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



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

PUBLIC COPY

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DEC 07 2007

FILE:

WAC 07 080 50480

Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER

Date:

IN RE:

Petitioner:

Beneficiary:

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert P. Wiemann".

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 Liberia, as the fiancé 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 January 19, 2007. The director denied the petition after determining that the petitioner had failed to submit documentary evidence that she was legally free to marry the beneficiary at the time the petition was filed. *Director's Decision*, dated May 22, 2007.

On appeal, the petitioner asserts that she is not able to provide her divorce decree because she is unable to locate her former husband. *Form I-290B*, dated May 29, 2007. The petitioner's Form G-325A indicates that her previous marriage was terminated on April 19, 2005 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The AAO notes that the petitioner does not need to be in contact with her former spouse to obtain a copy of her divorce decree. She may request a copy directly from the court where the divorce was filed. Therefore, because the petitioner has not submitted documentation to show that she was legally free to marry the beneficiary at the time the petition was filed, the appeal will be dismissed.

Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. 214.2(k)(2), the denial of this petition is without prejudice. The petitioner may file a new I-129F petition on the beneficiary's 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.