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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

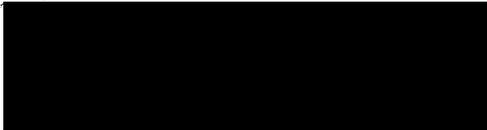


NOV 22 2004

FILE: 

Office: NEW YORK Date:

IN RE: Obligor:
Bonded Alien:



IMMIGRATION BOND: Bond Conditioned for the Delivery of an Alien under Section 103 of the
Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1103

ON BEHALF OF OBLIGOR:



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

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

DISCUSSION: The delivery bond in this matter was declared breached by the Field Office Director, Detention and Removal, New York, New York, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be sustained.

The record indicates that on November 20, 2001, the obligor posted a \$3,500 bond conditioned for the delivery of the above referenced alien. A Notice to Deliver Alien (Form I-340) dated March 10, 2003, was sent to the obligor via certified mail, return receipt requested. The notice demanded the bonded alien's surrender into the custody of an officer of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) at 9:00 a.m. on April 10, 2003, at [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] the obligor failed to present the alien, and the alien failed to appear as required. On April 29, 2003 the field office director informed the obligor that the delivery bond had been breached.

On appeal, counsel asserts that ICE attached a questionnaire to the Form I-340, but did not provide the required information as required by the Amwest/Reno Settlement Agreement entered into on June 22, 1995 by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (legacy INS) and Far West Surety Insurance Company.¹

The Settlement Agreement, Exhibit F, provides that "a questionnaire prepared by the surety with approval of the INS [now ICE] will be completed by the [ICE] whenever a demand to produce a bonded alien is to be delivered to the surety. The completed questionnaire will be certified correct by an officer of the [ICE] delivered to the surety with the demand."

ICE is in substantial compliance with the Settlement Agreement when the questionnaire provides the obligor with sufficient identifying information to assist in expeditiously locating the alien, and does not mislead the obligor. Each case must be considered on its own merits. Failure to include a photograph, for example, which is not absolutely required under the terms of the Agreement, does not have the same impact as an improper alien number or wrong name. The AAO must look at the totality of the circumstances to determine whether the obligor has been prejudiced by ICE's failure to fill in all of the blanks.

Counsel has not alleged or established any prejudice resulting from ICE's failure to complete each section of the questionnaire. More importantly, failure to complete each section does not invalidate the bond breach.

On appeal, counsel asserts that the alien was granted voluntary departure on April 17, 2002.

Counsel provides documentation developed by the Office of General Counsel (OGC), now Office of the Principal Legal Adviser (OPLA), that states a delivery bond must be canceled if an immigration court grants voluntary departure in a removal proceeding without the requirement of a voluntary departure bond and without setting other conditions on the grant of voluntary departure. The AAO has held in a precedent decision that OPLA memoranda are merely opinions. The OPLA is not an adjudicative body and is in the position only of being an advisor; as such, adjudicators are not bound by OPLA recommendations. *See Matter of Izummi*, 22 I&N Dec. 169 (Comm. 1998). Further, the AAO is not bound to follow a policy that violates procedure established by statute or regulation. *Accardi v. Shaughnessy*, 347 U.S. 260 (1954).

¹ Capital Bonding Corporation executed a settlement agreement with the legacy INS on February 21, 2003, in which it agreed not to raise certain arguments on appeals of bond breaches. The AAO will adjudicate the appeal notwithstanding the obligor's failure to comply with the settlement agreement in this case.

The record reflects that a removal hearing was held on April 17, 2002, and the alien was granted voluntary departure from the United States on or before August 17, 2002, with an alternate order of removal to take effect in the event that the alien failed to depart as required. The alien was ordered to provide ICE, within 60 days, travel documentation sufficient to assure lawful entry into the country to which the alien was departing. The record does not reflect that the bonded alien submitted the travel documentation. The court did not set other conditions on the grant of voluntary departure. The right of appeal was waived.

On appeal, counsel states that ICE lost statutory detention authority and hence the authority to maintain the delivery bond if the immigration judge granted the alien voluntary departure without the requirement of a bond or other conditions. Notwithstanding that in this case the alien failed to provide travel documentation, which according to counsel provides ICE with the requisite detention authority, counsel's arguments will be fully addressed below. Counsel's arguments will be fully addressed below.

Counsel states that ICE acknowledges that a loss of detention authority serves to terminate the delivery bond contract. As evidence, he cites the Amwest/Reno Settlement Agreement, entered into on June 22, 1995 by the legacy INS and Far West Surety Insurance Company. Under that agreement, the parties agreed that, pursuant to statute, the authority of the Attorney General, now the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security (Secretary), to detain an alien subject to a final order of deportation generally expires six months after the order of deportation becomes final. The agreement also contains a passage from the Deportation Officer's Handbook, as it then existed, that stated "upon the expiration of the six month period . . . the alien, as a rule, cannot . . . be continued on bond. Any outstanding bond or order of recognizance must be cancelled (emphasis added)." The parties, following the rule established by *Shrode v. Rowoldt*, 213 F.2d 810 (8th Cir. 1954), stipulated that ICE would cancel any bond which was not breached prior to the expiration of the six month period.

The provision, stipulation and case law were predicated on former section 242(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1252(c), which was deleted by section 306 of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRAIRA), effective April 1, 1997. Because former section 242 (c) of the Act no longer exists, this language contained in the Settlement Agreement is no longer applicable.

The AAO has continually held that the Secretary's authority to maintain a delivery bond is not contingent upon his authority to detain the alien. Counsel argues this ruling ignores the statutory framework established by amendments to the Act by the IIRAIRA.

As noted by counsel, ICE authority to arrest and detain an alien under section 236 of the Act terminates when a decision is made whether an alien is to be removed from the United States, as for example, upon the grant of voluntary departure without the setting of conditions. ICE detention and removal authority under section 241 of the Act begins with an order of removal, for example, upon the alien's overstay of the voluntary departure period. Counsel argues that during the period of voluntary departure where the alien has not reserved appeal, and without conditions on departure such as an order to produce a travel document or to post a voluntary departure bond, ICE has no authority to detain the alien, and thus no authority to maintain a delivery bond.

Counsel argues that ICE lost detention authority and hence the authority to maintain the delivery bond when it failed to execute the removal of the bonded alien within 90 days of the final order of removal. Counsel also argues that the AAO's previous rulings are contrary to the court's holding in *Shrode, supra*, in that bonding authority is a form of constructive detention, and a loss of detention authority requires cancellation of the delivery bond.

Following his arrest for violating immigration laws, Rowoldt, the alien in *Shrode*, was released on a bond conditioned upon his appearance for deportation proceedings. Although the order of deportation became final in April 1952, he was not deported. In October 1952, more than six months after the deportation order became final, Rowoldt was placed on supervisory parole. Immigration officials, however, refused to release him from bond.

In upholding the lower court's decision releasing Rowoldt from bond, the appellate court noted that the statute granted the Attorney General supervisory and limited detention authority but did not authorize the posting of bond. The court stated that the requirement to post bail is tantamount to making the sureties jailers, and that the power to require bail connotes the power to imprison in the absence of such bail. Since the only authority the Attorney General could exercise in Rowoldt's case was supervisory, a bond could not be required.

Since *Shrode*, section 305 of the IIRAIRA added section 241(a)(1) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1231(a)(1). It provides generally that the Secretary shall remove an alien from the United States within 90 days following the order of removal, with the 90-day period suspended for cause. During the 90-day removal period, the Secretary shall exercise detention authority by taking the alien into custody and canceling any previously posted bond unless the bond has been breached or is subject to being breached. Section 241(a)(2) of the Act; 8 C.F.R. § 1241.3(a).

Section 241(a)(3) of the Act provides that if an alien does not leave or is not removed during the 90-day period, the alien shall be subject to supervision under regulations prescribed by the Secretary. Posting of a bond may be authorized as a condition of release after the 90-day detention period. 8 C.F.R. § 1241.5(b). Thus, unlike in *Shrode*, the Secretary has the continuing authority to require aliens to post bond following the 90-day post-order detention period.

Counsel is correct that, per contract, the "types" of bonds are not interchangeable. The obligor is only bound by the terms of the contract to which it obligated itself. It is noted, however, that the terms of the Form I-352 for bonds conditioned upon the delivery of the alien establish the following condition: "the obligor shall cause the alien to be produced or to produce himself/herself . . . upon each and every written request until *exclusion/deportation/removal proceedings* . . . are finally terminated." (Emphasis added). Thus, the obligor is bound to deliver the alien by the express terms of the bond contract until either exclusion, deportation or removal proceedings are finally terminated, or one of the other conditions occurs.

Counsel posits that once ICE no longer has detention authority over the alien, it can no longer require a delivery bond. However, this ignores the holdings of *Zadvydas v. Davis*, 533 U.S. 678 (2001) and *Doan v. INS*, 311 F.3d 1160 (9th Cir. 2002). In *Zadvydas*, the Supreme Court expressly recognized the authority of the legacy INS to require the posting of a bond as a condition of release after it lost detention authority over the alien, even though a bond was not provided as a condition of release by the statute. In *Doan*, the 9th Circuit held the legacy INS had the authority to require a \$10,000 delivery bond in a supervised release context even though it did not have detention authority. Even though these cases arose in the post-removal period, it is obvious from the rulings that detention authority is not the sole determining factor as to whether ICE can require a delivery bond.

The bond contract provides that it may be canceled when (1) exclusion/deportation/removal proceedings are finally terminated; (2) the alien is accepted by ICE for detention or deportation/removal; or (3) the bond is otherwise canceled. The circumstances under which the bond may be "otherwise canceled" occur when the

Secretary or the Attorney General imposes a requirement for another bond, and the alien posts such a bond, or when an order of removal has been issued and the alien is taken into custody. As the obligor has not shown that any of these circumstances apply, the bond is not canceled.

The immigration court's failure to order the posting of a voluntary departure bond does not alter the terms of the bond contract, and does not serve to extinguish the delivery bond despite ICE loss of detention authority during the period of voluntary departure. The delivery bond requires delivery of the alien to ICE upon demand or until proceedings have terminated, and is not conditioned upon a theory of constructive detention.

Counsel raises additional arguments in a formulaic brief concerning bonded aliens who may be eligible for Temporary Protected Status. As these arguments are not applicable in this case, they will not be addressed here.

The Notice to Deliver Alien referenced an incorrect alien registration number (A-number) for the bonded alien. As such, the breach is not valid.

ORDER: The appeal is sustained. The field office director's decision declaring the bond breached is rescinded and the bond is continued in full force and effect.