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U.S. Citizenship
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06

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FILE: [REDACTED] Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER Date:
WAC 06 225 51556

IN RE: Petitioner: [REDACTED]
Beneficiary: [REDACTED]

PETITION: Petition for Alien Fiancé(e) Pursuant to § 101(a)(15)(K) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(K)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

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, Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The nonimmigrant visa petition was denied by the Director, California Service Center, and is now on appeal before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO). The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner is a naturalized citizen of the United States who seeks to classify the beneficiary, a native and citizen of Afghanistan, as the fiancée of a United States citizen pursuant to § 101(a)(15)(K) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(K).

Section 101(a)(15)(K) of the Act defines "fiancé(e)" as:

An alien who is the fiancée or fiancé of a citizen of the United States and who seeks to enter the United States solely to conclude a valid marriage with the petitioner within ninety days after entry. . . .

Section 214(d) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1184(d), states in pertinent part that a fiancé(e) petition:

shall be approved only after satisfactory evidence is submitted by the petitioner to establish that the parties have previously met in person within two years before the date of filing the petition, have a bona fide intention to marry, *and are legally able and actually willing to conclude a valid marriage* in the United States within a period of ninety days after the alien's arrival . . . [emphasis added].

It was held in *Matter of Souza*, 14 I&N Dec. 1 (Reg. Comm. 1972) that both the petitioner and beneficiary must be unmarried and free to conclude a valid marriage at the time the petition is filed. The petitioner filed the Petition for Alien Fiancé(e) (Form I-129F) with Citizenship and Immigration Services on August 7, 2006. The Director denied the petition after determining that the petitioner had failed to submit documentary evidence that the beneficiary was legally free to marry the petitioner at the time the petition was filed. *Decision of the Director*, dated October 17, 2006. The Director found that the petitioner and the beneficiary had married on April 23, 2006 in Afghanistan. *Id.* The record includes a photocopy of a marriage certificate issued by the High Court of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan stating that on April 23, 2006 the Neka (exchange of vows) occurred between the petitioner and the beneficiary, and as there are no legal obstacles to their marriage, the marriage has been conducted. *See marriage certificate.*

On appeal, the petitioner asserts that the Nikah does not always constitute marriage since it can be celebrated before the actual wedding and that at the present time, the beneficiary is only considered to be the petitioner's fiancée in the Afghan culture. *Form I-290B and attached statement.* The AAO acknowledges the assertions made by the petitioner, however, it notes that the record fails to include the documentary evidence to support such assertions. *See Matter of Soffici*, 22 I&N Dec. 158, 165 (Comm. 1998)(citing *Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972)). Without supporting documentary evidence, the assertions of the petitioner will not meet his burden of proof of this proceeding. *Id.* Furthermore, the marriage certificate included in the record states that the marriage has been conducted. *See marriage certificate.*

Although the AAO finds that the record reflects that the petitioner was married to the beneficiary at the time of filing the Form I-129F, thus making the beneficiary ineligible for benefits under section 101(a)(15)(K) of

the Act, the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106-553, 114 Stat. 2762 (2000), amended by LIFE Act Amendments, Pub. L. 106-554, 114 Stat. 2763 (2000) has amended the language of section 101(a)(15)(k) of the Act to allow U.S. citizens to file Form I-129F fiancé(e) petitions for their spouses if they have already filed Form I-130 alien relative petitions on their behalf.

Section 101(a)(15)(k)(ii) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(k)(ii), states, in part, that an alien who—

(ii) has concluded a valid marriage with a citizen of the United States who is the petitioner, is the beneficiary of a petition to accord a status under section 201(b)(2)(A)(i) that was filed under section 204 by the petitioner, and seeks to enter the United States to await the approval of such petition and the availability to the alien of an immigrant visa....

8 C.F.R. § 214.2(k)(7) provides, in part:

To be classified as a K-3 spouse as defined in section 101(a)(15)(k)(ii) of the Act, or the K-4 child of such alien defined in section 101(a)(15)(k)(ii) of the Act, the alien spouse must be the beneficiary of an immigrant visa petition filed by a U.S. citizen on Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative, and the beneficiary of an approved petition for a K-3 nonimmigrant visa filed on Form I-129F....

There is no evidence in the record that a Form I-130 visa petition was filed by the petitioner on behalf of his wife prior to his submission of the Form I-129F, nor has a check of CIS databases indicated that this is the case. As a result, the beneficiary cannot benefit from the instant petition. Therefore, the appeal is dismissed.

The denial of this petition is without prejudice. Once the petitioner files a Form I-130 on behalf of his wife, he may file a new I-129F petition on her behalf in accordance with the statutory requirements.

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. The petitioner has not met that burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.