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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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Washington, DC 20536

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

[redacted]

FILE: [redacted] Office: NEBRASKA SERVICE CENTER Date: APR 13 2004

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.

Cindy N. Gomez for
Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the Director, Nebraska 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 she had: 1) continuously resided in the United States since February 13, 2001; and 2) been continuously physically present in the United States since March 9, 2001.

On appeal, the applicant asserted that she had been residing in the United States since October 12, 2000. The applicant stated that she was sending a brief and/or evidence to the AAO within 30 days. To date; however, no additional documentation has been received.

It is noted that the director accepted two identical copies of the same appeal dated by the applicant on April 9, 2003. The first appeal was indicated as received on April 14, 2003, with the second received on May 21, 2003. However, it appears that only one appeal was actually filed. Therefore, the appeal shall be considered as properly filed.

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 is eligible for temporary protected status only if such alien establishes that he or she:

(a) is a national of a 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 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, or

(2) registers for TPS during any subsequent extension of such designation, if the applicant meets the above listed requirements and:

(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 entry on or prior to February 13, 2001, 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 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).

The applicant initially provided the following documentation:

1. A copy of her birth certificate with English translation;

2. A copy of her passport;
3. Copies of her earnings statements from July 19, 2001 through August 9, 2002;
4. A copy of a rent receipt dated July 30, 2002; and,
5. Copies of two money order receipts with no name, dated May 1, 2002.

On January 24, 2003, the applicant was requested to submit evidence establishing her residence since February 13, 2001, and physical presence since March 9, 2001, in the United States. In response, the applicant submitted the following documentation:

6. Copies of money orders dated March 13, 2001, April 9, 2001, April 9, 2002, and one illegible date;
7. Two affidavits from friends; and,
8. An affidavit of residence from Vilma San Martin.

The director determined that the applicant had failed to submit sufficient evidence to establish her eligibility for TPS and denied the application on April 2, 2003. The director noted that the applicant had established she met the requirements for identity and nationality.

On appeal, the applicant reasserted her claim and requested an additional 30 days to submit additional evidence in support of her claim. To date, no additional evidence has been submitted.

The affidavits from friends regarding the applicant's claimed presence in the United States before February 13, 2001 are not supported by corroborative evidence. Affidavits from acquaintances are not, by themselves persuasive evidence of continuous residence or physical presence. The money order receipts indicate that the applicant may have been in the United States from March 13, 2001. The applicant, however, has failed to submit sufficient evidence to establish that she 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 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.