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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
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Washington, DC 20529



U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services

MI



FILE:



[EAC 02 238 51099]

Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date: JUL 29 2005

IN RE:

Applicant:



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 (AAO) 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 that she had continuously resided in the United States since February 13, 2001.

On appeal, the applicant submits a brief statement and additional documentation.

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.
- (g) Has filed an application for late registration with the appropriate Service director, within a 60-day period immediately following the expiration or termination of conditions described in paragraph (f)(2) of this section.

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. Subsequent extensions of the TPS designation have been granted by the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, with the latest granted 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 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 her burden of proof the applicant must provide supporting documentary evidence of eligibility apart from her own statements. 8 C.F.R. § 244.9(b).

The applicant filed her initial Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status, on July 2, 2002. In support of her initial application, the applicant submitted:

1. A photocopy of her El Salvadoran birth certificate, with English translation;
2. Photocopies of earnings statements, dated December 2001; and,
3. A letter, dated May 14, 2002, from [REDACTED] stating that she had known the applicant since June 2000.

On November 7, 2002, the director requested the applicant to submit evidence establishing her qualifying continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States during the requisite time periods. In response, the applicant submitted:

4. A photocopy of the identification page from her El Salvadoran passport, issued in Boston, Massachusetts, on August 30, 2002; and,
5. A letter, dated December 2, 2002, from [REDACTED] stating that he had known the applicant since January 2000.

The director determined that the applicant had failed to submit sufficient evidence to establish her qualifying continuous residence in the United States since February 13, 2001. The director denied the application on December 3, 2003.

On appeal, the applicant submits the following additional documentation:

6. An undated letter from [REDACTED] stating that the applicant rented an apartment from him [REDACTED] Cambridge Street, [REDACTED] Cambridge, Massachusetts, from May 31, 2000 to May 31, 2003.

The applicant claims to have lived in the United States since May 2000. It is reasonable to expect that she would have a variety of contemporaneous evidence to support this claim. Letters from acquaintances (Nos. 3 and 5, above) are not, by themselves, persuasive evidence of residence or physical presence. Furthermore, the rent letter from [REDACTED] (No. 6) has little evidentiary weight or probative value as it is not in the form of an affidavit and is not supported by objective evidence, such as rent receipts and a lease agreement.

It is noted that, on her initial Form I-821, the applicant indicated that she had never used a Social Security number. However, the information contained in No. 2, above, indicates her Social Security number as [REDACTED]. This discrepancy in the applicant's submissions has not been explained and calls into question the applicant's ability to document the requirements under the statute and regulations. Doubt cast on any aspect of the evidence as submitted may lead to a reevaluation of the reliability and sufficiency of the remaining evidence

offered in support of the application. Further, it is incumbent on the applicant to resolve any inconsistencies in the record by independent objective evidence; any attempts to explain or reconcile such inconsistencies, absent competent objective evidence pointing to where the truth lies, will not suffice. *Matter of Ho*, 19 I&N Dec. 582. (Comm. 1988).

It is concluded that the applicant has not submitted sufficient evidence to establish her qualifying continuous residence in the United States from February 13, 2001, to the date of filing her TPS application on July 2, 2002. Consequently, the director's decision to deny the application for temporary protected status will be affirmed.

Beyond the decision of the director, the applicant has failed to submit sufficient evidence to establish her qualifying continuous physical presence in the United States since March 9, 2001. Therefore, the application may also not be approved for this reason.

An alien applying for temporary protected status 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.