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U.S. Citizenship
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FILE:

MSC-05-164-10061

Office: JACKSONVILLE

Date: NOV 05 2008

IN RE:

Applicant:

APPLICATION:

Application for Status as a Temporary Resident pursuant to Section 245A of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:

SELF-REPRESENTED

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. If your appeal was dismissed or rejected, all documents have been returned to the National Benefits Center. You no longer have a case pending before this office, and you are not entitled to file a motion to reopen or reconsider your case. If your appeal was sustained or remanded for further action, you will be contacted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert P. Wiemann".

Robert P. Wiemann, Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application for temporary resident status pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreements reached in *Catholic Social Services, Inc., et al., v. Ridge, et al.*, CIV. NO. S-86-1343-LKK (E.D. Cal) January 23, 2004, and *Felicity Mary Newman, et al., v. United States Immigration and Citizenship Services, et al.*, CIV. NO. 87-4757-WDK (C.D. Cal) February 17, 2004 (CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements), was denied by the director of the Jacksonville office. The decision is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant submitted a Form I-687, Application for Status as a Temporary Resident under Section 245A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Act), and a Form I-687 Supplement, CSS/Newman Class Membership Worksheet. The director determined that the applicant had not established by a preponderance of the evidence that she had continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status for the duration of the requisite period. The director denied the application, finding that the applicant had not met her burden of proof and was, therefore, not eligible to adjust to temporary resident status pursuant to the terms of the CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements. The director erroneously stated that the applicant had failed to respond to the Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID). In the NOID, the director explained that the applicant's absence from the United States during the requisite period exceeded 45 days and, therefore, the applicant did not reside in the United States continuously throughout the requisite period.

On appeal, the applicant states that she did respond to the NOID. She also provides evidence indicating that she was unable to return to the United States within 45 days due to her father's illness.

An applicant for temporary resident status must establish entry into the United States before January 1, 1982, and continuous residence in the United States in an unlawful status since such date and through the date the application is filed. Section 245A(a)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a(a)(2). The applicant must also establish that he or she has been continuously physically present in the United States since November 6, 1986. Section 245A(a)(3) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a(a)(3). The regulations clarify that the applicant must have been physically present in the United States from November 6, 1986 until the date of filing the application. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(b).

For purposes of establishing residence and physical presence under the CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements, the term "until the date of filing" in 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(b) means until the date the applicant attempted to file a completed Form I-687 application and fee or was caused not to timely file during the original legalization application period of May 5, 1987 to May 4, 1988. CSS Settlement Agreement paragraph 11 at page 6; Newman Settlement Agreement paragraph 11 at page 10.

The applicant has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she has resided in the United States for the requisite period, is admissible to the United States under the provisions of section 245A of the Act, and is otherwise eligible for adjustment of status. The

inference to be drawn from the documentation provided shall depend on the extent of the documentation, its credibility and amenability to verification. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5).

Although the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3) provides an illustrative list of contemporaneous documents that an applicant may submit in support of his or her claim of continuous residence in the United States in an unlawful status since prior to January 1, 1982, the submission of any other relevant document is permitted pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(vi)(L).

The “preponderance of the evidence” standard requires that the evidence demonstrate that the applicant’s claim is “probably true,” where the determination of “truth” is made based on the factual circumstances of each individual case. *Matter of E-M-*, 20 I&N Dec. 77, 79-80 (Comm. 1989). In evaluating the evidence, *Matter of E-M-* also stated that “[t]ruth is to be determined not by the quantity of evidence alone but by its quality.” *Id.* at 80. Thus, in adjudicating the application pursuant to the preponderance of the evidence standard, the director must examine each piece of evidence for relevance, probative value, and credibility, both individually and within the context of the totality of the evidence, to determine whether the fact to be proven is probably true.

Even if the director has some doubt as to the truth, if the petitioner submits relevant, probative, and credible evidence that leads the director to believe that the claim is “probably true” or “more likely than not,” the applicant or petitioner has satisfied the standard of proof. *See U.S. v. Cardozo-Fonseca*, 480 U.S. 421, 431 (1987) (defining “more likely than not” as a greater than 50 percent probability of something occurring). If the director can articulate a material doubt, it is appropriate for the director to either request additional evidence or, if that doubt leads the director to believe that the claim is probably not true, deny the application or petition.

At issue in this proceeding is whether the applicant has submitted sufficient credible evidence to meet her burden of establishing continuous unlawful residence in the United States during the requisite period. Here, the applicant has failed to meet this burden.

The record shows that the applicant submitted a Form I-687 application and Supplement to Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) on March 13, 2005. At part #30 of the Form I-687 application where applicants were asked to list all residences in the United States since first entry, the applicant indicated that she resided in New York, New York from September 23, 1981 to February 1988 and in the Bronx, New York from February 1988 to January 1992. At part #32 where applicants were asked to list all absences from the United States, the applicant indicated that she was in Nigeria for a family visit from May 1987 to April 1988. According to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(h)(1)(i), an applicant for temporary resident status shall be regarded as having resided continuously in the United States if, at the time of filing of the application, no single absence from the United States has exceeded 45 days, and the aggregate of all absences has not exceeded 180 days between January 1, 1982 through the date the application for temporary resident status is filed, unless the applicant can establish that due to emergent reasons, his or her return to the United States

could not be accomplished within the time period allowed. The applicant's visit to Nigeria exceeded 45 days. However, the initial filing period for temporary resident status began on May 4, 1987. It is unclear from the record whether the applicant attempted to apply for temporary resident status before she departed to Nigeria in 1987. Since it may have occurred outside the requisite period, the visit to Nigeria may not be relevant to the question of whether the applicant resided in the United States continuously throughout the requisite period. The applicant provided a declaration from [REDACTED] which states that the applicant's father, [REDACTED], fell sick from May 1, 1987 to April 1988. The fact that the applicant's father fell sick on May 1, 1987 tends to show that the applicant was aware of her father's illness prior to returning to Nigeria in May 1987 and, therefore, that her father's illness did not present an emergent reason for the delay in her return to the United States. However, as stated above, this absence is not clearly relevant to the question of whether the applicant resided in the United States continuously throughout the requisite period.

Outside of her personal statements, the applicant failed to provide any documentation supporting her claim of continuous residence in the United States throughout the requisite period. Going on record without supporting documentary evidence is not sufficient for purposes of meeting the burden of proof in these proceedings. *Matter of Soffici*, 22 I&N Dec. 158, 165 (Comm. 1998) (citing *Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972)). Therefore, the applicant is found not to have established that she resided in the United States throughout the requisite period.

In denying the application the director concluded that the applicant had not established by a preponderance of the evidence that she had continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status for the duration of the requisite period.

In summary, the applicant has not provided any evidence of residence in the United States relating to the requisite period. The absence of detailed supporting documentation to corroborate the applicant's claim of continuous residence for the entire requisite period seriously detracts from the credibility of this claim. Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5), the inference to be drawn from the documentation provided shall depend on the extent of the documentation, its credibility and amenability to verification. Given that the applicant failed to provide any documentation indicating that she resided in the United States during the requisite period, it is concluded that she has failed to establish continuous residence in an unlawful status in the United States for the requisite period under both 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5) and *Matter of E- M--*, *supra*. The applicant is, therefore, ineligible for temporary resident status under section 245A of the Act on this basis.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. This decision constitutes a final notice of ineligibility.