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



U.S. Citizenship
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FILE: [REDACTED]
MSC 06 067 12600

Office: NEW YORK

Date: JUN 02 2009

IN RE: Applicant: [REDACTED]

PETITION: Application for Status as a Temporary Resident pursuant to Section 245A of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a

ON BEHALF OF APPLICANT: 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. If your appeal was sustained, or if the matter was remanded for further action, you will be contacted. If your appeal was dismissed, you no longer have a case pending before this office, and you are not entitled to file a motion to reopen or reconsider your case.

John F. Grissom
Acting Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application for temporary resident status pursuant to the terms of the settlement agreements reached in *Catholic Social Services, Inc., et al., v. Ridge, et al.*, CIV. NO. S-86-1343-LKK (E.D. Cal) January 23, 2004, and *Felicity Mary Newman, et al., v. United States Immigration and Citizenship Services, et al.*, CIV. NO. 87-4757-WDK (C.D. Cal) February 17, 2004, (CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements) was denied by the Director, New York, New York, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant submitted a Form I-687, Application for Status as a Temporary Resident under Section 245A of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Act), and a Form I-687 Supplement, CSS/Newman Class Membership Worksheet. The director determined that the applicant had not established by a preponderance of the evidence that she had continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status for the duration of the requisite period. The director denied the application, finding that the applicant had not met her burden of proof and was, therefore, not eligible to adjust to temporary resident status pursuant to the terms of the CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements.

On appeal, the applicant provides the telephone numbers for the affiants who previously provided affidavits, along with a letter from her physician, a report card for the eighth grade from Bethany Christian Grade School in Brooklyn, New York, and a copy of her Form I-94 reflecting a August 8, 1988, entry into the United States.

An applicant for temporary resident status must establish entry into the United States before January 1, 1982, and continuous residence in the United States in an unlawful status since such date and through the date the application is filed. Section 245A(a)(2) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a(a)(2).

The applicant must also establish that he or she has been continuously physically present in the United States since November 6, 1986. Section 245A(a)(3) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a(a)(3). The regulations clarify that the applicant must have been physically present in the United States from November 6, 1986 until the date of filing the application. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(b)(1).

For purposes of establishing residence and presence in accordance with the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(b), "until the date of filing" shall mean until the date the alien attempted to file a completed Form I-687 application and fee or was caused not to timely file, consistent with the class member definitions set forth in the CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements. Paragraph 11, page 6 of the CSS Settlement Agreement and paragraph 11, page 10 of the Newman Settlement Agreement.

An alien applying for adjustment of status has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she has resided in the United States for the requisite periods, is admissible to the United States under the provisions of section 245A of the Act, and is otherwise eligible for adjustment of status. The inference to be drawn from the documentation provided shall depend on the extent of the documentation, its credibility and amenability to verification. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5).

Although the regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3) provides an illustrative list of contemporaneous documents that an applicant may submit in support of his or her claim of continuous residence in the United States in an unlawful status since prior to January 1, 1982, the submission of any other relevant document including affidavits is permitted pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(vi)(L).

The “preponderance of the evidence” standard requires that the evidence demonstrate that the applicant's claim is “probably true,” where the determination of “truth” is made based on the factual circumstances of each individual case. *Matter of E-M-*, 20 I&N Dec. 77, 79-80 (Comm. 1989). In evaluating the evidence, *Matter of E-M-* also stated that “[t]ruth is to be determined not by the quantity of evidence alone but by its quality.” *Id.* Thus, in adjudicating the application pursuant to the preponderance of the evidence standard, the director must examine each piece of evidence for relevance, probative value, and credibility, both individually and within the context of the totality of the evidence, to determine whether the fact to be proven is probably true.

Even if the director has some doubt as to the truth, if the petitioner submits relevant, probative, and credible evidence that leads the director to believe that the claim is “probably true” or “more likely than not,” the applicant or petitioner has satisfied the standard of proof. *See U.S. v. Cardozo-Fonseca*, 480 U.S. 421 (1987) (defining “more likely than not” as a greater than 50 percent probability of something occurring). If the director can articulate a material doubt, it is appropriate for the director to either request additional evidence or, if that doubt leads the director to believe that the claim is probably not true, deny the application or petition.

At issue in this proceeding is whether the applicant has submitted sufficient credible evidence to meet his or her burden of establishing continuous unlawful residence in the United States during the requisite period. Here, the applicant has failed to meet this burden.

At the time the applicant filed her Form I-687 application, she provided no documentation to establish continuous residence and physical presence in the United States during the requisite period. In response to a Notice of Intent to Deny dated January 11, 2006, the applicant, in an attempt to establish continuous unlawful residence in this country since prior to January 1, 1982, submitted:

- An affidavit from [REDACTED] who attested to the applicant’s moral character.
- Affidavits from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] who indicated that they have known the applicant since 1980. [REDACTED] asserted that she and the applicant were initially academic colleagues and then coworkers. [REDACTED] indicated that she babysat the applicant and other family members of the applicant.
- An affidavit from [REDACTED] who indicated that she has known the applicant for several years and attested to the applicant’s moral character.

The director determined that the applicant had failed to submit sufficient credible evidence establishing her continuous residence in this country since prior to January 1, 1982, and, therefore, denied the application on February 8, 2007.

On appeal, the applicant submits an affidavit from an aunt, [REDACTED] who indicated that the applicant "came to this country many years ago. I help to support her financially, etc."

The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has determined that affidavits from third party individuals may be considered as evidence of continuous residence. *See Matter of E-- M--*, *supra*. In ascertaining the evidentiary weight of such affidavits, USCIS must determine the basis for the affiant's knowledge of the information to which she is attesting; and whether the statement is plausible, credible, and consistent both internally and with the other evidence of record. *Id.*

Following the dicta set forth in *Matter of E-- M--*, *supra*, the affidavits should be analyzed to determine if the affidavits upon which the claim relies are consistent both internally and with the other evidence of record, plausible, credible, and if the affiant sets forth the basis of his knowledge for the testimony provided. However, the AAO does not view the documents discussed above as substantive enough to support a finding that the applicant entered the United States prior to January 1, 1982, and resided since that date through the date she attempted to file her application.

On appeal, the applicant submits a letter from [REDACTED], a medical doctor in Brooklyn, New York, who indicated that the applicant has been her patient since the early 1980's. However, neither appointment notices nor receipts, which would add credibility to the affiant's claim, were provided by the applicant.

The report card Bethany Christian Grade School has no probative value or evidentiary weight as it is for the school year of (September) 1988 to (June) 1989. It is unclear why the applicant would submit a report card subsequent to the period in question and not for the years that would establish her continuous residence during the requisite period of prior to January 1, 1982 through the date she attempted to file her application

The applicant claims to have been residing in the United States since July 1981. The applicant, whose birthday is November 26, 1973, would have been seven years of age at the time of her alleged entry. As she was a minor, it is conceivable that the applicant would have been residing with an adult during the period in question. The applicant's failure to provide the name of the individual with whom she resided with during the requisite period along with an attestation from said individual raises serious questions about the credibility of her claim and the authenticity of the affidavits submitted. Likewise, as the applicant was a minor, it is conceivable that the affiants, in their respective affidavits, would have mentioned whom the applicant was residing with.

The evidence must be evaluated not by the quantity of evidence alone but by its quality. While the affiants attested to knowing the applicant since the 1980's, none of the affiants actually attested to the applicant residing in the United States during the requisite period. In addition, the affiants provided no detailed accounts of an ongoing association establishing a relationship under which the affiants could be reasonably expected to have personal knowledge of the applicant's residence, activities and whereabouts during the requisite period. To be considered probative, an affiant's affidavit must do more than simply state that an affiant knows an applicant. The affidavit must contain sufficient detail, generated by the asserted contact with the applicant, to establish that a relationship does in fact exist, how the relationship was established and sustained, and that the affiant does, by virtue of that relationship, have knowledge of the facts asserted. The affidavits provided by the affiants do not provide sufficient detail to establish that the witness had an ongoing relationship with the applicant for the duration of the requisite period that would permit the applicant to know of the applicant's whereabouts and activities throughout the requisite period.

The absence of sufficiently detailed documentation to corroborate the applicant's claim of continuous residence for the entire requisite period seriously detracts from the credibility of her claim. Pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3), the inference to be drawn from the documentation provided shall depend on the extent of the documentation, its credibility and amenability to verification. Given the applicant's reliance upon documents with minimal probative value, it is concluded that the evidence submitted fails to establish continuous residence in an unlawful status in the United States during the requisite period. The applicant is, therefore, ineligible for temporary resident status under section 245A of the Act on this basis.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed. This decision constitutes a final notice of ineligibility.