

FAQ on Donations of Cell Phones to Cuba: American Support for the Free Exchange of Information and Democracy-Building Efforts for Cuba

Who can send a cell phone to Cuba?

Individuals with family in Cuba currently may send gift parcels to immediate family members that include food, medicine and clothing. Once changes to the Export Administration Regulations are completed, hopefully in the next few weeks, cell phones may be included in the gift packages.

Do you have to be related?

Yes. Only immediate family members in Cuba (parent, sibling, spouse, child, grandparent, or grandchild) may receive gift parcels.

How frequently can gift parcels be sent?

Not more than one gift parcel may be sent from the same donor to the same household in any one calendar month. A household is defined as all individuals living in common at a unique address.

What cell phones work in Cuba?

U.S. phones that use GSM (900 MHz) and TDMA will generally work in Cuba, provided they are appropriately connected to the local cell phone network. Like any purchase of cell phones for use overseas, consumers will need to research among a range of options of phones and service plans to determine the best choice for their particular situation.

Which service providers may be used?

Cell phones can be registered with either Cuba's "Cubacel" or with an international carrier that has a roaming agreement with Cubacel. Currently, no U.S. service providers have such roaming agreements.

When will the new regulations take effect?

We hope to complete the changes to U.S. regulations in the next few weeks. While this process is underway, American consumers have time to research their options and decide on the best approach that fits their situation.

Will an Apple iPhone work in Cuba? What about cameras that take pictures or surf the web...will they work?

While we can not attest to which particular phone models will work, U.S. phones that use GSM (900 MHz) and TDMA will generally work in Cuba, provided they are appropriately connected to the local cell phone network. Features beyond normal telephone conversations, such as data transfers, may or may not work depending on the features of such local networks.