

identifying data deleted to
prevent clearly unwarranted
invasion of personal privacy
PUBLIC COPY

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

[REDACTED]

B6

DATE: JUL 30 2012 OFFICE: NEBRASKA SERVICE CENTER FILE: [REDACTED]

IN RE: Petitioner: [REDACTED]
Beneficiary: [REDACTED]

PETITION: Immigrant Petition for Alien Worker as a Skilled Worker or Professional Pursuant to Section 203(b)(3) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(3)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

[REDACTED]

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. 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,

Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The Director, Nebraska Service Center (director), denied the immigrant visa petition. The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner describes itself as a Geriatric Skilled Nursing Home. It seeks to permanently employ the beneficiary in the United States as a registered nurse. The petitioner requests classification of the beneficiary as a professional or skilled worker pursuant to section 203(b)(3)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(3)(A).¹

The director denied the petition because the petitioner failed to submit a valid prevailing wage determination in accordance with 20 C.F.R. § 656.40.

The record shows that the appeal is properly filed, timely, and makes an allegation of error in law or fact. The procedural history in this case is documented by the record and incorporated into the decision. Further elaboration of the procedural history will be made only as necessary.

The AAO conducts appellate review on a *de novo* basis. *See Soltane v. DOJ*, 381 F.3d 143, 145 (3d Cir. 2004). The AAO considers all pertinent evidence in the record, including new evidence properly submitted upon appeal.²

The petition is for a Schedule A occupation. A Schedule A occupation is an occupation codified at 20 § C.F.R. 656.5(a) for which the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) has determined that there are not sufficient U.S. workers who are able, willing, qualified and available and that the wages and working conditions of similarly employed U.S. workers will not be adversely affected by the employment of aliens in such occupations. The current list of Schedule A occupations includes professional nurses and physical therapists. *Id.*

Petitions for Schedule A occupations do not require the petitioner to test the labor market and obtain a certified ETA Form 9089 from the DOL prior to filing the petition with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). Instead, the petition is filed directly with USCIS with a duplicate uncertified ETA Form 9089. *See* 8 C.F.R. §§ 204.5(a)(2) and (l)(3)(i); *see also* 20 C.F.R. § 656.15. Here, the Form I-140 was filed on August 8, 2007.

¹ Section 203(b)(3)(A)(i) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(3)(A)(i), grants preference classification to qualified immigrants who are capable of performing skilled labor (requiring at least two years training or experience), not of a temporary nature, for which qualified workers are not available in the United States. Section 203(b)(3)(A)(ii) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(3)(A)(ii), grants preference classification to qualified immigrants who hold baccalaureate degrees and are members of the professions.

² The submission of additional evidence on appeal is allowed by the instructions to the Form I-290B, which are incorporated into the regulations by 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(a)(1). *See Matter of Soriano*, 19 I&N Dec. 764 (BIA 1988).

If the Schedule A occupation is a professional nurse, the petitioner must establish that the beneficiary has a Certificate from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS); a permanent, full and unrestricted license to practice professional nursing in the state of intended employment; or passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). *See* 20 C.F.R. § 656.5(a)(2).

Petitions for Schedule A occupations must also contain evidence establishing that the employer provided its U.S. workers with notice of the filing of an ETA Form 9089 (Notice) as prescribed by 20 C.F.R. § 656.10(d), and a valid prevailing wage determination (PWD) obtained in accordance with 20 C.F.R. § 656.40 and 20 C.F.R. § 656.41. *See* 20 C.F.R. § 656.15(b)(2).

For the Notice requirement, the employer must provide notice of the filing of an ETA Form 9089 to any bargaining representative for the occupation, or, if there is no bargaining representative, by posted notice to its employees at the location of the intended employment. *See* 20 C.F.R. § 656.10(d)(1).

The regulation at 20 C.F.R. § 656.10(d)(3) states that the Notice shall:

- (i) State that the notice is being provided as a result of the filing of an application for permanent alien labor certification for the relevant job opportunity;
- (ii) State any person may provide documentary evidence bearing on the application to the Certifying Officer of the Department of Labor;
- (iii) Provide the address of the appropriate Certifying Officer; and
- (iv) Be provided between 30 and 180 days before filing the application.

Notices for Schedule A occupations must also contain a description of the job offered and the rate of pay. *See* 20 C.F.R. § 656.10(d)(6).

In cases where there is no bargaining representative, the Notice must be posted for at least 10 consecutive business days, and it must be clearly visible and unobstructed while posted. 20 C.F.R. § 656.10(d)(1)(ii). The Notice must be posted in a conspicuous place where the employer's U.S. workers can readily read it on their way to or from their place of employment. *Id.* In addition, the Notice must be published "in any and all in-house media, whether electronic or printed, in accordance with the normal procedures used for the recruitment of similar positions in the employer's organization." *Id.* The satisfaction of the Notice requirement may be documented by "providing a copy of the posted notice and stating where it was posted, and by providing copies of all the in-house media" used to distribute the Notice. *Id.*

In the instant case, the petitioner failed to submit a PWD that meets the requirements of 20 C.F.R. § 656.40, which states, in pertinent part, as follows:

§ 656.40 Determination of prevailing wage for labor certification purposes.

(a) *Application process.* The employer must request a prevailing wage determination from the SWA having jurisdiction over the proposed area of intended employment. . .

(b) *Determinations.* The SWA determines the prevailing wage as follows:

(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (e) and (f) of this section, if the job opportunity is covered by a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) that was negotiated at arms-length between the union and the employer, the wage rate set forth in the CBA agreement is considered as not adversely affecting the wages of U.S. workers similarly employed, that is, it is considered the “prevailing wage” for labor certification purposes.

(2) If the job opportunity is not covered by a CBA, the prevailing wage for labor certification purposes shall be the arithmetic mean, except as provided in paragraph (b)(3) of this section, of the wages of workers similarly employed in the area of intended employment. The wage component of the DOL Occupational Employment Statistics Survey shall be used to determine the arithmetic mean, unless the employer provides an acceptable survey under paragraph (g) of this section.

....

§ 656.41 Certifying Officer review of prevailing wage determinations.

(a) *Review of SWA prevailing wage determinations.* Any employer desiring review of a SWA PWD must make a request for such review within 30 days of the date from when the PWD was issued by the SWA. . . .

As set forth above, the instant petition and ETA Form 9089 were filed on August 2, 2007. The PWD in the record of proceeding is dated June 27, 2007 with validity dates of June 27, 2007 to September 25, 2007 and states an hourly rate of \$25.43. The prevailing wage determination source used was the “All Industries Database” (OES). The ETA Form 9089 states the wage source in Part F.6. as “OES;” F.5. states the annual prevailing wage as \$52,894; and the offered wage in part G.1. as \$25.43. The ETA Form 9089 Part I.e.24. indicates “Yes” to the question of “[h]as the bargaining representative for workers in the occupation in which the alien will be employed been provided with notice of this filing at least 30 days but not more than 180 days before the date the application is filed?” The petitioner checked “not applicable” to the next question: “If there is no bargaining representative, has a notice of this filing been posted for 10 business days in a conspicuous location at the place of employment, ending at least 30 days before but not more than 180 days before the date the application is filed?” As stated by the director, however, the prevailing wage determination was issued using the “all industries database” when the wage was, in fact, subject to a CBA based on

the petitioner's representations on the ETA Form 9089. Thus, without evidence showing that the CBA was not negotiated at arms-length between the union and employer, pursuant to regulation as set forth above, "the wage rate set forth in the CBA agreement is considered as not adversely affecting the wages of U.S. workers similarly employed . . ." That wage, therefore, is considered the prevailing wage for labor certification purposes, and should have formed the basis for the SWA's PWD.

In Section I.e.24 of the ETA Form 9089, the petitioner indicated that the bargaining representative for the workers in the occupation in which the beneficiary would be employed had been provided with notice of the filing of the labor certification application. Indeed, the record contains a copy of said notice dated July 23, 2007. However, the SWA did not receive notice that the prevailing wage was subject to a CBA at the time of its June 27, 2009 PWD and the SWA did not determine the prevailing wage based upon the CBA as required by regulation. In submitting ETA Form 9089, the employer declares under penalty of perjury that it has "read and reviewed [the] application and that to the best of [the employer's] knowledge the information contained [therein] is true and accurate." The employer is responsible for ensuring that the prevailing wage determination information provided by the SWA is entered on the ETA Form 9089 and is accurate. If the SWA determines the wage in error, the employer must request that identified problems be corrected in accordance with procedures at 20 C.F.R. § 656.41.

In this instance, the prevailing wage determined by the SWA was significantly less than the wage to be paid under the applicable CBA as the petitioner submitted an employment agreement stating a higher rate of \$64,064.50 than that listed of \$52,894 on the ETA Form 9089. Thus, the Form I-140 was not accompanied by a proper application for labor certification and proper PWD. The petition must, therefore, be denied.

The director properly denied the petition because the petitioner failed to submit a valid PWD in accordance with 20 C.F.R. § 656.40. The petitioner's after filed attempt to correct ETA Form 9089 in response to the director's request for evidence, therefore, cannot be accepted.

A petitioner must establish eligibility at the time of filing. *See Matter of Katigbak*, 14 I&N Dec. 45, 49 (Comm'r 1971). A petitioner may not make material changes to a petition in an effort to make a deficient petition conform to USCIS requirements. *See Matter of Izummi*, 22 I&N Dec. 169, 176 (Assoc. Comm'r 1988).

The burden of proof in these proceedings rests solely with the petitioner. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. The petitioner has not met that burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.