

Cuban Baseball in Havana processes visas for Pre-Olympic Games in Florida

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On Monday, the Cuban Baseball Federation warned that the United States had not granted visas to any of the members of its delegation to the Pre-Olympic of the Americas, in which 8 teams will compete.

On Wednesday, "12 teammates" went to the embassy and on Thursday and Friday another two groups will go, said to AFP the head of Arbitration and Treasurer of the Cuban Baseball Federation, Luis Daniel del Risco.

Since the United States suspended the delivery of visas at its consular office in Havana in 2017, Cubans have been forced to travel to third countries to apply for this document. Only a few exceptions have been made to process visas in Havana.

The Trump administration suspended in 2017 the delivery of visas on the island, alleging "acoustic attacks" against its diplomats, who were reduced to a minimum representation. Cuba has always denied that these attacks occurred.

Cuba's 41-member baseball delegation had begun the cumbersome visa process since April 19 in Mexico, but faced with the impossibility of obtaining it in time began to look for options in Panama or Guyana, the official explained.

"Until the variant was found here," in Havana, where they presented the documentation on May 11, Del Risco said and considered that possibility a good gesture by the U.S. authorities.

"We consider it good, the team can continue training, we have not had to travel to another place," he added.

Faced with the time pressure to be in the competition in the cities of West Palm Beach and Port St. Lucie, the Cuban Baseball Federation said Monday that the United States had "the responsibility to facilitate the presence of all countries" in that competition.

In addition, the Cuban pre-selection of 32 players plans to play two pre-tournament warm-up games in Florida with the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua, on May 27 and 29, respectively.

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