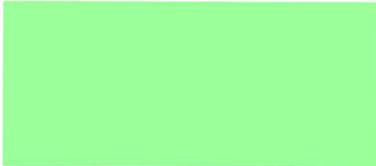




**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

(b)(6)



DATE: **MAR 07 2013** Office: **BANGKOK, THAILAND**

FILE: 

IN RE:

Applicant: 

APPLICATION:

Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility under section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(B)(v) and under section 212(h) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(h)

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:



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.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Rosenberg".

Ron Rosenberg
Acting Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The waiver application was denied by the Field Office Director, Bangkok, Thailand. The matter is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be sustained.

The applicant is a native and citizen Pakistan who was found to be inadmissible to the United States under section 212(a)(2)(A)(i)(I) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(2)(A)(i)(I), for having been convicted of a crime involving moral turpitude, and pursuant to section 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(II) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(B)(i)(II), for having been unlawfully present in the United States for one year or more and seeking readmission within 10 years of his last departure from the United States. The applicant's spouse is a lawful permanent resident. The applicant is applying for a waiver in order to reside in the United States.

The field office director determined that the applicant failed to establish extreme hardship to a qualifying relative, and denied the Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility (Form I-601) accordingly. *Decision of the Field Office Director*, dated August 11, 2011.

On appeal, counsel details the hardship that the applicant's spouse would experience if the waiver application is denied. *Form I-290B*, dated September 13, 2011.

The record includes, but is not limited to, counsel's brief, the applicant's spouse's statement, criminal records and country conditions information on Pakistan. The entire record was reviewed and considered in rendering a decision on the appeal.

Section 212(a)(9)(B) of the Act provides, in pertinent part:

(B) Aliens Unlawfully Present.-

- (i) In general.-Any alien (other than an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence) who-
 -
 - (II) has been unlawfully present in the United States for one year or more, and who again seeks admission within 10 years of the date of such alien's departure or removal from the United States, is inadmissible.
 -

- (v) Waiver.-The Attorney General [now the Secretary of Homeland Security, "Secretary"] has sole discretion to waive clause (i) in the case of an immigrant who is the spouse or son or daughter of a United States citizen or of an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, if it is established to the satisfaction of the [Secretary] that the refusal of admission to such immigrant alien would result in

extreme hardship to the citizen or lawfully resident spouse or parent of such alien.

The record reflects that the applicant entered the United States with a B-2 visitor's visa on October 19, 1995, his authorized period of stay expired on March 18, 1996; he was ordered removed on December 17, 2001; and he was removed from the United States on April 22, 2002. The applicant accrued unlawful presence from April 1, 1997, the effective date of unlawful presence provisions under the Act, until April 22, 2002, the date of his departure from the United States. The AAO finds that the applicant is no longer inadmissible to the United States under section 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(II) of the Act as he is seeking admission more than 10 years after his April 22, 2002 departure from the United States. He is no longer required to file a waiver under section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) of the Act.

Section 212(a)(2)(A) of the Act states, in pertinent parts:

- (i) [A]ny alien convicted of, or who admits having committed, or who admits committing acts which constitute the essential elements of –
 - (I) a crime involving moral turpitude (other than a purely political offense) or an attempt or conspiracy to commit such a crime . . . is inadmissible.

The Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) held in *Matter of Perez-Contreras*, 20 I&N Dec. 615, 617-18 (BIA 1992), that:

[M]oral turpitude is a nebulous concept, which refers generally to conduct that shocks the public conscience as being inherently base, vile, or depraved, contrary to the rules of morality and the duties owed between man and man, either one's fellow man or society in general....

In determining whether a crime involves moral turpitude, we consider whether the act is accompanied by a vicious motive or corrupt mind. Where knowing or intentional conduct is an element of an offense, we have found moral turpitude to be present. However, where the required mens rea may not be determined from the statute, moral turpitude does not inhere.

(Citations omitted.)

In *Matter of Silva-Trevino*, 24 I&N Dec. 687 (A.G. 2008), the Attorney General articulated a new methodology for determining whether a conviction is a crime involving moral turpitude where the language of the criminal statute in question encompasses conduct involving moral turpitude and conduct that does not. First, in evaluating whether an offense is one that categorically involves moral turpitude, an adjudicator reviews the criminal statute at issue to determine if there is a "realistic probability, not a theoretical possibility," that the statute would be applied to reach conduct that does not involve moral turpitude. *Id.* at 698 (citing *Gonzalez v. Duenas-Alvarez*, 549 U.S. 183,

193 (2007). A realistic probability exists where, at the time of the proceeding, an “actual (as opposed to hypothetical) case exists in which the relevant criminal statute was applied to conduct that did not involve moral turpitude. If the statute has not been so applied in any case (including the alien’s own case), the adjudicator can reasonably conclude that all convictions under the statute may categorically be treated as ones involving moral turpitude.” *Id.* at 697, 708 (citing *Duenas-Alvarez*, 549 U.S. at 193).

However, if a case exists in which the criminal statute in question was applied to conduct that does not involve moral turpitude, “the adjudicator cannot categorically treat all convictions under that statute as convictions for crimes that involve moral turpitude.” 24 I&N Dec. at 697 (citing *Duenas-Alvarez*, 549 U.S. at 185-88, 193). An adjudicator then engages in a second-stage inquiry in which the adjudicator reviews the “record of conviction” to determine if the conviction was based on conduct involving moral turpitude. *Id.* at 698-699, 703-704, 708. The record of conviction consists of documents such as the indictment, the judgment of conviction, jury instructions, a signed guilty plea, and the plea transcript. *Id.* at 698, 704, 708.

If review of the record of conviction is inconclusive, an adjudicator then considers any additional evidence deemed necessary or appropriate to resolve accurately the moral turpitude question. 24 I&N Dec. at 699-704, 708-709. However, this “does not mean that the parties would be free to present any and all evidence bearing on an alien’s conduct leading to the conviction. (citation omitted). The sole purpose of the inquiry is to ascertain the nature of the prior conviction; it is not an invitation to relitigate the conviction itself.” *Id.* at 703.

The record reflects that on December 5, 1997, the applicant was charged with theft of \$1,500 to less than \$20,000 under Texas Statutes section 31.03(e)(4)(A), a state jail felony; he was granted deferred adjudication of guilt for four years; his deferred adjudication was revoked on January 11, 2001; and he was convicted on January 11, 2001 and sentenced to 12 months confinement.¹ As the applicant has not contested his inadmissibility on appeal, and the record does not show that determination to be in error, we will not disturb the finding of inadmissibility under section 212(a)(2)(A) of the Act.

Section 212(h) of the Act provides, in pertinent part:

(h) The Attorney General [Secretary of Homeland Security] may, in his discretion, waive the application of subparagraph (A)(i)(I) . . . of subsection (a)(2) . . . if –

(1) (A) in the case of any immigrant it is established to the satisfaction of the Attorney General [Secretary] that –

¹ The applicant was convicted for a permit offense under Texas Tax Code 154.509 on July 12, 2000, for a permit offense under Texas Tax Code 155.207(5) on July 12, 2000, for a transportation of tobacco offense under Texas Tax Code 155.2109(1) on March 9, 2001, and for a book and records offense under Texas Tax Code 155.212(5) on March 9, 2001. The AAO notes that these are not crimes involving moral turpitude.

(b)(6)

- (i) . . . the activities for which the alien is inadmissible occurred more than 15 years before the date of the alien's application for a visa, admission, or adjustment of status,
- (ii) the admission to the United States of such alien would not be contrary to the national welfare, safety, or security of the United States, and
- (iii) the alien has been rehabilitated; or

(B) in the case of an immigrant who is the spouse, parent, son, or daughter of a citizen of the United States or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence if it is established to the satisfaction of the Attorney General [Secretary] that the alien's denial of admission would result in extreme hardship to the United States citizen or lawfully resident spouse, parent, son, or daughter of such alien . . .

In examining whether the applicant is eligible for a waiver, the AAO will assess whether he meets the requirements of section 212(h)(1)(A) of the Act. The record reflects that the activity resulting in the applicant's convictions occurred prior to December 5, 1997, the date he was charged. The AAO notes that an application for admission is considered a "continuing" application and "admissibility is determined on the basis of the facts and the law at the time the application is finally considered." *Matter of Alarcon*, 20 I.&N. Dec. 557, 562 (BIA 1992) (citations omitted). The date of the immigrant visa application is the date of the final decision, which in this case, must await the AAO's finding regarding the applicant's eligibility for a waiver of inadmissibility. As the activities for which the applicant is inadmissible occurred more than 15 years before the date of his immigrant visa application, he meets the requirement of section 212(h)(1)(A)(i) of the Act.

The record does not reflect that admitting the applicant would be contrary to the national welfare, safety, or security of the United States per section 212(h)(1)(A)(i) of the Act. The record reflects that the applicant was working in the United States at a food mart. His spouse is working as a dry cleaning manager. There is no indication that the applicant has ever relied on the government for financial assistance. The applicant has not had any criminal issues since his March 9, 2001 book and records offense. He has not had any issues related to theft since his December 5, 1997 charge. His parole was discharged in January 31, 2003. There is no indication that the applicant is involved with terrorist-related activities or poses other security issues.

The applicant has shown by a preponderance of the evidence that he has been rehabilitated per section 212(h)(1)(A)(iii) of the Act. As mentioned, the applicant has not had any criminal issues since his March 9, 2001 book and records offense. He has not had any issues related to theft since his December 5, 1997 charge. His parole was discharged in January 31, 2003. The record includes statements in support of his character. Accordingly, the applicant has shown that he meets the requirement of section 212(h)(1)(A)(iii) of the Act.

Based on the foregoing, the applicant has shown that he is eligible for consideration for a waiver under section 212(h)(1)(A) of the Act.

The granting of the waiver is discretionary in nature. The favorable factors include the applicant's lawful permanent resident spouse, hardship to his spouse, lack of a criminal record since 2001 and good character as detailed in supporting statements.

The unfavorable factors include the applicant's criminal convictions, unauthorized period of stay, removal and unauthorized employment.

Although the applicant's criminal and immigration history is serious and cannot be condoned, the AAO finds that the applicant has established that the favorable factors in his application outweigh the unfavorable factors.

In discretionary matters, the applicant bears the full burden of proving his eligibility for discretionary relief. See *Matter of Ducret*, 15 I&N Dec. 620 (BIA 1976). Here, the applicant has met that burden. Accordingly, the appeal will be sustained.

The AAO notes that the applicant is no longer required to file Form I-212 Application for Permission to Reapply for Admission into the United States After Deportation or Removal (Form I-212), as he has remained outside of the United States for 10 years.

ORDER: The appeal is sustained. The application is approved.