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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

[Redacted]

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FILE: LIN 05 044 51163 Office: NEBRASKA SERVICE CENTER Date: [Redacted]

IN RE: Petitioner: [Redacted]

Beneficiaries: [Redacted]

PETITION: Petition for a Nonimmigrant Worker Pursuant to Section 101(a)(H)(ii)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(ii)(b)

ON BEHALF OF PETITIONER:

SELF-REPRESENTED

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All documents have been returned to the office that originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The nonimmigrant visa petition 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 petitioner operates a hotel and resort. It desires to employ the beneficiaries as housekeepers for ten months. The Department of Labor (DOL) determined that a temporary certification by the Secretary of Labor could be made. The director determined that the petitioner had not established that its need for the beneficiaries' services is seasonal and temporary.

On appeal, the petitioner states that if the petition is not approved, it will be unable to operate its hotel effectively for the winter season.

Section 101(a)(15)(H)(ii)(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(H)(ii)(b), defines an H-2B temporary worker as:

an alien having a residence in a foreign country which he has no intention of abandoning, who is coming temporarily to the United States to perform other temporary service or labor if unemployed persons capable of performing such service or labor cannot be found in this country

. . . .

The test for determining whether an alien is coming "temporarily" to the United States to "perform temporary services or labor" is whether the need of the petitioner for the duties to be performed is temporary. It is the nature of the need, not the nature of the duties, that is controlling. *Matter of Artee Corp.*, 18 I&N Dec. 366 (Comm. 1982).

As a general rule, the period of the petitioner's need must be a year or less, although there may be extraordinary circumstances where the temporary services or labor might last longer than one year. The petitioner's need for the services or labor shall be a one-time occurrence, a seasonal need, a peakload need, or an intermittent need. 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(6)(ii)(B). The petition indicates that the employment is seasonal and that the temporary need recurs annually.

To establish that the nature of the need is "seasonal," the petitioner must demonstrate that the services or labor is traditionally tied to a season of the year by an event or pattern and is of a recurring nature. The petitioner shall specify the period(s) of time during each year in which it does not need the services or labor. The employment is not seasonal if the period during which the services or labor is not needed is unpredictable or subject to change or is considered a vacation period for the petitioner's permanent employees. 8 C.F.R. § 214.2(h)(6)(ii)(B)(2).

The nontechnical description of the job on the Application for Alien Employment Certification (Form ETA 750) reads:

- . Clean guest rooms and make beds.
- . Clean and disinfect bathrooms.
- . Wash windows and walls.
- . Stock rooms, sort, wash, fold and stock linens.

In determining whether an employer has demonstrated a temporary need for an H-2B worker, it must be determined whether the job duties, which are the subject of the temporary application, are permanent or temporary. If the duties are permanent in nature, the petitioner must clearly show that the need for the beneficiary's services or labor is of a short, identified length, limited by an identified event. Based on the evidence presented, a claim that a temporary need exists cannot be justified.

In a letter dated November 19, 2004, the petitioner states "by using a 10 month visa this allows us to give the full-time workers we do have time to take vacation during the slower months of April and May." The regulation cited above specifically states that the employment is not seasonal if the period during which the services or labor is not needed is considered a vacation period for the petitioner's permanent employees.

Moreover, the petitioner explains on the petition that its temporary need for the beneficiaries' services is as follows:

We are a small community with a tremendous influx of tourists. We need help and are unable to obtain it locally or regionally. Due to busier shoulder seasons and conventions we no longer have much of an off season.

If the petitioner is experiencing a severe labor shortage, it can be alleviated through the issuance of immigrant visas. Further, the petitioner, by stating that it "no longer has much of an off season", has shown that it has a permanent need for workers to perform housekeeping services. The services to be performed by the beneficiaries are ongoing and the petitioner's need to have additional workers perform these services has not been shown to be seasonal and temporary. The petitioner has not submitted any financial evidence to demonstrate that its business activity has formed a pattern where its needs for housekeeping services are traditionally tied to a season of the year and will recur next year at the same time. Simply going on record without supporting documentary evidence is not sufficient for purposes of meeting the burden of proof in these proceedings. *See Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972).

The petitioner states that it has used the H-2B visa program for the last two years and has been approved each time. The petitioner states that it has submitted the same evidence for both time periods and has been granted the 10-month visa petition.

Each nonimmigrant petition is a separate proceeding with a separate record. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 103.8(d). In making a determination of statutory eligibility, Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) is limited to the information contained in the record of proceeding. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 103.2(b)(16)(ii). The director's decision does not indicate whether he reviewed the prior approvals of the other nonimmigrant petitions. If the previous nonimmigrant petitions were approved based on the same unsupported and contradictory assertions that are contained in the current record, the approval would constitute material or gross error on the part of the director. The AAO is not required to approve applications or petitions where eligibility has not been demonstrated, merely because of prior approvals that may have been erroneous. *See, e.g. Matter of Church Scientology International*, 19 I&N Dec. 593, 597 (Comm. 1988). It would be absurd to suggest that CIS or any agency must treat acknowledged errors as binding precedent. *Sussex Engg. Ltd. v. Montgomery*, 825 F.2d 1084, 1090(6th Cir. 1987), *cert denied*, 485 U.S. 1008 (1988).

Furthermore, AAO's authority over service centers is comparable to the relationship between a court of appeals and a district court. Even if a service center director had approved the nonimmigrant petitions on behalf of the beneficiary, the AAO would not be bound to follow the contradictory decision of a service center. *Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra v. INS*, 2000 WL 282785 (E.D. La.), *aff'd*, 248 F.3d 1139 (5th Cir. 2001), *cert. denied*, 122 S.Ct. 51 (2001).

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

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.