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20 Mass. Ave., N.W., Rm. 3000
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U.S. Citizenship
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FILE:

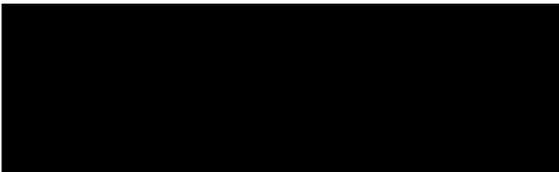
Office: BALTIMORE, MD Date: OCT 29 2007

IN RE:



APPLICATION: Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility under section 212(h) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(h).

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:



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. Wieman".

Robert P. Wieman, Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The waiver application was denied by the District Director, Baltimore, Maryland. The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be rejected as untimely filed. The AAO will return the matter to the district director for consideration as a motion to reopen.

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 103.3(a)(2)(i) provides that an affected party must file an appeal within 30 days after service of an unfavorable decision. If the decision is mailed, the 30-day period for submitting an appeal begins 3 days after it is mailed. 8 C.F.R. § 103.5a(b). The date of filing is the date of actual receipt of the appeal, not the date of mailing. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(a)(7)(i).

The record reflects that the district director sent the decision on March 23, 2006 to the applicant at the applicant's address of record. It is noted that the district director stated that the applicant had 33 days to file an appeal. Although counsel dated the appeal April 6, 2006, it was not received until July 25, 2006, 124 days after the decision was issued. Therefore, the appeal was untimely filed and must be rejected.

Neither the Act nor the pertinent regulations grant the AAO authority to extend the time limit for filing an appeal. However, the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 103.3(a)(2)(v)(B)(2) provides that, if an untimely appeal meets the requirements of a motion to reopen as described in 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(2) or a motion to reconsider as described in 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(3), the appeal must be treated as a motion, and a decision must be made on the merits of the case.

A motion to reopen must state the new facts to be proved in the reopened proceeding and be supported by affidavits or other documentary evidence. 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(2). A motion to reconsider must: (1) state the reasons for reconsideration and be supported by any pertinent precedent decisions to establish that the decision was based on an incorrect application of law or USCIS policy; and (2) establish that the decision was incorrect based on the evidence of record at the time of the initial decision. 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(3).

The official having jurisdiction over a motion is the official who made the last decision in the proceeding, in this case the district director of the Baltimore, Maryland District Office. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(ii). The district director declined to treat the late appeal as a motion and forwarded the matter to the AAO.

Here, counsel has submitted sufficient new evidence—including a psychological evaluation, medical records, financial documents, and utility bills—to meet the requirements for a motion to reopen.

Therefore, the district director must consider the untimely appeal as a motion to reopen and render a new decision accordingly.

ORDER: The appeal is rejected. The matter is returned to the district director for treatment as a motion and issuance of a new decision.