

petitioner to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that any person on whose behalf he/she is making a request under this section is an eligible spouse or unmarried, minor child. Evidence to establish the claimed relationship for a spouse or unmarried, minor child as set forth in 8 CFR part 204 must be submitted with the request for accompanying or following-to-join benefits. Where possible this will consist of the documents specified in § 204.2(a)(1)(i)(B), (a)(1)(iii)(B), (a)(2), (d)(2), and (d)(5) of this chapter.

(f) *Approvals*—(1) *Spouse or child in the United States*. When a spouse or child of a refugee is in the United States and the Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative is approved, USCIS will notify the refugee of such approval. Employment will be authorized incident to status.

(2) *Spouse or child outside the United States*. When a spouse or child of a refugee is outside the United States and the Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative is approved, USCIS will notify the refugee of such approval. USCIS will send the approved request to the Department of State for transmission to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate having jurisdiction over the area in which the refugee's spouse or child is located.

(3) *Benefits*. The Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative will remain valid for the duration of the relationship to the refugee and, in the case of a child, while the child is under 21 years of age and unmarried, provided also that the principal's status has not been revoked. However, the approved Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative will cease to confer immigration benefits after it has been used by the beneficiary for admission to the United States as a derivative of a refugee. For a derivative inside or arriving in the United States, USCIS will issue a document reflecting the derivative's current status as a refugee to demonstrate employment authorization, or the derivative may apply, under 8 CFR 274a.12(a), for evidence of employment authorization.

(g) *Denials*. If the spouse or child of a refugee is found to be ineligible for derivative status, a written notice explaining the basis for denial shall be forwarded to the principal refugee.

There shall be no appeal from this decision. However, the denial shall be without prejudice to the consideration of a new petition or motion to reopen the refugee or asylee relative petition proceeding, if the refugee establishes eligibility for the accompanying or following-to-join benefits contained in this part.

[63 FR 3795, Jan. 27, 1998, as amended at 76 FR 53783, Aug. 29, 2011; 76 FR 73476, Nov. 29, 2011]

§ 207.8 Physical presence in the United States.

For the purpose of adjustment of status under section 209(a)(1) of the Act, the required one year physical presence of the applicant in the United States is computed from the date the applicant entered the United States as a refugee.

[46 FR 45118, Sept. 10, 1981. Redesignated at 63 FR 3795, Jan. 27, 1998]

§ 207.9 Termination of refugee status.

The refugee status of any alien (and of the spouse or child of the alien) admitted to the United States under section 207 of the Act will be terminated by USCIS if the alien was not a refugee within the meaning of section 101(a)(42) of the Act at the time of admission. USCIS will notify the alien in writing of its intent to terminate the alien's refugee status. The alien will have 30 days from the date notice is served upon him or her in accordance with 8 CFR 103.8, to present written or oral evidence to show why the alien's refugee status should not be terminated. There is no appeal under this chapter I from the termination of refugee status by USCIS. Upon termination of refugee status, USCIS will process the alien under sections 235, 240, and 241 of the Act.

[76 FR 53784, Aug. 29, 2011]

PART 208—PROCEDURES FOR ASYLUM AND WITHHOLDING OF REMOVAL

Subpart A—Asylum and Withholding of Removal

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- 208.30 Credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, and reasonable possibility of torture determinations involving stowaways and applicants for admission who are found inadmissible pursuant to section 212(a)(6)(C) or 212(a)(7) of the Act, whose entry is limited or suspended under section 212(f) or 215(a)(1) of the Act, or who failed to apply for protection from persecution in a third country where potential relief is available while en route to the United States.
- 208.31 Reasonable fear of persecution or torture determinations involving aliens ordered removed under section 238(b) of the Act and aliens whose removal is reinstated under section 241(a)(5) of the Act.

AUTHORITY: 8 U.S.C. 1101, 1103, 1158, 1226, 1252, 1282; Title VII of Pub. L. 110–229; 8 CFR part 2; Pub. L. 115–218.

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SOURCE: 62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Asylum and Withholding of Removal

§ 208.1 General.

(a) *Applicability*—(1) *General*. Unless otherwise provided in this chapter I, this subpart A shall apply to all applications for asylum under section 208 of the Act or for withholding of deportation or withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, or under the Convention Against Torture, whether before an asylum officer or an immigration judge, regardless of the date of filing. For purposes of this chapter I, withholding of removal shall also mean withholding of deportation under section 243(h) of the Act, as it appeared prior to April 1, 1997, except as provided in § 208.16(d). Such applications are referred to as “asylum applications.” The provisions of this part 208 shall not affect the finality or validity of any decision made by a district director, an immigration judge, or the Board of Immigration Appeals in any such case prior to April 1, 1997. No asylum application that was filed with a district director, asylum officer, or immigration judge prior to April 1, 1997, may be reopened or otherwise reconsidered under the provisions of this part 208 except by motion granted in the exercise of discretion by the Board of Immigration Appeals, an immigration judge, or an asylum officer for proper cause shown. Motions to reopen or reconsider must meet the requirements of sections 240(c)(6) and (c)(7) of the Act, and 8 CFR parts 103 and 1003, as applicable.

(2) *Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*. The provisions of this subpart A shall not apply prior to January 1, 2030, to an alien physically present in or arriving in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands seeking to apply for asylum. No application for asylum may be filed prior to January 1, 2030, pursuant to section 208 of the Act by an alien physically present in or arriving in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Effective on the transition program effective date, the provisions of this subpart A shall apply to aliens physically present in or

arriving in the CNMI with respect to withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act and withholding and deferral of removal under the Convention Against Torture.

(b) *Training of asylum officers.* The Associate Director of USCIS Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations (RAIO) shall ensure that asylum officers receive special training in international human rights law, nonadversarial interview techniques, and other relevant national and international refugee laws and principles. The Associate Director of USCIS Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations (RAIO) shall also, in cooperation with the Department of State and other appropriate sources, compile and disseminate to asylum officers information concerning the persecution of persons in other countries on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, torture of persons in other countries, and other information relevant to asylum determinations, and shall maintain a documentation center with information on human rights conditions.

(c) *Particular social group.* For purposes of adjudicating an application for asylum under section 208 of the Act or an application for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, a particular social group is one that is based on an immutable or fundamental characteristic, is defined with particularity, and is recognized as socially distinct in the society at question. Such a particular social group cannot be defined exclusively by the alleged persecutory acts or harms and must also have existed independently of the alleged persecutory acts or harms that form the basis of the claim. The Secretary, in general, will not favorably adjudicate claims of aliens who claim a fear of persecution on account of membership in a particular social group consisting of or defined by the following circumstances: Past or present criminal activity or association (including gang membership); presence in a country with generalized violence or a high crime rate; being the subject of a recruitment effort by criminal, terrorist, or persecutory groups; the targeting of the applicant

for criminal activity for financial gain based on perceptions of wealth or affluence; interpersonal disputes of which governmental authorities were unaware or uninvolved; private criminal acts of which governmental authorities were unaware or uninvolved; past or present terrorist activity or association; past or present persecutory activity or association; or status as an alien returning from the United States. This list is nonexhaustive, and the substance of the alleged particular social group, rather than the precise form of its delineation, shall be considered in determining whether the group falls within one of the categories on the list. No alien shall be found to be a refugee or have it decided that the alien's life or freedom would be threatened based on membership in a particular social group in any case unless that person articulates on the record, or provides a basis on the record for determining, the definition and boundaries of the alleged particular social group. A failure to define, or provide a basis for defining, a formulation of a particular social group before an immigration judge shall waive any such claim for all purposes under the Act, including on appeal. Any waived claim on this basis shall not serve as the basis for any motion to reopen or reconsider for any reason, including a claim of ineffective assistance of counsel unless the alien complies with the procedural requirements for such a motion and demonstrates that counsel's failure to define, or provide a basis for defining, a formulation of a particular social group constituted egregious conduct.

(d) *Political opinion.* For purposes of adjudicating an application for asylum under section 208 of the Act or an application for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, a political opinion is one expressed by or imputed to an applicant in which the applicant possesses an ideal or conviction in support of the furtherance of a discrete cause related to political control of a State or a unit thereof. The Secretary, in general, will not favorably adjudicate claims of aliens who claim a fear of persecution on account of a political opinion defined solely by generalized disapproval of, disagreement with, or opposition to criminal,

terrorist, gang, guerilla, or other non-state organizations absent expressive behavior in furtherance of a cause against such organizations related to efforts by the State to control such organizations or behavior that is antithetical to or otherwise opposes the ruling legal entity of the State or a legal sub-unit of the State. A person who has been forced to abort a pregnancy or to undergo involuntary sterilization, or who has been persecuted for failure or refusal to undergo such a procedure or for other resistance to a coercive population control program, shall be deemed to have been persecuted on account of political opinion, and a person who has a well-founded fear that he or she will be forced to undergo such a procedure or subject to persecution for such failure, refusal, or resistance shall be deemed to have a well-founded fear of persecution on account of political opinion.

(e) *Persecution.* For purposes of screening or adjudicating an application for asylum under section 208 of the Act or an application for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, persecution requires an intent to target a belief or characteristic, a severe level of harm, and the infliction of a severe level of harm by the government of a country or by persons or an organization that the government was unable or unwilling to control. For purposes of evaluating the severity of the level of harm, persecution is an extreme concept involving a severe level of harm that includes actions so severe that they constitute an exigent threat. Persecution does not encompass the generalized harm that arises out of civil, criminal, or military strife in a country, nor does it encompass all treatment that the United States regards as unfair, offensive, unjust, or even unlawful or unconstitutional. It does not include intermittent harassment, including brief detentions; threats with no actual effort to carry out the threats, except that particularized threats of severe harm of an immediate and menacing nature made by an identified entity may constitute persecution; or, non-severe economic harm or property damage, though this list is nonexhaustive. The existence of laws or government policies that are unen-

forced or infrequently enforced do not, by themselves, constitute persecution, unless there is credible evidence that those laws or policies have been or would be applied to an applicant personally.

(f) *Nexus.* For purposes of adjudicating an application for asylum under section 208 of the Act or an application or withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, the Secretary, in general, will not favorably adjudicate the claims of aliens who claim persecution based on the following list of nonexhaustive circumstances:

(1) Interpersonal animus or retribution;

(2) Interpersonal animus in which the alleged persecutor has not targeted, or manifested an animus against, other members of an alleged particular social group in addition to the member who has raised the claim at issue;

(3) Generalized disapproval of, disagreement with, or opposition to criminal, terrorist, gang, guerilla, or other non-state organizations absent expressive behavior in furtherance of a discrete cause against such organizations related to control of a State or expressive behavior that is antithetical to the State or a legal unit of the State;

(4) Resistance to recruitment or coercion by guerilla, criminal, gang, terrorist or other non-state organizations;

(5) The targeting of the applicant for criminal activity for financial gain based on wealth or affluence or perceptions of wealth or affluence;

(6) Criminal activity;

(7) Perceived, past or present, gang affiliation; or,

(8) Gender.

(g) *Evidence based on stereotypes.* For purposes of adjudicating an application for asylum under section 208 of the Act or an application for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, evidence offered in support of such an application which promotes cultural stereotypes about a country, its inhabitants, or an alleged persecutor, including stereotypes based on race, religion, nationality, or gender, shall not be admissible in adjudicating that application, provided that nothing in this paragraph shall be construed as prohibiting the submission of evidence that

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an alleged persecutor holds stereotypical views of the applicant.

[64 FR 8487, Feb. 19, 1999, as amended at 74 FR 55736, Oct. 28, 2009; 76 FR 53784, Aug. 29, 2011; 85 FR 29310, May 14, 2020; 85 FR 80385, Dec. 11, 2020]

§ 208.2 Jurisdiction.

(a) *Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations (RAIO)*. Except as provided in paragraph (b) or (c) of this section, RAIO shall have initial jurisdiction over an asylum application filed by an alien physically present in the United States or seeking admission at a port-of-entry. RAIO shall also have initial jurisdiction over credible fear determinations under § 208.30 and reasonable fear determinations under § 208.31.

(b) *Jurisdiction of Immigration Court in general*. Immigration judges shall have exclusive jurisdiction over asylum applications filed by an alien who has been served a Form I-221, Order to Show Cause; Form I-122, Notice to Applicant for Admission Detained for a Hearing before an Immigration Judge; or Form I-862, Notice to Appear, after the charging document has been filed with the Immigration Court. Immigration judges shall also have jurisdiction over any asylum applications filed prior to April 1, 1997, by alien crewmembers who have remained in the United States longer than authorized, by applicants for admission under the Visa Waiver Pilot Program, and by aliens who have been admitted to the United States under the Visa Waiver Pilot Program. Immigration judges shall also have the authority to review reasonable fear determinations referred to the Immigration Court under § 208.31, and credible fear determinations referred to the Immigration Court under § 208.30.

(c) *Certain aliens not entitled to proceedings under section 240 of the Act—(1) Asylum applications and withholding of removal applications only*. After Form I-863, Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge, has been filed with the Immigration Court, an immigration judge shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any asylum application filed on or after April 1, 1997, by:

(i) An alien crewmember who:

(A) Is an applicant for a landing permit;

(B) Has been refused permission to land under section 252 of the Act; or

(C) On or after April 1, 1997, was granted permission to land under section 252 of the Act, regardless of whether the alien has remained in the United States longer than authorized;

(ii) An alien stowaway who has been found to have a credible fear of persecution or torture pursuant to the procedures set forth in subpart B of this part;

(iii) An alien who is an applicant for admission pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program under section 217 of the Act, except that if such an alien is an applicant for admission to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, then he or she shall not be eligible for asylum prior to January 1, 2030;

(iv) An alien who was admitted to the United States pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program under section 217 of the Act and has remained longer than authorized or has otherwise violated his or her immigration status, except that if such an alien was admitted to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, then he or she shall not be eligible for asylum in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands prior to January 1, 2030;

(v) An alien who has been ordered removed under § 235(c) of the Act, as described in § 235.8(a) of this chapter (applicable only in the event that the alien is referred for proceedings under this paragraph by the Regional Director pursuant to section 235.8(b)(2)(ii) of this chapter);

(vi) An alien who is an applicant for admission, or has been admitted, as an alien classified under section 101(a)(15)(S) of the Act (applicable only in the event that the alien is referred for proceedings under this paragraph by the district director);

(vii) An alien who is an applicant for admission to Guam or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands pursuant to the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program under section 212(l) of the Act, except that if such an alien is an applicant for admission to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, then he or she shall not be eligible for asylum prior to January 1, 2030; or

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(viii) An alien who was admitted to Guam or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands pursuant to the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program under section 212(1) of the Act and has remained longer than authorized or has otherwise violated his or her immigration status, except that if such an alien was admitted to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, then he or she shall not be eligible for asylum in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands prior to January 1, 2030.

(ix) An alien found to have a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, or reasonable possibility of torture in accordance with §§ 208.30, 1003.42, or 1208.30.

(2) *Withholding of removal applications only.* After Form I-863, Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge, has been filed with the Immigration Court, an immigration judge shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any application for withholding of removal filed by:

(i) An alien who is the subject of a reinstated removal order pursuant to section 241(a)(5) of the Act; or

(ii) An alien who has been issued an administrative removal order pursuant to section 238 of the Act as an alien convicted of committing an aggravated felony.

(3) *Rules of procedure—(i) General.* Except as provided in this section, proceedings falling under the jurisdiction of the immigration judge pursuant to paragraph (c)(1) or (c)(2) of this section shall be conducted in accordance with the same rules of procedure as proceedings conducted under 8 CFR part 240, subpart A. The scope of review in proceedings conducted pursuant to paragraph (c)(1) of this section shall be limited to a determination of whether the alien is eligible for asylum or withholding or deferral of removal, and whether asylum shall be granted in the exercise of discretion. The scope of review in proceedings conducted pursuant to paragraph (c)(2) of this section shall be limited to a determination of whether the alien is eligible for withholding or deferral of removal. During such proceedings, all parties are prohibited from raising or considering any other issues, including but not limited to issues of admissibility, deport-

ability, eligibility for waivers, and eligibility for any other form of relief.

(ii) *Notice of hearing procedures and in-absentia decisions.* The alien will be provided with notice of the time and place of the proceeding. The request for asylum and withholding of removal submitted by an alien who fails to appear for the hearing shall be denied. The denial of asylum and withholding of removal for failure to appear may be reopened only upon a motion filed with the immigration judge with jurisdiction over the case. Only one motion to reopen may be filed, and it must be filed within 90 days, unless the alien establishes that he or she did not receive notice of the hearing date or was in Federal or State custody on the date directed to appear. The motion must include documentary evidence, which demonstrates that:

(A) The alien did not receive the notice;

(B) The alien was in Federal or State custody and the failure to appear was through no fault of the alien; or

(C) “Exceptional circumstances,” as defined in section 240(e)(1) of the Act, caused the failure to appear.

(iii) *Relief.* The filing of a motion to reopen shall not stay removal of the alien unless the immigration judge issues an order granting a stay pending disposition of the motion. An alien who fails to appear for a proceeding under this section shall not be eligible for relief under section 240A, 240B, 245, 248, or 249 of the Act for a period of 10 years after the date of the denial, unless the applicant can show exceptional circumstances resulted in his or her failure to appear.

[65 FR 76130, Dec. 6, 2000, as amended at 74 FR 55736, Oct. 28, 2009; 76 FR 53784, Aug. 29, 2011; 85 FR 29310, May 14, 2020; 85 FR 80386, Dec. 11, 2020]

§ 208.3 Form of application.

(a) An asylum applicant must file Form I-589, Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal, together with any additional supporting evidence in accordance with the instructions on the form. The applicant’s spouse and children shall be listed on the application and may be included in the request for asylum if they are in the United States. One additional copy

of the principal applicant's Form I-589 must be submitted for each dependent included in the principal's application.

(b) An asylum application shall be deemed to constitute at the same time an application for withholding of removal, unless adjudicated in deportation or exclusion proceedings commenced prior to April 1, 1997. In such instances, the asylum application shall be deemed to constitute an application for withholding of deportation under section 243(h) of the Act, as that section existed prior to April 1, 1997. Where a determination is made that an applicant is ineligible to apply for asylum under section 208(a)(2) of the Act, an asylum application shall be construed as an application for withholding of removal.

(c) Form I-589 shall be filed under the following conditions and shall have the following consequences:

(1) If the application was filed on or after January 4, 1995, information provided in the application may be used as a basis for the initiation of removal proceedings, or to satisfy any burden of proof in exclusion, deportation, or removal proceedings;

(2) The applicant and anyone other than a spouse, parent, son, or daughter of the applicant who assists the applicant in preparing the application must sign the application under penalty of perjury. The applicant's signature establishes a presumption that the applicant is aware of the contents of the application. A person other than a relative specified in this paragraph who assists the applicant in preparing the application also must provide his or her full mailing address;

(3) An asylum application must be properly filed in accordance with 8 CFR part 103 and the filing instructions. Receipt of a properly filed asylum application will commence the 365-day period after which the applicant may file an application for employment authorization in accordance with § 208.7 and 8 CFR 274a.12 and 274a.13.

(4) Knowing placement of false information on the application may subject the person placing that information on the application to criminal penalties under title 18 of the United States Code and to civil or criminal penalties under section 274C of the Act; and

(5) Knowingly filing a frivolous application on or after April 1, 1997, so long as the applicant has received the notice required by section 208(d)(4) of the Act, shall render the applicant permanently ineligible for any benefits under the Act pursuant to § 208.20.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 65 FR 76131, Dec. 6, 2000; 85 FR 38626, June 26, 2020]

§ 208.4 Filing the application.

Except as prohibited in paragraph (a) of this section, asylum applications shall be filed in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section.

(a) *Prohibitions on filing.* Section 208(a)(2) of the Act prohibits certain aliens from filing for asylum on or after April 1, 1997, unless the alien can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Attorney General that one of the exceptions in section 208(a)(2)(D) of the Act applies. Such prohibition applies only to asylum applications under section 208 of the Act and not to applications for withholding of removal under § 208.16. If an applicant files an asylum application and it appears that one or more of the prohibitions contained in section 208(a)(2) of the Act apply, an asylum officer, in an interview, or an immigration judge, in a hearing, shall review the application and give the applicant the opportunity to present any relevant and useful information bearing on any prohibitions on filing to determine if the application should be rejected. For the purpose of making determinations under section 208(a)(2) of the Act, the following rules shall apply:

(1) *Authority.* Only an asylum officer, an immigration judge, or the Board of Immigration Appeals is authorized to make determinations regarding the prohibitions contained in section 208(a)(2)(B) or (C) of the Act.

(2) *One-year filing deadline.* (i) For purposes of section 208(a)(2)(B) of the Act, an applicant has the burden of proving:

(A) By clear and convincing evidence that the application has been filed within 1 year of the date of the alien's arrival in the United States, or

(B) To the satisfaction of the asylum officer, the immigration judge, or the

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Board that he or she qualifies for an exception to the 1-year deadline.

(ii) The 1-year period shall be calculated from the date of the alien's last arrival in the United States or April 1, 1997, whichever is later. When the last day of the period so computed falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the period shall run until the end of the next day that is not a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday. For the purpose of making determinations under section 208(a)(2)(B) of the Act only, an application is considered to have been filed on the date it is received by the Service, pursuant to §103.2(a)(7) of this chapter. In a case in which the application has not been received by the Service within 1 year from the applicant's date of entry into the United States, but the applicant provides clear and convincing documentary evidence of mailing the application within the 1-year period, the mailing date shall be considered the filing date. For cases before the Immigration Court in accordance with §3.13 of this chapter, the application is considered to have been filed on the date it is received by the Immigration Court. For cases before the Board of Immigration Appeals, the application is considered to have been filed on the date it is received by the Board. In the case of an application that appears to have been filed more than a year after the applicant arrived in the United States, the asylum officer, the immigration judge, or the Board will determine whether the applicant qualifies for an exception to the deadline. For aliens present in or arriving in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the 1-year period shall be calculated from either January 1, 2030 or the date of the alien's last arrival in the United States (including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands), whichever is later. No period of physical presence in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands prior to January 1, 2030, shall count toward the 1-year period. After November 28, 2009, any travel to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands from any other State shall not re-start the calculation of the 1-year period.

(3) *Prior denial of application.* For purposes of section 208(a)(2)(C) of the Act,

an asylum application has not been denied unless denied by an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals.

(4) *Changed circumstances.* (i) The term "changed circumstances" in section 208(a)(2)(D) of the Act shall refer to circumstances materially affecting the applicant's eligibility for asylum. They may include, but are not limited to:

(A) Changes in conditions in the applicant's country of nationality or, if the applicant is stateless, country of last habitual residence;

(B) Changes in the applicant's circumstances that materially affect the applicant's eligibility for asylum, including changes in applicable U.S. law and activities the applicant becomes involved in outside the country of feared persecution that place the applicant at risk; or

(C) In the case of an alien who had previously been included as a dependent in another alien's pending asylum application, the loss of the spousal or parent-child relationship to the principal applicant through marriage, divorce, death, or attainment of age 21.

(ii) The applicant shall file an asylum application within a reasonable period given those "changed circumstances." If the applicant can establish that he or she did not become aware of the changed circumstances until after they occurred, such delayed awareness shall be taken into account in determining what constitutes a "reasonable period."

(5) The term "extraordinary circumstances" in section 208(a)(2)(D) of the Act shall refer to events or factors directly related to the failure to meet the 1-year deadline. Such circumstances may excuse the failure to file within the 1-year period as long as the alien filed the application within a reasonable period given those circumstances. The burden of proof is on the applicant to establish to the satisfaction of the asylum officer, the immigration judge, or the Board of Immigration Appeals that the circumstances were not intentionally created by the alien through his or her own action or inaction, that those circumstances were directly related to the alien's failure to file the application within the 1-

year period, and that the delay was reasonable under the circumstances. Those circumstances may include but are not limited to:

(i) Serious illness or mental or physical disability, including any effects of persecution or violent harm suffered in the past, during the 1-year period after arrival;

(ii) Legal disability (e.g., the applicant was an unaccompanied minor or suffered from a mental impairment) during the 1-year period after arrival;

(iii) Ineffective assistance of counsel, provided that:

(A) The alien files an affidavit setting forth in detail the agreement that was entered into with counsel with respect to the actions to be taken and what representations counsel did or did not make to the respondent in this regard;

(B) The counsel whose integrity or competence is being impugned has been informed of the allegations leveled against him or her and given an opportunity to respond; and

(C) The alien indicates whether a complaint has been filed with appropriate disciplinary authorities with respect to any violation of counsel's ethical or legal responsibilities, and if not, why not;

(iv) The applicant maintained Temporary Protected Status, lawful immigrant or nonimmigrant status, or was given parole, until a reasonable period before the filing of the asylum application;

(v) The applicant filed an asylum application prior to the expiration of the 1-year deadline, but that application was rejected by the Service as not properly filed, was returned to the applicant for corrections, and was refiled within a reasonable period thereafter; and

(vi) The death or serious illness or incapacity of the applicant's legal representative or a member of the applicant's immediate family.

(6) *Asylum Cooperative Agreements.* Immigration officers have authority to apply section 208(a)(2)(A) of the Act, relating to the determination that the alien may be removed to a third country pursuant to a bilateral or multilateral agreement, as provided in § 208.30(e). For provisions relating to

the authority of immigration judges with respect to section 208(a)(2)(A), see 8 CFR 1240.11(g) and (h).

(c) *Amending an application after filing.* Upon the request of the alien, and as a matter of discretion, the asylum officer or immigration judge with jurisdiction may permit an asylum applicant to amend or supplement the application. Any delay in adjudication or in proceedings caused by a request to amend or supplement the application will be treated as a delay caused by the applicant for purposes of § 208.7 and 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(8).

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 64 FR 8488, Feb. 19, 1999; 64 FR 13881, Mar. 23, 1999; 65 FR 76131, Dec. 6, 2000; 69 FR 69488, Nov. 29, 2004; 74 FR 26937, June 5, 2009; 74 FR 55737, Oct. 28, 2009; 84 FR 64008, Nov. 19, 2019; 85 FR 29310, May 14, 2020; 85 FR 38626, June 26, 2020]

§ 208.5 Special duties toward aliens in custody of DHS.

(a) *General.* When an alien in the custody of DHS requests asylum or withholding of removal, or expresses a fear of persecution or harm upon return to his or her country of origin or to agents thereof, DHS shall make available the appropriate application forms and shall provide the applicant with the information required by section 208(d)(4) of the Act, including in the case of an alien who is in custody with a positive credible fear or reasonable fear determination under 8 CFR 208.30 or 208.31, and except in the case of an alien who is in custody pending a credible fear determination under 8 CFR 208.30 or a reasonable fear determination pursuant to 8 CFR 208.31. Although DHS does not have a duty in the case of an alien who is in custody pending a credible fear or reasonable fear determination under either 8 CFR 208.30 or 8 CFR 208.31, DHS may provide the appropriate forms, upon request. Where possible, expedited consideration shall be given to applications of detained aliens. Except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, such alien shall not be excluded, deported, or removed before a decision is rendered on his or her asylum application. Furthermore, except as provided in paragraph (c) of this section, an alien physically

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present in or arriving in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands shall not be excluded, deported, or removed before a decision is rendered on his or her application for withholding of removal pursuant to section 241(b)(3) of the Act and withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture. No application for asylum may be filed prior to January 1, 2030, under section 208 of the Act by an alien physically present in or arriving in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(b) *Certain aliens aboard vessels.* (1) If an alien crewmember or alien stowaway on board a vessel or other conveyance alleges, claims, or otherwise makes known to an immigration inspector or other official making an examination on the conveyance that he or she is unable or unwilling to return to his or her country of nationality or last habitual residence (if not a national of any country) because of persecution or a fear of persecution in that country on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, or if the alien expresses a fear of torture upon return to that country, the alien shall be promptly removed from the conveyance. If the alien makes such fear known to an official while off such conveyance, the alien shall not be returned to the conveyance but shall be retained in or transferred to the custody of the Service.

(i) An alien stowaway will be referred to an asylum officer for a credible fear determination under § 208.30.

(ii) An alien crewmember shall be provided the appropriate application forms and information required by section 208(d)(4) of the Act and may then have 10 days within which to submit an asylum application in accordance with the instructions on the form. DHS may extend the 10-day filing period for good cause. Once the application has been filed, DHS shall serve Form I-863 on the alien and immediately forward any such application to the appropriate Immigration Court with a copy of the Form I-863 being filed with that court.

(iii) An alien crewmember physically present in or arriving in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands can request withholding of removal

pursuant to section 241(b)(3) of the Act and withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture. However, such an alien crewmember is not eligible to request asylum pursuant to section 208 of the Act prior to January 1, 2030.

(2) Pending adjudication of the application, and, in the case of a stowaway the credible fear determination and any review thereof, the alien may be detained by the Service or otherwise paroled in accordance with § 212.5 of this chapter. However, pending the credible fear determination, parole of an alien stowaway may be permitted only when the Secretary determines, in the exercise of discretion, that parole is required to meet a medical emergency or is necessary for a legitimate law enforcement objective.

(c) *Exception to prohibition on removal.* A motion to reopen or an order to remand accompanied by an asylum application pursuant to § 208.4(b)(3)(iii) shall not stay execution of a final exclusion, deportation, or removal order unless such stay is specifically granted by the Board of Immigration Appeals or the immigration judge having jurisdiction over the motion.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 64 FR 8488, Feb. 19, 1999; 65 FR 76132, Dec. 6, 2000; 74 FR 26937, June 5, 2009; 74 FR 55737, Oct. 28, 2009; 76 FR 53784, Aug. 29, 2011; 85 FR 29310, May 14, 2020; 85 FR 80386, Dec. 11, 2020]

§ 208.6 Disclosure to third parties.

(a) Information contained in or pertaining to any application for refugee admission, asylum, withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, or protection under regulations issued pursuant to the Convention Against Torture's implementing legislation, records pertaining to any credible fear determination conducted pursuant to § 208.30, and records pertaining to any reasonable fear determination conducted pursuant to § 208.31, shall not be disclosed without the written consent of the applicant, except as permitted by this section or at the discretion of the Secretary.

(b) The confidentiality of other records kept by DHS and the Executive Office for Immigration Review that indicate that a specific alien has applied

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for refugee admission, asylum, withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, or protection under regulations issued pursuant to the Convention Against Torture's implementing legislation, or has received a credible fear or reasonable fear interview, or received a credible fear or reasonable fear review shall also be protected from disclosure, except as permitted in this section. DHS will coordinate with the Department of State to ensure that the confidentiality of those records is maintained if they are transmitted to Department of State offices in other countries.

(c) This section shall not apply to any disclosure to:

(1) Any United States Government official or contractor having a need to examine information in connection with:

(i) The adjudication of asylum applications;

(ii) The consideration of a request for a credible fear or reasonable fear interview, or a credible fear or reasonable fear review;

(iii) The defense of any legal action arising from the adjudication of, or failure to adjudicate, the asylum application, or from a credible fear determination or reasonable fear determination under § 208.30 or § 208.31;

(iv) The defense of any legal action of which the asylum application, credible fear determination, or reasonable fear determination is a part; or

(v) Any United States Government investigation concerning any criminal or civil matter; or

(2) Any Federal, State, or local court in the United States considering any legal action:

(i) Arising from the adjudication of, or failure to adjudicate, the asylum application, or from a credible fear or reasonable fear determination under § 208.30 or § 208.31; or

(ii) Arising from the proceedings of which the asylum application, credible fear determination, or reasonable fear determination is a part.

(d)(1) Any information contained in an application for refugee admission, asylum, withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, or protection under regulations issued pursuant to the Convention Against Torture's

implementing legislation, any relevant and applicable information supporting that application, any information regarding an alien who has filed such an application, and any relevant and applicable information regarding an alien who has been the subject of a reasonable fear or credible fear determination may be disclosed:

(i) As part of an investigation or adjudication of the merits of that application or of any other application under the immigration laws,

(ii) As part of any State or Federal criminal investigation, proceeding, or prosecution;

(iii) Pursuant to any State or Federal mandatory reporting requirement;

(iv) To deter, prevent, or ameliorate the effects of child abuse;

(v) As part of any proceeding arising under the immigration laws, including proceedings arising under the Act; and

(vi) As part of the Government's defense of any legal action relating to the alien's immigration or custody status including petitions for review filed in accordance with 8 U.S.C. 1252.

(2) If information may be disclosed under paragraph (d)(1) of this section, the disclosure provisions in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this section shall not apply.

(e) Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting the disclosure of information contained in an application for refugee admission, asylum, withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act, or protection under regulations issued pursuant to the Convention Against Torture's implementing legislation, information supporting that application, information regarding an alien who has filed such an application, or information regarding an alien who has been the subject of a reasonable fear or credible fear determination:

(1) Among employees and officers of the Department of Justice, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of State, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Labor, or a U.S. national security agency having a need to examine the information for an official purpose; or

(2) Where a United States Government employee or contractor has a

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good faith and reasonable belief that disclosure is necessary to prevent the commission of a crime, the furtherance of an ongoing crime, or to ameliorate the effects of a crime.

[65 FR 76133, Dec. 6, 2000, as amended at 85 FR 80386, Dec. 11, 2020]

§ 208.7 Employment authorization.

(a) *Application and decision*—(1)(i) *In General.* Subject to the restrictions contained in sections 208(d) and 236(a) of the Act, and except as otherwise provided in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, an applicant for asylum who is in the United States may apply for employment authorization pursuant to 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(8) and 274a.13(a)(2) of this chapter. The applicant must request employment authorization on the form and in the manner prescribed by USCIS and according to the form instructions, and must submit biometrics at a scheduled biometrics services appointment. USCIS has exclusive jurisdiction over all applications for employment authorization and employment authorization documentation based on a pending application for asylum under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(8), regardless of whether the asylum application is pending with USCIS or the Executive Office for Immigration Review. Employment authorization is not permitted during any period of judicial review of the asylum application, but may be requested if a Federal court remands the case to the Board of Immigration Appeals. USCIS may grant initial employment authorization under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(8) for a period that USCIS determines is appropriate at its discretion, not to exceed increments of two years.

(ii) *Period for filing.* An applicant for asylum cannot apply for initial employment authorization earlier than 365 calendar days after the date USCIS or the immigration court receives the asylum application in accordance with 8 CFR part 103 or 8 CFR 1003.31, respectively, and the filing instructions on the application. If an asylum application is denied by USCIS before a decision on an initial or renewal application for employment authorization, the application for employment authorization will be denied.

(iii) *Asylum applicants who are ineligible for employment authorization.* An applicant for asylum is not eligible for employment authorization if:

(A) The applicant was convicted at any time in the United States or abroad of any aggravated felony as described in section 101(a)(43) of the Act;

(B) The applicant was convicted on or after [effective date of final rule] of a particularly serious crime;

(C) There are serious reasons for believing that the applicant on or after August 25, 2020 has committed a serious non-political crime outside the United States;

(D) The applicant fails to establish that he or she is not subject to a mandatory denial of asylum due to any regulatory criminal grounds under 8 CFR 208.13(c);

(E) An asylum officer or an immigration judge has denied the applicant's asylum application within the 365-day period or before the adjudication of the initial request for employment authorization;

(F) The applicant filed his or her asylum application on or after August 25, 2020 and filed the application after the one-year filing deadline, unless and until the asylum officer or immigration judge determines that the applicant meets an exception for late filing as provided in section 208(a)(2)(D) of the Act and 8 CFR 208.4 and 1208.4, or unless the applicant was an unaccompanied alien child on the date the asylum application was first filed.

(G) The applicant is an alien who entered or attempted to enter the United States at a place and time other than lawfully through a U.S. port of entry on or after August 25, 2020, unless the alien demonstrates that he or she:

(1) Presented himself or herself without delay but no later than 48 hours after the entry or attempted entry to the Secretary of Homeland Security or his or her delegate;

(2) Indicated to the Secretary of Homeland Security or his or her delegate an intention to apply for asylum or expresses a fear of persecution or torture; and

(3) Has good cause for the illegal entry or attempted entry, provided such good cause does not include the evasion of U.S. immigration officers,

convenience, or for the purpose of circumvention of the orderly processing of asylum seekers at a U.S. port of entry.

(iv) *Delay.* Any delay requested or caused by the applicant in the adjudication of the asylum application that is still outstanding or has not been remedied when the initial application for employment authorization under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(8) is filed will result in a denial of such application. Examples of applicant-caused delays include, but are not limited to the list below:

(A) A request to amend or supplement an asylum application that causes a delay in its adjudication or in proceedings as described in 8 CFR 208.4(c);

(B) Failure to appear to receive and acknowledge receipt of the decision as specified in 8 CFR 208.9(d);

(C) A request for extension to submit additional evidence fewer than 14-days prior to the interview date as described by 8 CFR 208.9(e);

(D) Failure to appear for an asylum interview, unless excused by USCIS as described in 8 CFR 208.10(b)(1) for the failure to appear;

(E) Failure to appear for scheduled biometrics collection on the asylum application;

(F) A request to reschedule an interview for a later date;

(G) A request to transfer a case to a new asylum office or interview location, including when the transfer is based on a new address;

(H) A request to provide additional evidence for an interview;

(I) Failure to provide a competent interpreter at an interview; and

(J) Failure to comply with any other request needed to determine asylum eligibility.

(b) *Renewal and termination*—(1) *Renewals.* USCIS may renew employment authorization under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(8) in increments determined by USCIS in its discretion, but not to exceed increments of two years. Employment authorization is not permitted during any period of judicial review, but may be requested if a Federal court remands the case to the Board of Immigration Appeals. For employment authorization to be renewed under this section, the alien must request employment au-

thorization on the form and in the manner prescribed by USCIS and according to the form instructions. USCIS will require that an alien establish that he or she has continued to pursue an asylum application before USCIS, an immigration judge, or the Board of Immigration Appeals and that he or she continues to meet the eligibility criteria for employment authorization set forth in 8 CFR 208.7(a). For purposes of renewal of employment authorization, pursuit of an asylum application before an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals is established by submitting a copy of the referral notice or Notice to Appear placing the alien in proceedings, any hearing notices issued by the immigration court, evidence of a timely filed appeal if the alien appealed the denial of the asylum application to the Board of Immigration Appeals, or remand order to the immigration judge or Board of Immigration Appeals.

(i) *Referrals to an immigration judge.* Employment authorization granted after the required 365-day waiting period will continue for the remaining period authorized (unless otherwise terminated or revoked) if the asylum officer refers the alien's asylum application to an immigration judge. In accordance with 8 CFR 208.7(b)(1), the alien may be granted renewals of employment authorization while under such review by the immigration judge.

(ii) *Appeals to the Board of Immigration Appeals.* If the immigration judge denies the alien's asylum application, any remaining period of employment authorization will continue for the period authorized (unless otherwise terminated or revoked) during the period for filing an appeal with the Board of Immigration Appeals under 8 CFR 1003.38(b) or, if an appeal is timely filed within such period, during the pendency of the appeal with the Board of Immigration Appeals. In accordance with 8 CFR 208.7(b)(1), the alien may be granted renewals of employment authorization during these periods while the appeal is under review by the Board of Immigration Appeals and any remand to the immigration judge.

(2) *Terminations.* The alien's employment authorization granted pursuant

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to 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(8) will automatically terminate effective on the date the asylum officer denies the asylum application, thirty days after an immigration judge denies the asylum application unless timely appealed to the Board of Immigration Appeals, or the Board of Immigration Appeals affirms or upholds a denial, regardless of whether any automatic extension period pursuant to 8 CFR 274a.13(d)(3) is in place.

(c) *Severability.* The provisions in this section are intended to be independent severable parts. In the event that any provision in this section is not implemented, DHS intends that the remaining provisions be implemented as an independent rule.

[85 FR 38626, June 26, 2020]

§ 208.8 Limitations on travel outside the United States.

(a) An applicant who leaves the United States without first obtaining advance parole under § 212.5(f) of this chapter shall be presumed to have abandoned his or her application under this section.

(b) An applicant who leaves the United States pursuant to advance parole under § 212.5(f) of this chapter and returns to the country of claimed persecution shall be presumed to have abandoned his or her application, unless the applicant is able to establish compelling reasons for such return.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 65 FR 82255, Dec. 28, 2000]

§ 208.9 Procedure for interview before an asylum officer.

(a) The Service shall adjudicate the claim of each asylum applicant whose application is complete within the meaning of § 208.3(c)(3) and is within the jurisdiction of the Service.

(b) The asylum officer shall conduct the interview in a nonadversarial manner and, except at the request of the applicant, separate and apart from the general public. The purpose of the interview shall be to elicit all relevant and useful information bearing on the applicant's eligibility for asylum. At the time of the interview, the applicant must provide complete information regarding his or her identity, including

name, date and place of birth, and nationality, and may be required to register this identity. The applicant may have counsel or a representative present, may present witnesses, and may submit affidavits of witnesses and other evidence.

(c) The asylum officer shall have authority to administer oaths, verify the identity of the applicant (including through the use of electronic means), verify the identity of any interpreter, present and receive evidence, and question the applicant and any witnesses.

(d) *Completion of the interview.* Upon completion of the interview:

(1) The applicant or the applicant's representative will have an opportunity to make a statement or comment on the evidence presented. The asylum officer may, in his or her discretion, limit the length of such statement or comment and may require its submission in writing.

(2) USCIS will inform the applicant that he or she must appear in person to receive and to acknowledge receipt of the decision of the asylum officer and any other accompanying material at a time and place designated by the asylum officer, except as otherwise provided by the asylum officer. An applicant's failure to appear to receive and acknowledge receipt of the decision will be treated as delay caused by the applicant for purposes of 8 CFR 208.7.

(e) *Extensions.* The asylum officer will consider evidence submitted by the applicant together with his or her asylum application. The applicant must submit any documentary evidence at least 14 calendar days in advance of the interview date. As a matter of discretion, the asylum officer may consider evidence submitted within the 14-day period prior to the interview date or may grant the applicant a brief extension of time during which the applicant may submit additional evidence. Any such extension will be treated as a delay caused by the applicant for purposes of § 208.7.

(f) The asylum application, all supporting information provided by the applicant, any comments submitted by the Department of State or by the Service, and any other information specific to the applicant's case and

considered by the asylum officer shall comprise the record.

(g) An applicant unable to proceed with the interview in English must provide, at no expense to the Service, a competent interpreter fluent in both English and the applicant's native language or any other language in which the applicant is fluent. The interpreter must be at least 18 years of age. Neither the applicant's attorney or representative of record, a witness testifying on the applicant's behalf, nor a representative or employee of the applicant's country of nationality, or if stateless, country of last habitual residence, may serve as the applicant's interpreter. Failure without good cause to comply with this paragraph may be considered a failure to appear for the interview for purposes of § 208.10.

(h) *Asylum applicant interpreters.* For asylum interviews conducted between September 21, 2021, through March 16, 2022:

(1) Asylum applicants unable to proceed with the interview in English must use USCIS's telephonic interpreter services, so long as the applicant is fluent in one of the following languages: Akan, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Bengali, Burmese, Cantonese, Creole/Haitian Creole, Farsi-Afghani/Dari, Farsi-Iranian, Foo Chow/Fuzhou, French, Georgian, Gujarati, Hindi, Hmong, Hungarian, Indonesia/Bahasa, Konjobal, Korean, Kurdish, Lingala, Mam, Mandarin, Nepali, Pashto/Pushtu, Portuguese, Punjabi, Quiche/K'iche, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Sinhalese, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tamil, Tigrinya, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu, Uzbek, or Vietnamese.

(i) If a USCIS interpreter is unavailable, USCIS will either reschedule the interview and attribute the interview delay to USCIS for the purposes of employment authorization pursuant to § 208.7, or USCIS may, in its discretion, allow the applicant to provide an interpreter.

(ii) Except as provided in paragraph (h)(1)(iii) of this section, if an applicant is fluent in a language listed in this paragraph (h)(1) but refuses to proceed with the USCIS interpreter in order to use his or her own interpreter, USCIS will consider this a failure without

good cause to comply with this paragraph (h)(1). The applicant will be considered to have failed to appear for the interview for the purposes of 8 CFR 208.10.

(iii) If the applicant elects to proceed in a language that is not listed in this paragraph (h)(1), the applicant must provide a competent interpreter fluent in both English and the applicant's native language or any other language in which the applicant is fluent. If an applicant is unable to provide an interpreter fluent in English and the elected language not listed in this paragraph (h)(1), the applicant may provide an interpreter fluent in the elected language and one found in this paragraph (h)(1). USCIS will provide a relay interpreter to interpret between the language listed in this paragraph (h)(1) and English. The interpreter must be at least 18 years of age. Neither the applicant's attorney or representative of record, a witness testifying on the applicant's behalf, nor a representative or employee of the applicant's country of nationality, or if stateless, country of last habitual residence, may serve as the applicant's interpreter. Failure without good cause to comply with this paragraph may be considered a failure to appear for the interview for purposes of 8 CFR 208.10.

(2) [Reserved]

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 65 FR 76133, Dec. 6, 2000; 76 FR 53784, Aug. 29, 2011; 85 FR 38627, June 26, 2020; 85 FR 59660, Sept. 23, 2020; 86 FR 15076, Mar. 22, 2021; 86 FR 51788, Sept. 17, 2021]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 85 FR 59660, Sept. 23, 2020, § 208.9 was amended by adding paragraph (h), effective Sept. 23, 2020, through Mar. 22, 2021. At 86 FR 15076, Mar. 22, 2021, the expiration date for § 208.9(h) was extended to Sept. 20, 2021. At 86 FR 51788, Sept. 17, 2021, the paragraph was amended and the expiration date for § 208.9(h) was further extended to March 16, 2022.

§ 208.10 Failure to appear for an interview before an asylum officer or for a biometric services appointment for the asylum application.

(a) *Failure to appear for asylum interview or for a biometric services appointment.* (1) The failure to appear for an interview or biometric services appointment may result in:

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(i) Waiver of the right to an interview or adjudication by an asylum officer;

(ii) Dismissal of the application for asylum;

(iii) Referral of the applicant to the immigration court; or,

(iv) Denial of employment authorization.

(2) There is no requirement for USCIS to send a notice to an applicant that he or she failed to appear for his or her asylum interview or biometrics services appointment prior to issuing a decision on the application. Any rescheduling request for the asylum interview that has not yet been fulfilled on the date the application for employment authorization is filed under 8 CFR 274a.12(c)(8) will be treated as an applicant-caused delay for purposes of 8 CFR 208.7.

(b) *Rescheduling missed appointments.* USCIS, in its sole discretion, may excuse the failure to appear for an interview or biometrics services appointment and reschedule the missed appointment as follows:

(1) *Asylum Interview.* If the applicant demonstrates that he or she was unable to make the appointment due to exceptional circumstances.

(2) *Biometrics services appointment.* USCIS may reschedule the biometrics services appointment as provided in 8 CFR part 103.

[85 FR 38627, June 26, 2020]

§ 208.11 Comments from the Department of State.

(a) U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) may request, at its discretion, specific comments from the Department of State regarding individual cases or types of claims under consideration, or such other information as USCIS deems appropriate.

(b) With respect to any asylum application, the Department of State may provide, at its discretion, to USCIS:

(1) Detailed country conditions information relevant to eligibility for asylum or withholding of removal;

(2) An assessment of the accuracy of the applicant's assertions about conditions in his or her country of nationality or habitual residence and his or her particular situation;

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(3) Information about whether persons who are similarly situated to the applicant are persecuted or tortured in the applicant's country of nationality or habitual residence and the frequency of such persecution or torture; or

(4) Such other information as it deems relevant.

(c) Any comments received pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section shall be made part of the record. Unless the comments are classified under the applicable Executive Order, the applicant shall be provided an opportunity to review and respond to such comments prior to the issuance of any decision to deny the application.

[74 FR 15369, Apr. 6, 2009]

§ 208.12 Reliance on information compiled by other sources.

(a) In deciding an asylum application, or in deciding whether the alien has a credible fear of persecution or torture pursuant to § 208.30 of this part, or a reasonable fear of persecution or torture pursuant to § 208.31, the asylum officer may rely on material provided by the Department of State, other USCIS offices, or other credible sources, such as international organizations, private voluntary agencies, news organizations, or academic institutions.

(b) Nothing in this part shall be construed to entitle the applicant to conduct discovery directed toward the records, officers, agents, or employees of the Service, the Department of Justice, or the Department of State. Persons may continue to seek documents available through a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request pursuant to 8 CFR part 103.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 64 FR 8488, Feb. 19, 1999; 65 FR 76133, Dec. 6, 2000; 76 FR 53784, Aug. 29, 2011]

§ 208.13 Establishing asylum eligibility.

(a) *Burden of proof.* The burden of proof is on the applicant for asylum to establish that he or she is a refugee as defined in section 101(a)(42) of the Act. The testimony of the applicant, if credible, may be sufficient to sustain the burden of proof without corroboration. The fact that the applicant previously

established a credible fear of persecution for purposes of section 235(b)(1)(B) of the Act does not relieve the alien of the additional burden of establishing eligibility for asylum.

(b) *Eligibility.* The applicant may qualify as a refugee either because he or she has suffered past persecution or because he or she has a well-founded fear of future persecution.

(1) *Past persecution.* An applicant shall be found to be a refugee on the basis of past persecution if the applicant can establish that he or she has suffered persecution in the past in the applicant's country of nationality or, if stateless, in his or her country of last habitual residence, on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, and is unable or unwilling to return to, or avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country owing to such persecution. An applicant who has been found to have established such past persecution shall also be presumed to have a well-founded fear of persecution on the basis of the original claim. That presumption may be rebutted if an asylum officer or immigration judge makes one of the findings described in paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section. If the applicant's fear of future persecution is unrelated to the past persecution, the applicant bears the burden of establishing that the fear is well-founded.

(i) *Discretionary referral or denial.* Except as provided in paragraph (b)(1)(iii) of this section, an asylum officer shall, in the exercise of his or her discretion, refer or deny, or an immigration judge, in the exercise of his or her discretion, shall deny the asylum application of an alien found to be a refugee on the basis of past persecution if any of the following is found by a preponderance of the evidence:

(A) There has been a fundamental change in circumstances such that the applicant no longer has a well-founded fear of persecution in the applicant's country of nationality or, if stateless, in the applicant's country of last habitual residence, on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion; or

(B) The applicant could avoid future persecution by relocating to another part of the applicant's country of nationality or, if stateless, another part of the applicant's country of last habitual residence, and under all the circumstances, it would be reasonable to expect the applicant to do so.

(ii) *Burden of proof.* In cases in which an applicant has demonstrated past persecution under paragraph (b)(1) of this section, the Service shall bear the burden of establishing by a preponderance of the evidence the requirements of paragraphs (b)(1)(i)(A) or (B) of this section.

(iii) *Grant in the absence of well-founded fear of persecution.* An applicant described in paragraph (b)(1)(i) of this section who is not barred from a grant of asylum under paragraph (c) of this section, may be granted asylum, in the exercise of the decision-maker's discretion, if:

(A) The applicant has demonstrated compelling reasons for being unwilling or unable to return to the country arising out of the severity of the past persecution; or

(B) The applicant has established that there is a reasonable possibility that he or she may suffer other serious harm upon removal to that country.

(2) *Well-founded fear of persecution.* (i) An applicant has a well-founded fear of persecution if:

(A) The applicant has a fear of persecution in his or her country of nationality or, if stateless, in his or her country of last habitual residence, on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion;

(B) There is a reasonable possibility of suffering such persecution if he or she were to return to that country; and

(C) He or she is unable or unwilling to return to, or avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of such fear.

(ii) An applicant does not have a well-founded fear of persecution if the applicant could avoid persecution by relocating to another part of the applicant's country of nationality or, if stateless, another part of the applicant's country of last habitual residence, if under all the circumstances it

would be reasonable to expect the applicant to do so.

(iii) In evaluating whether the applicant has sustained the burden of proving that he or she has a well-founded fear of persecution, the asylum officer or immigration judge shall not require the applicant to provide evidence that there is a reasonable possibility he or she would be singled out individually for persecution if:

(A) The applicant establishes that there is a pattern or practice in his or her country of nationality or, if stateless, in his or her country of last habitual residence, of persecution of a group of persons similarly situated to the applicant on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion; and

(B) The applicant establishes his or her own inclusion in, and identification with, such group of persons such that his or her fear of persecution upon return is reasonable.

(3) *Reasonableness of internal relocation.* For purposes of determinations under paragraphs (b)(1)(i) and (ii) and (b)(2) of this section, adjudicators should consider the totality of the relevant circumstances regarding an applicant's prospects for relocation, including the size of the country of nationality or last habitual residence, the geographic locus of the alleged persecution, the size, reach, or numerosity of the alleged persecutor, and the applicant's demonstrated ability to relocate to the United States in order to apply for asylum.

(i) In cases in which the applicant has not established past persecution, the applicant shall bear the burden of establishing that it would not be reasonable for him or her to relocate, unless the persecution is by a government or is government-sponsored.

(ii) In cases in which the persecutor is a government or is government-sponsored, it shall be presumed that internal relocation would not be reasonable, unless DHS establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that, under all the circumstances, it would be reasonable for the applicant to relocate.

(iii) Regardless of whether an applicant has established persecution in the past, in cases in which the persecutor is not the government or a govern-

ment-sponsored actor, or otherwise is a private actor, there shall be a presumption that internal relocation would be reasonable unless the applicant establishes, by a preponderance of the evidence, that it would be unreasonable to relocate.

(iv) For purposes of determinations under paragraphs (b)(3)(ii) and (iii) of this section, persecutors who are private actors—including persecutors who are gang members, officials acting outside their official capacity, family members who are not themselves government officials, or neighbors who are not themselves government officials—shall not be considered to be persecutors who are the government or government-sponsored absent evidence that the government sponsored the persecution.

(c) *Mandatory denials*—(1) *Applications filed on or after April 1, 1997.* For applications filed on or after April 1, 1997, an applicant shall not qualify for asylum if section 208(a)(2) or 208(b)(2) of the Act applies to the applicant. If the applicant is found to be ineligible for asylum under either section 208(a)(2) or 208(b)(2) of the Act, the applicant shall be considered for eligibility for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act. The applicant shall also be considered for eligibility for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture if the applicant requests such consideration or if the evidence presented by the alien indicates that the alien may be tortured in the country of removal.

(2) *Applications filed before April 1, 1997.* (i) An immigration judge or asylum officer shall not grant asylum to any applicant who filed his or her application before April 1, 1997, if the alien:

(A) Having been convicted by a final judgment of a particularly serious crime in the United States, constitutes a danger to the community;

(B) Has been firmly resettled within the meaning of § 208.15;

(C) Can reasonably be regarded as a danger to the security of the United States;

(D) Has been convicted of an aggravated felony, as defined in section 101(a)(43) of the Act; or

(E) Ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in the persecution of any person on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

(F) Is described within section 212(a)(3)(B)(i)(I),(II), and (III) of the Act as it existed prior to April 1, 1997, and as amended by the Anti-terrorist and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996 (AEDPA), unless it is determined that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the individual is a danger to the security of the United States.

(ii) If the evidence indicates that one of the above grounds apply to the applicant, he or she shall have the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she did not so act.

(3) *Additional limitation on eligibility for asylum.* For applications filed after November 9, 2018, an alien shall be ineligible for asylum if the alien is subject to a presidential proclamation or other presidential order suspending or limiting the entry of aliens along the southern border with Mexico that is issued pursuant to subsection 212(f) or 215(a)(1) of the Act on or after November 9, 2018 and the alien enters the United States after the effective date of the proclamation or order contrary to the terms of the proclamation or order. This limitation on eligibility does not apply if the proclamation or order expressly provides that it does not affect eligibility for asylum, or expressly provides for a waiver or exception that makes the suspension or limitation inapplicable to the alien.

(4) *Additional limitation on eligibility for asylum.* Notwithstanding the provisions of §208.15, any alien who enters, attempts to enter, or arrives in the United States across the southern land border on or after July 16, 2019, after transiting through at least one country outside the alien's country of citizenship, nationality, or last lawful habitual residence en route to the United States, shall be found ineligible for asylum unless:

(i) The alien demonstrates that he or she applied for protection from persecution in at least one country outside the alien's country of citizenship, nationality, or last lawful habitual residence through which the alien

transited en route to the United States and the alien received a final judgment denying the alien protection in such country.

(ii) The alien demonstrates that he or she satisfies the definition of "victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons" provided in 8 CFR 214.11; or

(iii) The only country or countries through which the alien transited en route to the United States were, at the time of the transit, not parties to the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

(5) *Non-binding determinations.* Determinations made with respect to paragraph (c)(4)(ii) of this section are not binding on Federal departments or agencies in subsequent determinations of eligibility for T or U nonimmigrant status under section 101(a)(15)(T) or (U) of the INA or for benefits or services under 22 U.S.C. 7105 or 8 U.S.C. 1641(c)(4).

(6) *Additional limitations on eligibility for asylum.* For applications filed on or after November 20, 2020, an alien shall be found ineligible for asylum if:

(i) The alien has been convicted on or after such date of an offense arising under sections 274(a)(1)(A), 274(a)(2), or 276 of the Act;

(ii) The alien has been convicted on or after such date of a Federal, State, tribal, or local crime that the asylum officer knows or has reason to believe was committed in support, promotion, or furtherance of the activity of a criminal street gang as that term is defined either under the jurisdiction where the conviction occurred or in section 521(a) of title 18;

(iii) The alien has been convicted on or after such date of an offense for driving while intoxicated or impaired as those terms are defined under the jurisdiction where the conviction occurred (including a conviction for driving while under the influence of or impaired by alcohol or drugs) without regard to whether the conviction is classified as a misdemeanor or felony under Federal, State, tribal, or local law, in which such impaired driving was a cause of serious bodily injury or death of another person;

(iv)(A) The alien has been convicted on or after such date of a second or subsequent offense for driving while intoxicated or impaired as those terms are defined under the jurisdiction where the conviction occurred (including a conviction for driving while under the influence of or impaired by alcohol or drugs) without regard to whether the conviction is classified as a misdemeanor or felony under Federal, State, tribal, or local law;

(B) A finding under paragraph (c)(6)(iv)(A) of this section does not require the asylum officer to find the first conviction for driving while intoxicated or impaired (including a conviction for driving while under the influence of or impaired by alcohol or drugs) as a predicate offense. The asylum officer need only make a factual determination that the alien was previously convicted for driving while intoxicated or impaired as those terms are defined under the jurisdiction where the convictions occurred (including a conviction for driving while under the influence of or impaired by alcohol or drugs).

(v)(A) The alien has been convicted on or after such date of a crime that involves conduct amounting to a crime of stalking; or a crime of child abuse, child neglect, or child abandonment; or that involves conduct amounting to a domestic assault or battery offense, including a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, as described in section 922(g)(9) of title 18, a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence as described in section 921(a)(33) of title 18, a crime of domestic violence as described in section 12291(a)(8) of title 34, or any crime based on conduct in which the alien harassed, coerced, intimidated, voluntarily or recklessly used (or threatened to use) force or violence against, or inflicted physical injury or physical pain, however slight, upon a person, and committed by:

(1) An alien who is a current or former spouse of the person;

(2) An alien with whom the person shares a child in common;

(3) An alien who is cohabiting with or has cohabited with the person as a spouse;

(4) An alien similarly situated to a spouse of the person under the domes-

tic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction where the offense occurs; or

(5) Any other alien against a person who is protected from that alien's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the United States or any State, tribal government, or unit of local government.

(B) In making a determination under paragraph (c)(6)(v)(A) of this section, including in determining the existence of a domestic relationship between the alien and the victim, the underlying conduct of the crime may be considered and the asylum officer is not limited to facts found by the criminal court or provided in the underlying record of conviction.

(C) An alien who was convicted of offenses described in paragraph (c)(6)(v)(A) of this section is not subject to ineligibility for asylum on that basis if the alien would be described in section 237(a)(7)(A) of the Act were the crimes or conduct considered grounds for deportability under section 237(a)(2)(E)(i) through (ii) of the Act.

(vi) The alien has been convicted on or after such date of—

(A) Any felony under Federal, State, tribal, or local law;

(B) Any misdemeanor offense under Federal, State, tribal, or local law involving:

(1) The possession or use of an identification document, authentication feature, or false identification document without lawful authority, unless the alien can establish that the conviction resulted from circumstances showing that the document was presented before boarding a common carrier, that the document related to the alien's eligibility to enter the United States, that the alien used the document to depart a country in which the alien has claimed a fear of persecution, and that the alien claimed a fear of persecution without delay upon presenting himself or herself to an immigration officer upon arrival at a United States port of entry;

(2) The receipt of Federal public benefits, as defined in 8 U.S.C. 1611(c), from a Federal entity, or the receipt of similar public benefits from a State, tribal, or local entity, without lawful authority; or

(3) Possession or trafficking of a controlled substance or controlled-substance paraphernalia, other than a single offense involving possession for one's own use of 30 grams or less of marijuana.

(vii) The asylum officer knows or has reason to believe that the alien has engaged on or after such date in acts of battery or extreme cruelty as defined in 8 CFR 204.2(c)(1)(vi), upon a person, and committed by:

(A) An alien who is a current or former spouse of the person;

(B) An alien with whom the person shares a child in common;

(C) An alien who is cohabiting with or has cohabited with the person as a spouse;

(D) An alien similarly situated to a spouse of the person under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction where the offense occurs; or

(E) Any other alien against a person who is protected from that alien's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the United States or any State, tribal government, or unit of local government, even if the acts did not result in a criminal conviction;

(F) Except that an alien who was convicted of offenses or engaged in conduct described in paragraph (c)(6)(vii) of this section is not subject to ineligibility for asylum on that basis if the alien would be described in section 237(a)(7)(A) of the Act were the crimes or conduct considered grounds for deportability under section 237(a)(2)(E)(i)–(ii) of the Act.

(7) For purposes of paragraph (c)(6) of this section:

(i) The term “felony” means any crime defined as a felony by the relevant jurisdiction (Federal, State, tribal, or local) of conviction, or any crime punishable by more than one year of imprisonment.

(ii) The term “misdemeanor” means any crime defined as a misdemeanor by the relevant jurisdiction (Federal, State, tribal, or local) of conviction, or any crime not punishable by more than one year of imprisonment.

(iii) Whether any activity or conviction also may constitute a basis for removability under the Act is immaterial to a determination of asylum eligibility.

(iv) All references to a criminal offense or criminal conviction shall be deemed to include any attempt, conspiracy, or solicitation to commit the offense or any other inchoate form of the offense.

(v) No order vacating a conviction, modifying a sentence, clarifying a sentence, or otherwise altering a conviction or sentence, shall have any effect unless the asylum officer determines that—

(A) The court issuing the order had jurisdiction and authority to do so; and

(B) The order was not entered for rehabilitative purposes or for purposes of ameliorating the immigration consequences of the conviction or sentence.

(8) For purposes of paragraph (c)(7)(v)(B) of this section, the order shall be presumed to be for the purpose of ameliorating immigration consequences if:

(i) The order was entered after the initiation of any proceeding to remove the alien from the United States; or

(ii) The alien moved for the order more than one year after the date of the original order of conviction or sentencing.

(9) An asylum officer is authorized to look beyond the face of any order purporting to vacate a conviction, modify a sentence, or clarify a sentence to determine whether the requirements of paragraph (c)(7)(v) of this section have been met in order to determine whether such order should be given any effect under this section.

(d) *Discretion.* Factors that fall short of grounds of mandatory denial of an asylum application may constitute discretionary considerations.

(1) The following are significant adverse discretionary factors that a decision-maker shall consider, if applicable, in determining whether an alien merits a grant of asylum in the exercise of discretion:

(i) An alien's unlawful entry or unlawful attempted entry into the United States unless such entry or attempted entry was made in immediate flight from persecution in a contiguous country or unless such entry or attempted entry was made by an alien under the age of 18 at the time the entry or attempted entry was made;

(ii) The failure of an alien to apply for protection from persecution or torture in at least one country outside the alien's country of citizenship, nationality, or last lawful habitual residence through which the alien transited before entering the United States unless:

(A) The alien received a final judgment denying the alien protection in such country;

(B) The alien demonstrates that he or she satisfies the definition of "victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons" provided in 8 CFR 214.11; or

(C) Such country or all such countries were, at the time of the transit, not parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, or the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; and

(iii) An alien's use of fraudulent documents to enter the United States, unless the alien arrived in the United States by air, sea, or land directly from the applicant's home country without transiting through any other country.

(2)(i) The Secretary, except as provided in paragraph (d)(2)(ii) of this section, will not favorably exercise discretion under section 208 of the Act for an alien who:

(A) Immediately prior to his arrival in the United States or en route to the United States from the alien's country of citizenship, nationality, or last lawful habitual residence, spent more than 14 days in any one country unless:

(1) The alien demonstrates that he or she applied for protection from persecution or torture in such country and the alien received a final judgment denying the alien protection in such country;

(2) The alien demonstrates that he or she satisfies the definition of "victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons" provided in 8 CFR 214.11; or

(3) Such country was, at the time of the transit, not a party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, or the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

(B) Transits through more than one country between his country of citizenship, nationality, or last habitual residence and the United States unless:

(1) The alien demonstrates that he or she applied for protection from persecution or torture in at least one such country and received a final judgment denying the alien protection in that country;

(2) The alien demonstrates that he or she satisfies the definition of "victim of a severe form of trafficking in persons" provided in 8 CFR 214.11; or

(3) All such countries were, at the time of the transit, not parties to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, or the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;

(C) Would otherwise be subject to § 208.13(c) but for the reversal, vacatur, expungement, or modification of a conviction or sentence, unless the alien was found not guilty;

(D) Accrued more than one year of unlawful presence in the United States, as defined in sections 212(a)(9)(B)(ii) and (iii) of the Act, prior to filing an application for asylum;

(E) At the time the asylum application is filed with DHS has:

(1) Failed to timely file (or timely file a request for an extension of time to file) any required Federal, State, or local income tax returns;

(2) Failed to satisfy any outstanding Federal, State, or local tax obligations; or

(3) Has income that would result in tax liability under section 1 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and that was not reported to the Internal Revenue Service;

(F) Has had two or more prior asylum applications denied for any reason;

(G) Has withdrawn a prior asylum application with prejudice or been found to have abandoned a prior asylum application;

(H) Failed to attend an interview regarding his asylum application with DHS, unless the alien shows by a preponderance of the evidence that:

(1) Exceptional circumstances prevented the alien from attending the interview; or

(2) The interview notice was not mailed to the last address provided by the alien or his or her representative and neither the alien nor the alien's representative received notice of the interview; or

(I) Was subject to a final order of removal, deportation, or exclusion and did not file a motion to reopen to seek asylum based on changed country conditions within one year of those changes in country conditions.

(ii) Where one or more of the adverse discretionary factors set forth in paragraph (d)(2)(i) of this section are present, the Secretary, in extraordinary circumstances, such as those involving national security or foreign policy considerations, or cases in which an alien, by clear and convincing evidence, demonstrates that the denial or referral (which may result in the denial by an immigration judge) of the application for asylum would result in exceptional and extremely unusual hardship to the alien, may favorably exercise discretion under section 208 of the Act, notwithstanding the applicability of paragraph (d)(2)(i). Depending on the gravity of the circumstances underlying the application of paragraph (d)(2)(i), a showing of extraordinary circumstances might still be insufficient to warrant a favorable exercise of discretion under section 208 of the Act.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 64 FR 8488, Feb. 19, 1999; 65 FR 76133, Dec. 6, 2000; 83 FR 55952, Nov. 9, 2018; 84 FR 33843, July 16, 2019; 85 FR 67258, Oct. 21, 2020; 85 FR 80387, Dec. 11, 2020; 85 FR 82289, Dec. 17, 2020]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 85 FR 84193, Dec. 23, 2020, §208.13 was amended by adding paragraph (c)(10), effective Jan. 22, 2021. The amendment was delayed to Mar. 22, 2021 at 86 FR 6847, Jan. 25, 2021. The amendment was further delayed to Dec. 31, 2021 at 86 FR 15076, Mar. 22, 2021. The amendment was further delayed to Dec. 31, 2022, at 86 FR 73615, Dec. 28, 2021. For the convenience of the user, the added text is set forth as follows:

§ 208.13 Establishing asylum eligibility.

* * * * *

(c) * * *

(10) *Aliens who pose a danger to the security of the United States*—(i) *Public health emergencies.* If a communicable disease has triggered an ongoing declaration of a public health emergency under Federal law, such as

under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. 247d, or section 564 of the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. 360bbb-3, then an alien is ineligible for asylum under section 208 of the Act on the basis of there being reasonable grounds for regarding the alien as a danger to the security of the United States under section 208(b)(2)(A)(iv) of the Act if the alien:

(A) Exhibits symptoms indicating that he or she is afflicted with the disease, per guidance issued by the Secretary or the Attorney General, as appropriate, or

(B) Has come into contact with the disease within the number of days equivalent to the longest known incubation and contagion period for the disease, per guidance issued by the Secretary or the Attorney General, as appropriate.

(ii) *Danger to the public health caused by an epidemic outside of the United States.* If, regarding a communicable disease of public health significance as defined at 42 CFR 34.2(b), the Secretary and the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, have jointly—

(A) Determined that the physical presence in the United States of aliens who are coming from a country or countries (or one or more subdivisions or regions thereof), or have embarked at a place or places, where such disease is prevalent or epidemic (or had come from that country or countries (or one or more subdivisions or regions thereof), or had embarked at that place or places, during a period in which the disease was prevalent or epidemic there) would cause a danger to the public health in the United States; and

(B) Designated the foreign country or countries (or one or more subdivisions or regions thereof), or place or places, and the period of time or circumstances under which they jointly deem it necessary for the public health that aliens or classes of aliens described in paragraph (c)(10)(ii)(A) of this section who are still within the number of days equivalent to the longest known incubation and contagion period for the disease be regarded as a danger to the security of the United States under section 208(b)(2)(A)(iv) of the Act, including any relevant exceptions as appropriate, then—

(C) An alien or class of aliens are ineligible for asylum under section 208 of the Act on the basis of there being reasonable grounds for regarding the alien or class of aliens as a danger to the security of the United States under section 208(b)(2)(A)(iv) of the Act if the alien or class of aliens are described in (c)(10)(ii)(A) of this section and are regarded as a danger to the security of the United States as provided for in paragraph (c)(10)(ii)(B) of this section.

(iii) The grounds for mandatory denial described in paragraphs (c)(10)(i) and (ii) of this section shall not apply to an alien who is applying for asylum or withholding of removal

in the United States upon return from Canada to the United States and pursuant to the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada for Cooperation in the Examination of Refugee Status Claims from Nationals of Third Countries.

§ 208.14 Approval, denial, referral, or dismissal of application.

(a) *By an immigration judge.* Unless otherwise prohibited in § 208.13(c), an immigration judge may grant or deny asylum in the exercise of discretion to an applicant who qualifies as a refugee under section 101(a)(42) of the Act.

(b) *Approval by an asylum officer.* In any case within the jurisdiction of the RAIO, unless otherwise prohibited in § 208.13(c), an asylum officer may grant, in the exercise of his or her discretion, asylum to an applicant who qualifies as a refugee under section 101(a)(42) of the Act, and whose identity has been checked pursuant to section 208(d)(5)(A)(i) of the Act.

(c) *Denial, referral, or dismissal by an asylum officer.* If the asylum officer does not grant asylum to an applicant after an interview conducted in accordance with § 208.9, or if, as provided in § 208.10, the applicant is deemed to have waived his or her right to an interview or an adjudication by an asylum officer, the asylum officer shall deny, refer, or dismiss the application, as follows:

(1) *Inadmissible or deportable aliens.* Except as provided in paragraph (c)(4) of this section, in the case of an applicant who appears to be inadmissible or deportable under section 212(a) or 237(a) of the Act, the asylum officer shall refer the application to an immigration judge, together with the appropriate charging document, for adjudication in removal proceedings (or, where charging documents may not be issued, shall dismiss the application).

(2) *Alien in valid status.* In the case of an applicant who is maintaining valid immigrant, nonimmigrant, or Temporary Protected Status at the time the application is decided, the asylum officer shall deny the application for asylum.

(3) *Alien with valid parole.* If an applicant has been paroled into the United States and the parole has not expired or been terminated by the Service, the

asylum officer shall deny the application for asylum.

(4) *Alien paroled into the United States whose parole has expired or is terminated—*(i) *Alien paroled prior to April 1, 1997, or with advance authorization for parole.* In the case of an applicant who was paroled into the United States prior to April 1, 1997, or who, prior to departure from the United States, had received an advance authorization for parole, the asylum officer shall refer the application, together with the appropriate charging documents, to an immigration judge for adjudication in removal proceedings if the parole has expired, the Service has terminated parole, or the Service is terminating parole through issuance of the charging documents, pursuant to § 212.5(d)(2)(i) of this chapter.

(ii) *Alien paroled on or after April 1, 1997, without advance authorization for parole.* In the case of an applicant who is an arriving alien or is otherwise subject to removal under § 235.3(b) of this chapter, and was paroled into the United States on or after April 1, 1997, without advance authorization for parole prior to departure from the United States, the asylum officer will take the following actions, if the parole has expired or been terminated:

(A) *Inadmissible under section 212(a)(6)(C) or 212(a)(7) of the Act.* If the applicant appears inadmissible to the United States under section 212(a)(6)(C) or 212(a)(7) of the Act and the asylum officer does not intend to lodge any additional charges of inadmissibility, the asylum officer shall proceed in accordance with § 235.3(b) of this chapter. If such applicant is found to have a credible fear of persecution or torture based on information elicited from the asylum interview, an asylum officer may refer the applicant directly to an immigration judge in removal proceedings under section 240 of the Act, without conducting a separate credible fear interview pursuant to § 208.30. If such applicant is not found to have a credible fear based on information elicited at the asylum interview, an asylum officer will conduct a credible fear interview and the applicant will be subject to the credible fear process specified at § 208.30(b).

(B) *Inadmissible on other grounds.* In the case of an applicant who was paroled into the United States on or after April 1, 1997, and will be charged as inadmissible to the United States under provisions of the Act other than, or in addition to, sections 212(a)(6)(C) or 212(a)(7), the asylum officer shall refer the application to an immigration judge for adjudication in removal proceedings.

(d) *Applicability of §103.2(b) of this chapter.* No application for asylum or withholding of deportation shall be subject to denial pursuant to §103.2(b) of this chapter.

(e) *Duration.* If the applicant is granted asylum, the grant will be effective for an indefinite period, subject to termination as provided in §208.24.

(f) *Effect of denial of principal's application on separate applications by dependents.* The denial of an asylum application filed by a principal applicant for asylum shall also result in the denial of asylum status to any dependents of that principal applicant who are included in that same application. Such denial shall not preclude a grant of asylum for an otherwise eligible dependent who has filed a separate asylum application, nor shall such denial result in an otherwise eligible dependent becoming ineligible to apply for asylum due to the provisions of section 208(a)(2)(C) of the Act.

(g) *Applicants granted lawful permanent residence status.* If an asylum applicant is granted adjustment of status to lawful permanent resident, the Service may provide written notice to the applicant that his or her asylum application will be presumed abandoned and dismissed without prejudice, unless the applicant submits a written request within 30 days of the notice, that the asylum application be adjudicated. If an applicant does not respond within 30 days of the date the written notice was sent or served, the Service may presume the asylum application abandoned and dismiss it without prejudice.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 63 FR 12986, Mar. 17, 1998; 64 FR 27875, May 21, 1999; 65 FR 76134, Dec. 6, 2000; 76 FR 53784, Aug. 29, 2011]

§ 208.15 Definition of “firm resettlement.”

(a) An alien is considered to be firmly resettled if, after the events giving rise to the alien's asylum claim:

(1) The alien resided in a country through which the alien transited prior to arriving in or entering the United States and—

(i) Received or was eligible for any permanent legal immigration status in that country;

(ii) Resided in such a country with any non-permanent but indefinitely renewable legal immigration status (including asylee, refugee, or similar status but excluding status such as of a tourist); or

(iii) Resided in such a country and could have applied for and obtained any non-permanent but indefinitely renewable legal immigration status in that country;

(2) The alien physically resided voluntarily, and without continuing to suffer persecution or torture, in any one country for one year or more after departing his country of nationality or last habitual residence and prior to arrival in or entry into the United States, provided that time spent in Mexico by an alien who is not a native or citizen of Mexico solely as a direct result of being returned to Mexico pursuant to section 235(b)(2)(C) of the Act or of being subject to metering would not be counted for purposes of this paragraph; or

(3)(i) The alien is a citizen of a country other than the one where the alien alleges a fear of persecution and the alien was present in that country after departing his country of nationality or last habitual residence and prior to arrival in or entry into the United States; or

(ii) The alien was a citizen of a country other than the one where the alien alleges a fear of persecution, the alien was present in that country after departing his country of nationality or last habitual residence and prior to arrival in or entry into the United States, and the alien renounced that citizenship after arriving in the United States.

(b) The provisions of 8 CFR 1240.8(d) shall apply when the evidence of record indicates that the firm resettlement

bar may apply. In such cases, the alien shall bear the burden of proving the bar does not apply. Either DHS or the immigration judge may raise the issue of the application of the firm resettlement bar based on the evidence of record. The firm resettlement of an alien's parent(s) shall be imputed to the alien if the resettlement occurred before the alien turned 18 and the alien resided with the alien's parents at the time of the firm resettlement unless the alien establishes that he or she could not have derived any permanent legal immigration status or any non-permanent but indefinitely renewable legal immigration status (including asylee, refugee, or similar status but excluding status such as of a tourist) from the alien's parent.

[85 FR 80388, Dec. 11, 2020]

§ 208.16 Withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act and withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture.

(a) *Consideration of application for withholding of removal.* An asylum officer shall not decide whether the exclusion, deportation, or removal of an alien to a country where the alien's life or freedom would be threatened must be withheld, except in the case of an alien who is otherwise eligible for asylum but is precluded from being granted such status due solely to section 207(a)(5) of the Act. In exclusion, deportation, or removal proceedings, an immigration judge may adjudicate both an asylum claim and a request for withholding of removal whether or not asylum is granted.

(b) *Eligibility for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act; burden of proof.* The burden of proof is on the applicant for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act to establish that his or her life or freedom would be threatened in the proposed country of removal on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. The testimony of the applicant, if credible, may be sufficient to sustain the burden of proof without corroboration. The evidence shall be evaluated as follows:

(1) *Past threat to life or freedom.* (i) If the applicant is determined to have

suffered past persecution in the proposed country of removal on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, it shall be presumed that the applicant's life or freedom would be threatened in the future in the country of removal on the basis of the original claim. This presumption may be rebutted if an asylum officer or immigration judge finds by a preponderance of the evidence:

(A) There has been a fundamental change in circumstances such that the applicant's life or freedom would not be threatened on account of any of the five grounds mentioned in this paragraph upon the applicant's removal to that country; or

(B) The applicant could avoid a future threat to his or her life or freedom by relocating to another part of the proposed country of removal and, under all the circumstances, it would be reasonable to expect the applicant to do so.

(ii) In cases in which the applicant has established past persecution, the Service shall bear the burden of establishing by a preponderance of the evidence the requirements of paragraphs (b)(1)(i)(A) or (b)(1)(i)(B) of this section.

(iii) If the applicant's fear of future threat to life or freedom is unrelated to the past persecution, the applicant bears the burden of establishing that it is more likely than not that he or she would suffer such harm.

(2) *Future threat to life or freedom.* An applicant who has not suffered past persecution may demonstrate that his or her life or freedom would be threatened in the future in a country if he or she can establish that it is more likely than not that he or she would be persecuted on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion upon removal to that country. Such an applicant cannot demonstrate that his or her life or freedom would be threatened if the asylum officer or immigration judge finds that the applicant could avoid a future threat to his or her life or freedom by relocating to another part of the proposed country of removal and, under all the circumstances, it would be reasonable to

expect the applicant to do so. In evaluating whether it is more likely than not that the applicant's life or freedom would be threatened in a particular country on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, the asylum officer or immigration judge shall not require the applicant to provide evidence that he or she would be singled out individually for such persecution if:

(i) The applicant establishes that in that country there is a pattern or practice of persecution of a group of persons similarly situated to the applicant on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion; and

(ii) The applicant establishes his or her own inclusion in and identification with such group of persons such that it is more likely than not that his or her life or freedom would be threatened upon return to that country.

(3) *Reasonableness of internal relocation.* For purposes of determinations under paragraphs (b)(1) and (2) of this section, adjudicators should consider the totality of the relevant circumstances regarding an applicant's prospects for relocation, including the size of the country of nationality or last habitual residence, the geographic locus of the alleged persecution, the size, reach, or numerosity of the alleged persecutor, and the applicant's demonstrated ability to relocate to the United States in order to apply for withholding of removal.

(i) In cases in which the applicant has not established past persecution, the applicant shall bear the burden of establishing that it would not be reasonable for him or her to relocate, unless the persecutor is a government or is government-sponsored.

(ii) In cases in which the persecutor is a government or is government-sponsored, it shall be presumed that internal relocation would not be reasonable, unless DHS establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that, under the totality of the circumstances, it would be reasonable for the applicant to relocate.

(iii) Regardless of whether an applicant has established persecution in the past, in cases in which the persecutor

is not the government or a government-sponsored actor, or otherwise is a private actor, there shall be a presumption that internal relocation would be reasonable unless the applicant establishes, by a preponderance of the evidence, that it would be unreasonable to relocate.

(iv) For purposes of determinations under paragraphs (b)(3)(ii) and (iii) of this section, persecutors who are private actors, including but not limited to persecutors who are gang members, public officials who are not acting under color of law, or family members who are not themselves government officials or neighbors who are not themselves government officials, shall not be considered to be persecutors who are the government or government-sponsored absent evidence that the government sponsored the persecution.

(c) *Eligibility for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture.* (1) For purposes of regulations under Title II of the Act, "Convention Against Torture" shall refer to the United Nations Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, subject to any reservations, understandings, declarations, and provisos contained in the United States Senate resolution of ratification of the Convention, as implemented by section 2242 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 (Pub. L. 105-277, 112 Stat. 2681, 2681-821). The definition of torture contained in § 208.18(a) of this part shall govern all decisions made under regulations under Title II of the Act about the applicability of Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture.

(2) The burden of proof is on the applicant for withholding of removal under this paragraph to establish that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured if removed to the proposed country of removal. The testimony of the applicant, if credible, may be sufficient to sustain the burden of proof without corroboration.

(3) In assessing whether it is more likely than not that an applicant would be tortured in the proposed

country of removal, all evidence relevant to the possibility of future torture shall be considered, including, but not limited to:

- (i) Evidence of past torture inflicted upon the applicant;
- (ii) Evidence that the applicant could relocate to a part of the country of removal where he or she is not likely to be tortured;
- (iii) Evidence of gross, flagrant or mass violations of human rights within the country of removal, where applicable; and
- (iv) Other relevant information regarding conditions in the country of removal.

(4) In considering an application for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture, the immigration judge shall first determine whether the alien is more likely than not to be tortured in the country of removal. If the immigration judge determines that the alien is more likely than not to be tortured in the country of removal, the alien is entitled to protection under the Convention Against Torture. Protection under the Convention Against Torture will be granted either in the form of withholding of removal or in the form of deferral of removal. An alien entitled to such protection shall be granted withholding of removal unless the alien is subject to mandatory denial of withholding of removal under paragraphs (d)(2) or (d)(3) of this section. If an alien entitled to such protection is subject to mandatory denial of withholding of removal under paragraphs (d)(2) or (d)(3) of this section, the alien's removal shall be deferred under § 208.17(a).

(d) *Approval or denial of application—*
 (1) *General.* Subject to paragraphs (d)(2) and (d)(3) of this section, an application for withholding of deportation or removal to a country of proposed removal shall be granted if the applicant's eligibility for withholding is established pursuant to paragraphs (b) or (c) of this section.

(2) *Mandatory denials.* Except as provided in paragraph (d)(3) of this section, an application for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act or under the Convention Against Torture shall be denied if the applicant falls within section 241(b)(3)(B) of the

Act or, for applications for withholding of deportation adjudicated in proceedings commenced prior to April 1, 1997, within section 243(h)(2) of the Act as it appeared prior to that date. For purposes of section 241(b)(3)(B)(ii) of the Act, or section 243(h)(2)(B) of the Act as it appeared prior to April 1, 1997, an alien who has been convicted of a particularly serious crime shall be considered to constitute a danger to the community. If the evidence indicates the applicability of one or more of the grounds for denial of withholding enumerated in the Act, the applicant shall have the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that such grounds do not apply.

(3) *Exception to the prohibition on withholding of deportation in certain cases.* Section 243(h)(3) of the Act, as added by section 413 of Pub. L. 104–132 (110 Stat. 1214), shall apply only to applications adjudicated in proceedings commenced before April 1, 1997, and in which final action had not been taken before April 24, 1996. The discretion permitted by that section to override section 243(h)(2) of the Act shall be exercised only in the case of an applicant convicted of an aggravated felony (or felonies) where he or she was sentenced to an aggregate term of imprisonment of less than 5 years and the immigration judge determines on an individual basis that the crime (or crimes) of which the applicant was convicted does not constitute a particularly serious crime. Nevertheless, it shall be presumed that an alien convicted of an aggravated felony has been convicted of a particularly serious crime. Except in the cases specified in this paragraph, the grounds for denial of withholding of deportation in section 243(h)(2) of the Act as it appeared prior to April 1, 1997, shall be deemed to comply with the Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, Jan. 31, 1967, T.I.A.S. No. 6577.

(e) [Reserved]

(f) *Removal to third country.* Nothing in this section or § 208.17 shall prevent the Service from removing an alien to a third country other than the country

to which removal has been withheld or deferred.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 64 FR 8488, Feb. 19, 1999; 65 FR 76135, Dec. 6, 2000; 85 FR 67259, Oct. 21, 2020; 85 FR 80388, Dec. 11, 2020]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 85 FR 84193, Dec. 23, 2020, §208.16 was amended by revising paragraphs (d)(2) and (f), effective Jan. 22, 2021. The amendment was delayed to Mar. 22, 2021 at 86 FR 6847, Jan. 25, 2021. The amendment was further delayed to Dec. 31, 2021 at 86 FR 15076, Mar. 22, 2021. The amendment was further delayed to Dec. 31, 2022, at 86 FR 73615, Dec. 28, 2021. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 208.16 Withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act and withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture.

* * * * *

(d) * * *

(2) *Mandatory denials*—(i) *In general*. Except as provided in paragraph (d)(3) of this section, an application for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act or under the regulations issued pursuant to the legislation implementing the Convention Against Torture shall be denied if the applicant falls within section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act or, for applications for withholding of deportation adjudicated in proceedings commenced prior to April 1, 1997, within section 243(h)(2) of the Act as it appeared prior to that date. For purposes of section 241(b)(3)(B)(ii) of the Act, or section 243(h)(2)(B) of the Act as it appeared prior to April 1, 1997, an alien who has been convicted of a particularly serious crime shall be considered to constitute a danger to the community. If the evidence indicates the applicability of one or more of the grounds for denial of withholding enumerated in the Act, the applicant shall have the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that such grounds do not apply.

(ii) *Public health emergencies*. If a communicable disease has triggered an ongoing declaration of a public health emergency under Federal law, such as under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act, 42 U.S.C. 247d, or section 564 of the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, 21 U.S.C. 360bbb-3, then an alien is ineligible for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act and under the regulations issued pursuant to the legislation implementing the Convention Against Torture on the basis of there being reasonable grounds for regarding the alien as a danger to the security of the United States under section 241(b)(3)(B)(iv) of the Act if the alien

(A) Exhibits symptoms indicating that he or she is afflicted with the disease, per guidance issued by the Secretary or the Attorney General, as appropriate, or

(B) Has come into contact with the disease within the number of days equivalent to the longest known incubation and contagion period for the disease, per guidance issued by the Secretary or the Attorney General, as appropriate.

(iii) *Danger to the Public Health Caused by an Epidemic Outside of the United States*. If, regarding a communicable disease of public health significance as defined at 42 CFR 34.2(b), the Secretary and the Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, have jointly

(A) Determined that the physical presence in the United States of aliens who are coming from a country or countries (or one or more subdivisions or regions thereof), or have embarked at a place or places, where such disease is prevalent or epidemic (or had come from that country or countries (or one or more subdivisions or regions thereof), or had embarked at that place or places, during a period in which the disease was prevalent or epidemic there) would cause a danger to the public health in the United States, and

(B) Designated the foreign country or countries (or one or more subdivisions or regions thereof), or place or places, and the period of time or circumstances under which they jointly deem it necessary for the public health that aliens or classes of aliens described in paragraph (d)(2)(ii)(A) of this section who are still within the number of days equivalent to the longest known incubation and contagion period for the disease be regarded as a danger to the security of the United States under section 241(b)(3)(B)(iv) of the Act, including any relevant exceptions as appropriate, then—

(C) An alien or class of aliens are ineligible for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act and under the regulations issued pursuant to the legislation implementing the Convention Against Torture on the basis of there being reasonable grounds for regarding the alien or class of aliens as a danger to the security of the United States under section 241(b)(3)(B)(iv) of the Act if the alien or class of aliens are described in paragraph (d)(2)(ii)(A) of this section and are regarded as a danger to the security of the United States as provided for in paragraph (d)(2)(ii)(B) of this section.

(iv) The grounds for mandatory denial described in paragraphs (d)(2)(ii) and (iii) of this section shall not apply to an alien who is applying for asylum or withholding of removal in the United States upon return from Canada to the United States and pursuant to the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada for Cooperation in the Examination

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of Refugee Status Claims from Nationals of Third Countries.

* * * * *

(f) *Removal to third country.* (1) Nothing in this section or § 208.17 shall prevent the Department from removing an alien requesting protection to a third country other than a country to which removal is currently withheld or deferred.

(2) If an alien requests withholding or deferral of removal to his or her home country or another specific country, nothing in this section or § 208.17 precludes the Department from removing the alien to a third country prior to a determination or adjudication of the alien's initial request for withholding or deferral of removal if, after being notified of the identity of the prospective third country of removal and provided an opportunity to demonstrate that he or she is more likely than not to be tortured in that third country, the alien fails to establish that they are more likely than not to be tortured there. However, such a removal shall be executed only if the alien was:

(i) Advised at the time of requesting withholding or deferral of removal of the possibility of being removed to a third country prior to a determination or adjudication of the same under the conditions set forth in this paragraph; and

(ii) Provided, but did not accept, an opportunity to withdraw the request for withholding or deferral of removal in order to prevent such removal and, instead, proceed to removal pursuant to section 241(b) of the Act, as appropriate.

§ 208.17 Deferral of removal under the Convention Against Torture.

(a) *Grant of deferral of removal.* An alien who: has been ordered removed; has been found under § 208.16(c)(3) to be entitled to protection under the Convention Against Torture; and is subject to the provisions for mandatory denial of withholding of removal under § 208.16(d)(2) or (d)(3), shall be granted deferral of removal to the country where he or she is more likely than not to be tortured.

(b) *Notice to alien.* (1) After an immigration judge orders an alien described in paragraph (a) of this section removed, the immigration judge shall inform the alien that his or her removal to the country where he or she is more likely than not to be tortured shall be deferred until such time as the deferral is terminated under this section. The immigration judge shall inform the alien that deferral of removal:

(i) Does not confer upon the alien any lawful or permanent immigration status in the United States;

(ii) Will not necessarily result in the alien being released from the custody of the Service if the alien is subject to such custody;

(iii) Is effective only until terminated; and

(iv) Is subject to review and termination if the immigration judge determines that it is not likely that the alien would be tortured in the country to which removal has been deferred, or if the alien requests that deferral be terminated.

(2) The immigration judge shall also inform the alien that removal has been deferred only to the country in which it has been determined that the alien is likely to be tortured, and that the alien may be removed at any time to another country where he or she is not likely to be tortured.

(c) *Detention of an alien granted deferral of removal under this section.* Nothing in this section shall alter the authority of the Service to detain an alien whose removal has been deferred under this section and who is otherwise subject to detention. In the case of such an alien, decisions about the alien's release shall be made according to part 241 of this chapter.

(d) *Termination of deferral of removal.*

(1) At any time while deferral of removal is in effect, the INS District Counsel for the District with jurisdiction over an alien whose removal has been deferred under paragraph (a) of this section may file a motion with the Immigration Court having administrative control pursuant to § 3.11 of this chapter to schedule a hearing to consider whether deferral of removal should be terminated. The Service motion shall be granted if it is accompanied by evidence that is relevant to the possibility that the alien would be tortured in the country to which removal has been deferred and that was not presented at the previous hearing. The Service motion shall not be subject to the requirements for reopening in §§ 3.2 and 3.23 of this chapter.

(2) The Immigration Court shall provide notice to the alien and the Service

of the time, place, and date of the termination hearing. Such notice shall inform the alien that the alien may supplement the information in his or her initial application for withholding of removal under the Convention Against Torture and shall provide that the alien must submit any such supplemental information within 10 calendar days of service of such notice (or 13 calendar days if service of such notice was by mail). At the expiration of this 10 or 13 day period, the Immigration Court shall forward a copy of the original application, and any supplemental information the alien or the Service has submitted, to the Department of State, together with notice to the Department of State of the time, place and date of the termination hearing. At its option, the Department of State may provide comments on the case, according to the provisions of § 208.11 of this part.

(3) The immigration judge shall conduct a hearing and make a *de novo* determination, based on the record of proceeding and initial application in addition to any new evidence submitted by the Service or the alien, as to whether the alien is more likely than not to be tortured in the country to which removal has been deferred. This determination shall be made under the standards for eligibility set out in § 208.16(c). The burden is on the alien to establish that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured in the country to which removal has been deferred.

(4) If the immigration judge determines that the alien is more likely than not to be tortured in the country to which removal has been deferred, the order of deferral shall remain in place. If the immigration judge determines that the alien has not established that he or she is more likely than not to be tortured in the country to which removal has been deferred, the deferral of removal shall be terminated and the alien may be removed to that country. Appeal of the immigration judge's decision shall lie to the Board.

(e) *Termination at the request of the alien.* (1) At any time while deferral of removal is in effect, the alien may make a written request to the Immi-

gration Court having administrative control pursuant to § 3.11 of this chapter to terminate the deferral order. If satisfied on the basis of the written submission that the alien's request is knowing and voluntary, the immigration judge shall terminate the order of deferral and the alien may be removed.

(2) If necessary the immigration judge may calendar a hearing for the sole purpose of determining whether the alien's request is knowing and voluntary. If the immigration judge determines that the alien's request is knowing and voluntary, the order of deferral shall be terminated. If the immigration judge determines that the alien's request is not knowing and voluntary, the alien's request shall not serve as the basis for terminating the order of deferral.

(f) *Termination pursuant to § 208.18(c).* At any time while deferral of removal is in effect, the Attorney General may determine whether deferral should be terminated based on diplomatic assurances forwarded by the Secretary of State pursuant to the procedures in § 208.18(c).

[64 FR 8489, Feb. 19, 1999]

§ 208.18 Implementation of the Convention Against Torture.

(a) *Definitions.* The definitions in this subsection incorporate the definition of torture contained in Article 1 of the Convention Against Torture, subject to the reservations, understandings, declarations, and provisos contained in the United States Senate resolution of ratification of the Convention.

(1) Torture is defined as any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him or her or a third person information or a confession, punishing him or her for an act he or she or a third person has committed or is suspected of having committed, or intimidating or coercing him or her or a third person, or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, when such pain or suffering is inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official acting in an official capacity or other person acting in an official capacity. Pain or suffering inflicted by a public

official who is not acting under color of law shall not constitute pain or suffering inflicted by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official acting in an official capacity or other person acting in an official capacity, although a different public official acting in an official capacity or other person acting in an official capacity could instigate, consent to, or acquiesce in the pain or suffering inflicted by the public official who is not acting under color of law.

(2) Torture is an extreme form of cruel and inhuman treatment and does not include lesser forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment that do not amount to torture.

(3) Torture does not include pain or suffering arising only from, inherent in or incidental to lawful sanctions. Lawful sanctions include judicially imposed sanctions and other enforcement actions authorized by law, including the death penalty, but do not include sanctions that defeat the object and purpose of the Convention Against Torture to prohibit torture.

(4) In order to constitute torture, mental pain or suffering must be prolonged mental harm caused by or resulting from:

(i) The intentional infliction or threatened infliction of severe physical pain or suffering;

(ii) The administration or application, or threatened administration or application, of mind altering substances or other procedures calculated to disrupt profoundly the senses or the personality;

(iii) The threat of imminent death; or

(iv) The threat that another person will imminently be subjected to death, severe physical pain or suffering, or the administration or application of mind altering substances or other procedures calculated to disrupt profoundly the sense or personality.

(5) In order to constitute torture, an act must be specifically intended to inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering. An act that results in unanticipated or unintended severity of pain and suffering is not torture.

(6) In order to constitute torture an act must be directed against a person in the offender's custody or physical control.

(7) Acquiescence of a public official requires that the public official, prior to the activity constituting torture, have awareness of such activity and thereafter breach his or her legal responsibility to intervene to prevent such activity. Such awareness requires a finding of either actual knowledge or willful blindness. Willful blindness means that the public official acting in an official capacity or other person acting in an official capacity was aware of a high probability of activity constituting torture and deliberately avoided learning the truth; it is not enough that such public official acting in an official capacity or other person acting in an official capacity was mistaken, recklessly disregarded the truth, or negligently failed to inquire. In order for a public official to breach his or her legal responsibility to intervene to prevent activity constituting torture, the official must have been charged with preventing the activity as part of his or her duties and have failed to intervene. No person will be deemed to have breached a legal responsibility to intervene if such person is unable to intervene, or if the person intervenes but is unable to prevent the activity that constitutes torture.

(8) Noncompliance with applicable legal procedural standards does not *per se* constitute torture.

(b) *Applicability of §§ 208.16(c) and 208.17(a)—(1) Aliens in proceedings on or after March 22, 1999.* An alien who is in exclusion, deportation, or removal proceedings on or after March 22, 1999 may apply for withholding of removal under § 208.16(c), and, if applicable, may be considered for deferral of removal under § 208.17(a).

(2) *Aliens who were ordered removed, or whose removal orders became final, before March 22, 1999.* An alien under a final order of deportation, exclusion, or removal that became final prior to March 22, 1999 may move to reopen proceedings for the sole purpose of seeking protection under § 208.16(c). Such motions shall be governed by §§ 3.23 and 3.2 of this chapter, except that the time and numerical limitations on motions to reopen shall not apply and the alien shall not be required to demonstrate that the evidence sought to be offered was unavailable and could not have

been discovered or presented at the former hearing. The motion to reopen shall not be granted unless:

(i) The motion is filed within June 21, 1999; and

(ii) The evidence sought to be offered establishes a prima facie case that the applicant's removal must be withheld or deferred under §§ 208.16(c) or 208.17(a).

(3) *Aliens who, on March 22, 1999, have requests pending with the Service for protection under Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture.* (i) Except as otherwise provided, after March 22, 1999, the Service will not:

(A) Consider, under its pre-regulatory administrative policy to ensure compliance with the Convention Against Torture, whether Article 3 of that Convention prohibits the removal of an alien to a particular country, or

(B) Stay the removal of an alien based on a request filed with the Service for protection under Article 3 of that Convention.

(ii) For each alien who, on or before March 22, 1999, filed a request with the Service for protection under Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture, and whose request has not been finally decided by the Service, the Service shall provide written notice that, after March 22, 1999, consideration for protection under Article 3 can be obtained only through the provisions of this rule.

(A) The notice shall inform an alien who is under an order of removal issued by EOIR that, in order to seek consideration of a claim under §§ 208.16(c) or 208.17(a), such an alien must file a motion to reopen with the immigration court or the Board of Immigration Appeals. This notice shall be accompanied by a stay of removal, effective until 30 days after service of the notice on the alien. A motion to reopen filed under this paragraph for the limited purpose of asserting a claim under §§ 208.16(c) or 208.17(a) shall not be subject to the requirements for reopening in §§ 3.2 and 3.23 of this chapter. Such a motion shall be granted if it is accompanied by a copy of the notice described in paragraph (b)(3)(ii) or by other convincing evidence that the alien had a request pending with the Service for protection under Article 3 of the Convention

Against Torture on March 22, 1999. The filing of such a motion shall extend the stay of removal during the pendency of the adjudication of this motion.

(B) The notice shall inform an alien who is under an administrative order of removal issued by the Service under section 238(b) of the Act or an exclusion, deportation, or removal order reinstated by the Service under section 241(a)(5) of the Act that the alien's claim to withholding of removal under § 208.16(c) or deferral of removal under § 208.17(a) will be considered under § 208.31.

(C) The notice shall inform an alien who is under an administrative order of removal issued by the Service under section 235(c) of the Act that the alien's claim to protection under the Convention Against Torture will be decided by the Service as provided in § 208.18(d) and 235.8(b)(4) and will not be considered under the provisions of this part relating to consideration or review by an immigration judge, the Board of Immigration Appeals, or an asylum officer.

(4) *Aliens whose claims to protection under the Convention Against Torture were finally decided by the Service prior to March 22, 1999.* Sections 208.16(c) and 208.17 (a) and paragraphs (b)(1) through (b)(3) of this section do not apply to cases in which, prior to March 22, 1999, the Service has made a final administrative determination about the applicability of Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture to the case of an alien who filed a request with the Service for protection under Article 3. If, prior to March 22, 1999, the Service determined that an applicant cannot be removed consistent with the Convention Against Torture, the alien shall be considered to have been granted withholding of removal under § 208.16(c), unless the alien is subject to mandatory denial of withholding of removal under § 208.16(d)(2) or (d)(3), in which case the alien will be considered to have been granted deferral of removal under 208.17(a). If, prior to March 22, 1999, the Service determined that an alien can be removed consistent with the Convention Against Torture, the alien will be considered to have been finally denied withholding of removal under

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§ 208.16(c) and deferral of removal under § 208.17(a).

(c) *Diplomatic assurances against torture obtained by the Secretary of State.*

(1) The Secretary of State may forward to the Attorney General assurances that the Secretary has obtained from the government of a specific country that an alien would not be tortured there if the alien were removed to that country.

(2) If the Secretary of State forwards assurances described in paragraph (c)(1) of this section to the Attorney General for consideration by the Attorney General or her delegates under this paragraph, the Attorney General shall determine, in consultation with the Secretary of State, whether the assurances are sufficiently reliable to allow the alien's removal to that country consistent with Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture. The Attorney General's authority under this paragraph may be exercised by the Deputy Attorney General or by the Commissioner, Immigration and Naturalization Service, but may not be further delegated.

(3) Once assurances are provided under paragraph (c)(2) of this section, the alien's claim for protection under the Convention Against Torture shall not be considered further by an immigration judge, the Board of Immigration Appeals, or an asylum officer.

(d) *Cases involving aliens ordered removed under section 235(c) of the Act.* With respect to an alien terrorist or other alien subject to administrative removal under section 235(c) of the Act who requests protection under Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture, the Service will assess the applicability of Article 3 through the removal process to ensure that a removal order will not be executed under circumstances that would violate the obligations of the United States under Article 3. In such cases, the provisions of Part 208 relating to consideration or review by an immigration judge, the Board of Immigration Appeals, or an asylum officer shall not apply.

(e) *Judicial review of claims for protection from removal under Article 3 of the Convention Against Torture.* (1) Pursuant to the provisions of section 2242(d) of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Re-

structuring Act of 1998, there shall be no judicial appeal or review of any action, decision, or claim raised under the Convention or that section, except as part of the review of a final order of removal pursuant to section 242 of the Act; provided however, that any appeal or petition regarding an action, decision, or claim under the Convention or under section 2242 of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998 shall not be deemed to include or authorize the consideration of any administrative order or decision, or portion thereof, the appeal or review of which is restricted or prohibited by the Act.

(2) Except as otherwise expressly provided, nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to create a private right of action or to authorize the consideration or issuance of administrative or judicial relief.

[64 FR 8490, Feb. 19, 1999; 64 FR 13881, Mar. 23, 1999, as amended at 85 FR 80389, Dec. 11, 2020]

§ 208.19 Decisions.

The decision of an asylum officer to grant or to deny asylum or to refer an asylum application, in accordance with § 208.14(b) or (c), shall be communicated in writing to the applicant. Pursuant to § 208.9(d), an applicant must appear in person to receive and to acknowledge receipt of the decision to grant or deny asylum, or to refer an asylum application unless, in the discretion of the asylum office director, service by mail is appropriate. A letter communicating denial of asylum or referral of the application shall state the basis for denial or referral and include an assessment of the applicant's credibility.

[65 FR 76136, Dec. 6, 2000]

§ 208.20 Determining if an asylum application is frivolous.

(a) For applications filed on or after April 1, 1997, and before January 11, 2021, an applicant is subject to the provisions of section 208(d)(6) of the Act only if the alien received the notice required by section 208(d)(4)(A) of the Act and a final order by an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals specifically finds that the alien knowingly filed a frivolous asylum application. An application is frivolous if:

(1) Any of the material elements in the asylum application is deliberately fabricated, and the immigration judge or the Board is satisfied that the applicant, during the course of the proceedings, has had sufficient opportunity to account for any discrepancies or implausible aspects of the claim.

(2) Paragraphs (b) through (f) of this section shall only apply to applications filed on or after January 11, 2021.

(b) For applications filed on or after January 11, 2021, an asylum officer may determine that the applicant knowingly filed a frivolous asylum application and may refer the applicant to an immigration judge on that basis, so long as the applicant has received the notice required by section 208(d)(4)(A) of the Act. For any application referred to an immigration judge, an asylum officer's determination that an application is frivolous will not render an applicant permanently ineligible for immigration benefits unless an immigration judge or the Board makes a finding of frivolousness as described in paragraph 1208.20(c).

(c) For applications filed on or after January 11, 2021, an asylum application is frivolous if it:

(1) Contains a fabricated material element;

(2) Is premised upon false or fabricated evidence unless the application would have been granted without the false or fabricated evidence;

(3) Is filed without regard to the merits of the claim; or

(4) Is clearly foreclosed by applicable law.

(d) If the alien has been provided the warning required by section 208(d)(4)(A) of the Act, he or she need not be given any additional or further opportunity to account for any issues with his or her claim prior to the entry of a frivolousness finding.

(e) An asylum application may be found frivolous even if it was untimely filed.

(f) A withdrawn asylum application may also be found frivolous unless:

(1) The alien wholly disclaims the application and withdraws it with prejudice;

(2) The alien is eligible for and agrees to accept voluntary departure for a pe-

riod of no more than 30 days pursuant to section 240B(a) of the Act;

(3) The alien withdraws any and all other applications for relief or protection with prejudice; and

(4) The alien waives his right to appeal and any rights to file, for any reason, a motion to reopen or reconsider.

(g) For purposes of this section, a finding that an alien knowingly filed a frivolous asylum application shall not preclude the alien from seeking withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act or protection under the regulations issued pursuant to the Convention Against Torture's implementing legislation.

[85 FR 80389, Dec. 11, 2020]

§ 208.21 Admission of the asylee's spouse and children.

(a) *Eligibility.* In accordance with section 208(b)(3) of the Act, a spouse, as defined in section 101(a)(35) of the Act, 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(35), or child, as defined in section 101(b)(1) of the Act, also may be granted asylum if accompanying, or following to join, the principal alien who was granted asylum, unless it is determined that the spouse or child is ineligible for asylum under section 208(b)(2)(A)(i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v) of the Act for applications filed on or after April 1, 1997, or under § 208.13(c)(2)(i)(A), (C), (D), (E), or (F) for applications filed before April 1, 1997.

(b) *Relationship.* The relationship of spouse and child as defined in sections 101(a)(35) and 101(b)(1) of the Act must have existed at the time the principal alien's asylum application was approved and must continue to exist at the time of filing for accompanying or following-to-join benefits and at the time of the spouse or child's subsequent admission to the United States. If the asylee proves that the asylee is the parent of a child who was born after asylum was granted, but who was *in utero* on the date of the asylum grant, the child shall be eligible to accompany or follow-to-join the asylee. The child's mother, if not the principal asylee, shall not be eligible to accompany or follow-to-join the principal asylee unless the child's mother was the principal asylee's spouse on the date the principal asylee was granted asylum.

(c) *Spouse or child in the United States.* When a spouse or child of an alien granted asylum is in the United States, but was not included in the asylee's benefit request, the asylee may request accompanying or following-to-join benefits for his or her spouse or child, by filing for each qualifying family member a Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative, with supporting evidence, and in accordance with the form instructions, regardless of the status of that spouse or child in the United States. A separate Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative must be filed by the asylee for each qualifying family member within two years of the date in which he or she was granted asylum status, unless it is determined by USCIS that this period should be extended for humanitarian reasons. Upon approval of the Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative, USCIS will notify the asylee of such approval. Employment will be authorized incident to status. To demonstrate employment authorization, USCIS will issue a document reflecting the derivative's current status as an asylee, or the derivative may apply, under 8 CFR 274a.12(a), for employment authorization. The approval of the Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative will remain valid for the duration of the relationship to the asylee and, in the case of a child, while the child is under 21 years of age and unmarried, provided also that the principal's status has not been revoked. However, the approved Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative will cease to confer immigration benefits after it has been used by the beneficiary for admission to the United States as a derivative of an asylee.

(d) *Spouse or child outside the United States.* When a spouse or child of an alien granted asylum is outside the United States, the asylee may request accompanying or following-to-join benefits for his or her spouse or child(ren) by filing a separate Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative for each qualifying family member in accordance with the form instructions. A separate Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative for each qualifying family member must be filed within two years of the date in which the asylee was granted asylum, unless USCIS determines that the filing period should be extended for

humanitarian reasons. When the Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative is approved, USCIS will notify the asylee of such approval. USCIS also will send the approved request to the Department of State for transmission to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate having jurisdiction over the area in which the asylee's spouse or child is located. The approval of the Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative will remain valid for the duration of the relationship to the asylee and, in the case of a child, while the child is under 21 years of age and unmarried, provided also that the principal's status has not been revoked. However, the approved Request for Refugee/Asylee Relative will cease to confer immigration benefits after it has been used by the beneficiary for admission to the United States as a derivative of an asylee.

(e) *Denial.* If the spouse or child is found to be ineligible for the status accorded under section 208(c) of the Act, a written notice stating the basis for denial shall be forwarded to the principal alien. No appeal shall lie from this decision.

(f) *Burden of proof.* To establish the claimed relationship of spouse or child as defined in sections 101(a)(35) and 101(b)(1) of the Act, evidence must be submitted with the request as set forth in part 204 of this chapter. Where possible this will consist of the documents specified in § 204.2 (a)(1)(i)(B), (a)(1)(iii)(B), (a)(2), (d)(2), and (d)(5) of this chapter. The burden of proof is on the principal alien to establish by a preponderance of the evidence that any person on whose behalf he or she is making a request under this section is an eligible spouse or child.

(g) *Duration.* The spouse or child qualifying under section 208(c) of the Act shall be granted asylum for an indefinite period unless the principal's status is revoked.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997, as amended at 63 FR 3796, Jan. 27, 1998. Redesignated at 64 FR 8490, Feb. 19, 1999 and further redesignated and amended at 65 FR 76136, Dec. 6, 2000; 76 FR 53784, Aug. 29, 2011; 76 FR 73476, Nov. 29, 2011]

§ 208.22 Effect on exclusion, deportation, and removal proceedings.

An alien who has been granted asylum may not be deported or removed unless his or her asylum status is terminated pursuant to § 208.24. An alien in exclusion, deportation, or removal proceedings who is granted withholding of removal or deportation, or deferral of removal, may not be deported or removed to the country to which his or her deportation or removal is ordered withheld or deferred unless the withholding order is terminated pursuant to § 208.24 or deferral is terminated pursuant to § 208.17(d) or (e).

[64 FR 8492, Feb. 19, 1999. Revised at 65 FR 76136, Dec. 6, 2000]

§ 208.23 Restoration of status.

An alien who was maintaining his or her nonimmigrant status at the time of filing an asylum application and has such application denied may continue in or be restored to that status, if it has not expired.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997. Redesignated at 64 FR 8490, Feb. 19, 1999 and further redesignated at 65 FR 76136, Dec. 6, 2000]

§ 208.24 Termination of asylum or withholding of removal or deportation.

(a) *Termination of asylum by USCIS.* Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, an asylum officer may terminate a grant of asylum made under the jurisdiction of USCIS if, following an interview, the asylum officer determines that:

(1) There is a showing of fraud in the alien's application such that he or she was not eligible for asylum at the time it was granted;

(2) As to applications filed on or after April 1, 1997, one or more of the conditions described in section 208(c)(2) of the Act exist; or

(3) As to applications filed before April 1, 1997, the alien no longer has a well-founded fear of persecution upon return due to a change of country conditions in the alien's country of nationality or habitual residence or the alien has committed any act that would have been grounds for denial of asylum under § 208.13(c)(2).

(b) *Termination of withholding of deportation or removal by USCIS.* Except as provided in paragraph (e) of this section, an asylum officer may terminate a grant of withholding of deportation or removal made under the jurisdiction of USCIS if the asylum officer determines, following an interview, that:

(1) The alien is no longer entitled to withholding of deportation or removal because, owing to a fundamental change in circumstances relating to the original claim, the alien's life or freedom no longer would be threatened on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion in the country from which deportation or removal was withheld.

(2) There is a showing of fraud in the alien's application such that the alien was not eligible for withholding of removal at the time it was granted;

(3) The alien has committed any other act that would have been grounds for denial of withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act had it occurred prior to the grant of withholding of removal; or

(4) For applications filed in proceedings commenced before April 1, 1997, the alien has committed any act that would have been grounds for denial of withholding of deportation under section 243(h)(2) of the Act.

(c) *Procedure.* Prior to the termination of a grant of asylum or withholding of deportation or removal, the alien shall be given notice of intent to terminate, with the reasons therefor, at least 30 days prior to the interview specified in paragraph (a) of this section before an asylum officer. The alien shall be provided the opportunity to present evidence showing that he or she is still eligible for asylum or withholding of deportation or removal. If the asylum officer determines that the alien is no longer eligible for asylum or withholding of deportation or removal, the alien shall be given written notice that asylum status or withholding of deportation or removal and any employment authorization issued pursuant thereto, are terminated.

(d) *Termination of derivative status.* The termination of asylum status for a person who was the principal applicant

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shall result in termination of the asylum status of a spouse or child whose status was based on the asylum application of the principal. Such termination shall not preclude the spouse or child of such alien from separately asserting an asylum or withholding of deportation or removal claim.

(e) *Removal proceedings.* When an alien's asylum status or withholding of removal or deportation is terminated under this section, the Service shall initiate removal proceedings, as appropriate, if the alien is not already in exclusion, deportation, or removal proceedings. Removal proceedings may take place in conjunction with a termination hearing scheduled under § 208.24(f).

(f) *Termination of asylum, or withholding of deportation or removal, by an immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals.* An immigration judge or the Board of Immigration Appeals may reopen a case pursuant to 8 CFR 1003.2 and 8 CFR 1003.23 for the purpose of terminating a grant of asylum, or a withholding of deportation or removal. In such a reopened proceeding, the Service must establish, by a preponderance of evidence, one or more of the grounds set forth in paragraphs (a) or (b) of this section. In addition, an immigration judge may terminate a grant of asylum, or a withholding of deportation or removal, made under the jurisdiction of USCIS at any time after the alien has been provided a notice of intent to terminate by USCIS. Any termination under this paragraph may occur in conjunction with an exclusion, deportation, or removal proceeding.

(g) *Termination of asylum for arriving aliens.* If the Service determines that an applicant for admission who had previously been granted asylum in the United States falls within conditions set forth in § 208.24 and is inadmissible, the Service shall issue a notice of intent to terminate asylum and initiate removal proceedings under section 240 of the Act. The alien shall present his or her response to the intent to termi-

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nate during proceedings before the immigration judge.

[62 FR 10337, Mar. 6, 1997. Redesignated at 64 FR 8490, Feb. 19, 1999, and further redesignated and amended at 65 FR 76136, Dec. 6, 2000; 76 FR 53785, Aug. 29, 2011; 78 FR 22771, Apr. 17, 2013]

§ 208.25 Severability.

The provisions of part 208 are separate and severable from one another. In the event that any provision in part 208 is stayed, enjoined, not implemented, or otherwise held invalid, the remaining provisions shall nevertheless be implemented as an independent rule and continue in effect.

[85 FR 80389, Dec. 11, 2020]

§§ 208.26–208.29 [Reserved]

Subpart B—Credible Fear of Persecution

§ 208.30 Credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, and reasonable possibility of torture determinations involving stowaways and applicants for admission who are found inadmissible pursuant to section 212(a)(6)(C) or 212(a)(7) of the Act, whose entry is limited or suspended under section 212(f) or 215(a)(1) of the Act, or who failed to apply for protection from persecution in a third country where potential relief is available while en route to the United States.

(a) *Jurisdiction.* The provisions of this subpart B apply to aliens subject to sections 235(a)(2) and 235(b)(1) of the Act. Pursuant to section 235(b)(1)(B) of the Act, DHS has exclusive jurisdiction to make the determinations described in this subpart B. Except as otherwise provided in this subpart B, paragraphs (b) through (g) of this section are the exclusive procedures applicable to stowaways and applicants for admission who are found inadmissible pursuant to section 212(a)(6)(C) or 212(a)(7) of the Act and who receive fear interviews, determinations, and reviews under section 235(b)(1)(B) of the Act. Prior to January 1, 2030, an alien physically present in or arriving in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is ineligible to apply for

asylum and may only establish eligibility for withholding of removal pursuant to section 241(b)(3) of the Act or withholding or deferral of removal under the regulations issued pursuant to the Convention Against Torture's implementing legislation.

(b) *Process and Authority.* If an alien subject to section 235(a)(2) or 235(b)(1) of the Act indicates an intention to apply for asylum, or expresses a fear of persecution or torture, or a fear of return to his or her country, the inspecting officer shall not proceed further with removal of the alien until the alien has been referred for an interview by an asylum officer in accordance with this section. An asylum officer shall then screen the alien for a credible fear of persecution, and as necessary, a reasonable possibility of persecution and reasonable possibility of torture. An asylum officer, as defined in section 235(b)(1)(E) of the Act, has the authorities described in 8 CFR 208.9(c) and must conduct an evaluation and make a determination consistent with this section.

(c) *Treatment of dependents.* A spouse or child of an alien may be included in that alien's fear evaluation and determination, if such spouse or child:

(1) Arrived in the United States concurrently with the principal alien; and

(2) Desires to be included in the principal alien's determination. However, any alien may have his or her evaluation and determination made separately, if he or she expresses such a desire.

(d) *Interview.* The asylum officer will conduct the interview in a nonadversarial manner, separate and apart from the general public. The purpose of the interview shall be to elicit all relevant and useful information bearing on whether the alien can establish a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, or reasonable possibility of torture. The asylum officer shall conduct the interview as follows:

(1) If the officer conducting the interview determines that the alien is unable to participate effectively in the interview because of illness, fatigue, or other impediments, the officer may reschedule the interview.

(2) At the time of the interview, the asylum officer shall verify that the alien has received in writing the relevant information regarding the fear determination process. The officer shall also determine that the alien has an understanding of the fear determination process.

(3) The alien may be required to register his or her identity.

(4) The alien may consult with a person or persons of the alien's choosing prior to the interview or any review thereof, and may present other evidence, if available. Such consultation shall be at no expense to the Government and shall not unreasonably delay the process. Any person or persons with whom the alien chooses to consult may be present at the interview and may be permitted, in the discretion of the asylum officer, to present a statement at the end of the interview. The asylum officer, in his or her discretion, may place reasonable limits on the number of persons who may be present at the interview and on the length of the statement.

(5) If the alien is unable to proceed effectively in English, and if the asylum officer is unable to proceed competently in a language the alien speaks and understands, the asylum officer shall arrange for the assistance of an interpreter in conducting the interview. The interpreter must be at least 18 years of age and may not be the alien's attorney or representative of record, a witness testifying on the alien's behalf, a representative or employee of the alien's country of nationality, or, if the alien is stateless, the alien's country of last habitual residence.

(6) The asylum officer shall create a summary of the material facts as stated by the alien. At the conclusion of the interview, the officer shall review the summary with the alien and provide the alien with an opportunity to correct any errors therein.

(e) Procedures for determining credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, and reasonable possibility of torture.

(1) An alien establishes a credible fear of persecution if there is a significant possibility the alien can establish eligibility for asylum under section 208

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of the Act. “Significant possibility” means a substantial and realistic possibility of succeeding. When making such a determination, the asylum officer shall take into account:

(i) The credibility of the statements made by the alien in support of the alien’s claim;

(ii) Such other facts as are known to the officer, including whether the alien could avoid any future harm by relocating to another part of his or her country, if under all the circumstances it would be reasonable to expect the alien to do so; and

(iii) The applicability of any bars to being able to apply for asylum or to eligibility for asylum set forth at section 208(a)(2)(B)–(C) and (b)(2) of the Act, including any bars established by regulation under section 208(b)(2)(C) of the Act.

(2) An alien establishes a reasonable possibility of persecution if there is a reasonable possibility that the alien would be persecuted on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion in the country of removal. When making such determination, the officer will take into account:

(i) The credibility of the statements made by the alien in support of the alien’s claim;

(ii) Such other facts as are known to the officer, including whether the alien could avoid a future threat to his or her life or freedom by relocating to another part of the proposed country of removal and, under all circumstances, it would be reasonable to expect the applicant to do so; and

(iii) The applicability of any bars at section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act.

(3) An alien establishes a reasonable possibility of torture if there is a reasonable possibility that the alien would be tortured in the country of removal, consistent with the criteria in 8 CFR 208.16(c), 8 CFR 208.17, and 8 CFR 208.18. The alien must demonstrate a reasonable possibility that he or she will suffer severe pain or suffering in the country of removal, and that the feared harm would comport with the other requirements of 8 CFR 208.18(a)(1) through (8). When making such a determination, the asylum officer shall take into account:

(i) The credibility of the statements made by alien in support of the alien’s claim, and

(ii) Such other facts as are known to the officer, including whether the alien could relocate to a part of the country of removal where he or she is not likely to be tortured.

(4) In all cases, the asylum officer will create a written record of his or her determination, including a summary of the material facts as stated by the alien, any additional facts relied on by the officer, and the officer’s determination of whether, in light of such facts, the alien has established a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, or reasonable possibility of torture. In determining whether the alien has a credible fear of persecution, as defined in section 235(b)(1)(B)(v) of the Act, or a reasonable possibility of persecution or torture, the asylum officer shall consider whether the alien’s case presents novel or unique issues that merit consideration in a full hearing before an immigration judge.

(5)(i)(A) Except as provided in paragraph (e)(5)(ii) or (iii) or paragraph (e)(6) or (7) of this section, if an alien would be able to establish a credible fear of persecution but for the fact that the alien is subject to one or more of the mandatory bars to applying for asylum or being eligible for asylum contained in section 208(a)(2)(B)–(D) and (b)(2) of the Act, including any bars established by regulation under section 208(b)(2)(C) of the Act, then the asylum officer will enter a negative credible fear of persecution determination with respect to the alien’s eligibility for asylum.

(B) If an alien described in paragraph (e)(5)(i)(A) of this section is able to establish either a reasonable possibility of persecution (including by establishing that he or she is not subject to one or more of the mandatory bars to eligibility for withholding of removal contained in section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act) or a reasonable possibility of torture, then the asylum officer will enter a positive reasonable possibility of persecution or torture determination, as applicable. The Department of Homeland Security shall place the alien in

asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 208.2(c)(1) for full consideration of the alien's claim for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act or withholding or deferral of removal under the regulations issued pursuant to the implementing legislation for the Convention Against Torture.

(C) If an alien described in paragraph (e)(5)(i)(A) of this section fails to establish either a reasonable possibility of persecution (including by failing to establish that he or she is not subject to one or more of the mandatory bars to eligibility for withholding of removal contained in section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act) or a reasonable possibility of torture, the asylum officer will provide the alien with a written notice of decision, which will be subject to immigration judge review consistent with paragraph (g) of this section, except that the immigration judge will review the fear findings under the reasonable possibility standard instead of the credible fear of persecution standard described in paragraph (g) of this section and in 8 CFR 1208.30(g).

(ii) If the alien is found to be an alien described in 8 CFR 208.13(c)(3), then the asylum officer shall enter a negative credible fear determination with respect to the alien's application for asylum. The Department shall nonetheless place the alien in asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 208.2(c)(1) for full consideration of the alien's claim for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act, or for withholding or deferral of removal under the regulations issued pursuant to the implementing legislation for the Convention Against Torture, if the alien establishes, respectively, a reasonable possibility of persecution or torture. However, if an alien fails to establish, during the interview with the asylum officer, a reasonable possibility of either persecution or torture, the asylum officer will provide the alien with a written notice of decision, which will be subject to immigration judge review consistent with paragraph (g) of this section, except that the immigration judge will review the fear of persecution or torture findings under the reasonable possibility standard instead of

the credible fear standard described in paragraph (g) of this section and in 8 CFR 1208.30(g).

(iii) If the alien is found to be an alien described in 8 CFR 208.13(c)(4), then the asylum officer shall enter a negative credible fear determination with respect to the alien's application for asylum. The Department shall nonetheless place the alien in asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 208.2(c)(1) for full consideration of the alien's claim for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act or withholding or deferral of removal under the regulations issued pursuant to the implementing legislation for the Convention Against Torture if the alien establishes, respectively, a reasonable possibility of persecution or torture. However, if an alien fails to establish, during the interview with the asylum officer, a reasonable possibility of either persecution or torture, the asylum officer will provide the alien with a written notice of decision, which will be subject to immigration judge review consistent with paragraph (g) of this section, except that the immigration judge will review the fear of persecution or torture findings under the reasonable possibility standard instead of the credible fear standard described in paragraph (g) of this section and in 8 CFR 1208.30(g).

(6) Prior to any determination concerning whether an alien arriving in the United States at a U.S.-Canada land border port-of-entry or in transit through the U.S. during removal by Canada has a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, or reasonable possibility of torture, the asylum officer shall conduct a threshold screening interview to determine whether such an alien is ineligible to apply for asylum pursuant to section 208(a)(2)(A) of the Act and subject to removal to Canada by operation of the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada For Cooperation in the Examination of Refugee Status Claims from Nationals of Third Countries ("Agreement"). In conducting this threshold screening interview, the asylum officer shall apply all relevant

interview procedures outlined in paragraph (d) of this section, provided, however, that paragraph (d)(2) of this section shall not apply to aliens described in this paragraph (e)(6). The asylum officer shall advise the alien of the Agreement's exceptions and question the alien as to applicability of any of these exceptions to the alien's case.

(i) If the asylum officer, with concurrence from a supervisory asylum officer, determines that an alien does not qualify for an exception under the Agreement during this threshold screening interview, the alien is ineligible to apply for asylum in the United States. After the asylum officer's documented finding is reviewed by a supervisory asylum officer, the alien shall be advised that he or she will be removed to Canada in order to pursue his or her claims relating to a fear of persecution or torture under Canadian law. Aliens found ineligible to apply for asylum under this paragraph shall be removed to Canada.

(ii) If the alien establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she qualifies for an exception under the terms of the Agreement, the asylum officer shall make a written notation of the basis of the exception, and then proceed immediately to a determination concerning whether the alien has a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, or reasonable possibility of torture under paragraph (d) of this section.

(iii) An alien qualifies for an exception to the Agreement if the alien is not being removed from Canada in transit through the United States and:

(A) Is a citizen of Canada or, not having a country of nationality, is a habitual resident of Canada;

(B) Has in the United States a spouse, son, daughter, parent, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, or nephew who has been granted asylum, refugee, or other lawful status in the United States, provided, however, that this exception shall not apply to an alien whose relative maintains only non-immigrant visitor status, as defined in section 101(a)(15)(B) of the Act, or whose relative maintains only visitor status based on admission to the

United States pursuant to the Visa Waiver Program;

(C) Has in the United States a spouse, son, daughter, parent, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, or nephew who is at least 18 years of age and has an asylum application pending before U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the Executive Office for Immigration Review, or on appeal in federal court in the United States;

(D) Is unmarried, under 18 years of age, and does not have a parent or legal guardian in either Canada or the United States;

(E) Arrived in the United States with a validly issued visa or other valid admission document, other than for transit, issued by the United States to the alien, or, being required to hold a visa to enter Canada, was not required to obtain a visa to enter the United States; or

(F) The Director of USCIS, or the Director's designee, determines, in the exercise of unreviewable discretion, that it is in the public interest to allow the alien to pursue a claim for asylum, withholding of removal, or protection under the Convention Against Torture, in the United States.

(iv) As used in paragraphs (e)(6)(iii)(B), (C), and (D) of this section only, "legal guardian" means a person currently vested with legal custody of such an alien or vested with legal authority to act on the alien's behalf, provided that such an alien is both unmarried and less than 18 years of age, and provided further that any dispute with respect to whether an individual is a legal guardian will be resolved on the basis of U.S. law.

(7) When an immigration officer has made an initial determination that an alien, other than an alien described in paragraph (e)(6) of this section and regardless of whether the alien is arriving at a port of entry, appears to be subject to the terms of an agreement authorized by section 208(a)(2)(A) of the Act, and seeks the alien's removal consistent with that provision, prior to any determination concerning whether the alien has a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, or a reasonable possibility of torture, the asylum officer shall conduct a

threshold screening interview to determine whether the alien is ineligible to apply for asylum in the United States and is subject to removal to a country (“receiving country”) that is a signatory to the applicable agreement authorized by section 208(a)(2)(A) of the Act, other than the U.S.-Canada Agreement effectuated in 2004. In conducting this threshold screening interview, the asylum officer shall apply all relevant interview procedures outlined in paragraph (d) of this section, except that paragraphs (d)(2) and (4) of this section shall not apply to aliens described in this paragraph (e)(7). The asylum officer shall advise the alien of the applicable agreement’s exceptions and question the alien as to applicability of any of these exceptions to the alien’s case. The alien shall be provided written notice that if he or she fears removal to the prospective receiving country because of the likelihood of persecution on account of a protected ground or torture in that country and wants the officer to determine whether it is more likely than not that the alien would be persecuted on account of a protected ground or tortured in that country, the alien should affirmatively state to the officer such a fear of removal. If the alien affirmatively states such a fear, the asylum officer will determine whether the individual has demonstrated that it is more likely than not that he or she would be persecuted on account of a protected ground or tortured in that country.

(i)(A) If the asylum officer, with concurrence from a supervisory asylum officer, determines during the threshold screening interview that an alien does not qualify for an exception under the applicable agreement, and, if applicable, that the alien has not demonstrated that it is more likely than not that he or she would be persecuted on account of a protected ground or tortured in the receiving country, the alien is ineligible to apply for asylum in the United States. Subject to paragraph (e)(7)(i)(B) of this section, after the asylum officer’s documented finding is reviewed by a supervisory asylum officer, the alien shall be advised that he or she will be removed to the receiving country, as appropriate under the applicable agreement, in order to

pursue his or her claims relating to a fear of persecution or torture under the law of the receiving country. Prior to removal to a receiving country under an agreement authorized by section 208(a)(2)(A), the alien shall be informed that, in the receiving country, the alien will have an opportunity to pursue the alien’s claim for asylum or equivalent temporary protection.

(B) Aliens found ineligible to apply for asylum under this paragraph (e)(7) shall be removed to the receiving country, depending on the applicable agreement, unless the alien voluntarily withdraws his or her request for asylum.

(ii) If the alien establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she qualifies for an exception under the terms of the applicable agreement, or would more likely than not be persecuted on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or tortured, in the receiving country, the asylum officer shall make a written notation to that effect, and may then proceed to determine whether any other agreement is applicable to the alien under the procedures set forth in this paragraph (e)(7). If the alien establishes by a preponderance of the evidence that he or she qualifies for an exception under the terms of each of the applicable agreements, or would more likely than not be persecuted on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or tortured, in each of the prospective receiving countries, the asylum officer shall make a written notation to that effect, and then proceed immediately to a determination concerning whether the alien has a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, or a reasonable possibility of torture, under paragraph (d) of this section.

(iii) An exception to an applicable agreement is defined under the terms of the agreement itself. Each agreement, including any exceptions, will be announced in a FEDERAL REGISTER document. If the asylum officer determines that an alien is within one of the classes covered by a section 208(a)(2)(A) agreement, the officer shall next determine whether the alien meets any of

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the applicable agreement's exceptions. Regardless of whether the text of the applicable agreement provides for the following exceptions, all such agreements, by operation of section 208(a)(2)(A) of the Act, and as applicable to the United States, are deemed to contain the following provisions:

(A) No alien may be removed, pursuant to an agreement authorized by section 208(a)(2)(A), to the alien's country of nationality, or, if the alien has no nationality, to the alien's country of last habitual residence; and

(B) No alien may be removed, pursuant to an agreement authorized by section 208(a)(2)(A), where the Director of USCIS, or the Director's designee, determines, in the exercise of unreviewable discretion, that it is in the public interest for the alien to receive asylum in the United States, and that the alien therefore may apply for asylum, withholding of removal, or protection under the Convention Against Torture, in the United States.

(iv) If the asylum officer determines the alien meets an exception under the applicable agreement, or would more likely than not be persecuted on account of a protected ground or tortured in the prospective receiving country, the officer may consider whether the alien is subject to another agreement and its exceptions or would more likely than not be persecuted on account of a protected ground or tortured in another receiving country. If another section 208(a)(2)(A) agreement may not be applied to the alien, the officer should immediately proceed to a credible fear interview.

(8) An asylum officer's determination shall not become final until reviewed by a supervisory asylum officer.

(f) *Procedures for a positive fear determination.* If, pursuant to paragraph (e) of this section, an alien stowaway or an alien subject to expedited removal establishes either a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, or a reasonable possibility of torture:

(1) DHS shall issue a Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge for asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 208.2(c)(1).

(2) Parole of the alien may be considered only in accordance with section

212(d)(5) of the Act and 8 CFR 212.5 of this chapter.

(g) *Procedures for a negative fear determination.* (1) If, pursuant to paragraphs (e) and (f) of this section, an alien stowaway or an alien subject to expedited removal does not establish a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, or reasonable possibility of torture, DHS shall provide the alien with a written notice of decision and inquire whether the alien wishes to have an immigration judge review the negative determination, in accordance with section 235(b)(1)(B)(iii)(III) of the Act and this § 208.30. The alien must indicate whether he or she desires such review on a Record of Negative Fear Finding and Request for Review by Immigration Judge. If the alien refuses to make an indication, DHS shall consider such a response as a decision to decline review.

(i) If the alien requests such review, DHS shall arrange for detention of the alien and serve him or her with a Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge, for review of the negative fear determination in accordance with paragraph (g)(2) of this section.

(ii) If the alien is not a stowaway and does not request a review by an immigration judge, DHS shall order the alien removed with a Notice and Order of Expedited Removal, after review by a supervisory officer.

(iii) If the alien is a stowaway and the alien does not request a review by an immigration judge, DHS shall complete removal proceedings in accordance with section 235(a)(2) of the Act.

(2) *Review by immigration judge of a negative fear determination.* (i) Immigration judges shall review negative fear determinations as provided in 8 CFR 1208.30(g). DHS, however, may reconsider a negative credible fear finding that has been concurred upon by an immigration judge after providing notice of its reconsideration to the immigration judge.

(ii) DHS shall provide the record of any negative fear determinations being reviewed, including copies of the Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge, the asylum officer's notes, the summary of the material facts, and other

materials upon which the determination was based, to the immigration judge with the negative fear determination.

[65 FR 76136, Dec. 6, 2000, as amended at 69 FR 69488, Nov. 29, 2004; 74 FR 55737, Oct. 28, 2009; 76 FR 53785, Aug. 29, 2011; 83 FR 55952, Nov. 9, 2018; 84 FR 33843, July 16, 2019; 84 FR 64008, Nov. 19, 2019; 85 FR 29310, May 14, 2020; 85 FR 80389, Dec. 11, 2020]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 85 FR 84194, Dec. 23, 2020, §208.30 was amended by revising paragraphs (e)(4), (e)(5)(i)(A) and (B), and (e)(5)(iii), adding paragraph (e)(5)(iv), and revising paragraphs (f) introductory text, (f)(1), and (g)(1), effective Jan. 22, 2021. The amendment was delayed to Mar. 22, 2021 at 86 FR 6847, Jan. 25, 2021. The amendment was further delayed to Dec. 31, 2021 at 86 FR 15076, Mar. 22, 2021. The amendment was further delayed to Dec. 31, 2022, at 86 FR 73615, Dec. 28, 2021. For the convenience of the user, the added and revised text is set forth as follows:

§208.30 Credible fear determinations involving stowaways and applicants for admission who are found inadmissible pursuant to section 212(a)(6)(C) or 212(a)(7) of the Act, whose entry is limited or suspended under section 212(f) or 215(a)(1) of the Act, or who failed to apply for protection from persecution in a third country where potential relief is available while en route to the United States.

* * * * *

(e) * * *

(4) In all cases, the asylum officer will create a written record of his or her determination, including a summary of the material facts as stated by the alien, any additional facts relied on by the officer, and the officer's determination of whether, in light of such facts, the alien has established a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, reasonable possibility of torture or that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured in the prospective country of removal. In determining whether the alien has a credible fear of persecution, as defined in section 235(b)(1)(B)(v) of the Act, a reasonable possibility of persecution or torture, or that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured in the prospective country of removal, the asylum officer shall consider whether the alien's case presents novel or unique issues that merit consideration in a full hearing before an immigration judge.

(5)(i)(A) Except as provided in paragraphs (e)(5)(ii) through (iv) or paragraph (e)(6) or (7) of this section, if an alien would be able to establish a credible fear of persecution but for the fact that the alien is subject to one or more of the mandatory bars to applying for asylum or being eligible for asylum con-

tained in section 208(a)(2)(B)–(D) and (b)(2) of the Act, including any bars established by regulation under section 208(b)(2)(C) of the Act, then the asylum officer will enter a negative credible fear of persecution determination with respect to the alien's eligibility for asylum.

(B) If an alien described in paragraph (e)(5)(i)(A) of this section is able to establish either a reasonable possibility of persecution (including by establishing that he or she is not subject to one or more of the mandatory bars to eligibility for withholding of removal contained in section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act) or a reasonable possibility of torture, then the asylum officer will enter a positive reasonable possibility of persecution or torture determination, as applicable. The Department of Homeland Security shall place the alien in asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 1208.2(c)(1) for full consideration of the alien's claim for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act or withholding or deferral of removal under the regulations issued pursuant to the implementing legislation for the Convention Against Torture.

* * * * *

(iii) If the alien is found to be an alien described as ineligible for asylum in §208.13(c)(4), then the asylum officer shall enter a negative credible fear determination with respect to the alien's application for asylum. If the alien—

(A) Establishes, respectively, a reasonable possibility of persecution (including by establishing that he or she is not subject to one or more of the mandatory bars to eligibility for withholding of removal contained in section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act) or torture; or

(B) Would be able to establish a reasonable possibility of persecution but for the fact that he or she is subject to the mandatory bar to eligibility for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3)(B)(iv) of the Act, but nevertheless establishes that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured in the prospective country of removal, the Department of Homeland Security may, in the unreviewable discretion of the Secretary, either place the alien in asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 208.2(c)(1) for full consideration of the alien's claim for asylum under section 208 of the Act, withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act or withholding or deferral of removal under the regulations issued pursuant to the implementing legislation for the Convention Against Torture, or remove the alien to a third country.

(I) If the Department places the alien in asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 208.2(c)(1), then the immigration

judge shall review all issues de novo, including whether the alien has established that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured in the prospective country of removal.

(2) If the Department decides to remove the alien to a third country, it shall do so in a manner consistent with section 241 of the Act and §241.15, including by not removing the alien to a third country in which, after being notified of the identity of the prospective third country of removal the alien has established during an interview with an asylum officer that he or she is more likely than not to be tortured in that country. Further, such a removal to a third country shall be executed only if the alien was:

(i) Advised at the time of being determined to be subject to the mandatory bar to eligibility for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3)(B)(iv) of the Act and under the regulations issued pursuant to the legislation implementing the Convention Against Torture of the possibility of being removed to a third country prior to a determination or adjudication of the same under the conditions set forth in this paragraph, and

(ii) Provided, but did not accept, an opportunity to proceed to removal pursuant to section 241(b) of the Act, as appropriate.

(C) If an alien fails to establish a reasonable possibility of persecution or torture and is unable, during an interview with the asylum officer, to establish that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured in the prospective country of removal, then the asylum officer will provide the alien with a written notice of decision that will be subject to immigration judge review consistent with paragraph (g) of this section,

(iv)(A) Except as provided in paragraphs (e)(5)(ii) and (iii) or paragraph (e)(6) or (7) of this section, if an alien would be able to establish a credible fear of persecution or a reasonable possibility of persecution but for the fact that the alien is subject to the mandatory bars to being eligible for asylum contained in section 208(b)(2)(A)(iv) of the Act and to withholding of removal contained in section 241(b)(3)(B)(iv) of the Act:

(1) If the alien fails to establish, during an interview with the asylum officer, that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured in the prospective country of removal, then the asylum officer will provide the alien with a written notice of decision that will be subject to immigration judge review consistent with paragraph (g) of this section;

(2) If the alien establishes that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured in the prospective country of removal, the Department of Homeland Security may, in the unreviewable discretion of the Secretary, either place the alien in asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 208.2(c)(1) for full consideration of the alien's

claim for asylum under section 208 of the Act, withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3) of the Act or withholding or deferral of removal under the regulations issued pursuant to the implementing legislation for the Convention Against Torture, or remove the alien to a third country.

(i) If the Department places the alien in asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 208.2(c)(1), then the IJ shall review all issues de novo, including whether the alien has established that it is more likely than not that he or she would be tortured in the prospective country of removal.

(ii) If the Department decides to remove the alien to a third country, it shall do so in a manner consistent with section 241 of the Act and §241.15, including by not removing the alien to a third country in which, after being notified of the identity of the proposed third country of removal, the alien has established that he or she would be more likely than not to be tortured. Further, such a removal shall be executed only if the alien was advised at the time of being determined to be subject to the mandatory bar to eligibility for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3)(B)(iv) of the Act and under the regulations issued pursuant to the legislation implementing the Convention Against Torture of the possibility of being removed to a third country prior to a determination or adjudication of the same under the conditions set forth in this paragraph (e)(5)(iv) and provided with, but did not accept, an opportunity to proceed to removal pursuant to section 241(b) of the Act, as appropriate.

(f) *Procedures for a positive fear determination.* If, pursuant to paragraph (e) of this section, an alien stowaway or an alien subject to expedited removal establishes either a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, a reasonable possibility of torture, or that it is more likely than not that they would be tortured in the prospective country of removal:

(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (e)(5)(iii) through (iv) of this section, DHS shall issue a Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge for asylum-and-withholding-only proceedings under 8 CFR 208.2(c)(1).

* * * * *

(g) * * *

(1) If, pursuant to paragraphs (e) and (f) of this section, an alien does not establish a credible fear of persecution, reasonable possibility of persecution, reasonable possibility of torture, or that he or she is more likely than not to be tortured in the prospective country of removal, DHS shall provide the alien with a written notice of decision and inquire whether the alien wishes to have an immigration judge review the negative determination, in accordance with section 235(b)(1)(B)(iii)(III) of the Act and this

§ 208.30. The alien must indicate whether he or she desires such review on a Record of Negative Fear Finding and Request for Review by Immigration Judge. If the alien refuses to make an indication, DHS shall consider such a response as a decision to decline review.

* * * * *

§ 208.31 Reasonable fear of persecution or torture determinations involving aliens ordered removed under section 238(b) of the Act and aliens whose removal is reinstated under section 241(a)(5) of the Act.

(a) *Jurisdiction.* This section shall apply to any alien ordered removed under section 238(b) of the Act or whose deportation, exclusion, or removal order is reinstated under section 241(a)(5) of the Act who, in the course of the administrative removal or reinstatement process, expresses a fear of returning to the country of removal. USCIS has exclusive jurisdiction to make reasonable fear determinations, and EOIR has exclusive jurisdiction to review such determinations.

(b) *Initiation of reasonable fear determination process.* Upon issuance of a Final Administrative Removal Order under § 238.1 of this chapter, or notice under § 241.8(b) of this chapter that an alien is subject to removal, an alien described in paragraph (a) of this section shall be referred to an asylum officer for a reasonable fear determination. In the absence of exceptional circumstances, this determination will be conducted within 10 days of the referral.

(c) *Interview and procedure.* The asylum officer shall conduct the interview in a non-adversarial manner, separate and apart from the general public. At the time of the interview, the asylum officer shall determine that the alien has an understanding of the reasonable fear determination process. The alien may be represented by counsel or an accredited representative at the interview, at no expense to the Government, and may present evidence, if available, relevant to the possibility of persecution or torture. The alien's representative may present a statement at the end of the interview. The asylum officer, in his or her discretion, may place reasonable limits on the number of per-

sons who may be present at the interview and the length of the statement. If the alien is unable to proceed effectively in English, and if the asylum officer is unable to proceed competently in a language chosen by the alien, the asylum officer shall arrange for the assistance of an interpreter in conducting the interview. The interpreter may not be a representative or employee of the applicant's country or nationality, or if the applicant is stateless, the applicant's country of last habitual residence. The asylum officer shall create a summary of the material facts as stated by the applicant. At the conclusion of the interview, the officer shall review the summary with the alien and provide the alien with an opportunity to correct errors therein. The asylum officer shall create a written record of his or her determination, including a summary of the material facts as stated by the applicant, any additional facts relied on by the officers, and the officer's determination of whether, in light of such facts, the alien has established a reasonable fear of persecution or torture. The alien shall be determined to have a reasonable fear of persecution or torture if the alien establishes a reasonable possibility that he or she would be persecuted on account of his or her race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, or a reasonable possibility that he or she would be tortured in the country of removal. For purposes of the screening determination, the bars to eligibility for withholding of removal under section 241(b)(3)(B) of the Act shall not be considered.

(d) *Authority.* Asylum officers conducting screening determinations under this section shall have the authority described in § 208.9(c).

(e) *Referral to Immigration Judge.* If an asylum officer determines that an alien described in this section has a reasonable fear of persecution or torture, the officer shall so inform the alien and issue a Form I-863, Notice of Referral to the Immigration Judge, for full consideration of the request for withholding of removal only. Such cases shall be adjudicated by the immigration judge in accordance with the

provisions of §208.16. Appeal of the immigration judge's decision shall lie to the Board of Immigration Appeals.

(f) *Removal of aliens with no reasonable fear of persecution or torture.* If the asylum officer determines that the alien has not established a reasonable fear of persecution or torture, the asylum officer shall inform the alien in writing of the decision and shall inquire whether the alien wishes to have an immigration judge review the negative decision, using the Record of Negative Reasonable Fear Finding and Request for Review by Immigration Judge, on which the alien must indicate whether he or she desires such review. If the alien refuses to make an indication, DHS shall consider such a response as a decision to decline review.

(g) *Review by immigration judge.* The asylum officer's negative decision regarding reasonable fear shall be subject to review by an immigration judge upon the alien's request. If the alien requests such review, the asylum officer shall serve him or her with a Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge. The record of determination, including copies of the Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge, the asylum officer's notes, the summary of the material facts, and other materials upon which the determination was based shall be provided to the immigration judge with the negative determination. In the absence of exceptional circumstances, such review shall be conducted by the immigration judge within 10 days of the filing of the Notice of Referral to Immigration Judge with the immigration court. Upon review of the asylum officer's negative reasonable fear determination:

(1) If the immigration judge concurs with the asylum officer's determination that the alien does not have a reasonable fear of persecution or torture, the case shall be returned to DHS for removal of the alien. No appeal shall lie from the immigration judge's decision.

(2) If the immigration judge finds that the alien has a reasonable fear of persecution or torture, the alien may submit an Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal.

(i) The immigration judge shall consider only the alien's application for

withholding of removal under 8 CFR 1208.16 and shall determine whether the alien's removal to the country of removal must be withheld or deferred.

(ii) Appeal of the immigration judge's decision whether removal must be withheld or deferred lies with the Board of Immigration Appeals. If the alien or DHS appeals the immigration judge's decision, the Board shall review only the immigration judge's decision regarding the alien's eligibility for withholding or deferral of removal under 8 CFR 1208.16.

[64 FR 8493, Feb. 19, 1999; 64 FR 13881, Mar. 23, 1999; 76 FR 53785, Aug. 29, 2011; 85 FR 80392, Dec. 11, 2020]

PART 209—ADJUSTMENT OF STATUS OF REFUGEES AND ALIENS GRANTED ASYLUM

Sec.

209.1 Adjustment of status of refugees.

209.2 Adjustment of status of alien granted asylum.

AUTHORITY: 8 U.S.C. 1101, 1103, 1157, 1158, 1159, 1228, 1252, 1282; Title VII of Pub. L. 110-229; 8 CFR part 2; Pub. L. 115-218.

SOURCE: 46 FR 45119, Sept. 10, 1981, unless otherwise noted.

§209.1 Adjustment of status of refugees.

The provisions of this section shall provide the sole and exclusive procedure for adjustment of status by a refugee admitted under section 207 of the Act whose application is based on his or her refugee status.

(a) *Eligibility.* (1) Every alien in the United States who is classified as a refugee under 8 CFR part 207, whose status has not been terminated, is required to apply to USCIS one year after entry in order for USCIS to determine his or her admissibility under section 212 of the Act, without regard to paragraphs (4), (5), and (7)(A) of section 212(a) of the Act.

(2) Every alien processed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service abroad and paroled into the United States as a refugee after April 1, 1980, and before May 18, 1980, shall be considered as having entered the United States as a refugee under section 207(a) of the Act.