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



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Date: **NOV 25 2011**

Office CHICAGO

FILE:

IN RE: Applicant:

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

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.

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,

*Maria Feh*

for  
Perry Rhew  
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

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

The record establishes that the applicant is a native and citizen of Poland who procured entry to the United States in December 1999 by presenting a fraudulent passport. *See Record of Sworn Statement*, dated October 17, 2006. The applicant was thus found to be inadmissible to the United States under section 212(a)(6)(C)(i) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(6)(C)(i), for having procured entry to the United States by fraud or willful misrepresentation. The applicant does not contest the field office director's finding of inadmissibility. Rather, she seeks a waiver of inadmissibility pursuant to section 212(i) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(i), in order to reside in the United States with her U.S. citizen spouse.

The field office director concluded that the applicant had failed to establish that extreme hardship would be imposed on a qualifying relative and denied the Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility (Form I-601) accordingly. *Decision of the Field Office Director*, dated May 7, 2009.

In support of the appeal, counsel submits the following: a brief; a duplicate copy of the applicant's initial Form I-601 submission; a psychological evaluation; documentation pertaining to the applicant's eldest child's schooling; and evidence establishing the applicant's spouse's employment. The entire record was reviewed and considered in rendering this decision.

Section 212(a)(6)(C) of the Act provides, in pertinent part:

- (i) Any alien who, by fraud or willfully misrepresenting a material fact, seeks to procure (or has sought to procure or has procured) a visa, other documentation, or admission into the United States or other benefit provided under this Act is inadmissible.

Section 212(i) of the Act provides:

- (1) The Attorney General [now the Secretary of Homeland Security (Secretary)] may, in the discretion of the Attorney General (Secretary), waive the application of clause (i) of subsection (a)(6)(C) in the case of an immigrant who is the spouse, 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 Attorney General (Secretary) that the refusal of admission to the United States of such immigrant alien would result in extreme hardship to the citizen or lawfully resident spouse or parent of such an alien...

A waiver of inadmissibility under section 212(i) of the Act is dependent on a showing that the bar to admission imposes extreme hardship on a qualifying relative, which includes the U.S. citizen or lawfully resident spouse or parent of the applicant. The applicant's U.S. citizen spouse is the only

qualifying relative in this case. Hardship to the applicant, the children or the applicant's spouse's mother can be considered only insofar as it results in hardship to a qualifying relative. If extreme hardship to a qualifying relative is established, the applicant is statutorily eligible for a waiver, and USCIS then assesses whether a favorable exercise of discretion is warranted. *See Matter of Mendez-Morales*, 21 I&N Dec. 296, 301 (BIA 1996).

Extreme hardship is "not a definable term of fixed and inflexible content or meaning," but "necessarily depends upon the facts and circumstances peculiar to each case." *Matter of Hwang*, 10 I&N Dec. 448, 451 (BIA 1964). In *Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez*, the Board provided a list of factors it deemed relevant in determining whether an alien has established extreme hardship to a qualifying relative. 22 I&N Dec. 560, 565 (BIA 1999). 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. *Id.* 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 exclusive. *Id.* at 566.

The Board has also held that the common or typical results of removal and inadmissibility do not constitute extreme hardship, and has listed certain individual hardship factors considered common rather than extreme. These factors include: economic disadvantage, loss of current employment, inability to maintain one's present standard of living, inability to pursue a chosen profession, separation from family members, severing community ties, cultural readjustment after living in the United States for many years, cultural adjustment of qualifying relatives who have never lived outside the United States, inferior economic and educational opportunities in the foreign country, or inferior medical facilities in the foreign country. *See generally Matter of Cervantes-Gonzalez*, 22 I&N Dec. at 568; *Matter of Pilch*, 21 I&N Dec. 627, 632-33 (BIA 1996); *Matter of Ige*, 20 I&N Dec. 880, 883 (BIA 1994); *Matter of Ngai*, 19 I&N Dec. 245, 246-47 (Comm'r 1984); *Matter of Kim*, 15 I&N Dec. 88, 89-90 (BIA 1974); *Matter of Shaughnessy*, 12 I&N Dec. 810, 813 (BIA 1968).

However, though hardships may not be extreme when considered abstractly or individually, the Board has made it clear that "[r]elevant factors, though not extreme in themselves, must be considered in the aggregate in determining whether extreme hardship exists." *Matter of O-J-O-*, 21 I&N Dec. 381, 383 (BIA 1996) (quoting *Matter of Ige*, 20 I&N Dec. at 882). The adjudicator "must consider the entire range of factors concerning hardship in their totality and determine whether the combination of hardships takes the case beyond those hardships ordinarily associated with deportation." *Id.*

The actual hardship associated with an abstract hardship factor such as family separation, economic disadvantage, cultural readjustment, et cetera, differs in nature and severity depending on the unique circumstances of each case, as does the cumulative hardship a qualifying relative experiences as a result of aggregated individual hardships. *See, e.g., Matter of Bing Chih Kao and Mei Tsui Lin*, 23

I&N Dec. 45, 51 (BIA 2001) (distinguishing *Matter of Pilch* regarding hardship faced by qualifying relatives on the basis of variations in the length of residence in the United States and the ability to speak the language of the country to which they would relocate). For example, though family separation has been found to be a common result of inadmissibility or removal, separation from family living in the United States can also be the most important single hardship factor in considering hardship in the aggregate. See *Salcido-Salcido*, 138 F.3d at 1293 (quoting *Contreras-Buenfil v. INS*, 712 F.2d 401, 403 (9th Cir. 1983)); but see *Matter of Ngai*, 19 I&N Dec. at 247 (separation of spouse and children from applicant not extreme hardship due to conflicting evidence in the record and because applicant and spouse had been voluntarily separated from one another for 28 years). Therefore, we consider the totality of the circumstances in determining whether denial of admission would result in extreme hardship to a qualifying relative.

The applicant's U.S. citizen spouse contends that he will suffer emotional and financial hardship were he to remain in the United States while the applicant resides abroad due to her inadmissibility. In a declaration, the applicant's spouse explains that he is very close to his wife and can not imagine being separated from her on a long-term basis. In addition, the applicant's spouse explains that the children are extremely attached to their mother and long-term separation from her would cause them, and by extension him, extreme hardship. Finally, the applicant's spouse explains that he works full-time and makes just enough money to provide for his family. He states that were his wife to relocate abroad, she would not be able to obtain gainful employment in Poland due to her long absence from the country and the high unemployment rate. Consequently, the applicant's spouse states that supporting two households would cause him financial hardship. *Affidavit of* [REDACTED] dated December 30, 2006. In support, a psychiatric report has been provided from [REDACTED] concluding that the applicant should be granted permission to stay in the United States in order to ease her spouse's severe apprehension, distress and anguish. *Statement from* [REDACTED] dated June 3, 2009.

With respect to the emotional hardship referenced, although the input of any mental health professional is respected and valuable, the AAO notes that the submitted letter is based on a single interview between the applicant's spouse and the psychiatrist. The record fails to reflect an ongoing relationship between a mental health professional and the applicant's spouse or a proposed treatment plan for the depressive episode diagnosed by [REDACTED]. In addition, no supporting evidence has been provided establishing the hardships the applicant's spouse contends the children would experience due to long-term separation from the applicant.

Regarding the financial hardship referenced, counsel has not provided documentation on appeal establishing the applicant's and his spouse's current income and expenses and any assets and liabilities to support the assertion that the applicant's spouse will suffer financial hardship were his spouse to relocate abroad due to her inadmissibility. The AAO notes that copies of select bills paid by the applicant and his spouse, without context regarding the family's financial situation as a whole, do not establish financial hardship. Nor has it been established that the applicant is unable to obtain gainful employment in Poland, thereby ameliorating the hardships referenced by the applicant's spouse with respect to having to maintain two households. Going on record without

supporting documentary evidence is not sufficient for purposes of meeting the burden of proof in these proceedings. *Matter of Soffici*, 22 I&N Dec. 158, 165 (Comm. 1998) (citing *Matter of Treasure Craft of California*, 14 I&N Dec. 190 (Reg. Comm. 1972)).

The AAO recognizes that the applicant's U.S. citizen spouse will endure hardship as a result of long-term separation from the applicant. However, his situation, if he remains in the United States, is typical to individuals separated as a result of removal and does not rise to the level of extreme hardship based on the record.

With respect to relocating abroad to reside with the applicant due to her inadmissibility, the applicant's spouse asserts that he has strong family ties in the United States, including his mother, who suffers from Type 2 Diabetes, and two siblings, and long-term separation from them would cause him hardship. He explains that he spends a lot of time with his mother and sisters as they reside in the Chicago area. In addition, the applicant's husband contends that he has a good job in the United States and due to his unfamiliarity with the language, culture and customs of Poland, he would not be able to find gainful employment. *Supra* at 2-3. In support, evidence of the applicant's spouse's gainful employment with [REDACTED] since 1996 has been submitted. In addition, documentation has been provided establishing that the applicant's spouse makes over \$50,000 per year. *See Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement for 2005 for [REDACTED]* Moreover, evidence that the applicant's mother suffers from Type 2 Diabetes has been submitted.

The AAO notes that counsel has failed to provide any documentation from the applicant's spouse's mother's treating physician outlining the nature and severity of her current medical condition, the treatment plan, and what specific hardships she might experience were the applicant's spouse specifically to relocate abroad. Nevertheless, the record establishes that the applicant's children, who are seven and nine years old, are natives and citizens of the United States and are integrated into the United States lifestyle and educational system. The Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) found that a fifteen-year-old child who lived her entire life in the United States, who was completely integrated into the American lifestyle, and who was not fluent in Chinese, would suffer extreme hardship if she relocated to Taiwan. *Matter of Kao and Lin*, 23 I&N Dec. 45 (BIA 2001). The AAO finds *Matter of Kao and Lin* to be persuasive in this case due to the similar fact pattern. To uproot the applicant's children at this stage of their education and social development and relocate them to Poland would constitute extreme hardship to them, and by extension, to the applicant's spouse, the only qualifying relative in this case. In addition, the record reflects that the applicant's U.S. citizen spouse, who was born and raised in the United States, would be relocating to a country with which he is not familiar. He does not speak the language and is unfamiliar with the country, culture and customs. He would have to leave his community, his mother and siblings, and his gainful employment. It has thus been established that the applicant's spouse would suffer extreme hardship were he to relocate abroad to reside with the applicant due to her inadmissibility.

Although the applicant has demonstrated that the qualifying relative would experience extreme hardship if he relocated abroad to reside with the applicant, we can find extreme hardship warranting a waiver of inadmissibility only where an applicant has shown extreme hardship to a qualifying

relative in the scenario of relocation *and* the scenario of separation. The AAO has long interpreted the waiver provisions of the Act to require a showing of extreme hardship in both possible scenarios, as a claim that a qualifying relative will relocate and thereby suffer extreme hardship can easily be made for purposes of the waiver even where there is no actual intention to relocate. *Cf. Matter of Ige*, 20 I&N Dec. 880, 886 (BIA 1994). Furthermore, to relocate and suffer extreme hardship, where remaining in the United States and being separated from the applicant would not result in extreme hardship, is a matter of choice and not the result of inadmissibility. *Id.*, also *cf. Matter of Pilch*, 21 I&N Dec. 627, 632-33 (BIA 1996). As the applicant has not demonstrated extreme hardship from separation, we cannot find that refusal of admission would result in extreme hardship to the qualifying relative in this case.

The record, reviewed in its entirety, does not support a finding that the applicant's spouse will face extreme hardship if the applicant is unable to reside in the United States. Rather, the record demonstrates that he will face no greater hardship than the unfortunate, but expected, disruptions, inconveniences, and difficulties arising whenever a spouse is removed from the United States or is refused admission. There is no documentation establishing that the applicant's spouse's hardships are any different from other families separated as a result of immigration violations. Although the AAO is not insensitive to the applicant's spouse's situation, the record does not establish that the hardships he would face rise to the level of "extreme" as contemplated by statute and case law. Having found the applicant statutorily ineligible for relief, no purpose would be served in discussing whether the applicant merits a waiver as a matter of discretion.

In proceedings for application for waiver of grounds of inadmissibility, the burden of proving eligibility remains entirely with the applicant. Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361. Here, the applicant has not met that burden. Accordingly, the appeal will be dismissed.

**ORDER:** The appeal is dismissed. The application is denied.