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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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Washington, DC 20529



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

MI



FILE:



Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date: JUN 08 2005

IN RE:

Applicant:



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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "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 appeal will be dismissed.

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 determined the applicant failed to establish that he had continuously resided in the United States since February 13, 2001, and had been continuously physically present in the United States since March 9, 2001.

On appeal, the applicant submits a letter 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 by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, the latest with validity until 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 reveals that the applicant properly filed his initial Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status, with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), now CIS, on September 9, 2002. At the time of filing his Form I-821, the applicant indicated that he had last entered the United States without inspection in September 1999. In support of his application, the applicant's submitted documentation including:

1. A photocopy of an extract of his El Salvadoran birth certificate, with English translation;
2. A photocopy of a receipt, dated August 8, 2002, issued to the applicant by Urgente Express International Courier, Miami, Florida; and,
3. Letters and affidavits from acquaintances attesting to the applicant's residence in the United States.

On June 26, 2003, the applicant was requested to submit evidence to establish his qualifying continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite time periods. In response, the applicant submitted:

4. A letter, dated July 10, 2003, from [REDACTED] stating that the applicant had rented a room at [REDACTED] since August 2000.

The director determined that the documentation provided was not sufficient to establish the applicant's qualifying continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite time periods. The director denied the application on August 6, 2003.

On appeal, the applicant submits the following additional documentation:

5. A letter, dated August 17, 2003, from the pastor of [REDACTED] Somerville, Massachusetts, stating that the applicant came to the United States on January 9, 2001.
6. Additional letters and affidavits from acquaintances attesting to the applicant's residence in the United States.

The applicant claims to have lived in the United States since September 1999. It is reasonable to expect that he would have a variety of objective contemporaneous evidence to support this claim. Affidavits from acquaintances (Nos. 3, 4, and 6, above) are not, by themselves, persuasive evidence of residence or physical presence. Furthermore, although No. 2 constitutes evidence that the applicant was physically present in the United States on August 8, 2002, that date is well beyond the dates required for establishing continuous residence and continuous physical presence.

It is noted that the extract of the applicant's birth certificate (No. 1) was issued in El Salvador on May 30, 2002, more than nine month after the applicant's claimed date of entry into the United States. It is also noted that the pastor of [REDACTED] states (in No. 5) that the applicant "came here to the United States in January 9, 2001," not in September 1999, as the applicant claimed on his Form I-821. These discrepancies have not been explained and call into question in the applicant's ability to document the requirements under the statute and regulations. Doubt cast on any aspect of the evidence as submitted may lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the remaining evidence offered in support of the visa petition. It is incumbent on the applicant to resolve any inconsistencies in the record by independent objective evidence; any attempts to explain or reconcile such inconsistencies, absent competent objective evidence pointing to where the truth lies, will not suffice. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582. (Comm. 1988).

Based on a review of the record, it is concluded that the documentation submitted by the applicant is not sufficient to establish that he satisfies the continuous residence and continuous physical presence requirements described in 8 C.F.R. §§ 244.2(b) and (c). Consequently, the director's decision to deny the application for temporary protected status will be affirmed.

An alien applying for temporary protected status has the burden of proving that he or she meets the requirements enumerated above and is otherwise eligible under the provisions of section 244 of the Act. The applicant has failed to meet this burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.