

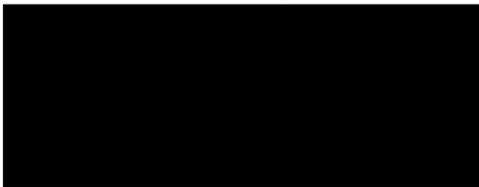


U.S. Department of Justice

Immigration and Naturalization Service

AAA

OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS
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ULLB, 3rd Floor
Washington, D.C. 20536



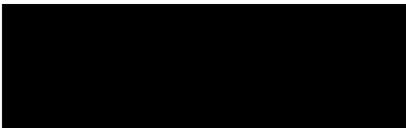
FILE: [Redacted] Office: Vermont Service Center

Date: MAR 10 2000

IN RE: Applicant: [Redacted]

APPLICATION: ~~Application for Waiver of Foreign Residence Requirement under~~
§ 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C.
1182(e)

IN BEHALF OF APPLICANT:



Public Copy

Identifying information
prevent clearly unwarranted
invasion of personal privacy

INSTRUCTIONS:

This is the decision in your case. All documents have been returned to the office which originally decided your case. Any further inquiry must be made to that office.

If you believe the law was inappropriately applied or the analysis used in reaching the decision was inconsistent with the information provided or with precedent decisions, you may file a motion to reconsider. Such a motion must state the reasons for reconsideration and be supported by any pertinent precedent decisions. Any motion to reconsider must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reconsider, as required under 8 C.F.R. 103.5(a)(1)(i).

If you have new or additional information which you wish to have considered, you may file a motion to reopen. Such a motion must state the new facts to be proved at the reopened proceeding and be supported by affidavits or other documentary evidence. Any motion to reopen must be filed within 30 days of the decision that the motion seeks to reopen, except that failure to file before this period expires may be excused in the discretion of the Service where it is demonstrated that the delay was reasonable and beyond the control of the applicant or petitioner. Id.

Any motion must be filed with the office which originally decided your case along with a fee of \$110 as required under 8 C.F.R. 103.7.

FOR THE ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER,
EXAMINATIONS

Terrance M. O'Reilly, Director
Administrative Appeals Office

DISCUSSION: The application was denied by the Director, Vermont Service Center, and a subsequent appeal was dismissed by the Associate Commissioner for Examinations. The matter is before the Associate Commissioner on a motion to reopen. The motion will be granted and the order dismissing the appeal will be affirmed.

The applicant is a native and citizen of Cameroon who is subject to the two-year foreign residence requirement of § 212(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (the Act), 8 U.S.C. 1182(e), because he participated in graduate medical education or training and because the Director, United States Information Agency (USIA), has designated Cameroon as clearly requiring the services of persons with the applicant's specialized knowledge or skill. The applicant was admitted to the United States as a nonimmigrant exchange visitor in 1996. The applicant married a native of Haiti and naturalized United States citizen on February 24, 1998. The applicant is now seeking the above waiver after alleging that his departure from the United States would impose exceptional hardship on his U.S. citizen spouse.

The director determined that the record failed to establish that the applicant's departure from the United States would impose exceptional hardship upon his U.S. citizen spouse and denied the application accordingly. The Associate Commissioner affirmed that decision on appeal.

On motion, counsel argues that the applicant's wife would suffer exceptional hardship if she were to accompany her husband to Cameroon. Counsel states that the applicant's wife would not be employable, would be unable to repay her student loans leading to the ruination of her personal credit. There is no requirement that the applicant's wife has to abandon her profession in the United States and reside with her husband temporarily in Cameroon.

Counsel states that the applicant's return to Cameroon would result in a loss of approximately \$200,000 in marital income. Counsel states that the applicant would suffer from prejudice and from a reduced standard of living in Cameroon. Hardship to the applicant is not a consideration in this matter.

Section 212(e) EDUCATIONAL VISITOR STATUS; FOREIGN RESIDENCE REQUIREMENT; WAIVER.-No person admitted under § 101(a)(15)(J) of the Act or acquiring such status after admission-

(i) whose participation in a program for which he came to the United States was financed in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, by an agency of the Government of the United States or by the government of the country of his nationality or his residence,

(ii) who at the time of admission or acquisition of status under § 101(a)(15)(J) was a national or resident of a country which the Director of the United States Information Agency, pursuant to regulations prescribed by him, had designated as clearly requiring the services of

persons engaged in the field of specialized knowledge or skill in which the alien was engaged, or

(iii) who came to the United States or acquired such status in order to receive graduate medical education or training,

shall be eligible to apply for an immigrant visa or for permanent residence, or for a nonimmigrant visa under §§ 101(a)(15)(H) or 101(a)(15)(L) until it is established that such person has resided and been physically present in the country of his nationality or last residence for an aggregate of at least two years following departure from the United States: Provided, That upon the favorable recommendation of the Director, pursuant to the request of an interested United States Government agency (or, in the case of an alien described in clause (iii), pursuant to the request of a State department of Public Health, or its equivalent), or of the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization after he has determined that departure from the United States would impose exceptional hardship upon the alien's spouse or child (if such spouse or child is a citizen of the United States or a lawfully resident alien), or that the alien cannot return to the country of his nationality or last residence because he would be subject to persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion, the Attorney General may waive the requirement of such two-year foreign residence abroad in the case of any alien whose admission to the United States is found by the Attorney General to be in the public interest except that in the case of a waiver requested by a State Department of Public Health, or its equivalent, or in the case of a waiver requested by an interested United States government agency on behalf of an alien described in clause (iii), the waiver shall be subject to the requirements of § 214(k): And provided further, That, except in the case of an alien described in clause (iii), the Attorney General may, upon the favorable recommendation of the Director, waive such two-year foreign residence requirement in any case in which the foreign country of the alien's nationality or last residence has furnished the Director a statement in writing that it has no objection to such waiver in the case of such alien.

Matter of Mansour, 11 I&N Dec. 306 (D.D. 1965), held that even though it is established that the requisite hardship would occur abroad, it must also be shown that the spouse would suffer as the result of having to remain in the United States. Temporary separation, even though abnormal, is a problem many families face in life and does not represent exceptional hardship as contemplated by § 212(e) of the Act. See Matter of Bridges, 11 I&N Dec. 506 (D.D. 1965).

Adjudication of a given application for a waiver of the foreign residence requirement is divided into two segments. Consideration must be given to the effects of the requirement if the qualifying spouse and/or child were to accompany the applicant abroad for the stipulated two-year term. Consideration must separately be given to the effects of the requirement should the party or parties choose to remain in the United States while the applicant is abroad.

An applicant must establish that exceptional hardship would be imposed on a citizen or lawful permanent resident spouse or child by the foreign residence requirement in both circumstances and not merely in one or the other. Hardship to the applicant is not a consideration in this matter.

In Keh Tong Chen v. Attorney General, 546 F. Supp. 1060 (D.D.C. 1982), the court addressed the issue of the waiver of the two-year foreign residence requirement. In a discussion of the term "exceptional hardship," the court specifically referred to the standards established in H.R. Rep. No. 721, 87th Cong., 1st Sess. 121 (1961), as follows:

Courts deciding § 212(e) cases have consistently emphasized the Congressional determination that it is "detrimental to the purposes of the program and to the national interests of the countries concerned to apply a lenient policy in the adjudication of waivers including cases where marriage occurring in the United States, or the birth of a child or children, is used to support the contention that the exchange alien's departure from this country would cause personal hardship."...Courts have effectuated Congressional intent by declining to find exceptional hardship unless the degree of hardship expected was greater than anxiety, loneliness, and altered financial circumstances ordinarily anticipated from a two-year sojourn abroad. See Mendez v. Major, 340 F.2d 128, 132 (8th Cir. 1965); Talavera v. Pederson, 334 F.2d 52, 58 (6th Cir. 1964).

The court noted additionally that the significance traditionally accorded the family in American life warrants that where the applicant alleges that denial of a waiver will result in separation from both a citizen-spouse and a citizen-child, a finding of "no exceptional hardship" should not be affirmed unless the reasons for this finding are made clear. The court's insistence upon clear articulation of reasons in cases involving a citizen-spouse and a citizen-child is consistent also with Congressional policy.

Counsel cites Slyper v. Attorney General, 576 F. Supp. 559 (D.D.C. 1983), where the court found that requiring an American citizen wife to accompany her husband to England would cause a major disruption in her career, have serious economic consequences for the couple and force the wife to leave her aged grandmother and would be an exceptional hardship.

In that matter the judge aptly observed that the "exceptional hardship" standard is stringent so that aliens will not be able to create such hardships themselves in order to evade the purpose of the foreign residence requirement. It is also noted that the alien in Slyper, was specifically assured by the American Vice Counsel that he would not have to depart from the United States for two years, and that determination was noted on the alien's official exchange visitor document. He then married a United States citizen during his temporary stay. The court determined that the absence of the threat of a possible two-year separation was an important consideration with regard to the party's marriage plans, and the problems and hardships were not manufactured by the alien and his spouse; they were created, or at least heavily influenced, by an agent of the government. The applicant knew that he was subject to the two-year foreign residence requirement when he was issued the nonimmigrant visa in 1996 and his decision to marry a United States citizen in 1998 was not influenced by a government official.

In Silverman v. Rogers, 437 F.2d 102 (1st Cir. 1970), the court stated that, "even assuming that the Federal Government had no right either to prevent a marriage or destroy it, we believe that here it has done nothing more than to say that the residence of one of the marriage partners may not be in the United States."

The record fails to contain persuasive documentation which reflects that the applicant's wife, a medical doctor and only qualifying relative, would suffer any type of hardship other than the hardship of separation if she remained in the United States continuing with her career while the applicant returns temporarily to Cameroon. The hardship of separation anticipated here, if the applicant's spouse chose to remain in the United States, is the usual hardship which might be anticipated during a temporary separation between family members caused by military, business, educational, or other obligations. While certainly inconvenient, such hardship does not rise to the level of "exceptional" as contemplated by Congress.

In this proceeding, it is the applicant alone who bears the full burden of proving his or her eligibility. Matter of T--S--Y--, 7 I&N Dec. 582 (BIA 1957); Matter of Y--, 7 I&N Dec. 697 (BIA 1958). In this case, the burden of proof has not been met, and the order dismissing the appeal will be affirmed.

ORDER: The order of July 19, 1999 dismissing the appeal is affirmed.