living conditions and supporting independent economic activity; strengthening civil society; and improving communications – will be eligible under Commerce’s SCP license exception.
- To improve living conditions and support independent economic activity, SCP will authorize: (1) building materials, equipment, and tools for use by the private sector to construct or renovate privately-owned buildings, including privately-owned residences, businesses, places of worship, and building for private sector social or recreational use; (2) tools and equipment for private agricultural activity; and (3) tools, equipment, supplies, and instruments for use by private sector entrepreneurs.
- To strengthen civil society, SCP will authorize export and reexport of donated items and temporary export and reexport by travelers to Cuba of items for use in scientific, archaeological, cultural, ecological, educational, historic preservation, or sporting activities. SCP will also authorize exports and reexports to human rights organizations, individuals, or non-governmental organizations that promote independent activity intended to strengthen civil society.
- Travelers will also be able to export temporarily items for use in professional research in the traveler’s profession or full time field of study under SCP. The activities or research must not be related to items on the United States Munitions List or items controlled for sensitive reasons on the Commerce Control List.
- To improve communications, SCP will authorize exports and reexports of items for use by news media personnel and U.S. news bureaus.
- SCP will not authorize the export of items on the Commerce Control List for sensitive reasons such as national security, nuclear proliferation, regional stability, missile technology, and other reasons of similar sensitivity.

Gift Parcels –

- Consolidated shipments of gift parcels will be eligible for the same Commerce license exception that authorizes individual gift parcels.

Liberalizing License Application Review Policy –

- Commerce will set forth a general policy of approval for applications to export or reexport items necessary for the environmental protection or enhancement of U.S. and international air and water quality or coastlines (including items that enhance environmental quality through energy efficiency).

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