



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

(b)(6)

DATE: APR 18 2013 OFFICE: NEBRASKA SERVICE CENTER FILE: [REDACTED]

IN RE: Applicant: [REDACTED]

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)

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT:

[REDACTED]

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 AAO inappropriately applied the law in reaching its decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen in accordance with the instructions on Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$630. The specific requirements for filing such a motion can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. **Do not file any motion directly with the AAO.** Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires any motion to be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

Ron Rosenberg
Acting Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The waiver application 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 record reflects that the applicant is a native and citizen of Honduras who was found to be inadmissible to the United States pursuant to section 212(a)(9)(B)(i)(II) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(B)(i)(II), for having been unlawfully present in the United States for more than one year and seeking readmission within ten years of her last departure from the United States; and section 212(a)(9)(A)(ii)(I) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(A)(ii)(I), for being ordered removed from the United States. The record indicates that the applicant is married to a U.S. citizen and the mother of two U.S. citizen children and a lawful permanent resident child. The applicant seeks a waiver of inadmissibility pursuant to section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(B)(v), in order to reside in the United States with her spouse and children.

When considering the applicant's request for waiver of this ground of inadmissibility, the Director determined that the applicant was also inadmissible to the United States pursuant to section 212(a)(6)(B) of the Act for failing to attend removal proceedings, and that no waiver was available for that ground of inadmissibility. *Decision of the Director*, dated August 31, 2012. The Application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissibility (Form I-601) was accordingly denied.

On appeal, the applicant, through counsel, asserts that the Director erred in denying the applicant's waiver application because no determination was made regarding her spouse's hardship and whether she had demonstrated reasonable cause for failing to attend removal proceedings. *Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion*, filed September 27, 2012. Counsel requests 30 days in order to submit a brief or additional evidence. As of the date of this decision, no additional statements or evidence have been submitted; therefore, the record is considered complete, and the AAO shall render a decision based upon the evidence now before it.

Section 212(a)(6)(B) of the Act states:

Failure to attend removal proceeding.-Any alien who without reasonable cause fails or refuses to attend or remain in attendance at a proceeding to determine the alien's inadmissibility or deportability and who seeks admission to the United States within 5 years of such alien's subsequent departure or removal is inadmissible.

The record reflects that on August 28, 2005, the applicant entered the United States without inspection. She was apprehended on the same day and released on her own recognizance after being served a Form I-862, Notice to Appear (NTA), before an immigration judge. The applicant provided the address listed on her NTA. When she did not appear on January 4, 2006, an immigration judge ordered the applicant removed *in absentia* from the United States. On April 26, 2012, the applicant departed the United States. The applicant has not contested these facts. Rather, the applicant has argued that she had "reasonable cause" for failing to attend her removal proceeding, and that she is not inadmissible under section 212(a)(6)(B) of the Act as a consequence.

Counsel asserts that the applicant has demonstrated reasonable cause for her failure to attend removal proceedings. However, the instant appeal relates to a Form I-601 application for a waiver of inadmissibility arising under sections 212(g), (h), (i) or (a)(9)(B)(v) of the Act. Inadmissibility under section 212(a)(6)(B) of the Act and the “reasonable cause” exception thereto, is not the subject of the Form I-601 and is not within the subject matter jurisdiction of the AAO to adjudicate with this appeal.

The AAO’s appellate authority in this case is limited to those matters that are within the scope of the Form I-601 waiver application. The authority to adjudicate appeals is delegated to the AAO by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) pursuant to the authority vested in her through the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Pub. L. 107-296. See DHS Delegation Number 0150.1 (effective March 1, 2003); see also 8 C.F.R. § 2.1 (2003). The AAO exercises appellate jurisdiction over the matters described at 8 C.F.R. § 103.1(f)(3)(iii) (as in effect on February 28, 2003).¹ The AAO cannot exercise appellate jurisdiction over additional matters on its own volition, or at the request of an applicant or petitioner. As a “statement of general . . . applicability and future effect designed to implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy,” the creation of appeal rights for adjustment application denials meets the definition of an agency “rule” under section 551 of the Administrative Procedure Act. The granting of appeal rights has a “substantive legal effect” because it is creating a new administrative “right,” and it involves an economic interest (the fee). “If a rule creates rights, assigns duties, or imposes obligations, the basic tenor of which is not already outlined in the law itself, then it is substantive.” *La Casa Del Convaleciente v. Sullivan*, 965 F.2d 1175, 1178 (1st Cir. 1992). All substantive or legislative rule making requires notice and comment in the Federal Register.

Under 8 C.F.R. § 103.1(f)(3)(iii)(F) (as in effect on February 28, 2003), the AAO has authority to adjudicate “[a]pplications for waiver of certain grounds of excludability [now inadmissibility] under § 212.7(a) of this chapter.” 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(a)(1) currently provides that an alien who is inadmissible and eligible for a waiver may apply for a waiver on a form designated by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in accordance with the form instructions. A waiver, if granted, applies to those grounds of inadmissibility and “to those crimes, events or incidents specified in the application for waiver.” 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(a). The form instructions for the Form I-601,² to which 8 C.F.R. § 212.7(a) refers, further defines the classes of aliens who may file a Form I-601, and the form itself provides a list of each ground of inadmissibility that can be waived, allowing the applicant to check a box next to those grounds for which the applicant seeks a waiver. As there is no statutory basis to waive inadmissibility under section 212(a)(6)(B) of the Act, neither the Form I-601 nor the instructions for Form I-601 list this ground of inadmissibility.

The object of the Form I-601 waiver application, in the context of an application for an immigrant visa filed

¹ Although 8 C.F.R. § 103(f)(3)(iii), as in effect on February 28, 2003, was subsequently omitted from the Code of Federal Regulations, courts have recognized that DHS continues to delegate appellate authority to the AAO consistent with that regulation. See *U.S. v. Gonzalez & Gonzalez Bonds and Insurance Agency, Inc.*, 728 F.Supp.2d 1077, 1082- 1083 (N.D. Cal. 2010); see also *Rahman v. Napolitano*, 814 F.Supp.2d 1098, 1103 (W.D. Washington 2011).

² <http://www.uscis.gov/files/form/i-601instr.pdf>

at a consulate or embassy abroad, is to remove inadmissibility as a basis of ineligibility for that visa. An alien is not required to file a separate waiver application for each ground of inadmissibility, but rather one application that, if approved, extends to all inadmissibilities specified in the application. However, where an alien is subject to an inadmissibility that cannot be waived, approval of the waiver application would not have the intended effect. Thus, no purpose is served in adjudicating such a waiver application, and USCIS may deny it for that reason as a matter of discretion. *Cf. Matter of J- F- D-*, 10 I&N Dec. 694 (Reg. Comm. 1963).

Counsel addresses the decision of the Field Office Director and asserts that the applicant has shown a reasonable cause for her failure to attend her removal proceeding. As the AAO lacks jurisdiction to review the "reasonable cause" issue, we will not evaluate the facts as presented and find that no purpose is served in adjudicating the applicant's application for a waiver of inadmissibility pursuant to section 212(a)(9)(B)(v) of the Act.

Section 291 of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1361, provides that the burden of proof is on the applicant to establish eligibility for the benefit sought. The applicant has failed to overcome the basis of denial of her Form I-601 waiver application.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.