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U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

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FILE:

MSC 03 063 61634

Office: GARDEN CITY

Date:

FEB 03 2009

IN RE: Applicant:

APPLICATION: Application for Status as a Permanent Resident pursuant to Section 1104 of the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106-553, 114 Stat. 2762 (2000), *amended by* Life Act Amendments, Pub. L. 106-554, 114 Stat. 2763 (2000).

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.

for John H. Vaughan
John F. Grissom, Acting Chief
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application for permanent resident status under the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act was denied by the director in Garden City, New York. It is now on appeal before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO). The appeal will be dismissed.

The director denied the application because the applicant failed to establish that he satisfied the “basic citizenship skills” required under section 1104(c)(2)(E) of the LIFE Act.

On appeal the applicant requests that he be given another opportunity to retake the test.

Under section 1104(c)(2)(E)(i) of the LIFE Act, regarding basic citizenship skills, an applicant for permanent resident status must demonstrate that he or she:

- (I) meets the requirements of section 312(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1423(a)) (relating to minimal understanding of ordinary English and a knowledge and understanding of the history and government of the United States); or
- (II) is satisfactorily pursuing a course of study (recognized by the [Secretary of Homeland Security]) to achieve such an understanding of English and such a knowledge and understanding of the history and government of the United States.

Under section 1104(c)(2)(E)(ii) of the LIFE Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security may waive all or part of the above requirements for aliens who are at least 65 years of age or who are developmentally disabled. *See also* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(c).

An applicant may establish that he or she has met the requirements of section 312(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Act) by demonstrating an understanding of the English language, including an ability to read, write, and speak words in ordinary usage in the English language, and by demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of the fundamentals of the history and of the principles and form of government of the United States. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(1) and 8 C.F.R. §§ 312.1 – 312.3.

An applicant may also establish that he or she has met the requirements of section 1104(c)(2)(E)(i) of the LIFE Act by providing a high school diploma or general educational development diploma (GED) from a school in the United States. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(2). The high school or GED diploma may be submitted either at the time of filing the Form I-485 LIFE Act application, subsequent to filing the application but prior to the interview, or at the time of the interview. *Id.*

Finally, an applicant may establish that he or she has met the requirements of section 1104(c)(2)(E)(i) of the LIFE Act by establishing that:

He or she has attended, or is attending, a state recognized, accredited learning institution in the United States, and that institution certifies such attendance. The course of study at such learning institution must be for a period of one academic year (or the equivalent thereof according to the standards of the learning institution) and the curriculum must include at least 40 hours of instruction in English and United States history and government. The applicant may submit certification on letterhead stationery from a state recognized, accredited learning institution either at the time of filing Form I-485, subsequent to filing the application but prior to the interview, or at the time of the interview (the applicant's name and A-number must appear on any such evidence submitted).

8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(3).

An applicant who fails to pass the English literacy and/or the United States history and government tests at the time of the initial LIFE interview shall be afforded a second opportunity after six months (or earlier at the request of the applicant) to pass the required tests or to submit the evidence described above. *See* 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(b).

The applicant, a native of Ecuador who claims to have resided in the United States since October 1981, filed his Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Resident or Adjust Status, under section 1104 of the LIFE Act (Form I-485) on December 2, 2002.

On August 14, 2006, the applicant was interviewed for LIFE legalization. He failed to demonstrate a basic understanding of ordinary English and a basic knowledge of U.S. history and government during the examination portion of the interview.

In a Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID) issued the same date, the director notified the applicant that he had failed the basic citizenship skills requirements at his LIFE legalization interview. The director notified the applicant that he was required to pass the test to be eligible for adjustment under the LIFE Act. The director granted the applicant 6 months to prepare for a second and final re-examination, and notified him that failure to pass the basic citizenship skills test during the re-examination would result in the denial of his application based solely on this issue. The applicant was scheduled for a second and final interview on February 15, 2007.

At his second interview for LIFE legalization, on February 15, 2007, the applicant demonstrated a basic knowledge of United States history and government, but failed to pass the English language test – in particular, the writing portion – for the second and final time.

On July 2, 2007, the director issued a Notice of Decision denying the application on the ground that the applicant failed to pass the basic citizenship skills test, and was therefore ineligible to adjust status under the LIFE Act.

On appeal the applicant asserts that he has made efforts to learn English and attended different schools to meet this requirement. The applicant submits a letter from [REDACTED] Immigration & Citizenship Coordinator at Dominican Women's Development Center in New York City, dated July 12, 2007, indicating that the applicant was enrolled in the "English as Second Language and US Civic and History" class for speakers of other languages. [REDACTED] indicated that the applicant started the program on October 28, 2006, and that the class was held every Saturday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. The applicant also submits a copy of a registration form from New York Language Center dated July 3, 2006, indicating that the applicant registered for a 5-week, 10 hours per week class of English as a Second Language. There is no evidence that the applicant attended and completed the class. The applicant requests another opportunity to demonstrate his knowledge of the basic citizenship skills requirements.

The applicant has not satisfied the basic citizenship skills for LIFE legalization under any of the three options set forth in the regulations. On two separate occasions he failed to pass examinations of his English language ability, as required under 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(1). He did not provide a high school diploma or GED from a school in the United States, as required under 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(2). Nor did the applicant show at the time of his second interview on February 15, 2007, that he had attended, or was attending, a state recognized, accredited learning institution in the United States, following a course of study which spans one academic year and that includes 40 hours of instruction in English and United States history and government, as required under 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(3).

The letter from Dominican Women's Development Center, does not comply with the requirements at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(3) because it does not indicate the number of hours of instruction in English and United States history and government completed by the applicant, does not include information showing that the center is a state recognized, accredited learning institution in the United States, does not include the applicant's A-number, and was not submitted by the time of the applicant's second interview on February 15, 2007, as required. As for the copy of the course registration for English as a Second Language from New York Language Center, there is no indication that the applicant completed the course or that the course spanned one academic year including 40 hours of instruction in English and United States history and government, as required by regulation. The applicant did not submit the document at the time of his second interview on February 15, 2007, and the document does not show that the center is a state recognized, accredited learning institution in the United States. Nor does the form include the applicant's A-number. Thus, the New York Language Center document also fails to comply with the requirements of 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(3).

The applicant is not 65 years old or older and there is no evidence in the record that he is developmentally disabled. Thus, the applicant does not qualify for either of the exceptions listed in section 1104(c)(2)(E)(ii) of the LIFE Act.

The applicant has failed to demonstrate that he has met the basic citizenship skills requirement as described at 1104(c)(2)(E) of the LIFE Act. Accordingly, he is not eligible for adjustment to permanent resident status under section 1104 of the LIFE Act.

For the reasons discussed above, the appeal will be dismissed, and the application denied.

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