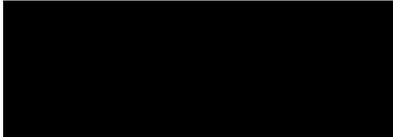


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Services

**identifying data deleted to
prevent clearly unwarranted
invasion of personal privacy**



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FILE: [REDACTED]
WAC 05 062 51883

Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER

OCT 27 2005
Date:

IN RE: Petitioner: [REDACTED]
Beneficiary: [REDACTED]

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, California 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 Mexico, 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 established the exemption or waiver grounds under 8 C.F.R. 214.2(k)(2) to warrant the favorable exercise of the director's discretion to exempt the meeting requirement. *Decision of the Director*, dated March 14, 2005.

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 28, 2004. Therefore, the petitioner and the beneficiary were required to have met during the period that began on December 28, 2002 and ended on December 28, 2004.

In response to the director's request for evidence and additional information, the petitioner submitted evidence of a meeting between the petitioner and the beneficiary during February 2005; the petitioner failed to submit sufficient documentation evidencing a meeting between the petitioner and the beneficiary during the two-year period immediately preceding the filing of the Form I-129F petition.

On appeal, the petitioner requests that the evidence that he previously submitted of a meeting between the petitioner and the beneficiary during February 2005 be accepted and the fact that the meeting did not occur during the required two-year period be overlooked as a technicality. The petitioner contends that he has many photographs of he and the beneficiary together during the required two-year period, however none of them are dated. *Letter from Shawn K. Higuchi*, dated March 20, 2005.

The record fails to demonstrate that the petitioner and the beneficiary met between December 28, 2002 and December 28, 2004 as required under section 214(d) of the Act. The AAO notes that the decision of the director clearly advised the petitioner, "...photos alone do not establish that the petitioner have [sic] met the beneficiary in person within the two-year period immediately preceding the filing of the petition." While the petitioner provides documentation beyond photographs to evidence a meeting between he and the beneficiary during February 2005, the AAO finds that a meeting during February 2005 fails to establish compliance with the meeting requirement under section 214(d) of the Act.

In the absence of primary evidence of a meeting between December 28, 2002 and December 28, 2004, the record is inconclusive as to whether or not the petitioner and beneficiary met as required. Further, the record does not establish 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. 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.