

Pt. 216

8 CFR Ch. I (1–1–21 Edition)

(2) *Unsuccessful EVUS enrollment.* If a covered alien's EVUS enrollment is unsuccessful per paragraph (g)(3) of this section, the covered alien may re-attempt enrollment or contact CBP.

(3) *Rescission of notification of compliance.* If a covered alien's nonimmigrant visa has been automatically provisionally revoked as described in paragraph (g)(4) of this section, the covered alien may re-attempt enrollment or contact CBP.

**PART 216—CONDITIONAL BASIS OF
LAWFUL PERMANENT RESIDENCE
STATUS**

- Sec.
- 216.1 Definition of conditional permanent resident.
- 216.2 Notification requirements.
- 216.3 Termination of conditional resident status.
- 216.4 Joint petition to remove conditional basis of lawful permanent resident status for alien spouse.
- 216.5 Waiver of requirement to file joint petition to remove conditions by alien spouse.
- 216.6 Petition by investor to remove conditional basis of lawful permanent resident status.

AUTHORITY: 8 U.S.C. 1101, 1103, 1154, 1184, 1186a, 1186b, and 8 CFR part 2.

SOURCE: 53 FR 30018, Aug. 10, 1988, unless otherwise noted.

§216.1 Definition of conditional permanent resident.

A *conditional permanent resident* is an alien who has been lawfully admitted for permanent residence within the meaning of section 101(a)(20) of the Act, except that a conditional permanent resident is also subject to the conditions and responsibilities set forth in section 216 or 216A of the Act, whichever is applicable, and part 216 of this chapter. Unless otherwise specified, the rights, privileges, responsibilities and duties which apply to all other lawful permanent residents apply equally to conditional permanent residents, including but not limited to the right to apply for naturalization (if otherwise eligible), the right to file petitions on behalf of qualifying relatives, the privilege of residing permanently in the United States as an immigrant in accordance with the immigration laws,

such status not having changed; the duty to register with the Selective Service System, when required; and the responsibility for complying with all laws and regulations of the United States. All references within this chapter to lawful permanent residents apply equally to conditional permanent residents, unless otherwise specified. The conditions of section 216 of the Act shall not apply to lawful permanent resident status based on a self-petitioning relationship under section 204(a)(1)(A)(iii), 204(a)(1)(A)(iv), 204(a)(1)(B)(ii), or 204(a)(1)(B)(iii) of the Act or based on eligibility as the derivative child of a self-petitioning spouse under section 204(a)(1)(A)(iii) or 204(a)(1)(B)(ii) of the Act, regardless of the date on which the marriage to the abusive citizen or lawful permanent resident occurred.

[53 FR 30018, Aug. 10, 1988, as amended at 59 FR 26590, May 23, 1994; 61 FR 13079, Mar. 26, 1996]

§216.2 Notification requirements.

(a) *When alien acquires status of conditional permanent resident.* At the time an alien acquires conditional permanent residence through admission to the United States with an immigrant visa or adjustment of status under section 245 of the Act, the Service shall notify the alien of the conditional basis of the alien's status, of the requirement that the alien apply for removal of the conditions within the ninety days immediately preceding the second anniversary of the alien's having been granted such status, and that failure to apply for removal of the conditions will result in automatic termination of the alien's lawful status in the United States.

(b) *When alien is required to apply for removal of the conditional basis of lawful permanent resident status.* Approximately 90 days before the second anniversary of the date on which the alien obtained conditional permanent residence, the Service should notify the alien a second time of the requirement that the alien and the petitioning spouse or alien entrepreneur must file a petition to remove the conditional basis of the alien's lawful permanent residence. Such notification shall be

mailed to the alien's last known address.

(c) *Effect of failure to provide notification.* Failure of the Service to provide notification as required by either paragraph (a) or (b) of this section does not relieve the alien and the petitioning spouse, or alien entrepreneur of the requirement to file a petition to remove conditions within the 90 days immediately preceding the second anniversary of the date on which the alien obtained permanent residence.

[53 FR 30018, Aug. 10, 1988, as amended at 59 FR 26590, May 23, 1994]

§ 216.3 Termination of conditional resident status.

(a) *During the two-year conditional period.* The director shall send a formal written notice to the conditional permanent resident of the termination of the alien's conditional permanent resident status if the director determines that any of the conditions set forth in section 216(b)(1) or 216A(b)(1) of the Act, whichever is applicable, are true, or it becomes known to the government that an alien entrepreneur who was admitted pursuant to section 203(b)(5) of the Act obtained his or her investment capital through other than legal means (such as through the sale of illegal drugs). If the Service issues a notice of intent to terminate an alien's conditional resident status, the director shall not adjudicate Form I-751 or Form I-829 until it has been determined that the alien's status will not be terminated. During this time, the alien shall continue to be a lawful conditional permanent resident with all the rights, privileges, and responsibilities provided to persons possessing such status. Prior to issuing the notice of termination, the director shall provide the alien with an opportunity to review and rebut the evidence upon which the decision is to be based, in accordance with § 103.2(b)(2) of this chapter. The termination of status, and all of the rights and privileges concomitant thereto (including authorization to accept or continue in employment in this country), shall take effect as of the date of such determination by the director, although the alien may request a review of such determination in removal proceedings. In addition to the

notice of termination, the director shall issue a notice to appear in accordance with 8 CFR part 239. During the ensuing removal proceedings, the alien may submit evidence to rebut the determination of the director. The burden of proof shall be on the Service to establish, by a preponderance of the evidence, that one or more of the conditions in section 216(b)(1) or 216A(b)(1) of the Act, whichever is applicable, are true, or that an alien entrepreneur who was admitted pursuant to section 203(b)(5) of the Act obtained his or her investment capital through other than legal means (such as through the sale of illegal drugs).

(b) *Determination of fraud after two years.* If, subsequent to the removal of the conditional basis of an alien's permanent resident status, the director determines that an alien spouse obtained permanent resident status through a marriage which was entered into for the purpose of evading the immigration laws or an alien entrepreneur obtained permanent resident status through a commercial enterprise which was improper under section 216A(b)(1) of the Act, the director may institute rescission proceedings pursuant to section 246 of the Act (if otherwise appropriate) or removal proceedings under section 240 of the Act.

[62 FR 10349, Mar. 6, 1997]

§ 216.4 Joint petition to remove conditional basis of lawful permanent resident status for alien spouse.

(a) *Filing the petition—(1) General procedures.* Within the 90-day period immediately preceding the second anniversary of the date on which the alien obtained permanent residence, the alien and the alien's spouse who filed the original immigrant visa petition or fiance/fiancee petition through which the alien obtained permanent residence must file a Petition to Remove the Conditions on Residence (Form I-751) with the Service. The petition shall be filed within this time period regardless of the amount of physical presence which the alien has accumulated in the United States. Before Form I-751 may be considered as properly filed, it must be accompanied by the fee required under 8 CFR 106.2 and by documentation as described in paragraph (a)(5) of

§216.4

8 CFR Ch. I (1–1–21 Edition)

this section, and it must be properly signed by the alien and the alien's spouse. If the joint petition cannot be filed due to the termination of the marriage through annulment, divorce, or the death of the petitioning spouse, or if the petitioning spouse refuses to join in the filing of the petition, the conditional permanent resident may apply for a waiver of the requirement to file the joint petition in accordance with the provisions of §216.5 of this part. Upon receipt of a properly filed Form I-751, the alien's conditional permanent resident status shall be extended automatically, if necessary, until such time as the director has adjudicated the petition.

(2) *Dependent children.* Dependent children of a conditional permanent resident who acquired conditional permanent resident status concurrently with the parent may be included in the joint petition filed by the parent and the parent's petitioning spouse. A child shall be deemed to have acquired conditional residence status concurrently with the parent if the child's residence was acquired on the same date or within 90 days thereafter. Children who cannot be included in a joint petition filed by the parent and parent's petitioning spouse due to the child's not having acquired conditional resident status concurrently with the parent, the death of the parent, or other reasons may file a separate Petition to Remove the Conditions on Residence (Form I-751).

(3) [Reserved]

(4) *Physical presence at time of filing.* A petition may be filed regardless of whether the alien is physically present in the United States. However, if the alien is outside the United States at the time of filing, he or she must return to the United States, with his or her spouse and dependent children, to comply with the interview requirements contained in the Act. Furthermore, if the documentation submitted in support of the petition includes affidavits of third parties having knowledge of the bona fides of the marital relationship, the petitioner must arrange for the affiants to be present at the interview, at no expense to the government. Once the petition has been properly filed, the alien may travel outside

the United States and return if in possession of documentation as set forth in §211.1(b)(1) of this chapter, provided the alien and the petitioning spouse comply with the interview requirements described in §216.4(b). An alien who is not physically present in the United States during the filing period but subsequently applies for admission to the United States shall be processed in accordance with §235.11 of this chapter.

(5) *Documentation.* Form I-751 shall be accompanied by evidence that the marriage was not entered into for the purpose of evading the immigration laws of the United States. Such evidence may include:

(i) Documentation showing joint ownership of property;

(ii) Lease showing joint tenancy of a common residence;

(iii) Documentation showing commingling of financial resources;

(iv) Birth certificates of children born to the marriage;

(v) Affidavits of third parties having knowledge of the bona fides of the marital relationship, or

(vi) Other documentation establishing that the marriage was not entered into in order to evade the immigration laws of the United States.

(6) *Termination of status for failure to file petition.* Failure to properly file Form I-751 within the 90-day period immediately preceding the second anniversary of the date on which the alien obtained lawful permanent residence on a conditional basis shall result in the automatic termination of the alien's permanent residence status and the initiation of proceedings to remove the alien from the United States. In such proceedings the burden shall be on the alien to establish that he or she complied with the requirement to file the joint petition within the designated period. Form I-751 may be filed after the expiration of the 90-day period only if the alien establishes to the satisfaction of the director, in writing, that there was good cause for the failure to file Form I-751 within the required time period. If the joint petition is filed prior to the jurisdiction vesting with the immigration judge in removal proceedings and the director excuses

the late filing and approves the petition, he or she shall restore the alien's permanent residence status, remove the conditional basis of such status and cancel any outstanding notice to appear in accordance with §239.2 of this chapter. If the joint petition is not filed until after jurisdiction vests with the immigration judge, the immigration judge may terminate the matter upon joint motion by the alien and the Service.

(b) *Interview*—(1) *Authority to waive interview.* The director of the regional service center shall review the Form I-751 filed by the alien and the alien's spouse to determine whether to waive the interview required by the Act. If satisfied that the marriage was not for the purpose of evading the immigration laws, the regional service center director may waive the interview and approve the petition. If not so satisfied, then the regional service center director shall forward the petition to the district director having jurisdiction over the place of the alien's residence so that an interview of both the alien and the alien's spouse may be conducted. The director must either waive the requirement for an interview and adjudicate the petition or arrange for an interview within 90 days of the date on which the petition was properly filed.

(2) *Location of interview.* Unless waived, an interview on the Form I-751 shall be conducted by an immigration examiner or other officer so designated by the district director at the district office, files control office or suboffice having jurisdiction over the residence of the joint petitioners.

(3) *Termination of status for failure to appear for interview.* If the conditional resident alien and/or the petitioning spouse fail to appear for an interview in connection with the joint petition required by section 216(c) of the Act, the alien's permanent residence status will be automatically terminated as of the second anniversary of the date on which the alien obtained permanent residence. The alien shall be provided with written notification of the termination and the reasons therefor, and a notice to appear shall be issued placing the alien under removal proceedings. The alien may seek review of the deci-

sion to terminate his or her status in such proceedings, but the burden shall be on the alien to establish compliance with the interview requirements. If the alien submits a written request that the interview be rescheduled or that the interview be waived, and the director determines that there is good cause for granting the request, the interview may be rescheduled or waived, as appropriate. If the interview is rescheduled at the request of the petitioners, the Service shall not be required to conduct the interview within the 90-day period following the filing of the petition.

(c) *Adjudication of petition.* The director shall adjudicate the petition within 90 days of the date of the interview, unless the interview is waived in accordance with paragraph (b)(1) of this section. In adjudicating the petition the director shall determine whether—

(1) The qualifying marriage was entered into in accordance with the laws of the place where the marriage took place;

(2) The qualifying marriage has been judicially annulled or terminated, other than through the death of a spouse;

(3) The qualifying marriage was entered into for the purpose of procuring permanent residence status for the alien; or

(4) A fee or other consideration was given (other than a fee or other consideration to an attorney for assistance in preparation of a lawful petition) in connection with the filing of the petition through which the alien obtained conditional permanent residence. If derogatory information is determined regarding any of these issues, the director shall offer the petitioners the opportunity to rebut such information. If the petitioners fail to overcome such derogatory information the director may deny the joint petition, terminate the alien's permanent residence, and issue a notice to appear to initiate removal proceedings. If derogatory information not relating to any of these issues is determined during the course of the interview, such information shall be forwarded to the investigations unit for appropriate action. If no unresolved derogatory information is determined relating to these issues, the

§216.5

8 CFR Ch. I (1-1-21 Edition)

petition shall be approved and the conditional basis of the alien's permanent residence status removed, regardless of any action taken or contemplated regarding other possible grounds for removal.

(d) *Decision*—(1) *Approval*. If the director approves the joint petition he or she shall provide written notice of the decision to the alien and shall require the alien to report to the appropriate office of the Service for processing for a new Permanent Resident Card (if necessary), at which time the alien shall surrender any Permanent Resident Card previously issued.

(2) *Denial*. If the director denies the joint petition, he or she shall provide written notice to the alien of the decision and the reason(s) therefor and shall issue a notice to appear under section 239 of the Act and 8 CFR part 239. The alien's lawful permanent resident status shall be terminated as of the date of the director's written decision. The alien shall also be instructed to surrender any Permanent Resident Card previously issued by the Service. No appeal shall lie from the decision of the director; however, the alien may seek review of the decision in removal proceedings. In such proceedings the burden of proof shall be on the Service to establish, by a preponderance of the evidence, that the facts and information set forth by the petitioners are not true or that the petition was properly denied.

[53 FR 30018, Aug. 10, 1988, as amended at 54 FR 30369, July 20, 1989; 59 FR 26590, May 23, 1994; 62 FR 10349, Mar. 6, 1997; 63 FR 70315, Dec. 21, 1998; 74 FR 26939, June 5, 2009; 85 FR 46925, Aug. 3, 2020]

§216.5 Waiver of requirement to file joint petition to remove conditions by alien spouse.

(a) *General*. (1) A conditional resident alien who is unable to meet the requirements under section 216 of the Act for a joint petition for removal of the conditional basis of his or her permanent resident status may file Form I-751, Petition to Remove the Conditions on Residence, if the alien requests a waiver, was not at fault in failing to meet the filing requirement, and the conditional resident alien is able to establish that:

(i) Deportation or removal from the United States would result in extreme hardship;

(ii) The marriage upon which his or her status was based was entered into in good faith by the conditional resident alien, but the marriage was terminated other than by death, and the conditional resident was not at fault in failing to file a timely petition; or

(iii) The qualifying marriage was entered into in good faith by the conditional resident but during the marriage the alien spouse or child was battered by or subjected to extreme cruelty committed by the citizen or permanent resident spouse or parent.

(2) A conditional resident who is in exclusion, deportation, or removal proceedings may apply for the waiver only until such time as there is a final order of exclusion, deportation or removal.

(b) *Fee*. Form I-751 shall be accompanied by the appropriate fee required under 8 CFR 106.2.

(c) [Reserved]

(d) *Interview*. The service center director may refer the application to the appropriate local office and require that the alien appear for an interview in connection with the application for a waiver. The director shall deny the application and initiate removal proceedings if the alien fails to appear for the interview as required, unless the alien establishes good cause for such failure and the interview is rescheduled.

(e) *Adjudication of waiver application*—

(1) *Application based on claim of hardship*. In considering an application for a waiver based upon an alien's claim that extreme hardship would result from the alien's removal from the United States, the director shall take into account only those factors that arose subsequent to the alien's entry as a conditional permanent resident. The director shall bear in mind that any removal from the United States is likely to result in a certain degree of hardship, and that only in those cases where the hardship is extreme should the application for a waiver be granted. The burden of establishing that extreme hardship exists rests solely with the applicant.

(2) *Application for waiver based upon the alien's claim that the marriage was*

entered into in good faith. In considering whether an alien entered into a qualifying marriage in good faith, the director shall consider evidence relating to the amount of commitment by both parties to the marital relationship. Such evidence may include—

- (i) Documentation relating to the degree to which the financial assets and liabilities of the parties were combined;
- (ii) Documentation concerning the length of time during which the parties cohabited after the marriage and after the alien obtained permanent residence;
- (iii) Birth certificates of children born to the marriage; and
- (iv) Other evidence deemed pertinent by the director.

(3) *Application for waiver based on alien's claim of having been battered or subjected to extreme mental cruelty.* A conditional resident who entered into the qualifying marriage in good faith, and who was battered or was the subject of extreme cruelty or whose child was battered by or was the subject of extreme cruelty perpetrated by the United States citizen or permanent resident spouse during the marriage, may request a waiver of the joint filing requirement. The conditional resident parent of a battered or abused child may apply for the waiver regardless of the child's citizenship or immigration status.

(i) For the purpose of this chapter the phrase "was battered by or was the subject of extreme cruelty" includes, but is not limited to, being the victim of any act or threatened act of violence, including any forceful detention, which results or threatens to result in physical or mental injury. Psychological or sexual abuse or exploitation, including rape, molestation, incest (if the victim is a minor) or forced prostitution shall be considered acts of violence.

(ii) A conditional resident or former conditional resident who has not departed the United States after termination of resident status may apply for the waiver. The conditional resident may apply for the waiver regardless of his or her present marital status. The conditional resident may still be residing with the citizen or permanent resi-

dent spouse, or may be divorced or separated.

(iii) Evidence of physical abuse may include, but is not limited to, expert testimony in the form of reports and affidavits from police, judges, medical personnel, school officials and social service agency personnel. The Service must be satisfied with the credibility of the sources of documentation submitted in support of the application.

(iv) The Service is not in a position to evaluate testimony regarding a claim of extreme mental cruelty provided by unlicensed or untrained individuals. Therefore, all waiver applications based upon claims of extreme mental cruelty must be supported by the evaluation of a professional recognized by the Service as an expert in the field. An evaluation which was obtained in the course of the divorce proceedings may be submitted if it was provided by a professional recognized by the Service as an expert in the field.

(v) The evaluation must contain the professional's full name, professional address and license number. It must also identify the licensing, certifying, or registering authority. The Service retains the right to verify the professional's license.

(vi) The Service's decision on extreme mental cruelty waivers will be based upon the evaluation of the recognized professional. The Service reserves the right to request additional evaluations from expert witnesses chosen by the Service. Requests for additional evaluations must be authorized by the Assistant Regional Commissioner for Adjudications.

(vii) Licensed clinical social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists are professionals recognized by the Service for the purpose of this section. A clinical social worker who is not licensed only because the state in which he or she practices does not provide for licensing will be considered a licensed professional recognized by the Service if he or she is included in the Register of Clinical Social Workers published by the National Association of Social Workers or is certified by the American Board of Examiners in Clinical Social Work.

This entire section in yellow has been overruled by VAWA 1994's any credible evidence rules. It is no longer applicable

This section of the regulations in yellow can only be implementing in a manner that is consistent with 8 U.S. C. 1367 VAWA confidentiality

§216.6

8 CFR Ch. I (1–1–21 Edition)

(viii) As directed by the statute, the information contained in the application and supporting documents shall not be released without a court order or the written consent of the applicant; or, in the case of a child, the written consent of the parent or legal guardian who filed the waiver application on the child's behalf. Information may be released only to the applicant, his or her authorized representative, an officer of the Department of Justice, or any federal or State law enforcement agency. Any information provided under this part may be used for the purposes of enforcement of the Act or in any criminal proceeding.

(f) *Decision.* The director shall provide the alien with written notice of the decision on the application for waiver. If the decision is adverse, the director shall advise the alien of the reasons therefor, notify the alien of the termination of his or her permanent residence status, instruct the alien to surrender any Permanent Resident Card issued by the Service and issue a notice to appear placing the alien in removal proceedings. No appeal shall lie from the decision of the director; however, the alien may seek review of such decision in removal proceedings.

[53 FR 30018, Aug. 10, 1988, as amended at 56 FR 22637, May 16, 1991; 59 FR 26591, May 23, 1994; 62 FR 10350, Mar. 6, 1997; 63 FR 70315, Dec. 21, 1998; 74 FR 26939, June 5, 2009; 85 FR 46925, Aug. 3, 2020]

§216.6 Petition by investor to remove conditional basis of lawful permanent resident status.

(a) *Filing the petition*—(1) *General procedures.* (i) A petition to remove the conditional basis of the permanent resident status of an investor accorded conditional permanent residence pursuant to section 203(b)(5) of the Act must be filed by the investor with the appropriate fee. The investor must file within the 90-day period preceding the second anniversary of the date on which the investor acquired conditional permanent residence. Before the petition may be considered as properly filed, it must be accompanied by the fee required under 8 CFR 106.2, and by documentation as described in paragraph (a)(4) of this section, and it must be properly signed by the investor.

Upon receipt of a properly filed petition, the investor's conditional permanent resident status shall be extended automatically, if necessary, until such time as USCIS has adjudicated the petition.

(ii) The investor's spouse and children may be included in the investor's petition to remove conditions. Where the investor's spouse and children are not included in the investor's petition to remove conditions, the spouse and each child must each file his or her own petition to remove the conditions on their permanent resident status, unless the investor is deceased. If the investor is deceased, the spouse and children may file separate petitions or may be included in one petition. A child who reached the age of 21 or who married during the period of conditional permanent residence, or a former spouse who became divorced from the investor during the period of conditional permanent residence, may be included in the investor's petition or must each file a separate petition.

(2) [Reserved]

(3) *Physical presence at time of filing.* A petition may be filed regardless of whether the alien is physically present in the United States. However, if the alien is outside the United States at the time of filing, he or she must return to the United States, with his or her spouse and children, if necessary, to comply with the interview requirements contained in the Act. Once the petition has been properly filed, the alien may travel outside the United States and return if in possession of documentation as set forth in §211.1(b)(1) of this chapter, provided the alien complies with the interview requirements described in paragraph (b) of this section. An alien who is not physically present in the United States during the filing period but subsequently applies for admission to the United States shall be processed in accordance with §235.11 of this chapter.

(4) *Documentation.* The petition for removal of conditions must be accompanied by the following evidence:

(i) [Reserved]

(ii) Evidence that the alien invested or was actively in the process of investing the requisite capital. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, an

audited financial statement or other probative evidence; and

(iii) Evidence that the alien sustained the actions described in paragraph (a)(4)(i) and (a)(4)(ii) of this section throughout the period of the alien's residence in the United States. The alien will be considered to have sustained the actions required for removal of conditions if he or she has, in good faith, substantially met the capital investment requirement of the statute and continuously maintained his or her capital investment over the two years of conditional residence. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, bank statements, invoices, receipts, contracts, business licenses, Federal or State income tax returns, and Federal or State quarterly tax statements.

(iv) Evidence that the alien created or can be expected to create within a reasonable time ten full-time jobs for qualifying employees. In the case of a "troubled business" as defined in 8 CFR 204.6(j)(4)(ii), the alien investor must submit evidence that the commercial enterprise maintained the number of existing employees at no less than the pre-investment level for the period following his or her admission as a conditional permanent resident. Such evidence may include payroll records, relevant tax documents, and Forms I-9.

(5) *Termination of status for failure to file petition.* Failure to properly file the petition to remove conditions within the 90-day period immediately preceding the second anniversary of the date on which the investor obtained lawful permanent residence on a conditional basis shall result in the automatic termination of the investor's permanent resident status and the initiation of removal proceedings. USCIS shall send a written notice of termination and a notice to appear to an investor who fails to timely file a petition for removal of conditions. No appeal shall lie from this decision; however, the investor may request a review of the determination during removal proceedings. In proceedings, the burden of proof shall rest with the investor to show by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she complied with the requirement to file the petition within

the designated period. USCIS may deem the petition to have been filed prior to the second anniversary of the investor's obtaining conditional permanent resident status and accept and consider a late petition if the investor demonstrates to USCIS' satisfaction that failure to file a timely petition was for good cause and due to extenuating circumstances. If the late petition is filed prior to jurisdiction vesting with the immigration judge in proceedings and USCIS excuses the late filing and approves the petition, USCIS shall restore the investor's permanent resident status, remove the conditional basis of such status, and cancel any outstanding notice to appear in accordance with 8 CFR 239.2. If the petition is not filed until after jurisdiction vests with the immigration judge, the immigration judge may terminate the matter upon joint motion by the investor and DHS.

(6) *Death of investor and effect on spouse and children.* If an investor dies during the prescribed 2-year period of conditional permanent residence, the spouse and children of the investor will be eligible for removal of conditions if it can be demonstrated that the conditions set forth in paragraph (a)(4) of this section have been met.

(b) *Petition review*—(1) *Authority to waive interview.* USCIS shall review the petition to remove conditions and the supporting documents to determine whether to waive the interview required by the Act. If satisfied that the requirements set forth in paragraph (c)(1) of this section have been met, USCIS may waive the interview and approve the petition. If not so satisfied, then USCIS may require that an interview of the investor be conducted.

(2) *Location of interview.* Unless waived, an interview relating to the petition to remove conditions for investors shall be conducted by a USCIS immigration officer at the office that has jurisdiction over either the location of the investor's commercial enterprise in the United States, the investor's residence in the United States, or the location of the adjudication of the petition, at the agency's discretion.

(3) *Termination of status for failure to appear for interview.* If the investor fails

to appear for an interview in connection with the petition when requested by USCIS, the investor's permanent resident status will be automatically terminated as of the second anniversary of the date on which the investor obtained permanent residence. The investor will be provided with written notification of the termination and the reasons therefore, and a notice to appear shall be issued placing the investor in removal proceedings. The investor may seek review of the decision to terminate his or her status in such proceedings, but the burden shall be on the investor to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she complied with the interview requirements. If the investor has failed to appear for a scheduled interview, he or she may submit a written request to USCIS asking that the interview be rescheduled or that the interview be waived. That request should explain his or her failure to appear for the scheduled interview, and if a request for waiver of the interview, the reasons such waiver should be granted. If USCIS determines that there is good cause for granting the request, the interview may be rescheduled or waived, as appropriate. If USCIS waives the interview, USCIS shall restore the investor's conditional permanent resident status, cancel any outstanding notice to appear in accordance with 8 CFR 239.2, and proceed to adjudicate the investor's petition. If USCIS reschedules that investor's interview, USCIS shall restore the investor's conditional permanent resident status, and cancel any outstanding notice to appear in accordance with 8 CFR 239.2.

(c) *Adjudication of petition.* (1) The decision on the petition shall be made within 90 days of the date of filing or within 90 days of the interview, whichever is later. In adjudicating the petition, the director shall determine whether:

- (i) [Reserved]
- (ii) The alien invested or was actively in the process of investing the requisite capital; and
- (iii) The alien sustained the actions described in paragraphs (c)(1)(i) and (c)(1)(ii) of this section throughout the period of the alien's residence in the

United States. The alien will be considered to have sustained the actions required for removal of conditions if he or she has, in good faith, substantially met the capital investment requirement of the statute and continuously maintained his or her capital investment over the two years of conditional residence.

(iv) The alien created or can be expected to create within a reasonable period of time ten full-time jobs to qualifying employees. In the case of a "troubled business" as defined in 8 CFR 204.6(j)(4)(ii), the alien maintained the number of existing employees at no less than the pre-investment level for the previous two years.

(2) If derogatory information is determined regarding any of these issues or it becomes known to the government that the investor obtained his or her investment funds through other than legal means, USCIS shall offer the investor the opportunity to rebut such information. If the investor fails to overcome such derogatory information or evidence that the investment funds were obtained through other than legal means, USCIS may deny the petition, terminate the investor's permanent resident status, and issue a notice to appear. If derogatory information not relating to any of these issues is determined during the course of the interview, such information shall be forwarded to the investigations unit for appropriate action. If no unresolved derogatory information is determined relating to these issues, the petition shall be approved and the conditional basis of the investor's permanent resident status removed, regardless of any action taken or contemplated regarding other possible grounds for removal.

(d) *Decision—(1) Approval.* If, after initial review or after the interview, USCIS approves the petition, USCIS will remove the conditional basis of the investor's permanent resident status as of the second anniversary of the date on which the investor acquired conditional permanent residence. USCIS shall provide written notice of the decision to the investor. USCIS

may request the investor and derivative family members to appear for biometrics at a USCIS facility for processing for a new Permanent Resident Card.

(2) *Denial.* If, after initial review or after the interview, USCIS denies the petition, USCIS will provide written notice to the investor of the decision and the reason(s) therefore, and shall issue a notice to appear. The investor's lawful permanent resident status and that of his or her spouse and any children shall be terminated as of the date of USCIS' written decision. The investor shall also be instructed to surrender any Permanent Resident Card previously issued by USCIS. No appeal shall lie from this decision; however, the investor may seek review of the decision in removal proceedings. In proceedings, the burden shall rest with USCIS to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that the facts and information in the investor's petition for removal of conditions are not true and that the petition was properly denied.

[59 FR 26591, May 23, 1994, as amended at 63 FR 70315, Dec. 21, 1998; 74 FR 26939, June 5, 2009; 84 FR 35809, July 24, 2019; 85 FR 46925, Aug. 3, 2020]

PART 217—VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

Sec.

217.1 Scope.

217.2 Eligibility.

217.3 Maintenance of status.

217.4 Inadmissibility and deportability.

217.5 Electronic System for Travel Authorization.

217.6 Carrier agreements.

217.7 Electronic data transmission requirement.

AUTHORITY: 8 U.S.C. 1103, 1187; 8 CFR part 2.

SOURCE: 53 FR 24901, June 30, 1988, unless otherwise noted.

§ 217.1 Scope.

The Visa Waiver Pilot Program (VWPP) described in this section is established pursuant to the provisions of section 217 of the Act.

[62 FR 10351, Mar. 6, 1997]

§ 217.2 Eligibility.

(a) *Definitions.* As used in this part, the term:

Carrier refers to the owner, charterer, lessee, or authorized agent of any commercial vessel or commercial aircraft engaged in transporting passengers to the United States from a foreign place.

Designated country refers to Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom refers only to British citizens who have the unrestricted right of permanent abode in the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, and the Isle of Man); it does not refer to British overseas citizens, British dependent territories' citizens, or citizens of British Commonwealth countries. Taiwan refers only to individuals who have unrestricted right of permanent abode on Taiwan and are in possession of an electronic passport bearing a personal identification (household registration) number.

Round trip ticket means any return trip transportation ticket in the name of an arriving Visa Waiver Pilot Program applicant on a participating carrier valid for at least 1 year, electronic ticket record, airline employee passes indicating return passage, individual vouchers for return passage, group vouchers for return passage for charter flights, and military travel orders which include military dependents for return to duty stations outside the United States on U.S. military flights. A period of validity of 1 year need not be reflected on the ticket itself, provided that the carrier agrees that it will honor the return portion of the ticket at any time, as provided in Form I-775, Visa Waiver Pilot Program Agreement.

(b) *Special program requirements*—(1) *General.* In addition to meeting all of the requirements for the Visa Waiver