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U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services

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ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OFFICE
125 Eye Street N.W.
BCIS, AAO, 20 Mass. Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20536

SEP 10 2006

File: EAC-01-049-51681

Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date:

IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiary:

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

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision 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.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied or the analysis used in reaching the decision was inconsistent with the information provided or with precedent decisions, you may file a motion to reconsider. Such a motion must state the reasons for reconsideration and be supported by any pertinent precedent decisions. Any motion to reconsider must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider, as required under 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i).

If you have new or additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reopen. Such a motion must state the new facts to be proved at the reopened proceeding and be supported by affidavits or other documentary evidence. Any motion to reopen must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reopen, except that failure to file before this period expires may be excused in the discretion of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (Bureau) where it is demonstrated that the delay was reasonable and beyond the control of the applicant or petitioner. *Id.*

Any motion must be filed with the office that originally decided your case along with a fee of \$110 as required under 8 C.F.R. § 103.7.

Robert P. Wiemann
Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

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

The petitioner is a long-term skilled care facility with 161 employees and an approximate gross annual income of \$7 million. It seeks to employ the beneficiary as a charge nurse for a period of three years. The director determined the petitioner had not established that the beneficiary is qualified to perform the duties of a specialty occupation.

On appeal, counsel submits a statement from the petitioner.

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), provides in part for nonimmigrant classification to qualified aliens who are coming temporarily to the United States to perform services in a specialty occupation. Section 214(i)(1) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1184(i)(1), defines a "specialty occupation" as an occupation that requires theoretical and practical application of a body of highly specialized knowledge, and 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 section 214(i)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1184(i)(2), to qualify as an alien coming to perform services in a specialty occupation the beneficiary must hold full state licensure to practice in the occupation, if such licensure is required to practice in the occupation. In addition, the beneficiary must have completed the degree required for the occupation, or have experience in the specialty equivalent to the completion of such degree and recognition of expertise in the specialty through progressively responsible positions relating to the specialty.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(v), licensure requirements for the H classification are as follows:

If an occupation requires a state or local license for an individual to fully perform the duties of the occupation, an alien (except an H-1A nurse) seeking H classification in that occupation must have that license prior to approval of the petition to be found qualified to enter the United States and immediately engage in employment in the occupation.

The director denied the petition because the petitioner had not demonstrated that the beneficiary is licensed to perform nursing

duties in the State of Massachusetts, or that she is otherwise immediately eligible to practice her profession in the State of Massachusetts. On appeal, the petitioner states, in part, that the beneficiary has a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing and has passed the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS) examination. The petitioner further states that a social security number is required for the licensure examination thereby necessitating the beneficiary's entry into the United States for such examination.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(4)(iii)(C), to qualify to perform services in a specialty occupation, the alien must meet one of the following criteria:

1. Hold a United States baccalaureate or higher degree required by the specialty occupation from an accredited college or university;
2. Hold a foreign degree determined to be equivalent to a United States baccalaureate or higher degree required by the specialty occupation from an accredited college or university;
3. Hold an unrestricted State license, registration, or certification which authorizes him or her to fully practice the specialty occupation and be immediately engaged in that specialty in the state of intended employment; or
4. Have education, specialized training, and/or progressively responsible experience that is equivalent to completion of a United States baccalaureate or higher degree in the specialty occupation and have recognition of expertise in the specialty through progressively responsible positions directly related to the specialty.

In a Bureau memorandum entitled "Social Security Cards and the Adjudication of H-1B Petitions," dated November 20, 2001, it states, in part, as follows:

An H-1B petition filed on behalf of an alien beneficiary who does not have a valid state license shall be approved for a period of 1-year provided that the only obstacle to obtaining the state licensure is the fact that the alien cannot obtain a social security card from the SSA. Petitions filed for these aliens

must contain evidence from the state licensing board clearly stating that the only obstacle to the issuance of state licensure is the lack of a social security card. In addition, the petitioner must establish that all other regulatory and statutory requirements for the occupation have been met.

The beneficiary holds a baccalaureate degree in nursing conferred by an institution in the Philippines. A credentials evaluation service found the beneficiary's foreign education equivalent to a bachelor's degree in nursing. The record also contains a CGFNS certificate for the beneficiary. The record does not contain a letter from the State of Massachusetts Board of Nursing stating that the beneficiary may be issued a license to practice professional nursing in the State of Massachusetts after she is issued a social security number. Accordingly, it is concluded that the petitioner has not shown that the beneficiary qualifies to perform the duties of the proffered position. For this reason, the petition may not be approved.

Beyond the decision of the director, the petitioner has not established that the proffered position is a specialty occupation. As this matter will be dismissed on the grounds discussed, this issue need not be examined further.

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.