

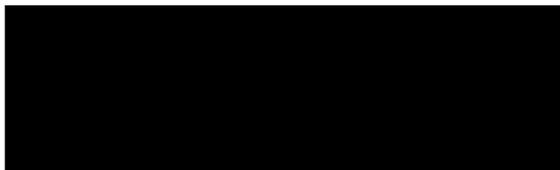
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U.S. Department of Homeland Security
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Office of Administrative Appeals MS 2090
Washington, DC 20529-2090



**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**



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FILE:



OFFICE: VERMONT SERVICE CENTER

DATE:

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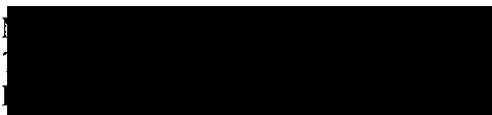
IN RE:

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:



INSTRUCTIONS:

Enclosed please find the decision of the Administrative Appeals Office in your case. All of the documents related to this matter have been returned to the Vermont Service Center. Please be advised that any further inquiry that you might have concerning your case must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied by us in reaching our decision, or you have additional information that you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reconsider or a motion to reopen. The specific requirements for filing such a request can be found at 8 C.F.R. § 103.5. All motions must be submitted to the Vermont Service Center by filing a Form I-290B, Notice of Appeal or Motion, with a fee of \$630. Please be aware that 8 C.F.R. § 103.5(a)(1)(i) requires that any motion must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider or reopen.

Thank you,

Perry Rhew
Chief, Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The applicant's Temporary Protected Status was withdrawn by the Director, Vermont Service Center. The matter 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 withdrew TPS because the applicant had been convicted of at least two misdemeanors in the United States.

On appeal, counsel asserts that the applicant does not have two misdemeanor convictions as the driving without license conviction was reduced to an infraction. Counsel asserts, "a reduction under California Penal Code 17(d) does not amount to a Pickering Issue in that a reduction under above stated code is a procedural tool that by operation of law renders no immigration barring consequences."

The director may withdraw the status of an alien granted TPS 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).

An alien shall not be eligible for TPS 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).

"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. 8 C.F.R. § 244.1.

The record reveals the applicant's criminal history in the state of California as follows:

1. On December 9, 2000, the applicant was arrested and subsequently charged with avoid a registration compliance, a violation of section 4462.5 VC, and unlicensed driver, a violation of 12500(a) VC. On October 24, 2001, the applicant was convicted of violating section 12500(a) VC, a misdemeanor. The applicant was ordered to pay a fine and was placed on probation for three years. The remaining charge was dismissed. On May 27, 2008, on behalf of the applicant, counsel submitted a motion to reduce the misdemeanor conviction to an infraction pursuant to section 17(d) PC. On May 28, 2008, the motion was granted. Case no. [REDACTED]

2. On January 17, 2003, the applicant was arrested and subsequently charged with disorderly conduct –prostitution, a violation of section 647(b) PC. On March 19, 2003, the applicant was convicted of this misdemeanor offense. The applicant was ordered to pay a fine and was placed on probation for one year. Case no. [REDACTED]

Under the statutory definition of "conviction" provided at Section 101(a)(48)(A) of the Act, no effect is to be given, in immigration proceedings, to a state action which purports to expunge, dismiss, cancel, vacate, discharge, or otherwise remove a guilty plea or other record of guilt or conviction. An alien remains convicted for immigration purposes notwithstanding a subsequent state action purporting to erase the original determination of guilt. *Matter of Roldan*, 22 I&N Dec. 512 (BIA 1999).

In addition, in *Matter of Pickering*, 23 I&N Dec. 621 (BIA 2003), the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) found that there is a significant distinction between convictions vacated on the basis of a procedural or substantive defect in the underlying proceedings and those vacated because of post-conviction events, such as rehabilitation or immigration hardships. The BIA reiterated that if a court vacates a conviction for reasons unrelated to the merits of the underlying criminal proceedings, the alien remains "convicted" for immigration purposes. *Id.* at 624.

The court documentation submitted does not suggest that the misdemeanor offense was reduced based on account of an underlying procedural or constitutional defect in the merits of the case. The record shows that years after the applicant had completed his probation, a motion to reduce the misdemeanor to an infraction offense was submitted. Therefore, despite the subsequent reduction, the applicant remains convicted, for immigration purposes, of the misdemeanor noted above.

The applicant is ineligible for TPS due to his two misdemeanor convictions. Section 244(c)(2)(B)(i) of the Act and 8 C.F.R. § 244.4(a). There is no waiver available, even for humanitarian reasons, of the requirements stated above. Consequently, the director's decision to withdraw TPS will be affirmed.

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.