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20 Mass. Ave., N.W., Rm. A3042
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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

MI



FILE: [REDACTED]
[EAC 02 157 51596]

Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date: **AUG 16 2005**

IN RE: Applicant: [REDACTED]

APPLICATION: Application for Temporary Protected Status under Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1254

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT: 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
Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The director's decision will be withdrawn, and the case will be remanded for further consideration and action.

The applicant is a native and citizen of El Salvador who is seeking Temporary Protected Status (TPS) under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1254.

The director denied the application on the based on a previous denial of a TPS application.

On appeal, the applicant submits a brief statement and additional documentation.

Section 244(c) of the Act, and the related regulations in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2, provide that an applicant is eligible for TPS only if such alien establishes that he or she:

- (a) Is a national, as defined in section 101(a)(21) of the Act, of a foreign state designated under section 244(b) of the Act;
- (b) Has been continuously physically present in the United States since the effective date of the most recent designation of that foreign state;
- (c) Has continuously resided in the United States since such date as the Attorney General may designate;
- (d) Is admissible as an immigrant except as provided under § 244.3;
- (e) Is not ineligible under § 244.4; and
- (f)
 - (1) Registers for Temporary Protected Status during the initial registration period announced by public notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER, or
 - (2) During any subsequent extension of such designation if at the time of the initial registration period:
 - (i) The applicant is a nonimmigrant or has been granted voluntary departure status or any relief from removal;
 - (ii) The applicant has an application for change of status, adjustment of status, asylum, voluntary departure, or any relief from removal which is pending or subject to further review or appeal;

- (iii) The applicant is a parolee or has a pending request for reparole; or
 - (iv) The applicant is a spouse or child of an alien currently eligible to be a TPS registrant.
- (g) Has filed an application for late registration with the appropriate Service director, within a 60-day period immediately following the expiration or termination of conditions described in paragraph (f)(2) of this section.

The phrase continuously physically present, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means actual physical presence in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous physical presence in the United States by virtue of brief, casual, and innocent absences as defined within this section.

The phrase continuously resided, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means residing in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous residence in the United States by reason of a brief, casual and innocent absence as defined within this section or due merely to a brief temporary trip abroad required by emergency or extenuating circumstances outside the control of the alien.

The phrase brief, casual, and innocent absence, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means a departure from the United States that satisfies the following criteria:

- (1) Each such absence was of short duration and reasonably calculated to accomplish the purpose(s) for the absence;
- (2) The absence was not the result of an order of deportation, an order of voluntary departure, or an administrative grant of voluntary departure without the institution of deportation proceedings; and
- (3) The purposes for the absence from the United States or actions while outside of the United States were not contrary to law.

Persons applying for TPS offered to El Salvadorans must demonstrate continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, and continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001. The initial registration period for Salvadorans was from March 9, 2001, through September 9, 2002. On July 9, 2002, the Attorney General announced an extension of the TPS designation until September 9, 2003. Subsequent extensions of the TPS designation have been granted, with the latest date through September 9, 2006, upon the applicant's re-registration during the requisite time period.

The burden of proof is upon the applicant to establish that he meets the above requirements. Applicants must submit all documentation as required in the instructions or requested by Citizenship and Immigration Services

(CIS). 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(a). The sufficiency of all evidence will be judged according to its relevancy, consistency, credibility, and probative value. To meet his burden of proof the applicant must provide supporting documentary evidence of eligibility apart from his own statements. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b).

The record reflects that the applicant submitted an initial Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status, with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), now Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS), on April 8, 2002. However, the acceptance of his application was suspended due to non-payment on April 24, 2002. Once proper payment was received, the applicant's initial Form I-821 was accepted as properly filed on May 2, 2002.

On May 13, 2003, the applicant was requested to submit evidence to establish his qualifying continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, and his qualifying continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001. In addition, the applicant was requested to submit evidence concerning the final disposition of his arrest on March 3, 2002, for "Driving Under the Influence" by the Leesburg, Virginia, Sheriff's Office. The applicant failed to respond to the director's request.

On July 25, 2003, the director denied the applicant's re-registration Form I-821 on the basis that a previous Form I-821 had been denied on May 13, 2003.

Based on a review of the record, the director's decision was made in error. The application was not "denied" on May 13, 2003; on that date, the applicant had merely been requested to submit evidence in support of the application.

In view of the foregoing, the previous decision of the director will be withdrawn. The petition will be remanded to the director for further consideration. The director may request any additional evidence he considers pertinent. Similarly, the applicant may provide additional evidence within a reasonable period of time to be determined by the director. Upon receipt of all the evidence, the director will review the entire record and enter a new decision.

It is noted that evidence contained in the record concerning the applicant's continuous physical presence and continuous residence is contradictory. A letter from the applicant's landlord indicates that he resided as a tenant in Connecticut from November 1998 through the date of the letter on April 13, 2003. Other information contained in the record indicates that the applicant resided in the State of Virginia since 2002.

As always in these proceedings, the burden of proof rests solely with the applicant. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361.

ORDER: The decision of the director is withdrawn. The case is remanded for further consideration and action.