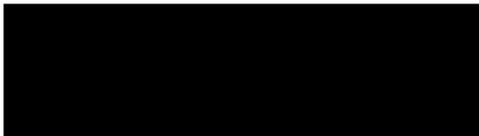


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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Immigration and Citizenship Services
Office of Administrative Appeals MS 2090
20 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090
U.S. Citizenship
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Services



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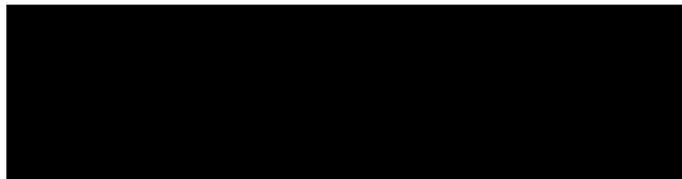
Date: **FEB 24 2012** Office: LOS ANGELES, CA

FILE:

IN RE: Applicant:

APPLICATION: Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility under section 212(h) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(h).

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:



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 by us in reaching our decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen. The specific requirements for filing such a request can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. 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 \$630. Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires that any motion must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

for Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The waiver application was denied by the Field Office Director, Los Angeles, California, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The record reflects that the applicant is a native and citizen of Mexico. He was found to be inadmissible to the United States pursuant to section 212(a)(2)(A)(i)(I) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(2)(A)(i)(I), for having been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude. The director indicated that the applicant sought a waiver of inadmissibility pursuant to section 212(h) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(h). The director concluded that the applicant had failed to establish extreme hardship to a qualifying relative, and denied the Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility (Form I-601) accordingly.

On appeal, counsel contends that the director failed to consider that the applicant's spouse will experience emotional and psychological hardship due to separation from the applicant, and will be impacted by the effect that separation will have on her children. Counsel states that the applicant's wife endured sexual abuse in her childhood from a family member and abuse in prior relationships, and that the director failed to consider the psychological assessment review of the applicant's wife. Counsel indicates that the applicant's wife and her children have overcome past trauma due to the applicant's emotional support. Additionally, counsel asserts that the applicant's wife has migraine headaches and the applicant's stepson has lymphedema praecox and requires special attention.

The record reflects that on December 1, 1993 the applicant was arrested for assault with a deadly weapon. On June 2, 1997, the judge found the applicant guilty of the charge. Additionally, the judge found the applicant guilty of the special allegation pursuant to section 12022.7 of the California Penal Code. The judge placed the applicant on probation and ordered that he serve 180 days in jail.

The applicant has not disputed inadmissibility on appeal, and as the record does not show the finding of inadmissibility to be erroneous, we will not disturb the finding of the director.

The applicant was convicted of assault with a deadly weapon. The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(d) provides:

The Attorney General [Secretary, Department of Homeland Security], in general, will not favorably exercise discretion under section 212(h)(2) of the Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(h)(2)) to consent to an application or reapplication for a visa, or admission to the United States, or adjustment of status, with respect to immigrant aliens who are inadmissible under section 212(a)(2) of the Act in cases involving violent or dangerous crimes, except in extraordinary circumstances, such as those involving national security or foreign policy considerations, or cases in which an alien clearly demonstrates that the denial of the application for adjustment of status or an immigrant visa or admission as an immigrant would result in exceptional and extremely unusual hardship. Moreover, depending on the gravity of the alien's underlying criminal offense, a showing of extraordinary circumstances might still be insufficient to warrant a favorable exercise of discretion under section 212(h)(2) of the Act.

The AAO notes that the words “violent” and “dangerous” and the phrase “violent or dangerous crimes” are not further defined in the regulation, and the AAO is aware of no precedent decision or other authority containing a definition of these terms as used in 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(d). A similar phrase, “crime of violence,” is found in section 101(a)(43)(F) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1101(a)(43)(F). Under that section, a crime of violence is an aggravated felony if the term of imprisonment is at least one year. As defined by 18 U.S.C. § 16, a crime of violence is an offense that has as an element the use, attempted use, or threatened use of physical force against the person or property of another, or any other offense that is a felony and that, by its nature, involves a substantial risk that physical force against the person or property of another may be used in the course of committing the offense. We note that the Attorney General declined to reference section 101(a)(43)(F) of the Act or 18 U.S.C. § 16, or the specific language thereof, in 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(d). Thus, we find that the statutory terms “violent or dangerous crimes” and “crime of violence” are not synonymous and the determination that a crime is a violent or dangerous crime under 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(d) is not dependent on it having been found to be a crime of violence under 18 U.S.C. § 16 or an aggravated felony under section 101(a)(43)(F) of the Act. *See* 67 Fed. Reg. 78675, 78677-78 (December 26, 2002).

Nevertheless, we will use the definition of a crime of violence found in 18 U.S.C. § 16 as guidance in determining whether a crime is a violent crime under 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(d), considering also other common meanings of the terms “violent” and “dangerous”. The term “dangerous” is not defined specifically by 18 U.S.C. § 16 or any other relevant statutory provision. Thus, in general, we interpret the terms “violent” and “dangerous” in accordance with their plain or common meanings, and consistent with any rulings found in published precedent decisions addressing discretionary denials under the standard described in 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(d). Decisions to deny waiver applications on the basis of discretion under 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(d) are made on a factual “case-by-case basis.” 67 Fed. Reg. at 78677-78.

The AAO finds that assault with a deadly weapon is a violent crime. In the instant case, as we find that there are no national security or foreign policy considerations that would warrant a favorable exercise of discretion, we will consider whether denial of admission would result in exceptional and extremely unusual hardship.

In *Matter of Monreal-Aguinaga*, 23 I& N Dec. 56, 62 (BIA 2001), the Board determined that exceptional and extremely unusual hardship in cancellation of removal cases under section 240A(b) of the Act is hardship that “must be ‘substantially’ beyond the ordinary hardship that would be expected when a close family member leaves this country.” However, the applicant need not show that hardship would be unconscionable. *Id.* at 61. The AAO notes that the exceptional and extremely unusual hardship standard in cancellation of removal cases is identical to the standard put forth by the Attorney General in *Matter of Jean, supra*, and codified at 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(d).

The Board stated that in assessing exceptional and extremely unusual hardship, it would be useful to view the factors considered in determining extreme hardship. *Id.* at 63. In *Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez*, 22 I&N Dec. 560, 565-66 (BIA 1999), the Board provided a list of factors it deemed relevant in determining whether an alien has established the lower standard of extreme hardship. The factors include the presence of a lawful permanent resident or United States citizen spouse or parent in this country; the qualifying relative’s family ties outside the United States; the conditions in the country or

countries to which the qualifying relative would relocate and the extent of the qualifying relative's ties in such countries; the financial impact of departure from this country; and significant conditions of health, particularly when tied to an unavailability of suitable medical care in the country to which the qualifying relative would relocate. The Board added that not all of the foregoing factors need be analyzed in any given case and emphasized that the list of factors was not an exclusive list. *Id.*

We note that in *Monreal*, the Board provided additional examples of the hardship factors it deemed relevant for establishing exceptional and extremely unusual hardship:

[T]he ages, health, and circumstances of qualifying lawful permanent resident and United States citizen relatives. For example, an applicant who has elderly parents in this country who are solely dependent upon him for support might well have a strong case. Another strong applicant might have a qualifying child with very serious health issues, or compelling special needs in school. A lower standard of living or adverse country conditions in the country of return are factors to consider only insofar as they may affect a qualifying relative, but generally will be insufficient in themselves to support a finding of exceptional and extremely unusual hardship. As with extreme hardship, all hardship factors should be considered in the aggregate when assessing exceptional and extremely unusual hardship.

23 I&N Dec. at 63-4.

In the precedent decision issued the following year, *Matter of Andazola-Rivas*, the Board noted that, "the relative level of hardship a person might suffer cannot be considered entirely in a vacuum. It must necessarily be assessed, at least in part, by comparing it to the hardship others might face." 23 I&N Dec. 319, 323 (BIA 2002). The issue presented in *Andazola-Rivas* was whether the Immigration Judge correctly applied the exceptional and extremely unusual hardship standard in a cancellation of removal case when he concluded that such hardship to the respondent's minor children was demonstrated by evidence that they "would suffer hardship of an emotional, academic and financial nature," and would "face complete upheaval in their lives and hardship that could conceivably ruin their lives." *Id.* at 321 (internal quotations omitted). The Board viewed the evidence of hardship in the respondent's case and determined that the hardship presented by the respondent did not rise to the level of exceptional and extremely unusual. The Board noted:

While almost every case will present some particular hardship, the fact pattern presented here is, in fact, a common one, and the hardships the respondent has outlined are simply not substantially different from those that would normally be expected upon removal to a less developed country. Although the hardships presented here might have been adequate to meet the former "extreme hardship" standard for suspension of deportation, we find that they are not the types of hardship envisioned by Congress when it enacted the significantly higher "exceptional and extremely unusual hardship" standard.

23 I&N Dec. at 324.

However, the Board in *Matter of Gonzalez Recinas*, a precedent decision issued the same year as

Andazola-Rivas, clarified that “the hardship standard is not so restrictive that only a handful of applicants, such as those who have a qualifying relative with a serious medical condition, will qualify for relief.” 23 I&N Dec. 467, 470 (BIA 2002). The Board found that the hardship factors presented by the respondent cumulatively amounted to exceptional and extremely unusual hardship to her qualifying relatives. The Board noted that these factors included her heavy financial and familial burden, lack of support from her children’s father, her U.S. citizen children’s unfamiliarity with the Spanish language, lawful residence of her immediate family, and the concomitant lack of family in Mexico. 23 I&N Dec. at 472. The Board stated, “We consider this case to be on the outer limit of the narrow spectrum of cases in which the exceptional and extremely unusual hardship standard will be met.” *Id.* at 470.

An analysis under *Monreal-Aguinaga* and *Andazola-Rivas* is appropriate. See *Gonzalez Recinas*, 23 I&N Dec. at 469 (“While any hardship case ultimately succeeds or fails on its own merits and on the particular facts presented, *Matter of Andazola* and *Matter of Monreal* are the starting points for any analysis of exceptional and extremely unusual hardship.”).

The evidence in this case includes birth certificates, tax records, a marriage certificate, medical records, a psychological assessment, financial records, and other documentation.

The applicant’s wife indicates in the letters dated August 2, 2009 and December 4, 2008 that she takes medication for chronic migraines and asthma. The applicant’s wife states that she has a healthy relationship with the applicant and depends on him to take care of her and their sons when she has migraines. She conveys that Jason, her youngest son, has lymphedema praecox, which causes his leg to swell and makes it susceptible to infection. The applicant’s wife describes in detail her childhood trauma of sexual abuse; the physical, sexual, and emotional abuse that she endured in first and second marriages; and finally, the emotional shock of being captured by guerillas in El Salvador and being forced to care for their wounded.

The record shows that the applicant married his U.S. citizen wife on August 28, 2004, and had legally adopted his stepsons. His oldest son, a lawful permanent resident, was born on February 17, 1995; his youngest son, born on September 25, 1992, and is a U.S. citizen. The record reflects that the applicant’s wife is a nurse. Medical records are consistent with the applicant’s wife claim of having chronic, serious migraine headaches, of being incapacitated one to five days every month, and of requiring medical treatment for her condition, which qualifies for benefits pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act. A medical record corroborates that the applicant’s son has lymphedema praecox, but it does not specify the severity of Jason’s disorder or the consequences of the disorder. The applicant submitted generic information about the disorder. A letter from the applicant’s oldest son corroborates the applicant’s close relationship with his adopted sons. Additionally, the psychological assessment interview is consistent with the applicant’s wife claim of depression and anxiety about the applicant’s possible deportation.

Nonetheless, the applicant has not described the hardships his wife would experience if she joined him to live in Mexico. Consequently, the applicant has not demonstrated that his wife would experience extreme hardship or exceptional and extremely unusual hardship.

In conclusion, we find that the applicant has not demonstrated that the hardships meet the “extreme” hardship or “exceptional and extremely unusual” hardship standard as required for a favorable exercise of discretion in 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(d).

In proceedings for application for waiver of grounds of inadmissibility under section 212(h) of the Act, the burden of proving eligibility rests with the applicant. *See* section 291 of the Act. Here, the applicant has not met that burden. Accordingly, the appeal will be dismissed and the waiver application will be denied.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.