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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
20 Mass. Ave., N.W., Rm. A3042.
Washington, DC 20529

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

[redacted]

FILE: [redacted] Office: Vermont Service Center Date: FEB 2 8 2005
[EAC 02 246 50662]

IN RE: Applicant: [redacted]

APPLICATION: Application for Temporary Protected Status under Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1254

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. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

Robert P. Wiemann, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and is now before the Administrative Appeals Office on appeal. The appeal will be dismissed.

The applicant is a native and citizen of El Salvador who is seeking Temporary Protected Status (TPS) under section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. § 1254.

The director denied the application because the applicant failed to establish his qualifying continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite period.

On appeal, the applicant submits documentation in support of his eligibility for TPS.

Section 244(c) of the Act, and the related regulations in 8 C.F.R. § 244.2, provide that an applicant is eligible for TPS only if such alien establishes that he or she:

(a) Is a national, as defined in section 101(a)(21) of the Act, of a foreign state designated under section 244(b) of the Act;

(b) Has been continuously physically present in the United States since the effective date of the most recent designation of that foreign state;

(c) Has continuously resided in the United States since such date as the Attorney General may designate;

(d) Is admissible as an immigrant except as provided under § 244.3;

(e) Is not ineligible under § 244.4; and

(f) (1) Registers for Temporary Protected Status during the initial registration period announced by public notice in the FEDERAL REGISTER, or

(2) During any subsequent extension of such designation if at the time of the initial registration period:

(i) The applicant is a nonimmigrant or has been granted voluntary departure status or any relief from removal;

(ii) The applicant has an application for change of status, adjustment of status, asylum, voluntary departure, or any relief from removal which is pending or subject to further review or appeal;

(iii) The applicant is a parolee or has a pending request for reparole; or

(iv) The applicant is a spouse or child of an alien currently eligible to be a TPS registrant.

The phrase *continuously physically present*, as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means actual physical presence in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous physical presence in the United States by virtue of brief, casual, and innocent absences as defined within this section.

The phrase *continuously resided,* as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means residing in the United States for the entire period specified in the regulations. An alien shall not be considered to have failed to maintain continuous residence in the United States by reason of a brief, casual and innocent absence as defined within this section or due merely to a brief temporary trip abroad required by emergency or extenuating circumstances outside the control of the alien.

The phrase *brief, casual, and innocent absence,* as defined in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1, means a departure from the United States that satisfies the following criteria:

(1) Each such absence was of short duration and reasonably calculated to accomplish the purpose(s) for the absence;

(2) The absence was not the result of an order of deportation, an order of voluntary departure, or an administrative grant of voluntary departure without the institution of deportation proceedings; and

(3) The purposes for the absence from the United States or actions while outside of the United States were not contrary to law.

Persons applying for TPS offered to El Salvadorans must demonstrate continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001, and continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001. On July 9, 2002, the Attorney General announced an extension of the TPS designation until September 9, 2003. A subsequent extension of the TPS designation has been granted by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, with validity until September 9, 2006, upon the applicant's re-registration during the requisite time period.

The burden of proof is upon the applicant to establish that he or she meets the above requirements. Applicants shall submit all documentation as required in the instructions or requested by Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS). 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(a). The sufficiency of all evidence will be judged according to its relevancy, consistency, credibility, and probative value. To meet his or her burden of proof the applicant must provide supporting documentary evidence of eligibility apart from his or her own statements. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b).

On August 1, 2003, the applicant was requested to submit evidence establishing his continuous physical presence in the United States from March 9, 2001, to the date of filing his application. The applicant did not respond to the director's request. The director determined that the applicant failed to establish he had been

continuously physically present in the United States from March 9, 2001, to the date of filing his application. Therefore, the director denied the application on October 15, 2003.

On appeal, the applicant states that he has resided in the United States since the year 2000, and has never left the United States. The applicant also submits, along with his appeal, the following documentation: a letter dated October 30, 2003, from Dr. who stated that the applicant has visited his office in the years 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003; a letter dated November 6, 2003, from Father , Parochial Vicar of in Silver Spring, Maryland, who stated that the applicant has been a parishioner of his church since January 2001; and a letter dated November 3, 2003, from Mr. who stated that he has known the applicant since November 2000.

The statements provided by the Dr regarding the applicant's claimed continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States are not supported by corroborative evidence. It is reasonable to expect that the applicant would have some type of contemporaneous evidence to support these statements; however, no corroborative evidence has been provided to cover the requisite time periods for Salvadoran TPS. The affidavit from Father has little evidentiary weight or probative value as it does not provide basic information that is expressly required by 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(a)(2)(v). Specifically, the pastor does not explain the origin of the information to which he attests, nor does he provide the address where the applicant resided during the period of his involvement with the church. In addition, although ated in this affidavit that he has known the applicant since November 2000, he does not indicate whether the applicant has resided in the United States during that time. The applicant claims to have lived in the United States since November 2000. It is reasonable to expect that the applicant would have some other type of contemporaneous evidence in support of his continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite time periods for TPS. The sufficiency of all evidence will be judged according to its relevancy, consistency, credibility, and probative value. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b). It is determined that the documentation submitted by the applicant is not sufficient to establish that he satisfies the continuous physical presence requirements described in 8 C.F.R. §§ 244.2(b). Consequently, the director's decision to deny the application for temporary protected status will be affirmed.

Beyond the decision of the director, it also is noted that the applicant has provided insufficient evidence to establish his qualifying continuous residence during the requisite time period. 8 C.F.R. § 244.2(c). Therefore, the application will also be denied for this reason.

An alien applying for TPS has the burden of proving that he or she meets the requirements enumerated above and is otherwise eligible under the provisions of section 244 of the Act. The applicant has failed to meet this burden.

ORDER: The appeal is dismissed.