

§515.571

31 CFR Ch. V (7-1-11 Edition)

§515.571 Certain transactions incident to travel to, from, and within the United States by Cuban nationals.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, the following transactions by or on behalf of a Cuban national who enters the United States on a non-immigrant visa or other non-immigrant travel authorization issued by the State Department are authorized:

(1) All transactions ordinarily incident to travel between the United States and Cuba, including the importation into the United States of accompanied baggage for personal use;

(2) All transactions ordinarily incident to travel and maintenance within the United States, including the payment of living expenses and the acquisition of goods for personal consumption in the United States;

(3) All transactions on behalf of aircraft or vessels incident to non-scheduled flights or voyages between the United States and Cuba, provided that the carrier used has a carrier service provider license issued pursuant to §515.572. This paragraph does not authorize the carriage of any merchandise into the United States except accompanied baggage; and

(4) Normal banking transactions involving foreign currency drafts, travelers' checks, or other instruments negotiated incident to travel in the United States by any person under the authority of this section.

(5) All transactions ordinarily incident to the activities for which a visa or other travel authorization was issued.

(i) This paragraph (a)(5) does not authorize receipt of compensation in excess of amounts covering living expenses and the acquisition of goods for personal consumption. See §515.565(a)(5) of this part for an authorization of payments to certain Cuban scholars of stipends or salaries that exceed this limit.

(ii) Examples of transactions authorized by this paragraph (a)(5) include: the payment of tuition to a U.S. educational institution by a national of Cuba issued a student visa; the payment of compensation covering only living expenses and the purchase of goods for personal consumption to a national of Cuba issued a performance-

related visa; and the rental of a stage by a Cuban group issued a performance visa.

(b) Payments and transfers of credit in the United States from blocked accounts in domestic banking institutions held in the name of a Cuban national who enters the United States on a visa or other travel authorization issued by the State Department or upon the order of such Cuban national are authorized provided that:

(1) Such payments and transfers of credit are made only for the living, traveling, and similar personal expenses in the United States of such Cuban national or his or her family;

(2) The total of all such payments and transfers of credit made under this section from the accounts of such Cuban national do not exceed \$250 in any one calendar month; and

(3) No payment or transfer is made from a blocked account in which a specially designated national has an interest.

(c) This section does not authorize any transfer of property to Cuba, or, except as otherwise authorized in paragraph (b) of this section, any debit to a blocked account.

NOTE TO §515.571: For the authorization of certain transactions by Cuban nationals who become U.S. citizens, apply for or receive U.S. permanent resident alien status, or are lawfully present in the United States in a non-visitor status, see §515.505 of this part.

[64 FR 25819, May 13, 1999, as amended at 68 FR 14148, Mar. 24, 2003; 69 FR 33773, June 16, 2004; 76 FR 5077, Jan. 28, 2011]

§515.572 Authorization of transactions incident to the provision of travel services, carrier services, and remittance forwarding services.

(a)(1) *Authorization of travel service provider.* The following persons wishing to provide services in connection with travel to Cuba are "travel service providers" for purposes of this part: Travel agents, ticket agents, commercial and noncommercial organizations that arrange travel to Cuba; tour operators; persons arranging through transportation to Cuba; persons chartering an aircraft or vessel on behalf of others in Cuba; and persons arranging hotel accommodations, ground transportation,

local tours, and similar travel activities on behalf of others in Cuba. Travel service providers must obtain authorization from the Office of Foreign Assets Control before providing services with respect to travel to Cuba. The list stated above should not be considered exhaustive, as other persons may be “travel service providers” within the meaning of this part. Opinions may be obtained from the Office of Foreign Assets Control concerning the applicability of this licensing requirement in individual cases.

(2) *Authorization of carrier service provider.* Persons subject to U.S. jurisdiction wishing to provide carrier services by aircraft or vessels incidental to their non-scheduled flights or voyages to, from, or within Cuba are “carrier service providers” for purposes of this part. Carrier service providers must obtain authorization from the Office of Foreign Assets Control before providing services with respect to non-scheduled flights or voyages to, from, or within Cuba. Carriage to or from Cuba of any merchandise, cargo or gifts, other than those permitted to individual travelers as accompanied baggage, must also be authorized by licenses issued by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

(3) *Authorization of remittance forwarders.* Persons subject to U.S. jurisdiction, including persons that provide payment forwarding services and non-commercial organizations acting on behalf of donors, that wish to provide services in connection with the collection or forwarding of remittances authorized pursuant to this part must obtain specific authorization from OFAC. Depository institutions, as defined in §515.333, are hereby authorized to provide these services without obtaining specific authorization from OFAC. However, all licensed remittance forwarders, including depository institutions, that forward remittances authorized pursuant to this part are required to collect from persons who use their services information showing compliance with the relevant remittance provisions of this part. Depository institutions are permitted to set up testing arrangements and exchange authenticator keys with Cuban financial institutions to forward remit-

tances authorized by or pursuant to §515.570, but may not open or use direct correspondent accounts of their own with Cuban financial institutions.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (a)(3): A suggested form for the collection of information showing compliance with the remittance provisions in §515.570 is available from OFAC’s Web site (www.treas.gov/ofac).

(b) *Terms and conditions of authorization to engage in service transactions.* Authorization to engage in service transactions will be issued only upon the applicant’s written affirmation and subsequent demonstration that it does not participate in discriminatory practices of the Cuban government against certain residents and citizens of the United States. Examples of such practices include, but are not limited to, charging discriminatory rates for air travel or requiring payment for services, such as hotel accommodations and meals, not desired, planned to be utilized, or actually utilized, based on such characteristics as race, color, religion, sex, citizenship, place of birth, or national origin. Authorization, whether a grant of provisional authorization or a license issued pursuant to this part, does not permit a travel or carrier service provider to provide services in connection with any individual’s transactions incident to travel which are prohibited by this part.

(c) *Initial applications for licenses.* The initial application for a license shall contain:

(1) The applicant organization’s name, address, telephone number, and the name of an official of the applicant organization responsible for its licensed services;

(2) The state of applicant’s organization, if a juridical entity, the address of its principal place of business and all branch offices, the identity and ownership percentages of all shareholders or partners, and the identity and position of all principal officers and directors;

(3) Copies of any bylaws, articles of incorporation, partnership agreements, management agreements, or other documents pertaining to the organization, ownership, control, or management of the applicant; and

(4)(i) In the case of applications for authorization to serve as travel or carrier service providers, a report on the

§515.572

31 CFR Ch. V (7-1-11 Edition)

forms and other procedures used to establish that each customer is in full compliance with U.S. law implementing the Cuban embargo and either qualifies for one of the general licenses contained in this part authorizing travel-related transactions in connection with travel to Cuba or has received a specific license from the Office of Foreign Assets Control issued pursuant to this part. In the case of a customer traveling pursuant to a general license, the applicant must demonstrate that it requires each customer to attest, in a signed statement, to his or her qualification for the particular general license claimed. The statement must provide facts supporting the customer's belief that he or she qualifies for the general license claimed. In the case of a customer traveling under a specific license, the applicant must demonstrate that it requires the customer to furnish it with a copy of the license. The copy of the signed statement or the specific license must be maintained on file with the applicant.

(ii) In the case of applications for authorization as remittance forwarders, a report on the forms, account books, and other recordkeeping procedures used to determine whether each customer has violated the terms of any authorization for remittances contained in or issued pursuant to this part, or sent remittances to persons ineligible to receive them under §515.570; and the method by which remittances are sent to Cuba and the procedures used by the applicant to ensure that the remittances are received by the persons intended.

(d) *Required reports and recordkeeping.*

(1) Each specific license or grant of provisional authority shall require that the service provider furnish annual reports to the Department of the Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Washington, DC 20220, during the term of the license. The required content of such reports and their due dates shall be provided to the service provider in a letter authorizing the provider to commence services. Each such report will cover only the one-year period immediately preceding the date of the report.

(2) While the names and addresses of individual travelers or remitters, the

number and amount of each remittance, and the name and address of each recipient, as applicable, need not be submitted with annual reports, this information must be retained on file with all other information required by §515.601 of this chapter. These records must be furnished to the Office of Foreign Assets Control on demand pursuant to §515.602 of this chapter.

(3) *Presentation of passenger lists.* Tour operators, persons operating an aircraft or vessel, or persons chartering an aircraft or vessel on behalf of others, for travel to, from, and within Cuba must furnish the U.S. Customs Service on demand a list of passengers on each flight or voyage to, from, and within Cuba.

(e) *Procedures governing the grant of provisional authority, denial, suspension, or revocation of authority to engage in service transactions—*(1) *Grant of provisional authority.* Following submission of a complete application as described in paragraph (c) of this section, the submission of any additional relevant information, and a preliminary evaluation by the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the applicant will be notified in writing that provisional authority has been granted to provide the services contemplated in the application. This provisional authority to provide services will remain in effect pending a final decision to grant or deny the license.

(2) *Denial of license—*(i) *Notice of denial.* If the Director, Office of Foreign Assets Control, determines that the application for a license to engage in service transactions related to travel to Cuba, carrier service transactions related to travel to Cuba, or transactions related to remittance forwarding should be denied for any reason, notice of denial shall be given to the applicant. The notice of denial shall state the reasons for the denial.

(ii) *Grounds for denial.* The causes sufficient to justify denial of an application for a license may include, but need not be limited to:

(A) Any cause which would justify suspension or revocation of the authority of a service provider pursuant to paragraph (e)(3) of this section;

(B) Failure to file a full and complete application;

(C) Any willful misstatement of pertinent facts in the application;

(D) Evidence indicating that the applicant participates in discriminatory practices of the Cuban Government against certain residents and citizens of the United States as described in paragraph (b) of this section; or

(E) A reputation imputing to the applicant criminal, dishonest, or unethical conduct, or a record of such conduct.

(3) *Suspension or revocation of a license or provisional authorization.* A license or provisional authorization issued pursuant to this section may be suspended for a specific period of time, or revoked, for the following reasons:

(i) The service provider has willfully made or caused to be made in any application for any license, request for a ruling or opinion, or report to be filed with the Office of Foreign Assets Control, any statement that was, at the time and in light of the circumstances under which it was made, false or misleading with respect to any material fact, or has omitted to state in any application, request for ruling or opinion, or report any material fact that was required;

(ii) The service provider has failed to file timely reports or comply with the recordkeeping requirements of his license or provisional authorization.

(iii) The service provider has been convicted, at any time after filing an application for a license under this section, of any felony or misdemeanor that:

(A) Involved the importation, exportation, or transfer of property in violation of any law or regulation administered by the Office of Foreign Assets Control;

(B) Arose directly out of the conduct of the business covered by the license; or

(C) Involved larceny, extortion, forgery, counterfeiting, fraudulent concealment, embezzlement, fraudulent conversion, misappropriation of funds, or a violation of the Customs laws, export or import control laws, or banking laws.

(iv) The service provider has violated any provision of law enforced by the Office of Foreign Assets Control or the

rules or regulations issued under any such provision;

(v) The service provider has counseled, commanded, induced, procured, or knowingly aided or abetted the violation by any other person of any provision of any law or regulation referred to above;

(vi) The service provider has, in the course of the business covered by the license, with felonious intent, in any manner willfully and knowingly deceived, defrauded, misled, threatened, or coerced any client or prospective client; or

(vii) The service provider has committed any other act or omission that demonstrates unfitness to conduct the business covered by the license.

[57 FR 53999, Nov. 16, 1992, as amended at 59 FR 31142, June 17, 1994; 59 FR 44886, Aug. 30, 1994; 63 FR 27349, May 18, 1998. Redesignated and amended at 64 FR 25813, 25819, May 13, 1999; 68 FR 14148, Mar. 24, 2003; 69 FR 33773, June, 16, 2004; 74 FR 46007, Sept. 8, 2009]

§ 515.573 Transactions by news organizations.

(a) Specific licenses may be issued authorizing all transactions necessary for the establishment and operation of news bureaus in Cuba whose primary purpose is the gathering and dissemination of news to the general public. Transactions that may be authorized include, but are not limited to, those incident to the following:

(1) Leasing office space and securing related goods and services;

(2) Hiring Cuban nationals to serve as support staff;

(3) Purchasing Cuban-origin goods for use in the operation of the office; and

(4) Paying fees related to the operation of the office in Cuba.

(b) Specific licenses may be issued authorizing transactions necessary for the establishment and operation of news bureaus in the United States by Cuban organizations whose primary purpose is the gathering and dissemination of news to the general public.

(c) Specific licenses may be issued authorizing transactions related to hiring Cuban nationals to provide reporting services or other services related to the gathering and dissemination of news.