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U.S. Department of Homeland Security

Citizenship and Immigration Services

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ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS OFFICE
CIS, AAO, 20 Mass, 3/F
425 I Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20536



File:



Office: NEBRASKA SERVICE CENTER

Date:

OCT 17 2003

IN RE: Petitioner:
Beneficiary:



Petition: Petition for Alien Fiancé(e) Pursuant to Section 101(a)(15)(K) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(K)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER: SELF-REPRESENTED

PUBLIC COPY

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 Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) 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, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

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

The petitioner is a citizen of the United States who seeks to classify the beneficiary, a native and citizen of Nigeria, as the fiancé of a United States citizen pursuant to section 101(a)(15)(K) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(K).

The director denied the petition after determining that the petitioner and the beneficiary had not personally met within two years before the date of filing the petition, as required by section 214(d) of the Act. In reaching this conclusion, the director found that the petitioner's failure to comply with the statutory requirement was not the result of extreme hardship to the petitioner or unique circumstances.

Section 101(a)(15)(K) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(K), defines "fiancé(e)" as:

An alien who is the fiancée or fiancé of a citizen of the United States and who seeks to enter the United States solely to conclude a valid marriage with the petitioner within ninety days after entry.

Section 214(d) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1184(d), states in pertinent part that a fiancé(e) petition:

. . . shall be approved only after satisfactory evidence is submitted by the petitioner to establish that the parties have previously met in person within two years before the date of filing the petition, have a bona fide intention to marry, and are legally able and actually willing to conclude a valid marriage in the United States within a period of ninety days after the alien's arrival. . . .

The petitioner filed the Petition for Alien Fiancé(e) (Form I-129F) on October 10, 2002. Therefore, the petitioner and the beneficiary were required to have met during the period that began on October 10, 2000 and ended on October 10, 2002.

In filing the petition, the petitioner stated that she and the beneficiary had never personally met, but had been in contact through the mail and by telephone. She explained that she and the beneficiary were busy going to school and had not had time or sufficient finances to personally meet.

On appeal, the petitioner submits a letter further explaining that she is a single mother who put herself through school to become a nurse. She states that she was previously earning only enough money to pay for school, pay her bills, and feed her children. She states

that she now has well-paid employment at a hospital, but is unable to visit the beneficiary because she does not have enough money or time off from her employment to travel.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(k)(2), a director may exercise discretion and waive the requirement of a personal meeting between the two parties if it is established that compliance would:

- (1) Result in extreme hardship to the petitioner; or
- (2) Violate strict and long-established customs of the beneficiary's foreign culture or social practice.

The regulation at § 214.2(k)(2) does not define what may constitute extreme hardship to a petitioner. Therefore, each claim of extreme hardship must be judged on a case-by-case basis taking into account the totality of the petitioner's circumstances. Generally, a director looks at whether the petitioner can demonstrate the existence of circumstances that are (1) not within the power of the petitioner to control or change, and (2) likely to last for a considerable duration or the duration cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. Examples of such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, serious medical conditions or hazards to U.S. citizens to travel to certain countries.

In the instant case, the petitioner's reasons for not having met the beneficiary during the two years prior to filing the petition are not persuasive. The time and expense required to travel to a foreign country are normal difficulties encountered in complying with the requirement and are not considered extreme hardship.

It is concluded that the petitioner has failed to establish that she and the beneficiary have personally met within the time period specified in section 214(d) of the Act, or that extreme hardship or unique circumstances exist to qualify her for a waiver of the statutory requirement. Therefore, the appeal will be dismissed.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R § 214.2(k)(2), the denial of this petition is without prejudice. If the petitioner and the beneficiary meet in person, the petitioner may file a new I-129F petition on behalf of the beneficiary. The petitioner will be required to submit evidence that she and the beneficiary have met within the two-year period that immediately precedes the filing of a new petition. Without the submission of documentary evidence that clearly establishes that the petitioner and the beneficiary have met in person during the requisite two-year period, the petition may not be approved unless the director grants a waiver of that requirement.

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 met that burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.