§ 245.18 Physicians with approved employment-based petitions serving in a medically underserved area or a Veterans Affairs facility.

(a) Which physicians are eligible for this benefit? Any alien physician who has been granted a national interest waiver under §204.12 of this chapter may submit Form I–485 during the 6-year period following Service approval of a second preference employment-based immigrant visa petition.

(b) Do alien physicians have special time-related requirements for adjustment?

(1) Alien physicians who have been granted a national interest waiver under §204.12 of this chapter must meet all the adjustment of status requirements of this part.

(2) The Service shall not approve an adjustment application filed by an alien physician who obtained a waiver under section 203(b)(2)(B)(ii) of the Act until the alien physician has completed the period of required service established in §204.12 of this chapter.

(c) Are the filing procedures and documentary requirements different for these particular alien physicians? Alien physicians submitting adjustment applications upon approval of an immigrant petition are required to follow the procedures outlined within this part with the following modifications.

(1) Delayed fingerprinting. Fingerprinting, as noted in the Form I–485 instructions, will not be scheduled at the time of filing. Fingerprinting will be scheduled upon the physician’s completion of the required years of service.

(2) Delayed medical examination. The required medical examination, as specified in §245.5, shall not be submitted with Form I–485. The medical examination report shall be submitted with the documentary evidence noting the physician’s completion of the required years of service.

(d) Employment authorization. (1) Once USCIS has approved a petition described in paragraph (a) of this section, the alien physician may apply for permanent residence and employment authorization on the forms designated by USCIS with the fee prescribed in §103.7(b)(1) and in accordance with the form instructions.

(2) Since section 203(b)(2)(B)(ii) of the Act requires the alien physician to complete the required employment before USCIS can approve the alien physician’s adjustment application, an alien physician who was in lawful nonimmigrant status when he or she filed the adjustment application is not required to maintain a nonimmigrant status while the adjustment application remains pending. Even if the alien physician’s nonimmigrant status expires, the alien physician shall not be considered to be unlawfully present, so long as the alien physician is practicing medicine in accordance with §204.5(k)(4)(iii) of this chapter.

(e) When does the Service begin counting the physician’s 5-year or 3-year medical practice requirement? Except as provided in this paragraph, the 6-year period during which a physician must provide the required 5 years of service begins on the date of the notice approving the Form I–140 and the national interest waiver. Alien physicians who have a 3-year medical practice requirement must complete their service within the 4-year period beginning on that date.

(1) If the physician does not already have employment authorization and so must obtain employment authorization before the physician can begin working, then the period begins on the date the Service issues the employment authorization document.

(2) If the physician formerly held status as a J–1 nonimmigrant, but obtained a waiver of the foreign residence requirement and a change of status to that of an H–1B nonimmigrant, pursuant to section 214(l) of the Act, as amended by section 230 of Public Law 103–416, and §212.7(c)(9) of this chapter, the period begins on the date of the alien’s change from J–1 to H–1B status. The Service will include the alien’s compliance with the 3-year period of service required under section 203(b)(2)(B)(ii)(II) of the Act in calculating the alien’s compliance with the 5 or 3-year medical practice requirement. If an alien is
still in J-1 nonimmigrant status when the Service approves a Form I-140 petition with a national interest job offer waiver, the aggregate period during which the medical practice requirement period must be completed will begin on the date the Service issues an employment authorization document.

(f) Will the Service provide information to the physician about evidence and supplemental filings? The Service shall provide the physician with the information and the projected timetables for completing the adjustment process, as described in this paragraph. If the physician either files the Form I-485 concurrently with or waits to subsequently file the Form I-485 while the previously filed Form I-140 is still pending, then the Service will give this information upon approval of the Form I-140. If the physician does not file the adjustment application until after approval of the Form I-140 visa petition, the Service shall provide this information upon receipt of the Form I-485 adjustment application.

(1) The Service shall note the date that the medical service begins (provided the physician already had work authorization at the time the Form I-140 was filed) or the date that an employment authorization document was issued.

(2) A list of the evidence necessary to satisfy the requirements of paragraphs (g) and (h) of this section.

(3) A projected timeline noting the dates that the physician will need to submit preliminary evidence two years and 120 days into his or her medical service in an underserved area or VA facility, and a projected date six years and 120 days in the future on which the physician’s final evidence of completed medical service will be due.

(g) Will physicians be required to file evidence prior to the end of the 5 or 3-year period? (1) For physicians with a 5-year service requirement, no later than 120 days after the second anniversary of the approval of Petition for Immigrant Worker, Form I-140, the alien physician must submit to the Service Center having jurisdiction over his or her place of employment documentary evidence that proves the physician has in fact satisfied the service requirement. Such evidence must include, but is not limited to:

(1) Individual Federal income tax returns, including copies of the alien's W-2 forms, for the entire 5-year period or the balance years of the 5-year period that follow the submission of the evidence required in paragraph (e) of this section;

(2) Documentation from the employer attesting to the full-time medical service rendered during the required aggregate period. The documentation shall address instances of breaks in employment, other than routine breaks such as paid vacations;

(3) If the physician established his or her own practice, documents noting the actual establishment of the practice, including incorporation of the medical practice (if incorporated), the business license, and the business tax returns and tax withholding documents submitted for the entire 3-year period, or the balance years of the 5-year period that follow the submission of the evidence required in paragraph (e) of this section.

(i) What if the physician does not comply with the requirements of paragraphs (f) and (g) of this section? If an alien physician does not submit (in accordance with paragraphs (f) and (g) of this

(a) Eligibility. USCIS may adjust the status to that of a lawful permanent resident, a native or citizen of Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos who:

(1) Was inspected and paroled into the United States before October 1, 1997;

(2) Was paroled into the United States from Vietnam under the auspices of the Orderly Departure Program (ODP), a refugee camp in East Asia, or a displaced person camp administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Thailand;

(3) Was physically present in the United States prior to and on October 1, 1997; and

(4) Is otherwise eligible to receive an immigrant visa and is otherwise admissible as an immigrant to the United States except as provided in paragraphs (e) and (f) of this section.

(b) Application. An applicant must submit an application on the form designated by USCIS with the fee specified in 8 CFR 103.7(b)(1) and in accordance with the form instructions. Applicants who are 14 through 79 years of age must also submit the biometrics service fee described in 8 CFR 103.17.

(c) Applications from aliens in immigration proceedings. An alien in pending immigration proceedings who believes he or she is eligible for adjustment of status under section 586 of Public Law 106–429 must apply directly to USCIS in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section. An immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals may not adjudicate applications for adjustment of status under this section. An alien who is currently in immigration proceedings who alleges eligibility for adjustment of status under section 586 of Public Law 106–429 may contact USCIS counsel after filing an application to...