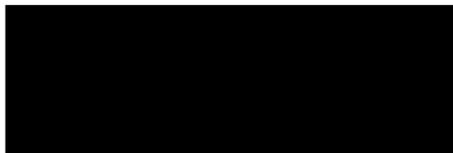


identifying data deleted to  
prevent clearly unwarranted  
invasion of personal privacy



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

**PUBLIC COPY**



MI

FILE: [REDACTED]  
[EAC 01 203 51485]

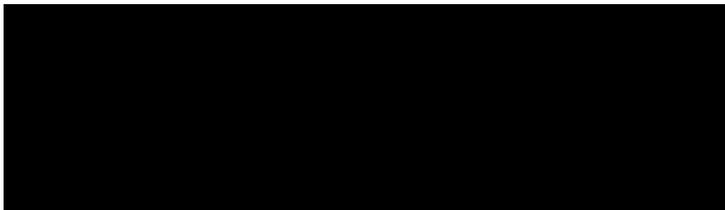
Office: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

Date: **MAR 30 2007**

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:



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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert P. Wiemann".

Robert P. Wiemann, Chief  
Administrative Appeals Office

**DISCUSSION:** The applicant's Temporary Protected Status was withdrawn by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and the case is now before the Administrative Appeals Office (AAO) on appeal.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 was granted Temporary Protected Status on April 21, 2003. The director subsequently withdrew the applicant's Temporary Protected Status on March 9, 2006, when it was determined that the applicant had been convicted of two or more misdemeanors.

The director may withdraw the status of an alien granted Temporary Protected Status under section 244 of the Act at any time if it is determined that the alien was not in fact eligible at the time such status was granted, or at any time thereafter becomes ineligible for such status. 8 C.F.R. § 244.14(a)(1).

On appeal, the applicant claims his eligibility for TPS.

An alien shall not be eligible for temporary protected status under this section if the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security finds that the alien has been convicted of any felony or two or more misdemeanors committed in the United States. See Section 244(c)(2)(B)(i) of the Act and 8 C.F.R. § 244.4(a).

8 C.F.R. § 244.1 defines "felony" and "misdemeanor:"

*Felony* means a crime committed in the United States, punishable by imprisonment for a term of more than one year, regardless of the term such alien actually served, if any, except: When the offense is defined by the State as a misdemeanor and the sentence actually imposed is one year or less regardless of the term such alien actually served. Under this exception for purposes of section 244 of the Act, the crime shall be treated as a misdemeanor.

*Misdemeanor* means a crime committed in the United States, either

- (1) Punishable by imprisonment for a term of one year or less, regardless of the term such alien actually served, if any, or
- (2) A crime treated as a misdemeanor under the term "felony" of this section.

For purposes of this definition, any crime punishable by imprisonment for a maximum term of five days or less shall not be considered a misdemeanor.

The record reveals the following offenses:

- On July 28, 2003, the applicant was convicted in Hempstead, New York, of operating a vehicle while ability impaired by alcohol in violation of VTL 1192.1 01 (I), a misdemeanor. (Docket # [REDACTED])

- On December 23, 2005, the applicant was convicted in Hempstead, New York, of operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs or alcohol in violation of VTL 1192.3 03, a misdemeanor. (Docket # [REDACTED])

On appeal, the applicant asserts his claim of eligibility for TPS and further states that he was convicted of one traffic violation and one misdemeanor offense.

Federal immigration law should be applied uniformly, without regard to the nuances of state law. *See Ye v. INS*, 214 F.3d 1128, 1132 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1965). Thus, whether a particular offense under state law constitutes a "misdemeanor" for immigration purposes is strictly a matter of federal law. *See Franklin v. INS*, 72 F.3d 571 (8<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1995); *Cabral v. INS*, 15 F.3d 193, 196 n.5 (1<sup>st</sup> Cir. 1994). While we must look to relevant state law in order to determine whether the statutory elements of a specific offense satisfy the regulatory definition of "misdemeanor," the legal nomenclature employed by a particular state to classify an offense or the consequences a state chooses to place on an offense in its own courts under its own laws does not control the consequences given to the offense in a federal immigration proceeding. *See Yazdchi v. INS*, 878 F.2d 166, 167 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1989); *Babouris v. Esperdy*, 269 F.2d 621, 623 (2<sup>nd</sup> Cir. 1959); *United States v. Flores-Rodriguez*, 237 F.2d 405, 409 (2<sup>nd</sup> Cir. 1956).

The fact that New York's legal taxonomy classifies the applicant's offenses as "violations" or "infractions" rather than "crimes," and precludes the offense from giving rise to any criminal disabilities in New York, is simply not relevant to the question of whether the offenses qualify as "misdemeanors" for immigration purposes. As cited above, for immigration purposes, a misdemeanor is any offense that is punishable by imprisonment for a term of one year or less, regardless of the term such alien actually served, if any. It is also noted that offenses that are punishable by imprisonment for a maximum term of five days or less shall not be considered a misdemeanor. In this case, numbers 1 and 2 above are punishable by maximum imprisonment for more than 5 days under New York State law. Therefore, we conclude that the applicant has been convicted of two or more "misdemeanors" as defined for immigration purposes in 8 C.F.R. § 244.1.

The applicant is ineligible for TPS due to his record of at least two or more misdemeanor convictions as detailed above. Section 244(c)(2)(B)(i) of the Act and 8 C.F.R. § 244.4(a). Consequently, the director's decision to withdraw the application for this reason will be affirmed.

The application will be denied for the above reasons, with each considered as an independent and alternative basis for denial. 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 from the withdrawal of the application for TPS is dismissed.