



July 6, 2023

Electronic System for Travel Authorization Ineligibility – Cuba

- The *Visa Waiver Program Improvement and Terrorist Travel Prevention Act of 2015* (“the Act”) makes nationals of Visa Waiver Program (VWP) countries who have been present in a country designated as a State Sponsor of Terrorism (SST), as well as those who are dual nationals of both a VWP country and a country designated as an SST at the time of applying for an Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) ineligible for travel to the United States under the VWP.
- On January 12, 2021, the Secretary of State designated Cuba as an SST, making individuals who have been present in Cuba on or after this date ineligible for travel under the VWP. The restriction on VWP travel also applies to individuals who are dual nationals of both a VWP country and Cuba at the time of applying.
- On July 6, 2023, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security updated the ESTA application form and ESTA Mobile App to reflect these changes.
- If an ESTA has already been approved and it is later determined that the traveler has been present in Cuba or holds dual nationality with both a VWP country and Cuba, the ESTA will be revoked.
- Travelers whose ESTA has been revoked will receive a notification indicating that their ESTA status has changed and may review their updated status on the ESTA Mobile App or on CBP’s ESTA website: <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov>
- It is stressed that travel to the United States is not barred for those travelers who are affected by the restriction and do not meet the exemption criteria. If you encounter such a traveler, direct them to apply for a nonimmigrant visa at any U.S. embassy or consulate.
- Limited Exceptions: Under the Act, military personnel and government employees are exempted from the VWP travel restrictions based on their presence in Cuba if such presence was in order to carry out their official duties for military service in the armed forces of a VWP country or as full-time government employees of a VWP country.
- There are no exemptions for presence in Cuba on behalf of international organizations or dual nationality with both a VWP country and Cuba.

If you have a question on boarding a traveler, it should be directed to the appropriate Regional Carrier Liaison Group (RCLG), Immigration Advisory Program (IAP) Officer or Joint Security Program (JSP) Officer.