

# Travel Agency Instructions for American Airlines Cuba Travel

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## Overview

The U.S. government currently permits customer travel between the U.S. and Cuba following stringent guidelines. Please review all of the information contained on this page and insure you communicate the details to your customer.

## Travel Requirements – between U.S. and Cuba

- **Passport** - the passport must be valid for six months beyond the customer's return trip from Cuba
- **Entry Document (Travel Card/Visa)** – [View more Travel Card/Visa details](#)
  - Non-Cuban born customers – depending on the purpose of their visit – either a visa (for business or study for example) or a travel/tourist card. Some documents use the terms travel card and tourist visa interchangeably
  - Cuban-born customers will enter with either a valid Cuban passport or a HE11 visa
- **Medical Insurance** - Cuba requires visitors to obtain Cuba-specific medical insurance, and will be automatically included in the cost of the customer's fare (a \$25 surcharge) – [View additional Medical Insurance details](#)
- **OFAC Reason Code (RFTV)** – Office of Foreign Assets Control allows travel under one of twelve predesignated reasons or a thirteenth reason requiring specific government approval (case-by-case basis).  
[View Approved OFAC Reason Codes \(RFTV\)](#)  
[View additional RFTV information](#)
  - **Important Note:** Tourism is not a valid Reason Code (RFTV) at this time

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## Approved Reasons for Travel (RFTV) to Cuba

	IATA Reason Codes	U.S. Government Permitted Reason for Travel
1	FAMILY	Family visits
2	GOVMT	Official business of the U.S. government, foreign governments, and certain intergovernmental organizations
3	JOURN	Journalistic activity
4	PRORM	Professional research and professional meetings
5	RELIG	Religious activities
6	PERFO	Public performances, clinics, workshops, athletic and other competitions, and exhibitions
7	SUPRT	Support for the Cuban people
8	HUMAN	Humanitarian projects
9	PRIRM	Activities of private foundations or research or educational institutes
10	INFOR	Exportation, importation, or transmission of information or information materials
11	EXPRT	Certain authorized export transactions or Additional certain authorized export transactions
12	LICEN	OFAC specific license (followed by license number)
<b>NOTE:</b> Flying to Cuba from or through the U.S. for tourism is strictly prohibited by the U.S. Department of Treasury - Traveling under a false reason may result in civil or criminal penalties under U.S. law		

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## PNR Requirements (Airline and Travel Agent)

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### Reason for Travel (RFTV)

Identifying and documenting the permitted category of travel is a legal requirement both for the traveler and for travel service providers

IATA's RFTV SSR is the long term solution for American's Travel Agencies to document Cuba the Reason Code for customers traveling to Cuba. However, industry booking sources (GDSs, content aggregators, etc.) may not be ready for RFTV, in which case:

- If your booking source is not ready for RFTV: enter the Reason Code in OTHS SSR
- Once your booking source launches RFTV: enter the Reason Code in RFTV SSR only
- Contact your GDS Helpdesk for specific formats

It is important that you make travelers aware of the U.S. governments' permitted reasons for travel to Cuba and that you understand your obligations as a Travel Services Provider. If you experience difficulty creating a process to document the Reason Code, then please contact Agency Relations by email at [agency.relations@aa.com](mailto:agency.relations@aa.com). Please indicate the following Subject Line: "Cuba – RFTV Documentation"

Note: Foreign Nationals (non-U.S. and Cuba Citizens) originating on a one-way ticket from Cuba may use SUPRT as the RFTV.

#### Instructions for Customers Travelling under Specific Licenses from OFAC

- Some customers may have a specific license number issued by the Office of Foreign Assets Control ("OFAC") which permits travel that falls outside of the 12 general reasons.
- For such customers, please (i) document their specific license using the Reason Code LICEN immediately followed by an oblique and the alphanumeric code for the specific license, e.g. LICEN/CT20161234567 and (ii) provide notice that American will require a paper copy of their specific license at the airport.

#### Example messages

- Example A: Message advising a general reason for travel:

```
HDQRMAA
.HDQRM1P
HDQ1P ABCDEF/XYZ/99999992/MIA/1P/US
2EDWARDS/PATRICIAMS/CHLOEMS
AA123C01OCT MIACFG HK2
SSR RFTV AA HK1 MIACFG0123C01OCT-1EDWARDS/PATRICIAMS.FAMILY
SSR RFTV AA HK1 CFGMIA0123C01OCT-1EDWARDS/CHLOEMS.FAMILY
```

- Example B: Message advising a specific OFAC license reason (LICEN) and license number:

```
HDQRMAA
.HDQRM1P
HDQ1P ABCDEF/XYZ/99999992/MIA/1P/US
2EDWARDS/PATRICIAMS/CHLOEMS
AA123C01OCT MIACFG HK2
SSR RFTV AA HK1 MIACFG0123C01OCT -
1EDWARDS/PATRICIAMS.LICEN/CT20161234567
SSR RFTV AA HK1 CFGMIA0123C01OCT -1EDWARDS/CHLOEMS.LICEN/CT20168901234
```

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#### Complete Customer Contact Information

As required in American's Addendum to the Governing Travel Agency Agreements, American requires complete customer contact information including but not limited to phone fields, addresses (home or billing) and email addresses in the PNR. This contact information is important in the event that American must contact customers concerning their Cuba travel.

Itineraries containing Cuba travel without complete customer contact information or otherwise not in compliance with American's requirements will be at risk of cancellation.

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### **American Prime Flights Only**

PNRs containing travel to/from Cuba on American cannot have any other air carrier in the same PNR. Other airlines must be booked and ticketed in separate PNRs.

- Codeshare Flights (AA marketed/OA operated) are not permitted in the same PNR
- If booking connecting flights between OA and AA to Cuba, please allow enough time for the customers to claim their baggage and recheck at the city in which travel on AA begins

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### **Travel Card/Visa**

A Cuba Travel Card/Visa, also known as a **Tourist** Card, is required to enter the country, along with a valid passport.

Note: an entry document is required for all customers.

- Cuban-born customers will enter with either a valid Cuban passport or a HE11 visa.

All other travelers will require – depending on the purpose of their visit – either a visa (for business or study for example) or a Tourist or Travel card. Some documents use the terms Tourist card and tourist visa interchangeably.

The Cuba Travel Card/Visa may be purchased in advance through <https://cubavisaservices.com/product/aa-visa-card/> for \$85.00, or for \$100.00 on the day of departure at the departing hub airport (MIA or CLT) from the Cuba Travel Services booths.

Note: Only cash (USD) and credit card are acceptable forms of payment at the Cuba Ready booths.

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### **Medical Insurance**

- American's Cuba flights include the cost of specific medical insurance required by the Cuban government for all customers travelling on U.S. airlines' flights to Cuba. Effective December 7, 2016, the Cuba Health Insurance appears in the price quote and on the ticket as tax code H3
  - The cost for medical insurance is \$25.00USD.
  - This applies to both revenue and award bookings
  - For tickets issued prior to December 7, 2016 the information appeared on the ticket as YQ.
- The customer's boarding pass will be the medical insurance document which will be stamped. It is very important for the customer to retain their boarding pass as this will be their proof of insurance while in Cuba.

Understand your obligations as a Travel Services Provider and minimize travel complications by staying up-to-date on any additional travel requirements and informing travelers accordingly. Additional travel information can be found on the U.S. and Cuba government websites:

- <http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/pages/cuba.aspx>
- <http://misiones.minrex.gob.cu/en/usa>

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## Schedule Change / Schedule Irregularity (IROPS)

When a change is made to the customer's flight(s), Travel Agents are required to update each customer's reason for travel to/from Cuba in the PNR by using SSRs to document specific 5-character "Reason Codes" as approved by IATA for all affected segments.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Reasons for Travel (RFTV)

#### 1- Why do I need to document travel reasons using IATA Reason Codes?

The U.S. Government currently limits the reasons for which customers may travel to Cuba. As such, Travel Service Providers, including American and Travel Agencies, must record customers' reasons for travel to comply with the U.S. Government's documentation requirements. This documentation is required because the U.S. Government requires customers to certify that they fall within one of the permitted travel categories and airlines and travel agents to capture and store customers' reasons for travel.

#### 2- Can I travel to Cuba as a Tourist?

No, travel for the sole purpose of tourism is not currently permitted on any U.S. carrier under the reasons for travel provided by the U.S. Government.

#### 3- For non-U.S. citizen customers who wish to fly from the United States to Cuba for tourism, what Reason Code could we use?

Tourism is not currently one of the U.S. government's permitted reasons for travel to Cuba. Please refer to the U.S. Government and the list of valid Reason Codes within this document for additional information about current Cuba permitted reasons.

#### 4- If an agency has erroneously issued a ticket to Cuba for tourism, can it be refunded?

Fare rules apply. The traveler is responsible to ensure they have the right to enter Cuba. Any exceptions will be assessed on a case by case basis.

#### 5- Where can I find more information about American's Cuba flights?

Visit [www.aa.com/visitcuba](http://www.aa.com/visitcuba) for more information and to stay up-to-date about American's Cuba flights.

#### 6- How long will the Reason Code be required?

The Reason Code will be required until the U.S. Government changes its policy.

**7- In which itineraries is the Reason Code required and does the customers' citizenship matter?**

The Reason Code is required for all itineraries that contain American Airlines-operated flights between Cuba and the U.S., irrespective of customers' citizenship or the marketing code of the flight. This includes flights which transit the U.S.

**8- What happens if the Reason Code or customers' contact information is not added to the PNR?**

If the information American instructs its Travel Agencies to add to the PNR is not present, then the itinerary is at-risk of cancellation. Remember, Travel Agencies must add the customer's accurate contact information; contact information of the Travel Agency or someone other than the customer indicated in the PNR will not suffice. *If you experience difficulty creating a process to document the Reason Code, then please contact American Airlines Agency Relations by email at [agency.relations@aa.com](mailto:agency.relations@aa.com) with subject line "Cuba – RFTV Documentation" which may help you find alternative solutions.*

**9- Do the 13 U.S. Government reasons for travel to Cuba apply when the only travel that is booked is from Cuba to the U.S.?**

Yes, if the customer originating in Cuba is a citizen of the U.S. or Cuba, then RFTV must be collected. For Foreign Nationals (non-U.S. and Cuba Citizens) originating on a one-way ticket from Cuba, Travel Agents may document RFTV SUPRT in SSR and add a historical remark stating H-CUBA TVL FOREIGN NATIONAL.

**10- Will the GDS display a pop-up to remind me of the 13 U.S. Government reasons for Cuba travel?**

How the GDS handles U.S. airlines' Cuba flights is solely up to the GDS. Decisions about modifications to the GDS display (e.g. for pop-ups that may or may not currently be in their systems) are made by the GDSs themselves.

**11- When must the Reason Code be submitted?**

The Reason Code must be added at the time of booking.

**12- What if multiple customers are in the PNR; do I need multiple Reason Codes?**

Yes, each customer requires their own Reason Code because it is possible that a given customer's reason for travel differs from other customers' traveling within the same PNR.

**13- Can the OTHS and RFTV SSRs accommodate different Reason Codes for different customers in the PNR?**

Yes, both OTHS and RFTV will be name-associated, meaning unique travel reason codes may be entered for each individual customer in the PNR.

**14- When will my booking source be ready to launch the RFTV SSR?**

The RFTV SSR was approved by IATA in early 2016 as an industry standard. Consult your booking source for more information about when it will have the RFTV SSR available for use.

**15- Where can one obtain a General License?**

A General License may be obtained through OFAC. General Licenses are very unique and you may find obtaining one a cumbersome process – more information may be found on the U.S. government site [http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=f0f367be3e05806e7499b330572a7b1e&mc=true&n=sp31.3.515.e&r=SUBPART&ty=HTML#se31.3.515\\_1501](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=&SID=f0f367be3e05806e7499b330572a7b1e&mc=true&n=sp31.3.515.e&r=SUBPART&ty=HTML#se31.3.515_1501)

Note: the majority of travelers eligible to travel to Cuba should fall under one of the 12 categories.

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### **Baggage and Other Miscellaneous Questions**

**1- What forms of payment are accepted in Cuba to pay for baggage and other fees?**

Currently, all Cuba airports are Cash Only and must be local currency (CUP).

**2- What baggage fees apply for travel to/from Cuba?**

Baggage fees vary, based on ticket origination. Please visit our [Checked Baggage Policy](#) page for more information.

**3- What is the tax 25.00 CU on the ticket?**

This is a Cuba Passenger Services Airport Tax, which applies to flights departing Cuba.

**4- Will Same Day Flight Change (SDFC) be offered to flights to Cuba?**

The Same Day Flight Change (SDFC) product offered to Main Cabin customers within/between 50 United States, US Virgin Islands (USVI), Puerto Rico, Canada, and Caribbean will not be offered for flights to/from Cuba.

However, Same Day Flight Change (SDFC) will be offered to customers traveling to/from Cuba for Premium Economy, First/Business class, and/or MileSaver Awards booked in T – inventory when processed as even exchanges.

**5- When flights to Cuba first launched, there were a lot of restrictions, have these restrictions been lifted?**

Previous round-trip, maximum stay and Cuba point of origin restriction have now been lifted. One-way and Cuba point of origin American Airlines flights are now available for sale.

Cuba point-of-sale is not permitted

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