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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Administrative Appeals Office (AAO)
20 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services



M₁

FILE: [REDACTED]
[LIN 10 905 00518]

Office: NEBRASKA SERVICE CENTER

Date:
APR 01 2011

IN RE: Applicant: [REDACTED]

APPLICATION: Application for Temporary Protected Status under Section 244 of the
Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1254

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 Nebraska Service Center. Please be advised that any further inquiry that you might have concerning your case must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied by us in reaching our decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen. The specific requirements for filing such a request can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. All motions must be submitted to the Nebraska Service Center by filing a Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$630. Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires that any motion must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

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

The applicant claims to be a citizen of Haiti who is seeking Temporary Protected Status (TPS) under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1254.

The director denied the application because the applicant failed to establish he had: 1) continuously resided in the United States since January 12, 2010; and 2) been continuously physically present in the United States since January 21, 2010.

On appeal, the applicant asserts that he is eligible for the benefit sought as he has been residing in the United States since 2008. The applicant asserts that he entered the United States in April or May 2009 and returned to Haiti in October 2009 to spend time with his wife, who had been ill. The applicant asserts that he had planned to return to the United States a month later, but his wife's health did not improve and, therefore, he decided to stay in Haiti.

Section 244(c) of the Act, and the related regulations in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2, provide that an applicant who is a national of a foreign state as designated by the Attorney General, now the Secretary, Department of Homeland Security (Secretary), is eligible for TPS only if such alien establishes that he or she:

- (a) Is a national of a state designated under section 244(b) of the Act;
- (b) Has been continuously physically present in the United States since the effective date of the most recent designation of that foreign state;
- (c) Has continuously resided in the United States since such date as the Secretary may designate;
- (d) Is admissible as an immigrant except as provided under section 244.3;
- (e) Is not ineligible under 8 C.F.R. § 244.4; and
- (f)
 - (1) Registers for Temporary Protected Status during the initial registration period announced by public notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER, or
 - (2) During any subsequent extension of such designation if at the time of the initial registration period:
 - (i) The applicant is a nonimmigrant or has been granted voluntary departure status or any relief from removal;

- (ii) The applicant has an application for change of status, adjustment of status, asylum, voluntary departure, or any relief from removal which is pending or subject to further review or appeal;
- (iii) The applicant is a parolee or has a pending request for reparole; or
- (iv) The applicant is a spouse or child of an alien currently eligible to be a TPS registrant.

The term *continuously physically present*, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means actual physical presence in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous physical presence in the United States by virtue of brief, casual, and innocent absences as defined within this section.

The term *continuously resided*, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means residing in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous residence in the United States by reason of a brief, casual and innocent absence as defined within this section or due merely to a brief temporary trip abroad required by emergency or extenuating circumstances outside the control of the alien.

Persons applying for TPS offered to Haitians must demonstrate continuous residence in the United States since January 12, 2010, and continuous physical presence in the United States since January 21, 2010.

The burden of proof is upon the applicant to establish that he or she meets the above requirements. Applicants shall submit all documentation as required in the instructions or requested by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(a). The sufficiency of all evidence will be judged according to its relevancy, consistency, credibility, and probative value. To meet his or her burden of proof the applicant must provide supporting documentary evidence of eligibility apart from his or her own statements. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b).

Along with his TPS application, the applicant submitted copies of: 1) the biographical page of his Haitian passport; 2) the biographical page of his U.S. visa issued on December 3, 2008; 3) his Form I-94, Arrival-Departure Record, which reflected he was admitted into the United States on March 20, 2010, as a nonimmigrant visitor; and 4) a letter dated October 28, 2009, from the City of New York Health and Hospitals Corporation, indicating the applicant had received emergency medical coverage at Kings County Hospital Center from August 12, 2009 to August 13, 2009.

USCIS records reflect that the applicant was also admitted into the United States on December 18, 2008, and May 30, 2009, and he last departed the United States on October 24, 2009.

On August 16, 2010, the applicant was requested to submit evidence establishing his continuous residence since January 12, 2010 and continuous physical presence in the United States since January 21, 2010, to the date of filing. The applicant was informed that if he had a brief, casual, and innocent absence from the United States during this period, or a brief temporary trip abroad required by emergency or extenuating circumstances outside his control, he was to submit evidence to support the absence.

The applicant, in response, provided additional copies of the documents previously submitted with his application along with:

- A copy of his employment authorization card valid from August 5, 2010.
- A copy of his social security card issued on September 1, 2010.
- A photocopied bank statement from Chase for the period July 27, 2010 to August 9, 2010.

The director determined that the applicant had not established continuous residence in the United States since January 12, 2010 and continuous physical presence since January 21, 2010. The director also determined that the applicant's failure to maintain continuous physical presence and residence was not due to brief, casual and innocent absence or a brief temporary trip abroad required by emergency or extenuating circumstances beyond his control. Accordingly, on October 7, 2010, the director denied the application.

On appeal, the applicant submits additional copies of the documents previously submitted along with an affidavit from [REDACTED] who indicates that the applicant has been residing in her home since March 2010.

The applicant's statements on appeal have been considered. However, the applicant's visits to the United States in 2008 and 2009 only serve to establish that the applicant was present in the United States during the duration of his visits; they do not establish *continuous* residence or continuous physical presence in the United States. The applicant's last arrival into the United States was subsequent to the eligibility period. Therefore, he cannot meet the criteria for continuous residence in the United States since January 12, 2010 and continuous physical presence in the United States since January 21, 2010 as described in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2(b) and (c). The AAO is bound by the clear language of the statute and lacks the authority to change the statute. Consequently, the director's decision to deny the application for TPS will be affirmed.

An alien applying for TPS has the burden of proving that he or she meets the requirements enumerated above and is otherwise eligible under the provisions of section 244 of the Act. The applicant has failed to meet this burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.