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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

PUBLIC COPY



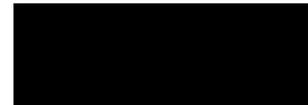
**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**



C1

DATE **MAY 31 2012**

Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER



IN RE:

Petitioner:

Beneficiary:



PETITION: Immigrant Petition for Special Immigrant Religious Worker Pursuant to Section 203(b)(4) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1153(b)(4), as described at Section 101(a)(27)(C) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(27)(C)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

SELF-REPRESENTED

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. Please note that all documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Please also note that any further inquiry must be made to that office.

Thank you,

Jerry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The Director, California Service Center, denied the immigrant visa petition. The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be rejected as untimely filed.

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(a)(1) provides, in pertinent part:

General. Every benefit request or other document submitted to DHS must be executed and filed in accordance with the form instructions . . . and such instructions are incorporated into the regulations requiring its submission.

As it pertains to the proper filing of an appeal, the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 103.3(a)(2)(i) provides:

Filing Appeal. The affected party must submit an appeal on Form I-290B. Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the affected party must pay the fee required by §103.7 of this part. The affected party must submit the complete appeal including any supporting brief as indicated in the applicable form instructions within 30 days after service of the decision.

If the decision was mailed, the appeal must be filed within 33 days. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 103.8(b). The date of filing is not the date of submission, but the date of actual receipt with the required fee. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(a)(7)(i).

The record indicates that the director issued the decision on May 3, 2011. It is noted that the director gave notice to the petitioner that it had 30 days to file the appeal and listed the proper fee for an appeal. The notice further advised: “Your notice of appeal must be filed with this office at the address at the top of this page.” The notice concluded: “**The appeal may not be filed directly with the AAO. The appeal must be filed at the address at the top of this page.**” (Bold and underline emphasis in original.)

The petitioner dated the appeal June 2, 2011. However, despite the clear instructions in the director’s notice and on the Form I-290B, the petitioner sent the appeal to the AAO. On June 7, 2011, the AAO returned the appeal as improperly filed with the wrong office. The appeal was received *by the director* on June 13, 2011, 41 days after the decision was issued. Accordingly, the appeal was untimely filed.

Neither the Act nor the pertinent regulations grant the AAO authority to extend the 33-day time limit for filing an appeal. The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 103.3(a)(2)(v)(B)(2) states that, if an untimely appeal meets the requirements of a motion to reopen or a motion to reconsider, the appeal must be treated as a motion, and a decision must be made on the merits of the case.

A motion to reopen must state the new facts to be proved in the reopened proceeding and, when filed, be supported by affidavits or other documentary evidence. 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(2). A motion to reconsider must state the reasons for reconsideration and be supported by any pertinent precedent

decisions to establish that the decision was based on an incorrect application of law or Service policy. A motion to reconsider a decision on an application or petition must, when filed, also establish that the decision was incorrect based on the evidence of record at the time of the initial decision. 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(3). A motion that does not meet applicable requirements when filed shall be dismissed. 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(4).

Here, the untimely appeal did not meet the requirements of a motion to reopen or a motion to reconsider when it was filed. Therefore, there is no requirement to treat the appeal as a motion under 8 C.F.R. § 103.3(a)(2)(v)(B)(2).

As the appeal was untimely filed and does not qualify as a motion, the appeal must be rejected.

ORDER: The appeal is rejected.