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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
20 Mass. Ave., N.W., Rm. A3042
Washington, DC 20529



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

M1

FILE:

[REDACTED]
[EAC 02 047 51719]

Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date: MAR 29 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.

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 denied the application because the applicant failed to establish his qualifying continuous residence in the United States during the requisite time period.

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. On July 9, 2002, the Attorney General announced an extension of the TPS designation until September 9, 2003. A subsequent extension of the TPS designation has been granted by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, with validity until March 9, 2005, 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).

On June 17, 2003, the applicant was requested to submit evidence to establish his qualifying continuous residence in the United States during the requisite time period. In response, the applicant submitted a variety of documentation, including receipts, pay stubs, and an account statement. The director noted that none of the documentation submitted by the applicant was dated any earlier than August 2002. The director concluded that the applicant had failed to establish his qualifying continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, and denied the application on September 9, 2003.

On appeal, the applicant states that he has submitted sufficient documentation to establish his eligibility for TPS. In support of his appeal, the applicant submits four affidavits from acquaintances attesting to their knowledge of the applicant. He also submits a photocopy of an "Arizona Personal Identification I.D. Card," issued on October 9, 1998.

The applicant claims to have last entered the United States on October 1, 1998. It is reasonable to expect that he would have a variety of credible, contemporaneous evidence to support his claim of having continuously resided in the United States from February 13, 2001, through to the date of filing his TPS application on October 12, 2001. The "Arizona Personal Identification I.D. Card" submitted does not appear to be an official identification document issued by the State of Arizona, and all of the other evidence submitted by the applicant is dated well prior to the dates required to establish qualifying continuous residence. Furthermore, affidavits from acquaintances are not, by themselves, persuasive evidence of residence or physical presence.

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

It is noted that, beyond the decision of the director, the applicant has also not submitted sufficient evidence to establish that he satisfies the continuous physical presence requirements described in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2(c). Therefore, the application may also not be approved for this reason.

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.