



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

August 18, 2016

TO: Maria Odom
Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman

FROM: León Rodríguez
Director

SUBJECT: **Response to Recommendations on Parole for Eligible U Visa
Principal and Derivative Petitioners Residing Abroad**

I would like to thank you for your recommendations to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) regarding parole for principal U nonimmigrant status (U visa) petitioners on the waiting list who reside abroad and any qualifying derivative family members who reside abroad. USCIS welcomes the opportunity to respond to the three recommendations.

Recommendations

You recommend that:

1. USCIS should afford parole to eligible U visa petitioners on the waiting list and qualifying derivative family members who reside abroad by creating a policy to facilitate entry into the United States while waiting for a visa to become available;
2. The parole policy should allow for concurrent filings of the U visa petitions and requests for parole; and
3. Cases should be adjudicated at the Vermont Service Center, where U visa petitions are currently processed, to ensure consistent and effective adjudication, and where Congress expressly authorized the placement of the adjudication of vulnerable populations.

USCIS' Response to the Your Recommendations

1. Afford parole to eligible U visa petitioners on the waiting list and qualifying derivative family members who reside abroad.

USCIS Response: USCIS agrees.

As acknowledged in your recommendation, USCIS plans to implement a policy for principal U visa petitioners on the waiting list who reside abroad and any qualifying derivative family members who reside abroad to request parole to enter the United States while the principal

U visa petitioner is on the waiting list. USCIS recognizes that the U visa provides lawful immigration status to a vulnerable population, and USCIS believes that this population will be better served through an established and streamlined process to request parole.

USCIS is creating a stand-alone application form that this victim population will be able to use to request parole. USCIS' policy regarding parole for the victim population will also include safe address protections. USCIS expects the new form and policy guidance to be completed in Fiscal Year 2017.

2. Allow for concurrent filings of the U visa and the request for parole.

USCIS Response: USCIS is considering this recommendation.

USCIS is currently evaluating various options regarding the parole application process. USCIS will consider the suggestion to allow parole applications to be filed both with the U visa petition and after the petitioner has been placed on the waiting list.

3. Parole requests should be adjudicated at the Vermont Service Center.

USCIS Response: USCIS is considering this recommendation.

USCIS is currently assessing the operational impact of the parole policy and the anticipated resources that this policy will require. As previously noted, USCIS is working to develop and implement safe address protections as part of the parole application process for the victim population. While USCIS cannot, at this time, specify which service center will adjudicate the parole requests, USCIS acknowledges the importance of consistent and effective adjudication of these requests.