

Canada to partially resume consular services in Havana



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Havana, July 31 (RHC)-- Starting August 1, Canada will restore some visa services at its embassy in Havana, reported Prensa Latina.

Cuban residents will again be able to obtain the fingerprints and photos needed for embassy applications, as well as to leave passports and pick up visas at the building.

The report said the new announcement does not restore all restricted services, but Canadian authorities said efforts are underway to make the process faster, easier and less expensive for applicants.

Despite the reopening of some work, all active applications were moved from Havana to Mexico City for processing. Applicants requesting permanent residence in Canada will still have to travel outside Cuba for any required medical examination or interview.

Cuba's ambassador to Canada, Josefina Vidal, noted that the island's government officially protested to Canadian authorities over the closing of immigration services.

In an interview, the diplomat said that the Cuban government did not understand the reason for the shutdown or the substantial reduction in the personnel of the Canadian embassy.

She explained that the reason for the measure was the mysterious illness suffered by several Canadian diplomats stationed in Cuba since 2017, which they initially attributed to "acoustic attacks".

She added that Canada replicated the U.S. model applied by the Donald Trump Administration which obliges Cubans who want a U.S. visa to visit a U.S. embassy in a third country, such as Colombia.

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