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U.S. Citizenship  
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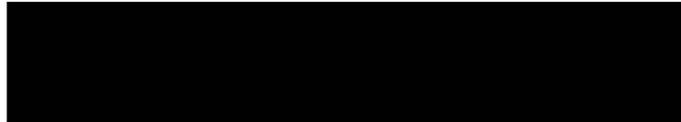
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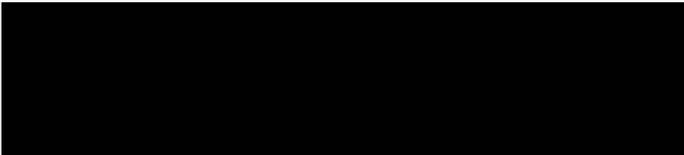
JAN 06 2009

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John F. Grissom".

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 New York City. 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 counsel asserts that the applicant has been enrolled in English language classes since 2002, and should be given another opportunity to take the test of his basic citizenship skills.

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).

On October 5, 2001 the applicant, a native of Ecuador, filed his Form I-485, Application to Register Permanent Resident or Adjust Status, under section 1104 of the LIFE Act.

On August 15, 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.

That same day the director issued a Notice of Intent to Deny (NOID), referring to the applicant's failure to pass the basic citizenship skills requirements (the director erroneously cited the date as August 2, 2004, rather than August 15, 2006), and advising that the second and final examination of his basic citizenship skills was scheduled for February 15, 2007.

At his re-examination on February 15, 2007, the applicant again failed the test of his basic citizenship skills.

On June 2, 2007 the director denied the application on the ground that the applicant had not satisfied the basic citizenship skills requirement for LIFE legalization.

On appeal counsel asserts that the applicant had attended over 100 hours of English language instruction since February 13, 2002 at the Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), a state recognized, accredited learning institution in New York. Counsel indicates that the applicant began a new course in October 2006, taking six hours of English language instruction per week, and expected to graduate from the BOCES English as a Second Language (ESOL) program in August 2007. According to counsel, the applicant passed the U.S. history and government part of his basic citizenship skills examination, and is now prepared to pass the

English language part if he is allowed to take the examination again.<sup>1</sup> As evidence of his English language classes the applicant submits a letter from [REDACTED], ESOL Instructor at BOCES, dated January 11, 2007, stating that the applicant was “currently enrolled” in the “English for Speakers of Other Languages program” and had been attending classes at Croton on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. since October 18, 2006.

The foregoing letter does not comport with the requirements of 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(3). It states only that the applicant was enrolled in an English language program with six hours of classes a week, without indicating that the classes comprised a course of study encompassing one academic year and 40 hours or more of instruction, or that the classes included a U.S. history and government component. The letter does not show the applicant’s A-number. Furthermore, the letter was not submitted to the district office by the time of the applicant’s second interview and examination on March 15, 2007, which was the latest date allowed in the regulation. Though the letter is dated January 11, 2007, there is no verification of the date on the letter, such as a notarial seal, and there is no evidence in the record that the letter was submitted by the applicant at any time prior to the appeal, which was filed on April 13, 2007.

Thus, the applicant has not satisfied the basic citizenship skills for LIFE legalization under any of the three options set forth in the regulations. He did not pass either of his examinations, in accordance with 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, in accordance with 8 C.F.R. § 245a.17(a)(2). Nor did the applicant show by the time of his second interview, on March 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, in accordance with 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.

The appeal will be dismissed, and the application denied.

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

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<sup>1</sup> While counsel asserts that the applicant passed the U.S. history and government part of his examination, there is no such indication on the examination sheet itself and the director did not indicate in the denial decision that the applicant passed any part of the examination. Thus, counsel’s assertion finds no support in the record.