



U.S. Citizenship
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FILE:



Office: Los Angeles

Date: SEP 26 2005

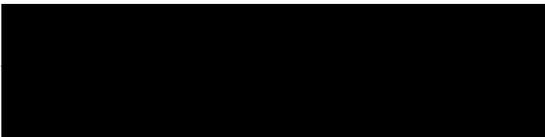
IN RE:

Applicant:



APPLICATION: Application for Status as a Permanent Resident pursuant to Section 1104 of the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106-553, 114 Stat. 2762 (2000), amended by Life Act Amendments, Pub. L. 106-554, 114 Stat. 2763 (2000).

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:



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. If your appeal was sustained, or if the matter was remanded for further action, you will be contacted. If your appeal was dismissed, 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.

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application for permanent resident status under the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act was denied by the District Director, Los Angeles, California, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be sustained.

The district director denied the application because the applicant had not demonstrated that he had continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status from before January 1, 1982 through May 4, 1988.

On appeal, counsel asserts that the applicant has submitted sufficient documentation establishing continuous residence in the United States from prior to January 1, 1982 through May 4, 1988. Counsel contends that the Immigration and Naturalization Service, or the Service (now Citizenship and Immigration Services, or CIS) has failed to recognize the difficulty in attempting to obtain evidence relating to events that occurred more than twenty years ago while the applicant was an undocumented illegal alien. Counsel includes a CIS memorandum issued December 5, 2003, regarding the adjudication of LIFE Act applications in support of the appeal.

An applicant for permanent 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 May 4, 1988. See § 1104(c)(2)(B) of the LIFE Act and 8 C.F.R. § 245a.11(b).

An applicant for permanent resident status under section 1104 of the LIFE Act has the burden to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she has resided in the United States for the requisite periods, is admissible to the United States and is otherwise eligible for adjustment of status under this section. 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.12(e).

When something is to be established by a preponderance of the evidence it is sufficient that the proof establish that it is probably true. See *Matter of E-- M--*, 20 I. & N. Dec. 77 (Comm. 1989).

Although the regulations provide an illustrative list of contemporaneous documents that an applicant may submit, the list also permits the submission of affidavits and any other relevant document. See 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(vi)(L).

The applicant is a class member in a legalization class-action lawsuit and as such, was permitted to previously file a Form I-687, Application for Temporary Resident Status Pursuant to Section 245A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) on or about May 23, 1991. In support of his claim of continuous residence in this country since prior to January 1, 1982, the applicant submitted four affidavits of residence.

The record shows that the applicant submitted his Form I-485 LIFE Act application on January 2, 2002. The applicant included copies of previously submitted documents in support of his claim of residence in the United States for the period in question.

On June 22, 2004, the district director issued a notice of intent to deny to the applicant informing him of the Service's intent to deny her application because he failed to submit sufficient evidence of continuous unlawful residence in the United States from January 1, 1982 through May 4, 1988. Specifically, the district

director observed that the applicant had submitted only third-party statements and affidavits that are not accompanied by other credible documentation. However, pursuant to *Matter of E--M--*, *supra*, affidavits in certain cases *can* effectively meet the preponderance of evidence standard, and the district director cannot simply refuse to consider such evidence merely because it is unaccompanied by other forms of documentation. Therefore, the district director's conclusions regarding the credibility of the applicant's claim of residence and the sufficiency of his supporting documentation as expressed in the notice of intent must be considered as questionable. The applicant was granted thirty days to respond to the notice and provide additional evidence in support of his claim of residence in the requisite period.

In response to the notice of intent to deny, the applicant provided two additional affidavits of residence attesting to his residence in this country since 1981. The district director determined that the applicant had failed to establish his claim of residence for the requisite period and denied the application on July 29, 2004.

The statements of counsel on appeal regarding the amount and sufficiency of the applicant's evidence of residence as well as his inability to obtain further documentation in light of his status as an illegal alien and the significant passage of time have been considered. In this instance, the applicant submitted evidence, including affidavits, which tends to corroborate his claim of residence in the United States during the requisite period. The district director has not established that the information contained in the applicant's supporting evidence was inconsistent with the claims made on the application, or that it was false information. As stated in *Matter of E--M--*, *supra*, when something is to be established by a preponderance of evidence, the applicant only has to establish that the proof is probably true. That decision also points out that, under the preponderance of evidence standard, an application may be granted even though some doubt remains regarding the evidence. The documents that have been furnished may be accorded substantial evidentiary weight and are sufficient to meet the applicant's burden of proof of residence in the United States for the requisite period.

The documentation provided by the applicant supports by a preponderance of the evidence that he satisfies the statutory and regulatory criteria of entry into the United States before January 1, 1982, as well as continuous unlawful residence in the country during the ensuing time frame of January 1, 1982 through May 4, 1988, as required for eligibility for legalization under section 1104(c)(2)(B)(i) of the LIFE Act.

Accordingly, the applicant's appeal will be sustained. The district director shall continue the adjudication of the application for permanent resident status.

ORDER: The appeal is sustained.