

# *Cuba publishes new regulations for self-employment*

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Havana, July 10 (RHC)-- Cuban authorities released on Tuesday new regulations that will govern the self-employment sector on the island. The new rules, which will enter into force on December 7, are grouped under several ministerial resolutions, decree-laws and decrees.

According to Resolution number 12 of the country's Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MTSS), the changes resulted in a total of 123 different kinds of licenses now, as compared with the 201 that existed previously.

At a press conference, deputy labor minister Marta Feitó explained that 96 types of licenses that were related among them, have been unified into just 28. She added that new licenses will also be granted in 27 different areas that were frozen since last year, among them the rental of homes, rooms and spaces, restaurant services and private contractors.

According to Feitó, once the regulations come into force, the license holders will have up to 90 days to adjust their business to what is indicated. In that period, they will receive training, and so will also the representatives of the government agencies involved in this process.

She added that the changes aim to improve this form of employment, by correcting deficiencies and ensuring that the private sector continues to progress in an orderly manner.

She said that while some of the changes were requested by the self-employed workers themselves, others seek to improve service quality and control over those activities.

As of last May, there were 591,456 self-employed workers in Cuba, representing 13 percent of the country's labor force. In line with the new regulations, the Cuban Ministry of Finance and Prices (MFP) also announced tax adjustments for the self-employment sector.

At a press conference, Vladimir Regueiro, Director of Fiscal Policy with the Ministry of Finance and Prices, said the new norms include monthly tax reductions for some licenses and increases for others, depending on both, the specific activity and the province.

The new changes, he said, give continuity to what has been endorsed in the country's socioeconomic guidelines to avoid the concentration of wealth and property in non-state forms, as well as to encourage the orderly development of the sector.

He further noted that since the self-employment sector was reopened in 2010, there has been an increase in revenue from this concept. He added that the self-employment sector is expected to contribute five percent of the total State Budget in the current year, 2018.

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