

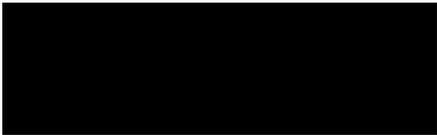
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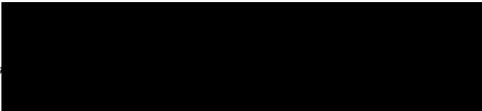
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Office: NEBRASKA SERVICE CENTER

Date: JAN 26 2005

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

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 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 naturalized citizen of the United States who seeks to classify the beneficiary, a native and citizen of Senegal, as the fiancée 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 had not offered documentation evidencing that he and the beneficiary had personally met within two years before the date of filing the petition, as required by section 214(d) of the Act and that the petitioner had not submitted credible documentary evidence to establish the fiancée relationship within the meaning of section 101(a)(15)(K) of the Act. *Decision of the Director*, dated May 12, 2004.

Section 101(a)(15)(K) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(K), provides nonimmigrant classification to an alien who:

- (i) is the fiancé(e) of a U.S. citizen and who seeks to enter the United States solely to conclude a valid marriage with that citizen within 90 days after admission;
- (ii) has concluded a valid marriage with a citizen of the United States who is the petitioner, is the beneficiary of a petition to accord a status under section 201(b)(2)(A)(i) that was filed under section 204 by the petitioner, and seeks to enter the United States to await the approval of such petition and the availability to the alien of an immigrant visa; or
- (iii) is the minor child of an alien described in clause (i) or (ii) and is accompanying, or following to join, the alien.

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. . . .

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(k)(2), the petitioner may be exempted from this requirement for a meeting if it is established that compliance would:

- (1) result in extreme hardship to the petitioner; or
- (2) that compliance would violate strict and long-established customs of the beneficiary's foreign culture or social practice, as where marriages are traditionally arranged by the parents of the contracting parties and the prospective bride and groom are prohibited from meeting subsequent to the arrangement and prior to the wedding day. In addition to establishing that the required meeting would be a violation of custom or practice, the petitioner must also establish that any and all other aspects of the traditional arrangements have been or will be met in accordance with the custom or practice.

The regulation at section 214.2 does not define what may constitute extreme hardship to the 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.

The petitioner filed the Petition for Alien Fiancé(e) (Form I-129F) with Citizenship and Immigration Services on December 30, 2003. Therefore, the petitioner and the beneficiary were required to have met during the period that began on December 30, 2001 and ended on December 30, 2003.

The director determined that the petitioner and the beneficiary did not meet during the two-year period immediately preceding the filing of the Form I-129F petition. The director further determined that the petitioner submitted a Form G-325A signed by him on behalf of the beneficiary rather than providing a Form G-325A reflecting an original signature of the beneficiary as required.

On appeal, the petitioner states that he is a proud member of the United States Navy and indicates that he was unable to take leave for three years due to his involvement with training and curriculum development while stationed onboard the USS Paul and Training Support Center/Center of Naval Engineering. The petitioner contends that he has demonstrated extreme hardship. *Letter from Abdoulaye Sylla*, dated May 17, 2004.

Under section 214(d) of the Act, the petitioner and the beneficiary were required to have met between December 30, 2001 and December 30, 2003. The evidence of record does not establish that the petitioner and the beneficiary met as required. The petitioner contends that he was unable to take leave from his employment for a period of three years. The AAO notes that the record fails to contain documentary evidence to substantiate the petitioner's claim. Further, the record fails to establish that the petitioner remains unable to take leave from his employment after serving his country without reprieve for over three years. The AAO notes that the financial and time commitments required for travel to a foreign country are common requirements to those filing the Form I-129F petition and do not constitute extreme hardship to the petitioner.

The record on appeal fails to include a completed Form G-325A signed by the beneficiary.

Taking into account the totality of the circumstances as the petitioner has presented them, the AAO does not find that compliance with the meeting requirement would result in extreme hardship to the petitioner or would violate strict and long-established customs of the beneficiary's foreign culture or social practice. Further, the AAO finds that the petitioner has not submitted credible documentary evidence to establish the fiancée relationship within the meaning of section 101(a)(15)(K) of the Act. Therefore, the appeal will be dismissed.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(k)(2), the denial of the petition is without prejudice. The petitioner may file a new Form I-129F petition on the beneficiary's behalf when sufficient evidence is available.

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

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.