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U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
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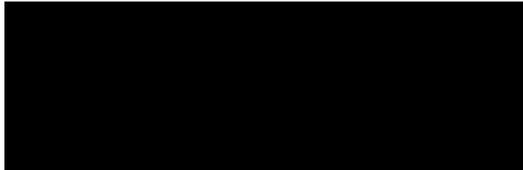
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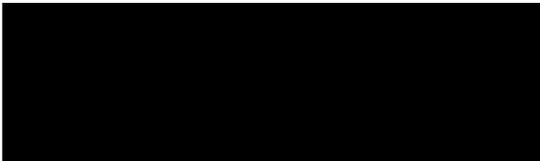
MAY 04 2010

IN RE: Applicant:



APPLICATION: 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:



INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. If your appeal was dismissed or rejected, all documents have been returned to the National Benefits Center. 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. If your appeal was sustained or remanded for further action, you will be contacted.

Elizabeth McCormack

Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application for temporary resident status was denied by the director of the Chicago office, 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 (LULAC) Class Membership Worksheet. The director denied the application, finding that the applicant was ineligible for adjustment to temporary resident status because he had not established by a preponderance of the evidence that he had continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status for the duration of the requisite time period.

On appeal, counsel for the applicant asserts that the evidence which the applicant previously submitted establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that he continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status for the duration of the requisite time period. Counsel asserts that a brief and additional evidence will be submitted after the FOIA request is received. The record reflects that the FOIA request, NRC2008050072, was processed on August 5, 2009. No brief or additional evidence has been submitted. The AAO has considered the applicant's assertions, reviewed all of the evidence, and has made a *de novo* decision based on the record and the AAO's assessment of the credibility, relevance and probative value of the evidence.¹

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).

For purposes of establishing residence and physical presence under the CSS/Newman Settlement Agreements, the term "until the date of filing" in 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(b)(1) means until the date the applicant attempted to file a completed Form I-687 application and fee or was caused not to timely file during the original legalization application period of May 5, 1987 to May 4, 1988. CSS Settlement Agreement, paragraph 11 at page 6; Newman Settlement Agreement, paragraph 11 at page 10.

The applicant 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

¹ The AAO maintains plenary power to review each appeal on a *de novo* basis. 5 U.S.C. § 557(b) ("On appeal from or review of the initial decision, the agency has all the powers which it would have in making the initial decision except as it may limit the issues on notice or by rule."); *see also*, *Janka v. U.S. Dept. of Transp.*, *NTSB*, 925 F.2d 1147, 1149 (9th Cir. 1991). The AAO's *de novo* authority has long been recognized by the federal courts. *See, e.g. Dor v. INS*, 891 F.2d 997, 1002 n.9 (2d Cir. 1989).

inference to be drawn from the documentation provided shall depend on the extent of the documentation, its credibility and amenability to verification. 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 is permitted pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(vi)(L). To meet his or her burden of proof, an applicant must provide evidence of eligibility apart from the applicant's own testimony, and the sufficiency of all evidence produced by the applicant will be judged according to its probative value and credibility. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(6).

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. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(6). The weight to be given any affidavit depends on the totality of the circumstances, and a number of factors must be considered. More weight will be given to an affidavit in which the affiant indicates personal knowledge of the applicant's whereabouts during the time period in question rather than a fill-in-the-blank affidavit that provides generic information. The regulations provide specific guidance on the sufficiency of documentation when proving residence through evidence of past employment or attestations by churches or other organizations. 8 C.F.R. §§ 245a.2(d)(3)(i) and (v).

Even if the director has some doubt as to the truth, if the applicant 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. Doubt cast on any aspect of the applicant's proof may lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the remaining evidence offered in support of the application. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I & N Dec. 582, 591-592 (BIA).

The issue in this proceeding is whether the applicant has establish that he (1) entered the United States before January 1, 1982 and (2) has continuously resided in the United States in an unlawful status for the requisite period of time. The documentation that the applicant submits in support of his claim to have arrived in the United States before January 1982 and lived in an unlawful status during the requisite period consists of witness statements and documents. The AAO has

reviewed each document in its entirety to determine the applicant's eligibility. Some of the evidence submitted indicates that the applicant resided in the United States after May 4, 1988; however, because evidence of residence after May 4, 1988 is not probative of residence during the requisite time period, it shall not be discussed.

The applicant has submitted statements from the following witnesses: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The statements are general in nature and state that the witnesses have knowledge of the applicant's residence in the United States for all, or a portion of, the requisite period.

Although the witnesses claim to have personal knowledge of the applicant's residence in the United States during the requisite period, the witness statements do not provide concrete information, specific to the applicant and generated by the asserted associations with him, which would reflect and corroborate the extent of those associations, and demonstrate that they were a sufficient basis for reliable knowledge about the applicant's residence in the United States during the requisite period. To be considered probative and credible, witness statements must do more than simply state that a witness knows an applicant and that the applicant has lived in the United States for a specific time period. Their content must include sufficient detail from a claimed relationship to indicate that it probably did exist and that the witness, by virtue of that relationship, does have knowledge of the facts alleged. For instance, the witnesses do not state how they date their initial meeting with the applicant in the United States or specify social gatherings, other special occasions or social events when they saw and communicated with the applicant during the requisite period. The witnesses also do not state how frequently they had contact with the applicant during the requisite period. The witnesses do not provide sufficient details that would lend credence to their claimed knowledge of the applicant's residence in the United States during the requisite period. For these reasons the AAO finds that the witness statements do not indicate that their assertions are probably true.

In addition, the two witness statements of [REDACTED] are inconsistent with the testimony of the applicant. The witness states that the applicant resided with him on [REDACTED] in Palos Heights, Illinois until approximately 1986. However, in the I-687 application the applicant states that he resided at that location until May 1988. In addition, the witness statements of [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] contain inconsistencies. The two witness statements of [REDACTED] state that he has known the applicant since approximately 1982 and mid 1981, respectively. The two witness statements of [REDACTED] contain the same inconsistency. These inconsistencies are material to the applicant's claim in that they have a direct bearing on the applicant's residence in the United States for the duration of the requisite period. As stated above, doubt cast on any aspect of the applicant's proof may lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the remaining evidence offered in support of the application. *Matter of Ho, supra*. These contradictions undermine the credibility of the applicant's claim of entry into the United States prior to January 1, 1982 and continuous residence in the United States during the requisite period.

The applicant has submitted an employment verification letter from [REDACTED] of [REDACTED] in Chicago. The witness states that the applicant worked for the company as a warehouse clerk from June 1983 to December 1986.

The employment verification letter of [REDACTED] does not meet the requirements set forth in the regulations, which provide specific guidance on the sufficiency of documentation when proving residence through evidence of past employment. The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(i) provides that letters from employers must include: (A) Alien's address at the time of employment; (B) Exact period of employment; (C) Periods of layoff; (D) Duties with the company; (E) Whether or not the information was taken from official company records; and (F) Where records are located and whether the Service may have access to the records. If the records are unavailable, an affidavit-form letter stating that the alien's employment records are unavailable and why such records are unavailable may be accepted in lieu of subsections (E) and (F). The witness's employment verification letter fails to comply with the above cited regulation because it lacks considerable detail regarding the applicant's employment. For instance, the witness does not state the applicant's daily duties as a warehouse clerk, the number of hours or days he was employed, or the location at which he was employed. Furthermore, the witness does not state how he was able to date the applicant's employment. It is unclear whether he referred to his own recollection or any records he may have maintained. For these reasons, the witness's employment verification letter is of little probative value.

The record contains a stamped envelope addressed to the applicant on [REDACTED] in Palos Heights, Illinois, with a postmark date of November 20, 1981. The envelope is some evidence in support of the applicant's presence in the United States on November 20, 1981.

The applicant has submitted a copy of page 12 of Pakistani passport number [REDACTED] which contains a multiple-entry, F-1 nonimmigrant student visa, obtained in Karachi on April 8, 1985 and valid until April 8, 1987, for the applicant to attend Trinidad State Junior College in Trinidad, Colorado.

The record contains copies of pay stubs dated October 15, 1985 and November 15, 1985, as well as a copy of a W-2 form for the year 1985. The applicant has submitted a copy of a stamped envelope addressed to him with a postmark date of November 13, 1985 from Trinidad State Junior College. The applicant has also submitted a copy of a stamped envelope addressed to him with a postmark date of December 6, 1985 from the Embassy of Pakistan. In judging the probative value and credibility of the evidence submitted, greater weight will be given to the submission of original documentation. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(6). These documents are some evidence in support of the applicant's presence in the United States on October 15, 1985, November 13, 1985, November 15, 1985 and December 6, 1985.

The applicant has submitted a copy of a bankbook from Savings of America, showing account activity from October 4, 1985 to January 8, 1986. The record also contains copies of pay stubs dated March 15, 1986 and April 15, 1986 and a copy of a stamped envelope addressed to the applicant with a postmark date of March 7, 1986 from Moraine Valley Community College. As

stated above, in judging the probative value and credibility of the evidence submitted, greater weight will be given to the submission of original documentation. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(6). These documents are some evidence in support of the applicant's presence in the United States on October 4, 1985, January 8, 1986, March 7, 1986, March 15, 1986 and April 15, 1986. The applicant has also submitted a statement from the Social Security Administration showing earnings in the years 1985 and 1986.

The record contains a copy of an I-94 Departure Record, which reveals that the applicant entered the United States in Chicago on April 2, 1987 as an F-1 nonimmigrant student.

The applicant has submitted copies of stamped envelopes addressed to him with a postmark dates of May 16, 1987 and June 2, 1987, respectively. The applicant submitted a copy of a bank deposit slip dated October 17, 1987. As stated above, in judging the probative value and credibility of the evidence submitted, greater weight will be given to the submission of original documentation. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(6). The record also contains a copy of a Revision Card for changes in college courses dated September 2, 1987, listing the applicant's address as [REDACTED] in Chicago. This document is inconsistent with the applicant's testimony in the instant I-687 application, in which he does not list this address as a residence during the requisite period. Due to this inconsistency, this document has minimal probative value. The remaining documents are some evidence in support of the applicant's presence in the United States on March 16, 1987, June 2, 1987 and October 17, 1987.

The remaining evidence in the record is comprised of copies of the applicant's statements, the instant I-687 application, the initial I-687 application, filed in 1990 to establish the applicant's CSS class membership, and an I-485 application to adjust to permanent resident status under the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act. The AAO finds in its *de novo* review that the record of proceedings contains materially inconsistent statements from the applicant regarding his residences in and absences from the United States during the requisite statutory period.

In the instant I-687 application, the applicant listed his residence addresses as follows: from September 1981 to May 1988 on [REDACTED] in Palos Heights, Illinois and from January 1987 for the duration of the requisite period on [REDACTED] in Chicago, Illinois.

In the initial I-687 application, the applicant listed his residence addresses as follows: from 1981 to February 1986 on [REDACTED] in Palos Heights, Illinois and from March 1986 to May 1988 on [REDACTED] in Chicago, Illinois. The overlapping dates are incongruous. There are contradictions as to when and where the applicant resided.

In addition, in both I-687 applications, the applicant listed only two absences from the United States during the requisite period, from April 1985 to May 1985 and from March 1987 to April 1987, respectively.

However, the record contains the applicant's Pakistani passport, obtained by the applicant in Karachi on July 29, 1984.

The applicant has failed to provide probative and credible evidence of his continuous residence in the United States for the duration of the requisite period. The inconsistencies regarding the dates the applicant resided at a particular location and was absent from the United States are material to the applicant's claim in that they have a direct bearing on the applicant's residence in the United States during the requisite period. No evidence of record resolves these inconsistencies. It is incumbent upon the applicant to resolve any inconsistencies in the record by independent objective evidence pointing to where the truth lies. Doubt cast on any aspect of the applicant's proof may lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the remaining evidence offered in support of the application. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I & N Dec. 582, 591-592 (BIA). These contradictions undermine the credibility of the applicant's claim of entry into the United States prior to January 1, 1982 and continuous residence in the United States during the requisite period.

Upon a *de novo* review of all of the evidence in the record, the AAO agrees with the director that the evidence submitted by the applicant has not established that he is eligible for the benefit sought. The various statements currently in the record which attempt to substantiate the applicant's residence and employment in the United States during the statutory period are not objective, independent evidence such that they might overcome the inconsistencies in the record regarding the applicant's claim that he maintained continuous residence in the United States throughout the statutory period, and thus are not probative.

Based upon the foregoing, the applicant has failed to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that he entered the United States before January 1, 1982 and continuously resided in an unlawful status in the United States for the requisite period as required under both 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(5) and *Matter of E- M--*, *supra*. 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.