U.S. Department of Homeland Security
20 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20529

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

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HQ 70/8

Interoffice Memorandum

To: Field Leadership

From: Michael Aytes
Associate Director, Domestic Operations

Re: New Classification for Victims of Criminal Activity – Eligibility for "U" Nonimmigrant Status

Revisions to *Adjudicator's Field Manual* (AFM) Chapter 39
(*AFM* Update AD08-12)

1. Purpose

This memorandum provides guidance to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) officers in the field regarding a new nonimmigrant classification created by the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000 (VTVPA), Pub. L. 106-386, 114 Stat. 1464 (Oct. 28, 2000). Title V of the VTVPA is entitled the Battered Immigrant Women Protection Act (BIWPA), and contains the provisions creating the U nonimmigrant status and establishing the eligibility requirements. Interim final regulations implementing the provisions creating the U nonimmigrant classification were published on September 17, 2007. 72 Fed. Reg. 53,014. This guidance establishes the requirements and procedures for aliens seeking nonimmigrant status under this new classification.

This memorandum also provides clarification on eligibility requirements for qualifying family members who were granted interim relief. The U regulation sets forth general eligibility requirements for derivative U Nonimmigrants, however these regulations do not address eligibility requirements for derivatives who are in interim relief status. Many qualifying family members who were granted interim relief do not meet the general age requirements in the rule. However the U regulation provides that, upon approval of a petition for U nonimmigrant status, principal petitioners and derivative family members who were granted interim relief will be accorded U nonimmigrant status as of the date that the request for U interim relief was approved. This guidance provides that with regard to qualifying family members who were granted interim relief, the family member's age on the date of the U interim relief filing shall be controlling for the age eligibility requirement, just as the interim relief approval date is controlling in designating the initial date of U nonimmigrant status.

2. Contact Information

This guidance is effective immediately. Please direct any questions concerning these changes through appropriate supervisory channels to Anne-Marie Mulagha, Regulations and Product Management Division, Domestic Operations Directorate, through the appropriate supervisory channels.

3. Use

This guidance is created solely for the purpose of USCIS personnel in performing their duties relative to adjudication of applications. It is not intended to, does not, and may not be relied upon to create any right or benefit, substantial or procedural, enforceable at law by any individual or any other party in removal proceedings, in litigation with the United States, or in any other or form or matter.

4. AFM Update

Accordingly, the AFM is revised as follows:

1. The AFM has been revised to add a new chapter 39 entitled, "U Nonimmigrants" (revision date [insert date memo signed]). New chapter 39 reads:

Chapter 39 U Nonimmigrants

(a) Definitions. As used in this chapter, the term:

(1) BIWPA means Battered Immigrant Women Protection Act of 2000 of the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act of 2000, div. B, Violence Against Women Act of 2000, tit. V, Pub. L. No. 106-386, 114 Stat. 1464, (2000), as amended by Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005, tit. VIII, Pub. L. No. 109-162, 119 Stat. 2960 (2006), as amended by Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act—Technical Corrections, Pub. L. No. 109-271, 120 Stat. 750 (2006).

(2) Certifying agency means a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, prosecutor, judge, or other authority, that has responsibility for the investigation or prosecution of a qualifying crime or criminal activity. This definition includes agencies that have criminal investigative jurisdiction in their respective areas of expertise, including, but not limited to, child protective services, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Department of Labor.

(3) Certifying official means: (i) the head of the certifying agency, or any person(s) in a supervisory role who has been specifically designated by the head of the certifying

agency to issue U nonimmigrant status certifications on behalf of that agency; or (ii) a Federal, State, or local judge.

(4) Indian Country is defined as: (i) all land within the limits of any Indian reservation under the jurisdiction of the United States Government, notwithstanding the issuance of any patent, and including rights-of-way running through the reservation; (ii) all dependent Indian communities within the borders of the United States whether within the original or subsequently acquired territory thereof, and whether within or without the limits of a state; and (iii) all Indian allotments, the Indian titles to which have not been extinguished, including rights-of-way running through such allotments.

(5) Investigation or prosecution refers to the detection or investigation of a qualifying crime or criminal activity, as well as to the prosecution, conviction, or sentencing of the perpetrator of the qualifying crime or criminal activity.

(6) Military Installation means any facility, base, camp, post, encampment, station, yard, center, port, aircraft, vehicle, or vessel under the jurisdiction of the Department of Defense, including any leased facility, or any other location under military control.

(7) Next friend means a person appearing in a lawsuit to act for the benefit of a petitioner who is under the age of 16 or who is incapacitated or incompetent, and who has suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of being a victim of qualifying criminal activity. The next friend is not a party to the legal proceeding and is not appointed as a guardian.

(8) Physical or mental abuse means injury or harm to the victim's physical person, or harm to or impairment of the emotional or psychological soundness of the victim.

(9) Qualifying crime or qualifying criminal activity includes one or more of the following or any similar activities in violation of Federal, State or local criminal law of the United States: rape; torture; trafficking; incest; domestic violence; sexual assault; abusive sexual contact; prostitution; sexual exploitation; female genital mutilation; being held hostage; peonage; involuntary servitude; slave trade; kidnapping; abduction; unlawful criminal restraint; false imprisonment; blackmail; extortion; manslaughter; murder; felonious assault; witness tampering; obstruction of justice; perjury; or attempt, conspiracy, or solicitation to commit any of the above mentioned crimes. The term, "any similar activity," refers to criminal offenses in which the nature and elements of the offenses are substantially similar to the statutorily enumerated list of criminal activities.

(10) Qualifying family member means the spouse or child(ren) of an alien victim 21 years of age or older who is eligible for U nonimmigrant status as described in

section 101(a)(15)(U) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(U). In the case of an alien victim under the age of 21, qualifying family member means the spouse, child(ren), parents, or unmarried siblings under the age of 18 of such an alien.

(11) Territories and Possessions of the United States means American Samoa, Swains Island, Bajo Nuevo (the Petrel Islands), Baker Island, Howland Island, Jarvis Island, Johnston Atoll, Kingman Reef, Midway Atoll, Navassa Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Palmyra Atoll, Serranilla Bank, and Wake Atoll.

(12) U nonimmigrant status certification means Form I-918, Supplement B, "U Nonimmigrant Status Certification," which confirms that the petitioner has been helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of the qualifying criminal activity of which he or she is a victim.

(13) U interim relief refers to the interim benefits that were provided by USCIS to petitioners for U nonimmigrant status, who requested such benefits and who were deemed prima facie eligible for U nonimmigrant status prior to the publication of the implementing regulations.

(14) Victim of qualifying criminal activity generally means an alien who has suffered direct and proximate harm as a result of the commission of qualifying criminal activity.

(i) The alien spouse, unmarried children under 21 years of age and, if the victim is under 21 years of age, parents and unmarried siblings under 18 years of age, will be considered victims of qualifying criminal activity where the direct victim is deceased due to murder or manslaughter, or is incompetent or incapacitated, and, therefore, unable to provide information concerning the criminal activity or be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of the criminal activity. For purposes of determining eligibility under this definition, USCIS will consider the age of the victim at the time the qualifying criminal activity first occurred.

(ii) A petitioner may be considered a victim of witness tampering, obstruction of justice, or perjury, including any attempt, solicitation, or conspiracy to commit one or more of those offenses, if:

(A) The petitioner has been directly and proximately harmed by the perpetrator of the witness tampering, obstruction of justice, or perjury; and

(B) There are reasonable grounds to conclude that the perpetrator committed the witness tampering, obstruction of justice, or perjury offense, at least in principal part, as a means:

(1) To avoid or frustrate efforts to investigate, arrest, prosecute, or otherwise bring to justice the perpetrator for other criminal activity; or

(2) To further the perpetrator's abuse or exploitation of or undue control over the petitioner through manipulation of the legal system.

(iii) A person who is culpable for the qualifying criminal activity being investigated or prosecuted is excluded from being recognized as a victim of qualifying criminal activity.

(b) Eligibility. An alien is eligible for U-1 nonimmigrant status if he or she demonstrates all of the following in accordance with paragraph (c) of this chapter:

(1) The alien has suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of having been a victim of qualifying criminal activity. Whether abuse is substantial is based on a number of factors, including but not limited to: the nature of the injury inflicted or suffered; the severity of the perpetrator's conduct; the severity of the harm suffered; the duration of the infliction of the harm; and the extent to which there is permanent or serious harm to the appearance, health, or physical or mental soundness of the victim, including aggravation of pre-existing conditions. No single factor is a prerequisite to establish that the abuse suffered was substantial. Also, the existence of one or more of the factors automatically does not create a presumption that the abuse suffered was substantial. A series of acts taken together may be considered to constitute substantial physical or mental abuse even where no single act alone rises to that level;

(2) The alien possesses credible and reliable information establishing that he or she has knowledge of the details concerning the qualifying criminal activity upon which his or her petition is based. The alien must possess specific facts regarding the criminal activity leading a certifying official to determine that the petitioner has, is, or is likely to provide assistance to the investigation or prosecution of the qualifying criminal activity. In the event that the alien has not yet reached 16 years of age on the date on which an act constituting an element of the qualifying criminal activity first occurred, a parent, guardian or next friend of the alien may possess the information regarding a qualifying crime. In addition, if the alien is incapacitated or incompetent, a parent, guardian, or next friend may possess the information regarding the qualifying crime;

(3) The alien has been helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful to a certifying agency in the investigation or prosecution of the qualifying criminal activity

upon which his or her petition is based, and since the initiation of cooperation, has not refused or failed to provide information and assistance reasonably requested. In the event that the alien has not yet reached 16 years of age on the date on which an act constituting an element of the qualifying criminal activity first occurred, a parent, guardian or next friend of the alien may provide the required assistance. In addition, if the petitioner is incapacitated or incompetent and, therefore, unable to be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of the qualifying criminal activity, a parent, guardian, or next friend may provide the required assistance; and

(4) The qualifying criminal activity occurred in the United States (including Indian country and U.S. military installations) or in the territories or possessions of the United States, or violated a U.S. federal law that provides for extraterritorial jurisdiction to prosecute the offense in a U.S. federal court.

(c) Application procedures for U nonimmigrant status.

(1) Filing a petition. USCIS has sole jurisdiction over all petitions for U nonimmigrant status. An alien seeking U-1 nonimmigrant status must submit, by mail, Form I-918, "Petition for U Nonimmigrant Status," applicable fees (or request for a fee waiver as provided in 8 CFR 103.7(c)), and initial evidence to USCIS in accordance with this paragraph and the instructions to Form I-918. A petitioner who received interim relief is not required to submit initial evidence with Form I-918 if he or she wishes to rely on the law enforcement certification and other evidence that was submitted with the request for interim relief.

(i) Petitioners in pending immigration proceedings. A petitioner who is in removal proceedings under section 240 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1229a, or in exclusion or deportation proceedings initiated under former sections 236 or 242 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1226 and 1252 (as in effect prior to April 1, 1997), and who would like to apply for U nonimmigrant status must file a Form I-918 directly with USCIS. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) counsel may agree to file, at the request of the petitioner, a joint motion to terminate proceedings without prejudice with the Immigration Judge or Board of Immigration Appeals, whichever is appropriate, while a petition for U nonimmigrant status is being adjudicated by USCIS.

(ii) Petitioners with final orders of removal, deportation, or exclusion. A petitioner who is the subject of a final order of removal, deportation, or exclusion is not precluded from filing a petition for U-1 nonimmigrant status directly with USCIS. The filing of a petition for U-1 nonimmigrant status has no effect on ICE's authority to execute a final order, although the petitioner may file a request for a stay of removal

pursuant to 8 CFR 241.6(a) and 8 CFR 1241.6(a). If the petitioner is in detention pending execution of the final order, the time during which a stay is in effect will extend the period of detention (under the standards of 8 CFR 241.4) reasonably necessary to bring about the petitioner's removal.

(2) Initial evidence. Form I-918 must include the following initial evidence:

(i) Form I-918, Supplement B, "U Nonimmigrant Status Certification," signed by a certifying official within the six months immediately preceding the filing of Form I-918. The certification must state that: the person signing the certificate is the head of the certifying agency, or any person(s) in a supervisory role who has been specifically designated by the head of the certifying agency to issue U nonimmigrant status certifications on behalf of that agency, or is a Federal, State, or local judge; the agency is a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, or prosecutor, judge or other authority, that has responsibility for the detection, investigation, prosecution, conviction, or sentencing of qualifying criminal activity; the petitioner has been a victim of qualifying criminal activity that the certifying official's agency is investigating or prosecuting; the petitioner possesses information concerning the qualifying criminal activity of which he or she has been a victim; the petitioner has been, is being, or is likely to be helpful to an investigation or prosecution of that qualifying criminal activity; and the qualifying criminal activity violated U.S. law, or occurred in the United States, its territories, its possessions, Indian country, or at military installations abroad.

(ii) Any additional evidence that the petitioner wants USCIS to consider to establish that: the petitioner is a victim of qualifying criminal activity; the petitioner has suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of being a victim of qualifying criminal activity; the petitioner (or, in the case of a child under the age of 16 or petitioner who is incompetent or incapacitated, a parent, guardian or next friend of the petitioner) possesses information establishing that he or she has knowledge of the details concerning the qualifying criminal activity of which he or she was a victim and upon which his or her petition is based; the petitioner (or, in the case of a child under the age of 16 or petitioner who is incompetent or incapacitated, a parent, guardian or next friend of the petitioner) has been helpful, is being helpful, or is likely to be helpful to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, prosecutor, or authority, or Federal or State judge, investigating or prosecuting the criminal activity of which the petitioner

is a victim; or the criminal activity is qualifying and occurred in the United States (including Indian country and U.S. military installations) or in the territories or possessions of the United States, or violates a U.S. federal law that provides for extraterritorial jurisdiction to prosecute the offense in a U.S. federal court;

(iii) A signed statement by the petitioner describing the facts of the victimization. The statement may also include information supporting any of the eligibility requirements set out in paragraph (b) of this chapter. When the petitioner is under the age of 16, incapacitated, or incompetent, a parent, guardian, or next friend may submit a statement on behalf of the petitioner; and

(iv) If the petitioner is inadmissible, Form I-192, "Application for Advance Permission to Enter as a Non-Immigrant," in accordance with 8 CFR 212.17.

(3) Biometric capture. All petitioners for U-1 nonimmigrant status must submit to biometric capture and pay a biometric capture fee. USCIS will notify the petitioner of the proper time and location to appear for biometric capture after the petitioner files Form I-918.

(4) Evidentiary standards and burden of proof. The burden shall be on the petitioner to demonstrate eligibility for U-1 nonimmigrant status. The petitioner may submit any credible evidence relating to his or her Form I-918 for consideration by USCIS. USCIS shall conduct a de novo review of all evidence submitted in connection with Form I-918 and may investigate any aspect of the petition. Evidence previously submitted for this or other immigration benefit or relief may be used by USCIS in evaluating the eligibility of a petitioner for U-1 nonimmigrant status. However, USCIS will not be bound by its previous factual determinations. USCIS will determine, in its sole discretion, the evidentiary value of previously or concurrently submitted evidence, including Form I-918, Supplement B, "U Nonimmigrant Status Certification."

(5) Decision. After completing its de novo review of the petition and evidence, USCIS will issue a written decision approving or denying Form I-918 and notify the petitioner of this decision. USCIS will include in a decision approving Form I-918 a list of nongovernmental organizations and available resources to which the petitioner can refer regarding his or her options while in the United States.

(i) Approval of Form I-918, generally. If USCIS determines that the petitioner has met the requirements for U-1 nonimmigrant status, USCIS will approve Form I-918. For a petitioner who is within the

United States, USCIS also will concurrently grant U-1 nonimmigrant status, subject to the annual limitation as provided in paragraph (d) of this chapter. For a petitioner who is subject to an order of exclusion, deportation, or removal issued by the Secretary, the order will be deemed canceled by operation of law as of the date of USCIS' approval of Form I-918.

(A) Notice of Approval of Form I-918 for U-1 petitioners within the United States. After USCIS approves Form I-918 for an petitioner who filed his or her petition from within the United States, USCIS will notify the petitioner of such approval on Form I-797, "Notice of Action," and include Form I-94, "Arrival-Departure Record," indicating U-1 nonimmigrant status.

(B) Notice of Approval of Form I-918 for U-1 petitioners outside the United States. After USCIS approves Form I-918 for an petitioner who filed his or her petition from outside the United States, USCIS will notify the petitioner of such approval on Form I-797, "Notice of Action," and will forward notice to the Department of State for delivery to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate having jurisdiction over the area in which the petitioner is located, or, for a visa exempt petitioner, to the appropriate port of entry.

(ii) Denial of Form I-918. USCIS will provide written notification to the petitioner of the reasons for the denial. The petitioner may appeal a denial of Form I-918 to the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) in accordance with the provisions of 8 CFR 103.3. For petitioners who appeal a denial of their Form I-918 to the AAO, the denial will not be deemed administratively final until the AAO issues a decision affirming the denial. Upon USCIS' final denial of a petition for a petitioner who was in removal proceedings that were terminated pursuant to 8 CFR 214.14(c)(1)(i), DHS may file a new Notice to Appear (see section 239 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1229) to place the individual in proceedings again. For petitioners who are subject to an order of removal, deportation, or exclusion and whose order has been stayed, USCIS' denial of the petition will result in the stay being lifted automatically as of the date the denial becomes administratively final.

(6) Petitioners granted U interim relief. Petitioners who were granted U interim relief as defined in paragraph (a)(13) of this chapter and whose Form I-918 is approved will be accorded U-1 nonimmigrant status as of the date that a request for U interim relief was initially approved.

(7) Employment authorization. An petitioner granted U-1 nonimmigrant status is employment authorized incident to status. USCIS automatically will issue an initial Employment Authorization Document (EAD) to such petitioners who are in the United States. For principal petitioners who applied from outside the United States, the initial EAD will not be issued until the petitioner has been admitted to the United States in U nonimmigrant status. After admission, the petitioner may receive an initial EAD, upon request and submission of a copy of his or her Form I-94, "Arrival-Departure Record," to the USCIS office having jurisdiction over the adjudication of petitions for U nonimmigrant status. No additional fee is required. An petitioner granted U-1 nonimmigrant status seeking to renew his or her expiring EAD or replace an EAD that was lost, stolen, or destroyed, must file Form I-765 in accordance with the instructions to the form.

(d) Annual cap of U-1 nonimmigrant status.

(1) General. In accordance with section 214(p)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1184(p)(2), the total number of aliens who may be issued a U-1 nonimmigrant visa or granted U-1 nonimmigrant status may not exceed 10,000 in any fiscal year.

(2) Waiting list. All eligible petitioners who, due solely to the cap, are not granted U-1 nonimmigrant status must be placed on a waiting list and receive written notice of such placement. Priority on the waiting list will be determined by the date the petition was filed with the oldest petitions receiving the highest priority. In the next fiscal year, USCIS will issue a number to each petition on the waiting list, in the order of highest priority, providing the petitioner remains admissible and eligible for U nonimmigrant status. After U-1 nonimmigrant status has been issued to qualifying petitioners on the waiting list, any remaining U-1 nonimmigrant numbers for that fiscal year will be issued to new qualifying petitioners in the order that the petitions were properly filed. USCIS will grant deferred action or parole to U-1 petitioners and qualifying family members while the U-1 petitioners are on the waiting list. USCIS, in its discretion, may authorize employment for such petitioners and qualifying family members.

(3) Unlawful presence. During the time a petitioner for U nonimmigrant status who was granted deferred action or parole is on the waiting list, no accrual of unlawful presence under section 212(a)(9)(B) of the INA, 8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(9)(B), will result. However, a petitioner may be removed from the waiting list and the deferred action or parole may be terminated at the discretion of USCIS.

(e) Restrictions on use and disclosure of information relating to petitioners for U nonimmigrant classification.

(1) General. The use or disclosure (other than to a sworn officer or employee of DHS, the Department of Justice, the Department of State, or a bureau or agency of any of those departments, for legitimate department, bureau, or agency purposes) of any information relating to the beneficiary of a pending or approved petition for U nonimmigrant status is prohibited unless the disclosure is made:

(i) By the Secretary of Homeland Security, at his discretion, in the same manner and circumstances as census information may be disclosed by the Secretary of Commerce under 13 U.S.C. 8;

(ii) By the Secretary of Homeland Security, at his discretion, to law enforcement officials to be used solely for a legitimate law enforcement purpose;

(iii) In conjunction with judicial review of a determination in a manner that protects the confidentiality of such information;

(iv) After adult petitioners for U nonimmigrant status or U nonimmigrant status holders have provided written consent to waive the restrictions prohibiting the release of information;

(v) To Federal, State, and local public and private agencies providing benefits, to be used solely in making determinations of eligibility for benefits pursuant to 8 U.S.C. 1641(c);

(vi) After a petition for U nonimmigrant status has been denied in a final decision;

(vii) To the chairmen and ranking members of the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate or the Committee on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives, for the exercise of congressional oversight authority, provided the disclosure relates to information about a closed case and is made in a manner that protects the confidentiality of the information and omits personally identifying information (including locational information about individuals);

(viii) With prior written consent from the petitioner or derivative family members, to nonprofit, nongovernmental victims' service providers for the sole purpose of assisting the victim in obtaining victim services from programs with expertise working with immigrant victims; or

(ix) To federal prosecutors to comply with constitutional obligations to provide statements by witnesses and certain other documents to defendants in pending federal criminal proceedings.

(2) Agencies receiving information under this chapter, whether governmental or non-governmental, are bound by the confidentiality provisions and other restrictions set out in 8 U.S.C. 1367.

(3) Officials of the Department of Homeland Security are prohibited from making adverse determinations of admissibility or deportability based on information obtained solely from the perpetrator of substantial physical or mental abuse and the criminal activity.

(f) Admission of qualifying family members.

(1) Eligibility. An alien who has petitioned for or has been granted U-1 nonimmigrant status (i.e. principal petitioner) may petition for the admission of a qualifying family member in a U-2 (spouse), U-3 (child), U-4 (parent of a U-1 petitioner who is a child under 21 years of age), or U-5 (unmarried sibling under the age of 18) derivative status, if accompanying or following to join such principal petitioner. A qualifying family member who committed the qualifying criminal activity in a family violence or trafficking context which established the principal petitioner's eligibility for U nonimmigrant status shall not be granted U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant status. To be eligible for U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant status, it must be demonstrated that:

(i) The alien for whom U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 status is being sought is a qualifying family member, as defined in paragraph (a)(10) of this chapter; and

(ii) The qualifying family member is admissible to the United States.

(2) Filing Procedures. A petitioner for U-1 nonimmigrant status may apply for derivative U nonimmigrant status on behalf of qualifying family members by submitting a Form I-918, Supplement A, "Petition for Qualifying Family Member of U-1 Recipient," for each family member either at the same time the petition for U-1 nonimmigrant status is filed, or at a later date. A petitioner who has been granted U-1 nonimmigrant status may also apply for derivative U nonimmigrant status on behalf of qualifying family members by submitting Form I-918, Supplement A for each family member. Each Form I-918, Supplement A must be accompanied by initial evidence and the required fees specified in the instructions to the form. Forms I-918, Supplement A that are not filed at the same time as Form I-918 but are filed at a later date must be accompanied by a copy of the Form I-918 that was filed by the

principal petitioner or a copy of his or her Form I-94 demonstrating proof of U-1 nonimmigrant status, as applicable.

(i) Qualifying family members in pending immigration proceedings. The principal petitioner of a qualifying family member who is in removal proceedings under section 240 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1229a, or in exclusion or deportation proceedings initiated under former sections 236 or 242 of the Act, 8 U.S. C. 1226 and 1252 (as in effect prior to April 1, 1997), and who is seeking U nonimmigrant status, must file a Form I-918, Supplement A directly with USCIS. ICE counsel may agree to file, at the request of the qualifying family member, a joint motion to terminate proceedings without prejudice with the Immigration Judge or Board of Immigration Appeals, whichever is appropriate, while the petition for U nonimmigrant status is being adjudicated by USCIS.

(ii) Qualifying family members with final orders of removal, deportation, or exclusion. A petitioner who is the subject of a final removal order, deportation, or exclusion is not precluded from filing a petition for U-2, U-3, U-4 or U-5 nonimmigrant status directly with USCIS. The filing of a petition for U-2, U-3, U-4 or U-5 nonimmigrant status has no effect on ICE's authority to execute a final order, although the petitioner may file a request for a stay of removal pursuant to 8 CFR 241.6(a) and 8 CFR 1241.6(a). If the petitioner is in detention pending execution of the final order, the time during which a stay is in effect will extend the period of detention (under the standards of 8 CFR 241.4) reasonably necessary to bring about the petitioner's removal.

(3) Initial evidence. Form I-918, Supplement A, must include the following initial evidence:

(i) Evidence demonstrating the relationship of a qualifying family member, as provided in paragraph (f)(4) of this chapter;

(ii) If the qualifying family member is inadmissible, Form I-192, "Application for Advance Permission to Enter as a Non-Immigrant," in accordance with 8 CFR 212.17.

(4) Relationship. Except as set forth in paragraphs (f)(4)(i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) of this chapter, the relationship between the U-1 principal petitioner and the qualifying family member must exist at the time Form I-918 was filed, and the relationship must continue to exist at the time Form I-918, Supplement A is adjudicated, and at the time of the qualifying family member's subsequent admission to the United States.

(i) If the U-1 principal petitioner proves that he or she has become the parent

of a child after Form I-918 was filed, the child shall be eligible to accompany or follow to join the U-1 principal petitioner.

(ii) If the principal petitioner was under 21 years of age at the time he or she filed Form I-918, and filed Form I-918, Supplement A for an unmarried sibling under the age of 18, USCIS will continue to consider such sibling as a qualifying family member for purposes of U nonimmigrant status even if the principal petitioner is no longer under 21 years of age at the time of adjudication, and even if the sibling is no longer under 18 years of age at the time of adjudication.

(iii) If the principal petitioner was under 21 years of age at the time she or he filed for a parent(s) or unmarried sibling(s) under the age of 18, USCIS will continue to consider such parent(s) or sibling(s) as a qualifying family member for purposes of U nonimmigrant status at the time the principal files Form I-918 and Form I-918, Supplement A, even if the principal petitioner is no longer under 21 years of age at the time of filing or adjudication, and even if the sibling is no longer under 18 years of age at the time of filing or adjudication.

(iv) If the qualifying family member was under 21 years of age at the time of the U interim relief filing, USCIS will continue to consider such family member as a qualifying family member for purposes of U nonimmigrant status at the time the principal petitioner files Form I-918 and Form I-918, Supplement A, even if the family member is no longer under 21 years of age at the time of filing or adjudication.

(5) Biometric capture and evidentiary standards. The provisions for biometric capture and evidentiary standards in paragraphs (c)(3) and (c)(4) of this chapter also are applicable to petitions for qualifying family members.

(6) Decision. USCIS will issue a written decision approving or denying Form I-918, Supplement A and send notice of this decision to the U-1 principal petitioner. USCIS will include in a decision approving Form I-918 a list of nongovernmental organizations and available resources to which the qualifying family member can refer regarding his or her options while in the United States. For a qualifying family member who is subject to an order of exclusion, deportation, or removal issued by the Secretary, the order will be deemed canceled by operation of law as of the date of USCIS' approval of Form I-918, Supplement A.

(i) Approvals for qualifying family members within the United States. When USCIS approves a Form I-918, Supplement A for a qualifying family member who is within the United States, it will concurrently grant that petitioner U-2, U-

3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant status. USCIS will notify the principal of such approval on Form I-797, "Notice of Action," with Form I-94, "Arrival-Departure Record," indicating U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant status. Petitioners who were previously granted U interim relief as defined in paragraph (a)(13) of this chapter will be accorded U nonimmigrant status as of the date that the request for U interim relief was approved. Petitioners who are granted U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant status are not subject to an annual numerical limit. USCIS may not approve Form I-918, Supplement A unless it has approved the principal's Form I-918.

(ii) Approvals for qualifying family members outside the United States. When USCIS approves Form I-918, Supplement A for a qualifying family member who is outside the United States, USCIS will notify the principal of such approval on Form I-797. USCIS will forward the approved Form I-918, Supplement A to the Department of State for delivery to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate having jurisdiction over the area in which the qualifying family member is located, or, for a visa exempt alien, to the appropriate port of entry.

(iii) Denial of the Form I-918, Supplement A. In accordance with 8 CFR 103.3(a)(1), USCIS will provide written notification of the reasons for the denial. The principal may appeal the denial of Form I-918, Supplement A to the Administrative Appeals Office in accordance with the provisions of 8 CFR 103.3. Upon USCIS' final denial of Form I-918, Supplement A for a qualifying family member who was in removal proceedings that were terminated pursuant to 8 CFR 214.14(f)(2)(i), DHS may file a new Notice to Appear (see section 239 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1229) to place the individual in proceedings again. For qualifying family members who are subject to an order of removal, deportation, or exclusion and whose order has been stayed, USCIS' denial of the petition will result in the stay being lifted automatically as of the date the denial becomes administratively final.

(7) Employment authorization. A petitioner granted U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant status is employment authorized incident to status. To obtain an Employment Authorization Document (EAD), such petitioner must file Form I-765, "Application for Employment Authorization," with the appropriate fee or a request for a fee waiver, in accordance with the instructions to that form. For qualifying family members within the United States, the Form I-765 must be filed after Form I-918, Supplement A, is approved. For qualifying family members who are outside the United States, Form I-765 may only be filed after admission to the United States in U nonimmigrant status.

(g) Duration of U nonimmigrant status.

(1) In general. U nonimmigrant status may be approved for a period not to exceed 4 years in the aggregate. A qualifying family member granted U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant status will be approved for a period that does not exceed the expiration date of the initial period.

(2) Extension of status.

(i) Where a U nonimmigrant's approved period of stay on Form I-94 is less than 4 years, he or she may file Form I-539, "Application to Extend/Change Nonimmigrant Status," to request an extension of U nonimmigrant status for an aggregate period not to exceed 4 years. USCIS may approve an extension of status for a qualifying family member beyond the date when the U-1 nonimmigrant's status expires when the qualifying family member is unable to enter the United States timely due to delays in consular processing, and an extension of status is necessary to ensure that the qualifying family member is able to attain at least 3 years in nonimmigrant status for purposes of adjusting status under section 245(m) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1255.

(ii) Extensions of U nonimmigrant status beyond the 4-year period are available upon attestation by the certifying official that the petitioner's presence in the United States continues to be necessary to assist in the investigation or prosecution of qualifying criminal activity. In order to obtain an extension of U nonimmigrant status based upon such an attestation, the petitioner must file Form I-539 and a newly executed Form I-918, Supplement B in accordance with the instructions to Form I-539.

(h) Revocation of approved petitions for U nonimmigrant status.

(1) Automatic revocation. An approved petition for U-1 nonimmigrant status will be revoked automatically if, pursuant to 8 CFR 214.14(d)(1), the beneficiary of the approved petition notifies the USCIS office that approved the petition that he or she will not apply for admission to the United States and, therefore, the petition will not be used.

(2) Revocation on notice.

(i) USCIS may revoke an approved petition for U nonimmigrant status following a notice of intent to revoke. USCIS may revoke an approved petition for U nonimmigrant status based on one or more of the following reasons:

(A) The certifying official withdraws the U nonimmigrant status certification referred to in 8 CFR 214.14(c)(2)(i) or disavows the contents in writing;

(B) Approval of the petition was in error;

(C) Where there was fraud in the petition;

(D) In the case of a U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant, the relationship to the principal petitioner has terminated; or

(E) In the case of a U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant, the principal U-1's nonimmigrant status is revoked.

(ii) The notice of intent to revoke must be in writing and contain a detailed statement of the grounds for the revocation and the time period allowed for the U nonimmigrant's rebuttal. The petitioner may submit evidence in rebuttal within 30 days of the date of the notice. USCIS shall consider all relevant evidence presented in deciding whether to revoke the approved petition for U nonimmigrant status. The determination of what is relevant evidence and the weight to be given to that evidence will be within the sole discretion of USCIS. If USCIS revokes approval of a petition and thereby terminates U nonimmigrant status, USCIS will provide the alien with a written notice of revocation that explains the specific reasons for the revocation.

(3) Appeal of a revocation of approval. A revocation on notice may be appealed to the Administrative Appeals Office in accordance with 8 CFR 103.3 within 30 days after the date of the notice of revocation. Automatic revocations may not be appealed. The denial upon which an appeal is filed will not become final until the appeal is adjudicated.

(4) Effects of revocation of approval. Revocation of a principal alien's approved Form I-918 will result in termination of status for the principal alien, as well as in the denial of any pending Form I-918, Supplement A filed for qualifying family members seeking U-2, U-3, U-4, or U-5 nonimmigrant status. Revocation of a qualifying family member's approved Form I-918, Supplement A will result in termination of status for the qualifying family member. Revocation of an approved Form I-918 or Form I-918, Supplement A also revokes any waiver of inadmissibility granted in conjunction with such petition.

(i) Removal proceedings. Nothing in this chapter prohibits USCIS from instituting removal proceedings under section 240 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1229(a), for conduct committed after admission, for conduct or a condition that was not disclosed to USCIS prior to the granting

of U nonimmigrant status, for misrepresentations of material facts in Form I-918 or Form I-918, Supplement A and supporting documentation, or after revocation of U nonimmigrant status.

☞ 2. The AFM Transmittal Memoranda button is revised by adding a new entry, in numerical order, to read:

AD08-12 [Insert date]	Chapter 39	This memorandum adds a new chapter 39 to the Adjudicator's Field Manual (AFM).

Distribution List:
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