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



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services



M/T

FILE: [REDACTED]
[EAC 02 221 53086]

Office: Vermont Service Center

Date: MAY 12 2008

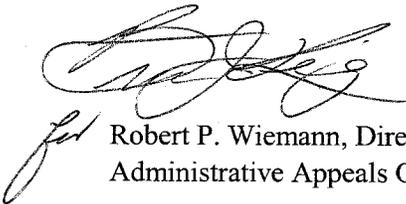
IN RE: Applicant: [REDACTED]

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, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office 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 and continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite periods.

On appeal, the applicant asserts his eligibility for TPS and submits evidence in support of his claim.

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.

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 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 or she meets the above requirements. Applicants shall 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 or her burden of proof the applicant must provide supporting documentary evidence of eligibility apart from his or her own statements. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b).

On February 20, 2003, the applicant was requested to submit evidence establishing his continuous residence in the United States as of February 13, 2001, and his continuous physical presence in the United States from March 9, 2001, to the date of filing his application. In response, the applicant submitted some evidence in an

attempt to establish his continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite time periods. The director determined that 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, to the date of filing his application. Therefore, the director denied the application on February 9, 2004.

On appeal, the applicant submits the following documentation: a letter dated February 27, 2004, from [REDACTED] who stated that she has known the applicant since 2001; an affidavit from [REDACTED] who stated that she has known the applicant since 1976; and an employment letter dated March 3, 2003, from [REDACTED] President of Complete Building Maintenance, who stated that the applicant had been employed by his company for the past three years.

The letter from [REDACTED] indicates that she has known the applicant since the year 2001; however, she does not state whether their acquaintance was in the United States or elsewhere, nor does she give a specific date when she met the applicant. In addition, although the statement provided by [REDACTED] indicates that she has known the applicant since 1976, she does not state whether their acquaintance was in the United States as well. Affidavits and letters from acquaintances are not, by themselves, persuasive evidence of continuous residence or continuous physical presence in the United States. The employment letter from [REDACTED] has little evidentiary weight or probative value as it does not provide basic information that is expressly required by 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(a)(2)(i). Specifically, [REDACTED] does not provide the address where the applicant resided during the period of his employment. [REDACTED] letter is not notarized nor in affidavit form, and it is not supported by corroborative evidence, such as check stubs or earnings statements, for the time period of the applicant's claimed employment with his company. The applicant claims to have lived in the United States since June 1990. It is also reasonable to expect that the applicant would have some other type of documentary evidence to support his continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite time periods. The sufficiency of all evidence will be judged according to its relevancy, consistency, credibility, and probative value. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b). The applicant has not submitted sufficient credible evidence to establish his continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, and his continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001. The applicant has, therefore, failed to establish that he has met the criteria described in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2 (b) and (c). Consequently, the director's decision to deny the application for TPS on these grounds will be affirmed.

An alien applying for TPS 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.