



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

identifying data deleted to  
prevent clearly unwarranted  
invasion of personal privacy

**PUBLIC COPY**

L2



FILE: [Redacted]  
MSC-02-183-65518

Office: SACRAMENTO

Date: MAY 26 2010

IN RE: Applicant: [Redacted]

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:  
[Redacted]

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.

Perry Rhew  
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

**DISCUSSION:** The application for permanent resident status under the Legal Immigration Family Equity (LIFE) Act was denied by the Director, Sacramento and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The district director denied the application because the applicant had failed to establish residence in the United States in an unlawful status from January 1, 1982 through May 4, 1988 as required by section 1104(c)(2)(B) of the LIFE Act. The director found that the applicant 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 period.

On appeal, the applicant reiterated his claim of continuous residence in the United States from prior to January 1, 1982 through May 4, 1988. He asserts that the director erroneously applied the standards of law and that the applicant did not have adequate opportunity to address derogatory evidence. The applicant requests a copy of the record of proceedings. This request was completed for failure to comply on December 29, 2008.<sup>1</sup>

An applicant for permanent 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 May 4, 1988. Section 1104(c)(2)(B) of the LIFE Act and 8 C.F.R. § 245a.11(b).

An applicant for permanent resident status under section 1104 of the LIFE Act has the burden to establish 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 212(a) of the Act, and is otherwise eligible for adjustment of status under this section. The 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.12(e).

Although the regulations provide an illustrative list of contemporaneous documents that an applicant may submit, the list also permits the submission of affidavits and any other relevant document. 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(vi)(L).

The regulation at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(i) states that letters from employers attesting to an applicant's employment must: provide the applicant's address at the time of employment; identify the exact period of employment; show periods of layoff; state the applicant's duties; declare whether the information was taken from company records; and, identify the location of such company records and state whether such records are accessible or in the alternative state the reason why such records are unavailable.

---

<sup>1</sup> NRC2008066401

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.

The issue in this proceeding is whether the applicant (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 several affidavits, a lease, and a Social Security Administration (SSA) wage statement. The AAO has reviewed each document to determine the applicant’s eligibility; however, the AAO will not quote each witness statement in this decision.

The AAO conducts appellate review on a *de novo* basis. *See Soltane v. DOJ*, 381 F.3d 143, 145 (3d Cir. 2004).

The documentation contained in the record which pertains to the relevant period consists of the following:

- An affidavit from [REDACTED] who indicates under penalty of perjury that he has known the applicant since 1981 and that the applicant worked for him in 1982, 1983 and 1984 picking peaches and grapes. However, the record of proceedings contains a G-325A biographic information sheet and the Form I-687 in which the applicant indicates that he worked as a gas station attendant in Lodi, California from 1981 until 1988. Furthermore, this letter fails to meet certain regulatory standards set forth at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3)(i), which provides that letters from employers must include the applicant’s address at the time of employment; exact period of employment; whether the information was taken from official company records and where records are located and whether USCIS may have access to the records; if records are unavailable, an affidavit form-letter stating that the employment records are unavailable may be accepted which shall be signed, attested to by the employer under penalty of perjury and shall state the employer’s willingness to

come forward and give testimony if requested. The statement by [REDACTED] does not include much of the required information and can be afforded minimal weight as evidence of the applicant's residence in the United States for the duration of the requisite period.

- An affidavit from [REDACTED] in which the affiant, [REDACTED] indicates that he knew the applicant from the mosque from December 1987 to April 2000 during which time the applicant attended five times per day. This letter does not conform to the statutory requirements for attestations by churches, unions, or other organizations, which is found at 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2 ((d)(3)(v)). That regulation requires such attestations to "show the inclusive dates of membership and state the address where the applicant resided during the membership period." [REDACTED] does not provide dates of the applicant's membership or any other information that is probative of the issue of his initial entrance to the United States prior to January 1982 or his continuous residence for the duration of the statutory period. Thus, it can be given no probative weight.
- A Social Security Administration (SSA) Wage and Earnings Report indicating that the applicant began earning taxable wages in the United States in 1990.
- A lease agreement dated March 1, 1981 signed by [REDACTED] United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) contacted [REDACTED] on April 8, 2003 and he indicated that he had recently filled out the lease form and that he did not meet the applicant until 1986. [REDACTED] also signed an affidavit dated December 9, 2003 stating that he lived with the applicant from March 1981 until January 1983. It is incumbent upon the applicant to resolve any inconsistencies in the record by independent objective evidence. Any attempt to explain or reconcile such inconsistencies will not suffice unless the applicant submits competent objective evidence pointing to where the truth lies. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582, 591-92 (BIA 1988). Doubt cast on any aspect of the applicant's proof may, of course, lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the application. *Id.* at 591.
- Affidavits from [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Although the affiants state that they met the applicant during the relevant period, their statements do not supply enough details to be considered probative. Specifically, all of the affiants indicate that they met the applicant during the relevant period; however, none indicate how they date their initial acquaintance with the applicant, or how frequently they saw the applicant during the relevant period.

To be considered probative and credible, witness affidavits must do more than simply state that an affiant 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 the relationship probably did exist and that the witness does, by virtue of that relationship,

have knowledge of the facts alleged. Upon review, the AAO finds that, individually and together, the witness statements do not indicate that their assertions are probably true. Therefore, they have little probative value.

While an applicant's failure to provide evidence other than affidavits shall not be the sole basis for finding that he or she failed to meet the continuous residency requirements, an application which is lacking in contemporaneous documentation cannot be deemed approvable if considerable periods of claimed continuous residence rely entirely on affidavits which are considerably lacking in certain basic and necessary information. As discussed above, the affiants' statements are significantly lacking in detail and do not establish that the affiants actually had personal knowledge of the events and circumstances of the applicant's residence in the United States. Few of the affiants provided much relevant information beyond acknowledging that they met during the relevant period. Overall, the affidavits provided do not overcome the noted inconsistencies and are so deficient in detail that they can be given no significant probative value.

As is stated above, 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). The applicant has been given the opportunity to satisfy his burden of proof with a broad range of evidence pursuant to 8 C.F.R. § 245a.2(d)(3).

Finally, the record includes a copy of a Removal Order dated March 27, 1998 indicating that the applicant was ordered removed from the United States pursuant to Section 212(a)(7)(A)(i)(I).

Section 245A(a)(4)(A) of the Act requires an alien to establish that he or she is admissible to the United States as an immigrant in order to be eligible for temporary resident status. Section 245A(a)(4)(A) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1255a(a)(4)(A). Section 212(a)(9)(A)(ii)(II) of the Act renders inadmissible aliens who departed the United States while an order of removal was outstanding and who seek admission within 10 years of the date of the alien's departure. Section 212(a)(9)(A)(ii)(II) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1182(a)(9)(A)(ii)(II). While it is unclear from the record whether the applicant actually departed the United States, he has failed to meet his burden of establishing his admissibility.

Given the applicant's reliance upon documents with minimal probative value, it is concluded that he has failed to establish continuous residence in an unlawful status in the United States from prior to January 1, 1982 through May 4, 1988 as required under section 1104(c)(2)(B) of the LIFE Act. The applicant is, therefore, ineligible for permanent resident status under section 1104 of the LIFE Act on this basis.

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