



# OFAC

Office of Foreign Assets Control

## CUBA TRAVEL ADVISORY

**ISSUED: July 25, 2011**

**SUBJECT: Travel to Cuba and People-to-People Groups**

The U.S. Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control ("OFAC") is aware of misstatements in the media suggesting that U.S. foreign policy, as implemented by OFAC, now allows for virtually unrestricted group travel to Cuba by persons subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. Although OFAC amended the Cuban Assets Control Regulations, 31 C.F.R. Part 515 (the "Regulations"), in January 2011 to expand licensing of travel to Cuba for certain specific purposes, the amended Regulations still contain significant travel restrictions.

OFAC now specifically licenses organizations that sponsor and organize certain educational exchange programs to promote contact with the Cuban people ("People-to-People Groups"), provided that the requirements set forth in section 515.565(b)(2) of the Regulations and OFAC's licensing guidelines are met. Anyone interested in traveling to Cuba should review the Regulations and OFAC's *Comprehensive Guidelines for License Applications to Engage in Travel-Related Transactions Involving Cuba* ("Application Guidelines") (available at [www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/cuba\\_tr\\_app.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/cuba_tr_app.pdf)) to determine whether his or her proposed travel-related transactions are or could be authorized under this or any other travel license category. As stated in the Application Guidelines, OFAC only licenses People-to-People Groups that certify that all participants will have a full-time schedule of educational exchange activities that will result in meaningful interaction between the travelers and individuals in Cuba. Authorized activities by People-to-People Groups are not "tourist activities" under the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, which prohibits OFAC from licensing travel-related transactions for tourist activities.

Potential travelers should know that a People-to-People Group licensed by OFAC will possess and is required to make available to its participants information concerning its specific license. A People-to-People Group using another entity to make its travel arrangements may only use an OFAC-authorized Travel Service Provider (listed at [http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/cuba\\_tsp.pdf](http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/cuba_tsp.pdf)) or an entity outside the United States that is not subject to U.S. jurisdiction. Travel agents and tour operators in the United States that do not hold an OFAC Travel Service Provider authorization cannot organize trips, collect funds, make travel arrangements, or engage in any other Cuba travel-related transactions for People-to-People Groups or any other licensed travelers.

Authorized travelers to Cuba are subject to daily spending limits and are prohibited from bringing any Cuban "souvenirs" or other goods into the United States, with the exception of information and informational materials.

**Civil and criminal penalties** may result from a violation of the Regulations.

For additional information about OFAC sanctions involving Cuba, you may contact:

OFFICE OF FOREIGN ASSETS CONTROL  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
Washington, D.C. 202/622-2490  
Miami, FL 786/845-2828 (Travel Service Providers)  
[www.treasury.gov/ofac](http://www.treasury.gov/ofac)