



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

H6



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IN RE: Applicant: 

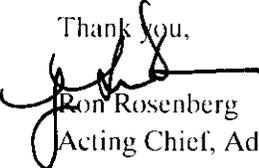
APPLICATION: Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility pursuant to section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(B)(v).

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:  


INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosed please find the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All of the documents related to this matter have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Please be advised that any further inquiry that you might have concerning your case must be made to that office.

If you believe the AAO inappropriately applied the law in reaching its decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen in accordance with the instructions on Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$630, or a request for a fee waiver. The specific requirements for filing such a motion can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. **Do not file any motion directly with the AAO.** Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires any motion to be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,  
  
Ron Rosenberg  
Acting Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

**DISCUSSION:** The waiver application was denied by the Acting Field Office Director, Mexico City, Mexico, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant is a native and citizen of Mexico who was found to be inadmissible to the United States pursuant to section 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(II) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(B)(i)(II), for having been unlawfully present in the United States for more than one year and seeking readmission within 10 years of his last departure from the United States. The applicant is the fiancé of a U.S. citizen and seeks a waiver of inadmissibility in order to return to the United States.

The Acting Field Office Director concluded that the applicant failed to establish that a denial of his waiver application would result in extreme hardship to his U.S. citizen fiancée and denied the application accordingly. *See Decision of Acting Field Office Director.*

On appeal, the applicant, through counsel, submits a psychological evaluation report, a rental agreement, a letter from his fiancée's sister and landlord, a letter from his daughter's child care provider, and some bills and bank statements. Counsel indicates that an appeal brief would be submitted to the AAO within 30 days, but, after more than a year, no brief or additional evidence has been received by the AAO.

The record contains, in relevant part, the above-mentioned documents submitted on appeal, the applicant's Form I-601, Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility, and the documents submitted in support of the waiver application. The entire record was reviewed and considered in rendering a decision on the appeal.

Section 212(a)(9) of the Act provides:

**(B) ALIENS UNLAWFULLY PRESENT.-**

(i) In general.- Any alien (other than an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence) who-

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(II) has been unlawfully present in the United States for one year or more, and who again seeks admission within 10 years of the date of such alien's departure or removal from the United States, is inadmissible.

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(v) Waiver.- The Attorney General [now the Secretary of Homeland Security (Secretary)] has sole discretion to waive clause (i) in the case of an immigrant who is the spouse or son or daughter of a United States citizen or of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, if it is established to the satisfaction of the [Secretary] that the refusal of admission to such immigrant alien would result in extreme hardship to the citizen or lawfully resident spouse or parent of such alien. No court shall have jurisdiction to review a decision or action by the [Secretary] regarding a waiver under this clause.

In the present case, the record reflects that the applicant first entered the United States in 2001 and remained here unlawfully until his departure in 2008. The applicant is therefore inadmissible under section 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(II) of the Act for having been unlawfully present in the United States for over a year. The applicant's qualifying relative is his U.S. citizen fiancée.

Extreme hardship is "not a definable term of fixed and inflexible content or meaning," but "necessarily depends upon the facts and circumstances peculiar to each case." *Matter of Hwang*, 10 I&N Dec. 448, 451 (BIA 1964). In *Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez*, the Board of Immigration Appeals (the Board) provided a list of factors it deemed relevant in determining whether an alien has established extreme hardship to a qualifying relative. 22 I&N Dec. 560, 565 (BIA 1999). The factors include the presence of a lawful permanent resident or United States citizen spouse or parent in this country; the qualifying relative's family ties outside the United States; the conditions in the country or countries to which the qualifying relative would relocate and the extent of the qualifying relative's ties in such countries; the financial impact of departure from this country; and significant conditions of health, particularly when tied to an unavailability of suitable medical care in the country to which the qualifying relative would relocate. *Id.* The Board added that not all of the foregoing factors need be analyzed in any given case and emphasized that the list of factors was not exclusive. *Id.* at 566.

The Board has also held that the common or typical results of removal and inadmissibility do not constitute extreme hardship, and has listed certain individual hardship factors considered common rather than extreme. These factors include: economic disadvantage, loss of current employment, inability to maintain one's present standard of living, inability to pursue a chosen profession, separation from family members, severing community ties, cultural readjustment after living in the United States for many years, cultural adjustment of qualifying relatives who have never lived outside the United States, inferior economic and educational opportunities in the foreign country, or inferior medical facilities in the foreign country. *See generally Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez*, 22 I&N Dec. at 568; *Matter of Pilch*, 21 I&N Dec. 627, 632-33 (BIA 1996); *Matter of Ige*, 20 I&N Dec. 880, 883 (BIA 1994); *Matter of Ngai*, 19 I&N Dec. 245, 246-47 (Comm'r 1984); *Matter of Kim*, 15 I&N Dec. 88, 89-90 (BIA 1974); *Matter of Shaughnessy*, 12 I&N Dec. 810, 813 (BIA 1968).

However, though hardships may not be extreme when considered abstractly or individually, the Board has made it clear that "[r]elevant factors, though not extreme in themselves, must be considered in the aggregate in determining whether extreme hardship exists." *Matter of O-J-O-*,

21 I&N Dec. 381, 383 (BIA 1996) (quoting *Matter of Ige*, 20 I&N Dec. at 882). The adjudicator “must consider the entire range of factors concerning hardship in their totality and determine whether the combination of hardships takes the case beyond those hardships ordinarily associated with deportation.” *Id.*

The actual hardship associated with an abstract hardship factor such as family separation, economic disadvantage, cultural readjustment, et cetera, differs in nature and severity depending on the unique circumstances of each case, as does the cumulative hardship a qualifying relative experiences as a result of aggregated individual hardships. See, e.g., *Matter of Bing Chih Kao and Mei Tsui Lin*, 23 I&N Dec. 45, 51 (BIA 2001) (distinguishing *Matter of Pilch* regarding hardship faced by qualifying relatives on the basis of variations in the length of residence in the United States and the ability to speak the language of the country to which they would relocate). For example, though family separation has been found to be a common result of inadmissibility or removal, separation from family living in the United States can also be the most important single hardship factor in considering hardship in the aggregate. See *Salcido-Salcido*, 138 F.3d at 1293 (quoting *Contreras-Buenfil v. INS*, 712 F.2d 401, 403 (9th Cir. 1983)); but see *Matter of Ngai*, 19 I&N Dec. at 247 (separation of spouse and children from applicant not extreme hardship due to conflicting evidence in the record and because applicant and spouse had been voluntarily separated from one another for 28 years). Therefore, we consider the totality of the circumstances in determining whether denial of admission would result in extreme hardship to a qualifying relative.

The applicant maintains that his U.S. citizen fiancée would face extreme hardship should the waiver application be denied. In this regard, the applicant states that his fiancée would suffer emotional and financial hardship. The applicant claims further that his fiancée is concerned for his safety in Mexico and for the couple's daughter's well-being either in Mexico or in the United States without her father's presence.<sup>1</sup> The record indicates that the applicant's fiancée is residing with her sister, who is permitting her to reside in her home without paying rent. The applicant's fiancée is employed but is experiencing some financial difficulties. The psychologist's report submitted on appeal states, in relevant part, that the applicant's fiancée is suffering from anxiety, stress and depression.

The evidence in the record does not support the applicant's claim that his fiancée would face extreme hardship. The hardship that the applicant's fiancée faces due to their separation is the common result of inadmissibility experienced by other individuals in her situation, and do not rise to the level of extreme hardship. The record establishes that the applicant's fiancée has been in the United States since 2001 and has family in the United States. The record also indicates that she is employed. The applicant's fiancée is experiencing some psychological hardship due

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<sup>1</sup> It is noted that Congress did not include hardship to an alien's children as a factor to be considered in assessing extreme hardship under section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) of the Act. In the present case, the applicant's fiancée is the only qualifying relative for the waiver and hardship to the applicant's child will not be separately considered, except as it may affect the applicant's fiancée.

to the couple's separation. The psychological evaluation is based on one interview of the applicant's fiancée, and not after continued treatment. The psychologist's evaluation does not indicate that the applicant's fiancée's condition amounts to emotional hardship beyond that normally experienced by others in her circumstances. The psychologist recommends medication and therapy to alleviate the applicant's fiancée's anxiety and depression. There is no indication in the record that the recommended treatment is unavailable or, if the applicant's fiancée is undergoing treatment, that it is not yielding positive results.

The record suggests that the applicant's fiancée is not likely to relocate to Mexico should the applicant's waiver application be denied. The applicant's fiancée worries about the applicant's well-being and safety in Mexico, and due to her fear for the couple's daughter's safety, she is not considering relocating to Mexico should the applicant's waiver be denied. The applicant's fiancée does have family ties in Mexico. A claim that a qualifying relative will relocate and thereby suffer extreme hardship can easily be made for purposes of the waiver even where there is no actual intention to relocate. *Cf. Matter of Ige*, 20 I&N Dec. 880, 886 (BIA 1994). Furthermore, to relocate and suffer extreme hardship, where remaining in the United States and being separated from the applicant would not result in extreme hardship, is a matter of choice and not the result of inadmissibility. *Id.*, also *cf. Matter of Pilch*, 21 I&N Dec. 627, 632-33 (BIA 1996); see also *Ramirez-Durazo v. INS*, 794 F.2d 491, 497 (9th Cir. 1986) (holding that "lower standard of living in Mexico and the difficulties of readjustment to that culture and environment . . . simply are not sufficient").

The record does not contain sufficient evidence to show that the hardships faced by the applicant's fiancée, due to either separation from the applicant or relocation to Mexico, considered in the aggregate, rise beyond the common results of removal or inadmissibility to the level of extreme hardship. The AAO therefore finds that the applicant has failed to establish extreme hardship to his qualifying relative as required under section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) of the Act. As the applicant has not established extreme hardship to a qualifying relative no purpose would be served in determining whether the applicant merits a waiver as a matter of discretion.

In proceedings for application for waiver of grounds of inadmissibility under section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) of the Act, the burden of proving eligibility remains entirely with the applicant. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. Here, the applicant has not met that burden. Accordingly, the appeal will be dismissed.

**ORDER:** The appeal is dismissed.