

Waiver allows illegals married to citizens to apply for green card

By [Diana Davis](#)

ATLANTA —

The Obama administration has just announced new rules that come as a relief for hundreds of thousands of U.S. citizens married to illegal immigrants.

Their spouses can now apply to become legal residents without long separations from family members in the United States. Channel 2's Diana Davis talked to an Atlanta family that's been waiting months for the announcement.

Adam Adacker and his wife Rocio have been married 11 years. He said his wife came to the United States illegally from Mexico 15 years ago to escape violence from Mexican drug cartels. He told Davis the new ruling will stop his wife from having to live in the shadows.

“Right now, she doesn't have a driver's license, and she can't work, so it does nothing but benefit us as a family. (Now,) she can feel safe. She can get a job. She can contribute,” he said.

The new waiver means Adacker's wife and others married to U.S. citizens can apply for a green card while she stays in the country. Previously, residents in her position had to cross the border to apply and risk being turned down and getting stuck. The Adackers no longer have to worry about the risk of separation.

“We don't have to be separated from our kids. If the chance does occur that she does get denied the waiver, then we're here. We can try again,” Adacker said.

The waiver does not affect couples already stranded in Mexico, including Dalton's Angelica and Ramon Gonzales. Davis first spoke to the couple and their family six months ago.

Mrs. Gonzales is an illegal immigrant, but she was raised in the United States. She and her husband, a U.S. citizen, traveled to Mexico, but their waiver was denied. Now, she is stuck in Mexico for 10 years, but her husband has chosen to remain by her side.

Hundreds of thousands of couples who haven't risked the trip may now be able to get those waivers, according to Atlanta immigration lawyer Charles Kuck.

“Over a million people are going to be eligible for this. No doubt about it, I've got several hundred families that have been waiting for this rule change, because they don't want to be separated for three, four, five, 12, 18 months,” he said.

The Anackers have two young children, both U.S. citizens. Now, it looks like their mother can

get her green card without risking long separation.

“It’s a great gift for them as well,” Adam Anacker told Davis.

Immigration officials start accepting applications for the waivers on March 3, but the paperwork may take up to eight or nine months to complete.

<http://www.wsbtv.com/news/news/local/waiver-allows-illegals-married-citizens-apply-gree/nTmNn/>