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Press Release

USCIS REMINDS APPLICANTS FOR ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS AND OTHER BENEFITS TO OBTAIN ADVANCE PAROLE BEFORE HOLIDAY TRAVEL ABROAD

WASHINGTON, DC - U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) reminds individuals with a pending application for adjustment of status to that of lawful permanent resident, a pending application for relief under section 203 of the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA 203), a pending asylum application, or an approved application for Temporary Protected Status (TPS), to obtain Advance Parole by filing Form I-131, Application for Travel Document (available online at www.uscis.gov), from USCIS before traveling abroad.

Advance Parole is permission to re-enter the United States after traveling abroad in order to continue processing for adjustment of status or other benefits. Individuals must be approved for Advance Parole before leaving the United States. Travel outside of the United States without Advance Parole may result in serious consequences, including being unable to return to the United States and having pending immigration-related applications denied. An asylum applicant who leaves the United States on advance parole and returns to the country of claimed persecution shall be presumed to have abandoned his or her asylum application absent compelling reasons for such return.

Applicants can apply for Advance Parole at a USCIS Service Center. Processing times at Service Centers range from 90-150 days. Applicants planning travel abroad should plan ahead due to the busy holiday travel season. For more information on Advance Parole, see "How do I get a Travel Document?" at <http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/howdoi/travdoc.htm>.

Note:

Under the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996, aliens who depart the United States after being unlawfully present in the United States for certain periods can be barred from admission to lawful permanent resident status, even if they have obtained Advance Parole. Those aliens who have been unlawfully present in the United States for more than 180 days, but less than one year are inadmissible for three years; those who have been unlawfully present for a year or more are inadmissible for 10 years. Aliens who are unlawfully present, and who depart the U.S. and subsequently reenter under a grant of parole, may nevertheless be ineligible to adjust their status.

An alien who has been admitted as a refugee or has been granted asylum does not need to obtain advance parole, if applying for adjustment of status under the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), however, such aliens need a refugee travel document in order to travel abroad. USCIS urges all aliens with pending applications for adjustment of status, relief under NACARA 203, asylum and those applicants currently in Temporary Protected Status (TPS) to consult an immigration attorney, immigration assistance organization accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals, the USCIS National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283, or the USCIS web site: www.uscis.gov before making any foreign travel plans.