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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of Administrative Appeals MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090



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

D6

[REDACTED]

FILE:

[REDACTED]

Office: CALIFORNIA SERVICE CENTER

Date: FEB 20 2010

IN RE:

Petitioner:

Beneficiary:

[REDACTED]

PETITION: Petition for Alien Fiancé(e) Pursuant to § 101(a)(15)(K) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(K)

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.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen. Please refer to 8 C.F.R. § 103.5 for the specific requirements. All motions must be submitted to the office that originally decided your case by filing a Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$585. Any motion must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider, as required by 8 C.F.R. 103.5(a)(1)(i).

Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The Director, California Service Center, initially approved the nonimmigrant visa petition on February 1, 2008. On October 20, 2008, the petition was returned for further review to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) by the U.S. Embassy in Manila, Philippines. On July 7, 2009, the director issued a Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID), requesting evidence that the petitioner and the beneficiary were legally free to enter into a marriage, as the record did not contain a final divorce decree issued by the civil court authorities that terminated the beneficiary's civil marriage to [REDACTED]. The director denied the petition on August 17, 2009, as the marriage between the beneficiary and [REDACTED] was terminated on November 25, 2008, subsequent to the August 22, 2007 filing of the petition.

The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The petitioner is a citizen of the United States who seeks to classify the beneficiary, a native and citizen of the Philippines, as the fiancé(e) of a United States citizen pursuant to § 101(a)(15)(K) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(15)(K).

The director denied the nonimmigrant visa petition because the petitioner had not established that he and the beneficiary were legally free to enter into a marriage, as the record did not contain evidence of the termination of the beneficiary's marriage to [REDACTED]. It is noted that the petitioner had previously submitted a counterfeit death certificate for [REDACTED]. On appeal, the petitioner states, in part, that, with the submission of the beneficiary's divorce document, he has complied with the visa requirements and the petition should be approved. As supporting documentation, the petitioner submits copies of previously submitted documents, including the Certificate of Finality, as evidence of the November 25, 2008 termination of the beneficiary's marriage to [REDACTED].

A "fiancé(e)" is defined at Section 101(a)(15)(K) of the Act as:

Subject to subsections (d) and (p) of section 214, an alien who -

(i) is the fiancée or fiancé of a citizen of the United States . . . and who seeks to enter the United States solely to conclude a valid marriage with the petitioner within ninety days after admission.

Section 214(d)(1) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1184(d)(1), states in pertinent part that a fiancé(e) petition:

[s]hall be approved only after satisfactory evidence is submitted by the petitioner to establish that the parties have previously met in person within 2 years before the date of filing the petition, have a bona fide intention to marry, and are legally able and actually willing to conclude a valid marriage in the United States within a period of ninety days after the alien's arrival

The petitioner filed the Petition for Alien Fiancé(e) (Form I-129F) with USCIS on August 22, 2007. Therefore, the petitioner and the beneficiary were required to have met in person between August 22, 2005 and August 22, 2007.

As discussed above, the director denied the petition because the termination of the marriage between the beneficiary and [REDACTED] was finalized on November 25, 2008, subsequent to the August 22, 2007 filing of the petition. Thus the petitioner failed to demonstrate that he and the beneficiary were legally free to enter into a marriage when the petition was filed.

On appeal, the petitioner states, in part, that, with the submission of the beneficiary's divorce document, he has complied with the visa requirements and the petition should be approved.

The petition is not approvable. The petitioner filed the Petition for Alien Fiancé(e) (Form I-129F) with USCIS on August 22, 2007. At the time of filing, the beneficiary remained married to her spouse, [REDACTED]. The AAO acknowledges the Certificate of Finality, as evidence of the November 25, 2008 termination of the beneficiary's marriage to [REDACTED] nevertheless, the beneficiary was not legally free to conclude a valid marriage with the petitioner when the petition was filed. It is the date of filing the petition that controls here. It was held in *Matter of Souza*, 14 I&N Dec. 1 (Reg. Comm. 1972) that both the petitioner and the beneficiary must be unmarried and free to conclude a valid marriage at the time the petition is filed. In addition, USCIS regulations affirmatively require a petitioner to establish eligibility for the benefit it is seeking at the time the petition is filed. 8 C.F.R. 103.2(b)(1). A visa petition may not be approved at a future date after the petitioner or beneficiary becomes eligible under a new set of facts. *Matter of Michelin Tire Corp.*, 17 I&N Dec. 248 (Reg. Comm. 1978). Accordingly, the AAO cannot find that the beneficiary was legally able to conclude a valid marriage with the petitioner when the petition was filed. Accordingly, the appeal is dismissed. The petition must be denied.

The denial of the petition is without prejudice. Should the petitioner wish to file a new I-129F Petition, he should ensure that he submits all of the required supporting documentation. If necessary, the petitioner should consult the instructions to the Form I-129F to understand the specific documents that he should file along with the petition. The petitioner may download the I-129F petition with the instructions from the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov, or he may call the USCIS National Customer Service Center (NCSC) at 1-800-375-5283 to have the form and the instructions mailed to his home.

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. The petition is denied.