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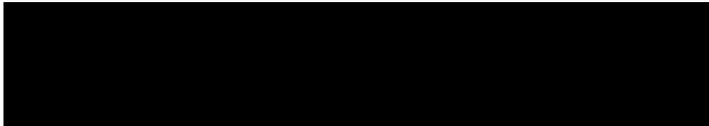


**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**



FILE: LIN 02 173 52987 Office: NEBRASKA SERVICE CENTER Date: **MAR 18 2004**

IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiary:



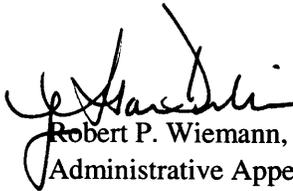
PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(H) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

SELF-REPRESENTED

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.


Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The service center director denied the nonimmigrant visa petition and the matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed. The petition will be denied.

The petitioner is a healthcare management and services business that seeks to employ the beneficiary as a case management coordinator. The petitioner endeavors to classify the beneficiary as a nonimmigrant worker in a specialty occupation pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101 (a)(15)(H)(i)(b).

It is noted that the record contains no properly filed G-28. The G-28, Notice of Entry of Appearance as Attorney or Representative, has not been properly completed by the petitioner's counsel. As such, the petitioner's counsel is not recognized in this proceeding.

The director denied the petition because the proffered position is not a specialty occupation and the beneficiary is not qualified to perform a specialty occupation. On appeal, the petitioner's counsel submits a brief.

The AAO will first address the director's conclusion that the position is not a specialty occupation.

Section 214(i)(1) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1184 (i)(1), defines the term "specialty occupation" as an occupation that requires:

- (A) theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge, and
- (B) attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree in the specific specialty (or its equivalent) as a minimum for entry into the occupation in the United States.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A), to qualify as a specialty occupation, the position must meet one of the following criteria:

- (1) A baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is normally the minimum requirement for entry into the particular position;
- (2) The degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations or, in the alternative, an employer may show that its particular position is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree;
- (3) The employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position; or
- (4) The nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree.

Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) interprets the term "degree" in the criteria at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A) to mean not just any baccalaureate or higher degree, but one in a specific specialty that is directly related to the proffered position.

The record of proceeding before the AAO contains: (1) Form I-129 and supporting documentation; (2) the director's request for additional evidence; (3) the petitioner's response to the director's request; (4) the director's denial letter; and (5) Form I-290B and supporting documentation. The AAO reviewed the record in its entirety before issuing its decision.

The petitioner is seeking the beneficiary's services as a case management coordinator. Evidence of the beneficiary's duties includes: the I-129 petition; the petitioner's April 12, 2002 letter in support of the petition; and the petitioner's response to the director's request for evidence. According to this evidence, the beneficiary would perform duties that entail: assessing the needs of the department and personnel; reviewing quality assurance standards; analyzing rehabilitation policies and procedures; interviewing personnel and patients to evaluate quality assurance program; monitoring key activities and obtaining solutions to problems; developing program to monitor compliance with corporate, local, state, and federal guidelines; reviewing and evaluating patient medical records regarding admission and stay in facility; compiling statistical data and writing reports of findings; selecting topics for review, such as drugs and high volume cases; and writing quality assurance standards and procedures. The petitioner indicated that a qualified candidate for the job would possess a bachelor's degree in any healthcare related field or an equivalent thereof.

The director found that the proffered position was not a specialty occupation because the proposed duties are not so complex as to require a baccalaureate degree. The director found further that the petitioner failed to establish any of the criteria found at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A).

On appeal, the petitioner asserts that the proffered position normally requires a baccalaureate degree industry wide and that, in the petitioner's case, the proposed duties are so complex that such degree is necessary. Job advertisements are submitted in support of these claims.

Upon review of the record, the petitioner has established none of the four criteria outlined in 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A). Therefore, the proffered position is not a specialty occupation.

The AAO turns first to the criteria at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2 (h)(4)(iii)(A)(1) and (2): a baccalaureate or higher degree or its equivalent is the normal minimum requirement for entry into the particular position; a degree requirement is common to the industry in parallel positions among similar organizations; or a particular position is so complex or unique that it can be performed only by an individual with a degree.

Factors often considered by CIS when determining these criteria include: whether the Department of Labor's (DOL) *Occupational Outlook Handbook (Handbook)* reports that the industry requires a degree; whether the industry's professional association has made a degree a minimum entry requirement; and whether letters or affidavits from firms or individuals in the industry attest that such firms "routinely employ and recruit only degreed individuals." See *Shanti, Inc. v. Reno*, 36 F. Supp. 2d 1151, 1165 (D.Min. 1999)(quoting *Hird/Blaker Corp. v. Slattery*, 764 F. Supp. 872, 1102 (S.D.N.Y. 1991)).

The AAO routinely consults the *Handbook* for its information about the duties and educational requirements of particular occupations. The AAO does not concur with counsel that the proffered position is a specialty occupation. The types of duties the petitioner ascribes to the beneficiary fall primarily within the scope of an administrative support worker supervisor and manager, as described by the DOL in its *Handbook*, 2002-2003 edition. According to the DOL at page 418 of the *Handbook*, most businesses fill office and administrative support supervisory and managerial positions by promoting clerical or administrative support workers from

within their organizations. As such, the director concluded correctly that the proffered position does not require a baccalaureate degree, or its equivalent, in a specific specialty.

Regarding parallel positions in the petitioner's industry, the petitioner submitted Internet job postings for various healthcare related positions. There is no evidence, however, to show that the employers issuing those postings are similar to the petitioner, or that the advertised positions are parallel to the instant position. For example, one of the positions is that of a behavioral health services case manager for an HMO whose duties entail: receiving and evaluating calls from subscribers, primary medical providers, employers, corporate customer representatives, psychotherapists, and hospital staff personnel; and participating in interdisciplinary case conferences. Another position is that of an acute care case manager/nurse, whose duties include authorizing all post acute care. There is also no evidence to show that the proposed duties of the proffered position are as complex as the duties of the advertised positions. Thus, the advertisements have little relevance.

The record also does not include any evidence from professional associations regarding an industry standard, or documentation to support the complexity or uniqueness of the proffered position. The petitioner has, thus, not established the criteria set forth at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(1) or (2).

The AAO now turns to the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(3) – the employer normally requires a degree or its equivalent for the position. As the petitioner does not address this issue on appeal, it will not be discussed further.

Finally, the AAO turns to the criterion at 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(iii)(A)(4) – the nature of the specific duties is so specialized and complex that knowledge required to perform the duties is usually associated with the attainment of a baccalaureate or higher degree.

To the extent that they are depicted in the record, the duties do not appear so specialized and complex as to require the highly specialized knowledge associated with a baccalaureate or higher degree, or its equivalent, in a specific specialty. Therefore, the evidence does not establish that the proffered position is a specialty occupation under 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(A)(4).

As related in the discussion above, the petitioner has failed to establish that the proffered position is a specialty occupation. Accordingly, the AAO shall not disturb the director's denial of the petition.

The director also found that the beneficiary would not be qualified to perform the duties of the proffered position if the job had been determined to be a specialty occupation. However, as the AAO is dismissing the appeal because the job is not a specialty occupation, it will not discuss the beneficiary's qualifications.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. The petitioner has not sustained that burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. The petition is denied.