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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**

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FILE:

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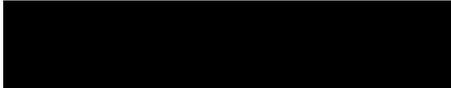
Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date:

MAY 25 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.

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 stated to be 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 continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001.

On appeal, the applicant provides a statement, some additional documentation and one document previously submitted.

Section 244(c) of the Act, and the related regulations in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2, provide that an applicant who is a national of a foreign state designated by the Attorney General is eligible for temporary protected status 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 section 244.3;
- (e) Is not ineligible under 8 C.F.R. § 244.4; and
- (f)
 - (1) Registers for TPS 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 issue raised by the director to be addressed in this proceeding is whether the applicant has established his continuous residence in the United States during the requisite timeframe.

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. 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 record reveals that the applicant filed his application with the Immigration and Naturalization Service now Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS), on August 28, 2002.

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 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).

In a notice of intent to deny, dated May 14, 2003, the applicant was requested to submit evidence to establish his continuous residence in the United States as of February 13, 2001. The applicant failed to respond to the notice of intent to deny.

The director found that the applicant failed to establish that he had continuously resided in the United States since February 13, 2001. The director denied the application on September 3, 2003.

On appeal, the applicant states that he is a citizen of El Salvador, and that he entered the United States in September of 1998. The applicant also states that he has not "left the United States for any period of time totaling 180 days or more." The applicant further states that the only letter he received from the Service was the denial notice dated September 3, 2003, and that he had not received any letter asking him to present documents to show that he continuously resided in the United States, as mentioned in the denial notice.

The applicant submits: a letter dated September 16, 2003, from [REDACTED] who states that the applicant lived in his house since "January 2001 to July 30, 2002;" a letter dated September 16, 2003, from [REDACTED] Deli, which states that the owner of the deli knows the applicant, and that the applicant resides at [REDACTED]; a letter dated September 12, 2003, from [REDACTED] who states that he has known the applicant since January 2001; a previously submitted receipt from [REDACTED] dated "00-23-01;" a receipt from [REDACTED] dated "1/2/001;" and, three rent receipts for "3/1 01, 5/1 01, and 8/1 01. It is noted that with the exception of two rent receipts all other receipts appear to have altered dates. It is incumbent upon the applicant to resolve any inconsistencies in the record by independent objective evidence, and 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, 591-92 (BIA 1988). Doubt cast on any aspect of the applicant's proof may lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the remaining evidence offered in support of the application. *Id.*, 582, 591.

The documentation submitted on appeal is not sufficient in establishing that the applicant has continuously resided in the United States since February 13, 2001. The receipts provided are questionable due to the appearance of altered dates. The letters, without additional supporting credible documentary evidence, are not sufficient for the purpose of meeting the burden of proof in these proceedings. See *Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972). The applicant has provided no additional evidence on appeal to sufficiently establish his continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, until the filing of his TPS application on August 28, 2002. The applicant has failed to provide sufficient evidence to establish that he has met the criteria described in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2(c). Consequently, the director's decision to deny the application for TPS on this ground will be affirmed.

Beyond the decision of the director, for the reasons stated above, the evidence contained in the record is not sufficient in establishing that the applicant has been continuously physically present in the United States since March 9, 2001. Therefore, the application must also be denied 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.