

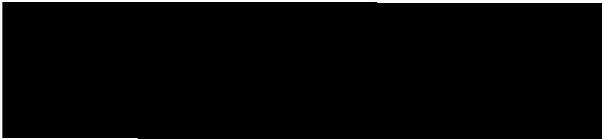
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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of Administrative Appeals MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090

**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**



41

FILE:



Office: HOUSTON

Date:

JUN 05 2009

MSC-05 208 12094

IN RE:

Applicant:



APPLICATION:

Application for Status as a Temporary Resident pursuant to Section 245A of the
Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:



INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. If your appeal was dismissed or rejected, all documents have been returned to the National Benefits Center. You no longer have a case pending before this office, and you are not entitled to file a motion to reopen or reconsider your case. If your appeal was sustained or remanded for further action, you will be contacted.

John F. Grissom
Acting Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application for temporary resident status pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreements reached in *Catholic Social Services, Inc., et al., v. Ridge, et al.*, CIV. NO. S-86-1343-LKK (E.D. Cal) January 23, 2004, and *Felicity Mary Newman, et al., v. United States Immigration and Citizenship Services, et al.*, CIV. NO. 87-4757-WDK (C.D. Cal) February 17, 2004 (CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements) was denied by the District Director, Houston, Texas. The decision is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant a native of Mexico who claims to have lived in the United States since June 1981, submitted a Form I-687, Application for Status as a Temporary Resident under Section 245A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Act), and a Form I-687 Supplement, CSS/Newman Class Membership Worksheet on April 26, 2005. The director denied the application, finding that the applicant had not established by a preponderance of the evidence that he had continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status for the duration of the requisite period.

On appeal the applicant asserts that the director did not properly evaluate the documentation submitted in support of his application. In the applicant's view, the evidence in the record is sufficient to establish that he meets the continuous unlawful residence requirement for the duration of the requisite period.

An applicant for temporary resident status must establish entry into the United States before January 1, 1982, and continuous residence in the United States in an unlawful status since such date and through the date the application is filed. Section 245A(a)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a(a)(2). The applicant must also establish that he or she has been continuously physically present in the United States since November 6, 1986. Section 245A(a)(3) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a(a)(3). The regulations clarify that the applicant must have been physically present in the United States from November 6, 1986 until the date of filing the application. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(b).

For purposes of establishing residence and physical presence under the CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements, the term "until the date of filing" in 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(b) means until the date the applicant attempted to file a completed Form I-687 application and fee or was caused not to timely file during the original legalization application period of May 5, 1987 to May 4, 1988. CSS Settlement Agreement paragraph 11 at page 6; Newman Settlement Agreement paragraph 11 at page 10.

The applicant has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she has resided in the United States for the requisite periods, is admissible to the United States under the provisions of section 245A of the Act, and is otherwise eligible for adjustment of status. The inference to be drawn from the documentation provided shall depend on the extent of the documentation, its credibility and amenability to verification. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5).

Although the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3) provides an illustrative list of contemporaneous documents that an applicant may submit in support of his or her claim of

continuous residence in the United States in an unlawful status since prior to January 1, 1982, the submission of any other relevant document is permitted pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(vi)(L). To meet his or her burden of proof, an applicant must provide evidence of eligibility apart from the applicant's own testimony, and the sufficiency of all evidence produced by the applicant will be judged according to its probative value and credibility. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(6).

The "preponderance of the evidence" standard requires that the evidence demonstrate that the applicant's claim is "probably true," where the determination of "truth" is made based on the factual circumstances of each individual case. *Matter of E-M-*, 20 I&N Dec. 77, 79-80 (Comm. 1989). In evaluating the evidence, *Matter of E-M-* also stated that "[t]ruth is to be determined not by the quantity of evidence alone but by its quality." *Id.* Thus, in adjudicating the application pursuant to the preponderance of the evidence standard, the director must examine each piece of evidence for relevance, probative value, and credibility, both individually and within the context of the totality of the evidence, to determine whether the fact to be proven is probably true. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(6). The weight to be given any affidavit depends on the totality of the circumstances, and a number of factors must be considered. More weight will be given to an affidavit in which the affiant indicates personal knowledge of the applicant's whereabouts during the time period in question rather than a fill-in-the-blank affidavit that provides generic information. The regulations provide specific guidance on the sufficiency of documentation when proving residence through evidence of past employment or attestations by churches or other organizations. 8 C.F.R. §§ 245a.2(d)(3)(i) and (v).

Even if the director has some doubt as to the truth, if the applicant submits relevant, probative, and credible evidence that leads the director to believe that the claim is "probably true" or "more likely than not," the applicant or petitioner has satisfied the standard of proof. *See U.S. v. Cardozo-Fonseca*, 480 U.S. 421 (1987) (defining "more likely than not" as a greater than 50 percent probability of something occurring). If the director can articulate a material doubt, it is appropriate for the director to either request additional evidence or, if that doubt leads the director to believe that the claim is probably not true, deny the application or petition.

The issue in this proceeding is whether the applicant (1) entered the United States before January 1, 1982 and (2) has continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status for the requisite period of time. The documentation that the applicant submits in support of his claim to have arrived in the United States before January 1982 and lived in an unlawful status during the requisite period consists of the following:

- A photocopied letter of employment from [REDACTED], personnel coordinator at Gordon Furniture in Houston, Texas, dated May 2, 1991, stating that the applicant was employed from October 27, 1986 to July 4, 1989.
- A series of affidavits – dated from 1990-1992, and 2007- from individuals who claim to have reside with, or otherwise known the applicant during the 1980s.

The AAO has reviewed each document in its entirety to determine the applicant's eligibility.

At his legalization interview on April 5, 2006, the applicant indicated that he first entered the United States in June 1981 without inspection, that he first departed the United States in 1984 to visit his family in Mexico, and that he departed the United States a second time in 1988 to attend his mother's funeral in Mexico. The applicant did not provide specific details of his trips, only that they were "for a short time." On the Form I-687 dated September 4, 1991, the applicant indicated that he last entered the United States on March 2, 1988, and that he departed the United States only once during the 1980s to Mexico from February to March 2, 1988. On the same form, the applicant indicated that he has a daughter – [REDACTED] – born in Mexico on June 30, 1985. The applicant did not indicate and the record does not reflect that the applicant's wife was residing in the United States with the applicant during the 1980s. On the Form I-687 he filed in April 2005, the applicant indicated that he was absent from the United States twice during the 1980s – in September 1984 and from February to March 1988. The applicant provided conflicting information about his absences from the United States and his continuous residence in the United States during the 1980s, thereby casting some doubt on his claim that he entered the United States from before January 1, 1982 and resided continuously in the country through May 4, 1988.

It is incumbent upon the applicant to resolve any inconsistencies in the record by independent objective evidence. Any attempt to explain or reconcile such inconsistencies will not suffice without competent objective evidence pointing to where the truth lies. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582, 591-92 (BIA 1988). Doubt cast on any aspect of the applicant's evidence also reflects on the reliability of other evidence in the record. *See id.*

The letter of employment from Gordon Furniture does not comport with the regulatory requirements of 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(i) because it did not provide the applicant's address during the periods of employment, did not indicate whether the information was taken from company records, and did not indicate whether such records are available for review. The letter is not supplemented by any earnings statements, pay stubs, or tax records demonstrating that the applicant was actually employed during any of the years claimed. Finally, the original of the letter is not in the file for proper verification. For the reasons stated above, the letter of employment has limited probative value. It is not persuasive evidence that the applicant resided continuously in the United States from before January 1, 1982 through May 4, 1988, as required for legalization.

The affidavits in the record from individuals who claim to have resided with, or otherwise have known the applicant during the 1980s, have minimalist or fill-in-the-blank formats with very limited personal input by the affiants. For the amount of time they claim to have known the applicant - in most cases since 1981 – the affiants provided remarkably few details about the applicant's life in the United States such as where he worked, and the nature and extent of their interaction with him during the 1980s. The affidavits are not accompanied by any documentary evidence – such as

photographs, letters, and the like -- demonstrating the affiants' personal relationships with the applicant in the United States during the 1980s. For the reasons discussed above, the AAO finds that the affidavits have limited probative value. They are not persuasive evidence of the applicant's continuous unlawful residence in the United States from before January 1, 1982 through the date the applicant filed an application for temporary resident status.

Upon a *de novo* review of all of the evidence in the record, the AAO agrees with the director that the evidence submitted by the applicant has not established that he is eligible for the benefit sought.

Therefore, based upon the foregoing, the applicant has failed to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that he entered the United States before January 1, 1982 and continuously resided in an unlawful status in the United States for the requisite period as required under both 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5) and *Matter of E- M--*, *supra*. The applicant is, therefore, ineligible for temporary resident status under section 245A of the Act on this basis.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. This decision constitutes a final notice of ineligibility.