

§ 655.1319 Document retention requirements.

(a) *Entities required to retain documents.* All employers receiving a certification of the *Application for Temporary Employment Certification* for agricultural workers under this subpart are required to retain the documents and records as provided in the regulations cited in paragraph (c) of this section.

(b) *Period of required retention.* Records and documents must be retained for a period of 3 years from the date of certification of the *Application for Temporary Employment Certification*.

(c) *Documents and records to be retained.* (1) All applicants must retain the following documentation:

(i) Proof of recruitment efforts including:

(A) Job order placement as specified in § 655.102(e)(1);

(B) Advertising as specified in § 655.102(g)(3), or, if used, professional, trade, or ethnic publications;

(C) Contact with former U.S. workers as specified in § 655.102(h);

(D) Multi-state recruitment efforts (if required under § 655.102(i)) as specified in § 655.102(g)(3);

(ii) Substantiation of information submitted in the recruitment report prepared in accordance with § 655.102(k)(2), such as evidence of non-applicability of contact of former employees as specified in § 655.102(h);

(iii) The supplemental recruitment report as specified in § 655.102(k) and any supporting resumes and contact information as specified in § 655.102(k)(3);

(iv) Proof of workers' compensation insurance or State law coverage as specified in § 655.104(e);

(v) Records of each worker's earnings as specified in § 655.104(j);

(vi) The work contract or a copy of the *Application for Temporary Employment Certification* as defined in 29 CFR 501.10 and specified in § 655.104(q);

(vii) The wage determination provided by the NPC as specified in § 655.108;

(viii) Copy of the request for housing inspection submitted to the SWA as specified in § 655.104(d); and

(2) In addition to the documentation specified in paragraph (c)(1) of this section, H-2ALCs must also retain:

(i) Statements of compliance with the housing and transportation obligations for each fixed-site employer which provided housing or transportation and to which the H-2ALC provided workers during the validity period of the certification, unless such housing and transportation obligations were met by the H-2ALC itself, in which case proof of compliance by the H-2ALC must be retained, as specified in § 655.101(a)(5);

(ii) Proof of surety bond coverage which includes the name, address, and phone number of the surety, the bond number of other identifying designation, the amount of coverage, and the payee, as specified in 29 CFR 501.8; and

(3) Associations filing must retain documentation substantiating their status as an employer or agent, as specified in § 655.101(a)(1).

PART 656—LABOR CERTIFICATION PROCESS FOR PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT OF ALIENS IN THE UNITED STATES

Subpart A—Purpose and Scope of Part 656

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AUTHORITY: 8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(5)(A), 1182(p)(1); sec.122, Public Law 101-649, 109 Stat. 4978; and Title IV, Public Law 105-277, 112 Stat. 2681.

SOURCE: 69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—Purpose and Scope of Part 656

§ 656.1 Purpose and scope of part 656.

(a) Under section 212(a)(5)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA or Act) (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(5)(A)), certain aliens may not obtain immigrant visas for entrance into the United States in order to engage in permanent employment unless the Secretary of Labor has first certified to the Secretary of State and to the Secretary of Homeland Security that:

(1) There are not sufficient United States workers who are able, willing, qualified and available at the time of application for a visa and admission into the United States and at the place where the alien is to perform the work; and

(2) The employment of the alien will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of United States workers similarly employed.

(b) The regulations under this part set forth the procedures through which such immigrant labor certifications may be applied for, and granted or denied.

(c) Correspondence and questions about the regulations in this part should be addressed to: Office of Foreign Labor Certification, Employment

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and Training Administration, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room C-4312, Washington, DC 20210.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 71 FR 35522, June 21, 2006]

§ 656.2 Description of the Immigration and Nationality Act and of the Department of Labor's role thereunder.

(a) *Description of the Act.* The Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 *et seq.*) regulates the admission of aliens into the United States. The Act designates the Secretary of Homeland Security and the Secretary of State as the principal administrators of its provisions.

(b) *Burden of proof under the Act.* Section 291 of the Act (8 U.S.C. 1361) provides, in pertinent part, that:

Whenever any person makes application for a visa or any other documentation required for entry, or makes application for admission, or otherwise attempts to enter the United States, the burden of proof shall be upon such person to establish that he is eligible to receive such visa or such document, or is not subject to exclusion under any provision of this Act * * *.

(c)(1) *Role of the Department of Labor.* The permanent labor certification role of the Department of Labor under the Act derives from section 212(a)(5)(A) (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(5)(A)), which provides that any alien who seeks admission or status as an immigrant for the purpose of employment under paragraph (2) or (3) of section 203(b) of the Act may not be admitted unless the Secretary of Labor has first certified to the Secretary of State and to the Secretary of Homeland Security that:

(i) There are not sufficient United States workers who are able, willing, qualified, and available at the time of application for a visa and admission to the United States and at the place where the alien is to perform such skilled or unskilled labor; and

(ii) The employment of such alien will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of workers in the United States similarly employed.

(2) This certification is referred to in this part 656 as a "labor certification."

(3) We certify the employment of aliens in several instances: For the permanent employment of aliens under

this part; and for temporary employment of aliens for agricultural and nonagricultural employment in the United States classified under 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(H)(ii), under the DHS regulation at 8 CFR 214.2(h)(5) and (6) and sections 101(a)(15)(H)(ii), 214, and 218 of the Act. See 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(H)(ii), 1184, and 1188. We also administer labor attestation and labor condition application programs for the admission and/or work authorization of the following nonimmigrants: Specialty occupations and fashion models (H-1B visas), specialty occupations from countries with which the U.S. has entered agreements listed in the INA (H-1B1 visas), registered nurses (H-1C visas), and crewmembers performing longshore work (D visas), classified under 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b), 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(b1), 1101(a)(15)(H)(i)(c), and 1101(a)(15)(D), respectively. See also 8 U.S.C. 1184(c), (m), and (n), and 1288.

§ 656.3 Definitions, for purposes of this part, of terms used in this part.

Act means the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, 8 U.S.C. 1101 *et seq.*

Agent means a person who is not an employee of an employer, and who has been designated in writing to act on behalf of an alien or employer in connection with an application for labor certification.

Applicant means a U.S. worker (see definition of U.S. worker below) who is applying for a job opportunity for which an employer has filed an *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* (ETA Form 9089).

Application means an *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* submitted by an employer (or its agent or attorney) in applying for a labor certification under this part.

Area of intended employment means the area within normal commuting distance of the place (address) of intended employment. There is no rigid measure of distance which constitutes a normal commuting distance or normal commuting area, because there may be widely varying factual circumstances among different areas (e.g., normal commuting distances might be 20, 30, or 50 miles). If the place of intended employment is within a Metropolitan

Statistical Area (MSA) or a Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA), any place within the MSA or PMSA is deemed to be within normal commuting distance of the place of intended employment; however, not all locations within a Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA) will be deemed automatically to be within normal commuting distance. The borders of MSA's and PMSA's are not controlling in the identification of the normal commuting area; a location outside of an MSA or PMSA (or a CMSA) may be within normal commuting distance of a location that is inside (e.g., near the border of) the MSA or PMSA (or CMSA). The terminology CMSAs and PMSAs are being replaced by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). However, ETA will continue to recognize the use of these area concepts as well as their replacements.

Attorney means any person who is a member in good standing of the bar of the highest court of any state, possession, territory, or commonwealth of the United States, or the District of Columbia, and who is not under suspension or disbarment from practice before any court or before DHS or the United States Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review. Such a person is permitted to act as an agent, representative, or attorney for an employer and/or alien under this part.

Barter, for purposes of an Application for Permanent Employment Certification (Form ETA 9089) or an Application for Alien Labor Certification (Form ETA 750), means the transfer of ownership of a labor certification application or certification from one person to another by voluntary act or agreement in exchange for a commodity, service, property or other valuable consideration.

Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals (BALCA or Board) means the permanent Board established by this part, chaired by the Chief Administrative Law Judge, and consisting of Administrative Law Judges assigned to the Department of Labor and designated by the Chief Administrative Law Judge to be members of the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals. The Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals is

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located in Washington, DC, and reviews and decides appeals in Washington, DC.

Certifying Officer (CO) means a Department of Labor official who makes determinations about whether or not to grant applications for labor certifications.

Closely-held Corporation means a corporation that typically has relatively few shareholders and whose shares are not generally traded in the securities market.

Employer means:

(1) A person, association, firm, or a corporation that currently has a location within the United States to which U.S. workers may be referred for employment and that proposes to employ a full-time employee at a place within the United States, or the authorized representative of such a person, association, firm, or corporation. An employer must possess a valid Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN). For purposes of this definition, an “authorized representative” means an employee of the employer whose position or legal status authorizes the employee to act for the employer in labor certification matters. A labor certification can not be granted for an *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* filed on behalf of an independent contractor.

(2) Persons who are temporarily in the United States, including but not limited to, foreign diplomats, intra-company transferees, students, and exchange visitors, visitors for business or pleasure, and representatives of foreign information media can not be employers for the purpose of obtaining a labor certification for permanent employment.

Employment means:

(1) Permanent, full-time work by an employee for an employer other than oneself. For purposes of this definition, an investor is not an employee. In the event of an audit, the employer must be prepared to document the permanent and full-time nature of the position by furnishing position descriptions and payroll records for the job opportunity involved in the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification*.

(2) Job opportunities consisting solely of job duties that will be performed totally outside the United States, its

territories, possessions, or commonwealths can not be the subject of an *Application for Permanent Employment Certification*.

Employment and Training Administration (ETA) means the agency within the Department of Labor (DOL) that includes the Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC).

Immigration Officer means an official of the Department of Homeland Security, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) who handles applications for labor certifications under this part.

Job opportunity means a job opening for employment at a place in the United States to which U.S. workers can be referred.

Nonprofessional occupation means any occupation for which the attainment of a bachelor’s or higher degree is not a usual requirement for the occupation.

Non-profit or tax-exempt organization for the purposes of § 656.40 means an organization that:

(1) Is defined as a tax exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, section 501(c)(3), (c)(4), or (c)(6) (26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3), (c)(4) or (c)(6)); and

(2) Has been approved as a tax-exempt organization for research or educational purposes by the Internal Revenue Service.

Office of Foreign Labor Certification means the organizational component within the Employment and Training Administration that provides national leadership and policy guidance and develops regulations and procedures to carry out the responsibilities of the Secretary of Labor under the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, concerning alien workers seeking admission to the United States in order to work under section 212(a)(5)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended.

*O*NET* means the system developed by the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, to provide to the general public information on skills, abilities, knowledge, work activities, interests and specific vocational preparation levels associated with occupations. O*NET is based on the Standard Occupational Classification system. Further information

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about O*NET can be found at <http://www.onetcenter.org>.

Prevailing wage determination (PWD) means the prevailing wage provided or approved by an OFLC National Processing Center (NPC), in accordance with OFLC guidance governing foreign labor certification programs. This includes PWD requests processed for purposes of employer petitions filed with DHS under Schedule A or for sheepherders.

Professional occupation means an occupation for which the attainment of a bachelor's or higher degree is a usual education requirement. A beneficiary of an application for permanent alien employment certification involving a professional occupation need not have a bachelor's or higher degree to qualify for the professional occupation. However, if the employer is willing to accept work experience in lieu of a baccalaureate or higher degree, such work experience must be attainable in the U.S. labor market and must be stated on the application form. If the employer is willing to accept an equivalent foreign degree, it must be clearly stated on the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification form*.

Purchase, for purposes of an Application for Permanent Employment Certification (Form ETA 9089) or an Application for Alien Labor Certification (Form ETA 750), means the transfer of ownership of a labor certification application or certification from one person to another by voluntary act and agreement, based on a valuable consideration.

Sale, for purposes of an Application for Permanent Employment Certification (Form ETA 9089) or an Application for Alien Labor Certification (Form ETA 750), means an agreement between two parties, called, respectively, the seller (or vendor) and the buyer (or purchaser) by which the seller, in consideration of the payment or promise of payment of a certain price in money terms, transfers ownership of a labor certification application or certification to the buyer.

Secretary means the Secretary of Labor, the chief official of the U.S. Department of Labor, or the Secretary's designee.

Secretary of Homeland Security means the chief official of the U.S. Depart-

ment of Homeland Security or the Secretary of Homeland Security's designee.

Secretary of State means the chief official of the U.S. Department of State or the Secretary of State's designee.

Specific vocational preparation (SVP) means the amount of lapsed time required by a typical worker to learn the techniques, acquire the information, and develop the facility needed for average performance in a specific job-worker situation. Lapsed time is not the same as work time. For example, 30 days is approximately 1 month of lapsed time and not six 5-day work weeks, and 3 months refers to 3 calendar months and not 90 work days. The various levels of specific vocational preparation are provided below.

Level	Time
1	Short demonstration.
2	Anything beyond short demonstration up to and including 30 days.
3	Over 30 days up to and including 3 months.
4	Over 3 months up to and including 6 months.
5	Over 6 months up to and including 1 year.
6	Over 1 year up to and including 2 years.
7	Over 2 years up to and including 4 years.
8	Over 4 years up to and including 10 years.
9	Over 10 years.

State Workforce Agency (SWA), formerly known as State Employment Security Agency (SESA), means the state agency that receives funds under the Wagner-Peyser Act to provide employment-related services to U.S. workers and employers and/or administers the public labor exchange delivered through the state's one-stop delivery system in accordance with the Wagner-Peyser Act.

United States, when used in a geographic sense, means the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Guam.

United States worker means any worker who is:

- (1) A U.S. citizen;
- (2) A U.S. national;
- (3) Lawfully admitted for permanent residence;
- (4) Granted the status of an alien lawfully admitted for temporary residence under 8 U.S.C. 1160(a), 1161(a), or 1255a(a)(1);
- (5) Admitted as a refugee under 8 U.S.C. 1157; or

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(6) Granted asylum under 8 U.S.C. 1158.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 71 FR 35522, June 21, 2006; 72 FR 27944, May 17, 2007; 73 FR 78068, Dec. 19, 2008]

Subpart B—Occupational Labor Certification Determinations

§ 656.5 Schedule A.

We have determined there are not sufficient United States workers who are able, willing, qualified, and available for the occupations listed below on *Schedule A* and the wages and working conditions of United States workers similarly employed will not be adversely affected by the employment of aliens in *Schedule A* occupations. An employer seeking a labor certification for an occupation listed on *Schedule A* may apply for that labor certification under § 656.15.

SCHEDULE A

(a) Group I:

(1) Persons who will be employed as physical therapists, and who possess all the qualifications necessary to take the physical therapist licensing examination in the state in which they propose to practice physical therapy.

(2) Aliens who will be employed as professional nurses; and

(i) Who have received a Certificate from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS);

(ii) Who hold a permanent, full and unrestricted license to practice professional nursing in the state of intended employment; or

(iii) Who have passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN), administered by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing.

(3) Definitions of Group I occupations:

(i) *Physical therapist* means a person who applies the art and science of physical therapy to the treatment of patients with disabilities, disorders and injuries to relieve pain, develop or restore function, and maintain performance, using physical means, such as exercise, massage, heat, water, light, and electricity, as prescribed by a physician (or a surgeon).

(ii) *Professional nurse* means a person who applies the art and science of nursing which reflects comprehension of principles derived from the physical, biological and behavioral sciences. Professional nursing generally includes making clinical judgments involving the observation, care and counsel of persons requiring nursing care; administering of medicines and treatments prescribed by the physician or dentist; and participation in the activities for the promotion of health and prevention of illness in others. A program of study for professional nurses generally includes theory and practice in clinical areas such as obstetrics, surgery, pediatrics, psychiatry, and medicine.

(b) Group II:

(1) *Sciences or arts (except performing arts)*. Aliens (except for aliens in the performing arts) of exceptional ability in the sciences or arts including college and university teachers of exceptional ability who have been practicing their science or art during the year prior to application and who intend to practice the same science or art in the United States. For purposes of this group, the term “science or art” means any field of knowledge and/or skill with respect to which colleges and universities commonly offer specialized courses leading to a degree in the knowledge and/or skill. An alien, however, need not have studied at a college or university in order to qualify for the Group II occupation.

(2) *Performing arts*. Aliens of exceptional ability in the performing arts whose work during the past 12 months did require, and whose intended work in the United States will require, exceptional ability.

Subpart C—Labor Certification Process

§ 656.10 General instructions.

(a) *Filing of applications*. A request for a labor certification on behalf of any alien who is required by the Act to be a beneficiary of a labor certification in order to obtain permanent resident status in the United States may be filed as follows:

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(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (a)(2), (3), and (4) of this section, an employer seeking a labor certification must file under this section and § 656.17.

(2) An employer seeking a labor certification for a college or university teacher must apply for a labor certification under this section and must also file under either § 656.17 or § 656.18.

(3) An employer seeking labor certification for an occupation listed on *Schedule A* must apply for a labor certification under this section and § 656.15.

(4) An employer seeking labor certification for a sheepherder must apply for a labor certification under this section and must also choose to file under either § 656.16 or § 656.17.

(b) *Representation.* (1) Employers may have agents or attorneys represent them throughout the labor certification process. If an employer intends to be represented by an agent or attorney, the employer must sign the statement set forth on the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form: That the attorney or agent is representing the employer and the employer takes full responsibility for the accuracy of any representations made by the attorney or agent. Whenever, under this part, any notice or other document is required to be sent to the employer, the document will be sent to the attorney or agent who has been authorized to represent the employer on the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form.

(2)(i) It is contrary to the best interests of U.S. workers to have the alien and/or agents or attorneys for either the employer or the alien participate in interviewing or considering U.S. workers for the job offered the alien. As the beneficiary of a labor certification application, the alien can not represent the best interests of U.S. workers in the job opportunity. The alien's agent and/or attorney can not represent the alien effectively and at the same time truly be seeking U.S. workers for the job opportunity. Therefore, the alien and/or the alien's agent and/or attorney may not interview or consider U.S. workers for the job offered to the alien, unless the agent and/or attorney is the employer's rep-

resentative, as described in paragraph (b)(2)(ii) of this section.

(ii) The employer's representative who interviews or considers U.S. workers for the job offered to the alien must be the person who normally interviews or considers, on behalf of the employer, applicants for job opportunities such as that offered the alien, but which do not involve labor certifications.

(3) No person under suspension or disbarment from practice before any court or before the DHS or the United States Department of Justice's Executive Office for Immigration Review is permitted to act as an agent, representative, or attorney for an employer and/or alien under this part.

(c) *Attestations.* The employer must certify to the conditions of employment listed below on the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* under penalty of perjury under 18 U.S.C. 1621 (2). Failure to attest to any of the conditions listed below results in a denial of the application.

(1) The offered wage equals or exceeds the prevailing wage determined pursuant to § 656.40 and § 656.41, and the wage the employer will pay to the alien to begin work will equal or exceed the prevailing wage that is applicable at the time the alien begins work or from the time the alien is admitted to take up the certified employment;

(2) The wage offered is not based on commissions, bonuses or other incentives, unless the employer guarantees a prevailing wage paid on a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly basis that equals or exceeds the prevailing wage;

(3) The employer has enough funds available to pay the wage or salary offered the alien;

(4) The employer will be able to place the alien on the payroll on or before the date of the alien's proposed entrance into the United States;

(5) The job opportunity does not involve unlawful discrimination by race, creed, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, handicap, or citizenship;

(6) The employer's job opportunity is not:

(i) Vacant because the former occupant is on strike or locked out in the course of a labor dispute involving a work stoppage;

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(ii) At issue in a labor dispute involving a work stoppage.

(7) The job opportunity's terms, conditions and occupational environment are not contrary to Federal, state or local law;

(8) The job opportunity has been and is clearly open to any U.S. worker;

(9) The U.S. workers who applied for the job opportunity were rejected for lawful job-related reasons;

(10) The job opportunity is for full-time, permanent employment for an employer other than the alien.

(d) *Notice.* (1) In applications filed under §§ 656.15 (*Schedule A*), 656.16 (Shepherders), 656.17 (Basic Process), 656.18 (College and University Teachers), and 656.21 (Supervised Recruitment), the employer must give notice of the filing of the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* and be able to document that notice was provided, if requested by the Certifying Officer, as follows:

(i) To the bargaining representative(s) (if any) of the employer's employees in the occupational classification for which certification of the job opportunity is sought in the employer's location(s) in the area of intended employment. Documentation may consist of a copy of the letter and a copy of the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form that was sent to the bargaining representative.

(ii) If there is no such bargaining representative, by posted notice to the employer's employees at the facility or location of the employment. The notice must be posted for at least 10 consecutive business days. The notice must be clearly visible and unobstructed while posted and must be posted in conspicuous places where the employer's U.S. workers can readily read the posted notice on their way to or from their place of employment. Appropriate locations for posting notices of the job opportunity include locations in the immediate vicinity of the wage and hour notices required by 29 CFR 516.4 or occupational safety and health notices required by 29 CFR 1903.2(a). In addition, the employer must publish the notice in any and all in-house media, whether electronic or printed, in accordance with the normal procedures used for the recruitment of

similar positions in the employer's organization. The documentation requirement may be satisfied by providing a copy of the posted notice and stating where it was posted, and by providing copies of all the in-house media, whether electronic or print, that were used to distribute notice of the application in accordance with the procedures used for similar positions within the employer's organization.

(2) In the case of a private household, notice is required under this paragraph (d) only if the household employs one or more U.S. workers at the time the application for labor certification is filed. The documentation requirement may be satisfied by providing a copy of the posted notice to the Certifying Officer.

(3) The notice of the filing of an *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* must:

(i) State the notice is being provided as a result of the filing of an application for permanent alien labor certification for the relevant job opportunity;

(ii) State any person may provide documentary evidence bearing on the application to the Certifying Officer of the Department of Labor;

(iii) Provide the address of the appropriate Certifying Officer; and

(iv) Be provided between 30 and 180 days before filing the application.

(4) If an application is filed under § 656.17, the notice must contain the information required for advertisements by § 656.17(f), must state the rate of pay (which must equal or exceed the prevailing wage entered by the SWA on the prevailing wage request form), and must contain the information required by paragraph (d)(3) of this section.

(5) If an application is filed on behalf of a college and university teacher selected in a competitive selection and recruitment process, as provided by § 656.18, the notice must include the information required for advertisements by § 656.18(b)(3), and must include the information required by paragraph (d)(3) of this section.

(6) If an application is filed under the *Schedule A* procedures at § 656.15, or the procedures for shepherders at § 656.16, the notice must contain a description of the job and rate of pay, and must meet the requirements of this section.

(e)(1)(i) *Submission of evidence.* Any person may submit to the Certifying Officer documentary evidence bearing on an application for permanent alien labor certification filed under the basic labor certification process at § 656.17 or an application involving a college and university teacher selected in a competitive recruitment and selection process under § 656.18.

(ii) Documentary evidence submitted under paragraph (e)(1)(i) of this section may include information on available workers, information on wages and working conditions, and information on the employer's failure to meet the terms and conditions for the employment of alien workers and co-workers. The Certifying Officer must consider this information in making his or her determination.

(2)(i) Any person may submit to the appropriate DHS office documentary evidence of fraud or willful misrepresentation in a *Schedule A* application filed under § 656.15 or a shepherdder application filed under § 656.16.

(ii) Documentary evidence submitted under paragraph (e)(2) of this section is limited to information relating to possible fraud or willful misrepresentation. The DHS may consider this information under § 656.31.

(f) *Retention of documents.* Copies of applications for permanent employment certification filed with the Department of Labor and all supporting documentation must be retained by the employer for 5 years from the date of filing the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification*.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 71 FR 35523, June 21, 2006]

§ 656.11 Substitutions and modifications to applications.

(a) Substitution or change to the identity of an alien beneficiary on any application for permanent labor certification, whether filed under this part or 20 CFR part 656 in effect prior to March 28, 2005, and on any resulting certification, is prohibited for any request to substitute submitted after July 16, 2007.

(b) Requests for modifications to an application will not be accepted for applications submitted after July 16, 2007.

[72 FR 27944, May 17, 2007]

§ 656.12 Improper commerce and payment.

The following provision applies to applications filed under both this part and 20 CFR part 656 in effect prior to March 28, 2005, and to any certification resulting from those applications:

(a) Applications for permanent labor certification and approved labor certifications are not articles of commerce. They shall not be offered for sale, barter or purchase by individuals or entities. Any evidence that an application for permanent labor certification or an approved labor certification has been sold, bartered, or purchased shall be grounds for investigation under this part and may be grounds for denial under § 656.24, revocation under § 656.32, debarment under § 656.31(f), or any combination thereof.

(b) An employer must not seek or receive payment of any kind for any activity related to obtaining permanent labor certification, including payment of the employer's attorneys' fees, whether as an incentive or inducement to filing, or as a reimbursement for costs incurred in preparing or filing a permanent labor certification application, except when work to be performed by the alien in connection with the job opportunity would benefit or accrue to the person or entity making the payment, based on that person's or entity's established business relationship with the employer. An alien may pay his or her own costs in connection with a labor certification, including attorneys' fees for representation of the alien, except that where the same attorney represents both the alien and the employer, such costs shall be borne by the employer. For purposes of this paragraph (b), payment includes, but is not limited to, monetary payments; wage concessions, including deductions from wages, salary, or benefits; kickbacks, bribes, or tributes; in kind payments; and free labor.

(c) Evidence that an employer has sought or received payment from any source in connection with an application for permanent labor certification

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or an approved labor certification, except for a third party to whose benefit work to be performed in connection with the job opportunity would accrue, based on that person's or entity's established business relationship with the employer, shall be grounds for investigation under this part or any appropriate Government agency's procedures, and may be grounds for denial under § 656.32, revocation under § 656.32, debarment under § 656.31(f), or any combination thereof.

[72 FR 27945, May 17, 2007]

§ 656.15 Applications for labor certification for *Schedule A* occupations.

(a) *Filing application.* An employer must apply for a labor certification for a *Schedule A* occupation by filing an application with the appropriate DHS office, and not with an ETA application processing center.

(b) *General documentation requirements.* A *Schedule A* application must include:

(1) An *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form, which includes a prevailing wage determination in accordance with §§ 656.40 and 656.41.

(2) Evidence that notice of filing the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* was provided to the bargaining representative or the employer's employees as prescribed in § 656.10(d).

(c) *Group I documentation.* An employer seeking labor certification under Group I of *Schedule A* must file with DHS, as part of its labor certification application, documentary evidence of the following:

(1) An employer seeking *Schedule A* labor certification for an alien to be employed as a physical therapist (§ 656.5(a)(1)) must file as part of its labor certification application a letter or statement, signed by an authorized state physical therapy licensing official in the state of intended employment, stating the alien is qualified to take that state's written licensing examination for physical therapists. Application for certification of permanent employment as a physical therapist may be made only under this § 656.15 and not under § 656.17.

(2) An employer seeking a *Schedule A* labor certification for an alien to be

employed as a professional nurse (§ 656.5(a)(2)) must file as part of its labor certification application documentation that the alien has received a Certificate from the Commission on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS); that the alien holds a full and unrestricted (permanent) license to practice nursing in the state of intended employment; or that the alien has passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). Application for certification of employment as a professional nurse may be made only under this § 656.15(c) and not under § 656.17.

(d) *Group II documentation.* An employer seeking a *Schedule A* labor certification under Group II of *Schedule A* must file with DHS, as part of its labor certification application, documentary evidence of the following:

(1) An employer seeking labor certification on behalf of an alien to be employed as an alien of exceptional ability in the sciences or arts (excluding those in the performing arts) must file documentary evidence showing the widespread acclaim and international recognition accorded the alien by recognized experts in the alien's field; and documentation showing the alien's work in that field during the past year did, and the alien's intended work in the United States will, require exceptional ability. In addition, the employer must file documentation about the alien from at least two of the following seven groups:

(i) Documentation of the alien's receipt of internationally recognized prizes or awards for excellence in the field for which certification is sought;

(ii) Documentation of the alien's membership in international associations, in the field for which certification is sought, which require outstanding achievement of their members, as judged by recognized international experts in their disciplines or fields;

(iii) Published material in professional publications about the alien, about the alien's work in the field for which certification is sought, which shall include the title, date, and author of such published material;

(iv) Evidence of the alien's participation on a panel, or individually, as a judge of the work of others in the same or in an allied field of specialization to that for which certification is sought;

(v) Evidence of the alien's original scientific or scholarly research contributions of major significance in the field for which certification is sought;

(vi) Evidence of the alien's authorship of published scientific or scholarly articles in the field for which certification is sought, in international professional journals or professional journals with an international circulation;

(vii) Evidence of the display of the alien's work, in the field for which certification is sought, at artistic exhibitions in more than one country.

(2) An employer seeking labor certification on behalf of an alien of exceptional ability in the performing arts must file documentary evidence that the alien's work experience during the past twelve months did require, and the alien's intended work in the United States will require, exceptional ability; and must submit documentation to show this exceptional ability, such as:

(i) Documentation attesting to the current widespread acclaim and international recognition accorded to the alien, and receipt of internationally recognized prizes or awards for excellence;

(ii) Published material by or about the alien, such as critical reviews or articles in major newspapers, periodicals, and/or trade journals (the title, date, and author of such material shall be indicated);

(iii) Documentary evidence of earnings commensurate with the claimed level of ability;

(iv) Playbills and star billings;

(v) Documents attesting to the outstanding reputation of theaters, concert halls, night clubs, and other establishments in which the alien has appeared or is scheduled to appear; and/or

(vi) Documents attesting to the outstanding reputation of theaters or repertory companies, ballet troupes, orchestras, or other organizations in which or with which the alien has performed during the past year in a leading or starring capacity.

(e) *Determination.* An Immigration Officer determines whether the employer

and alien have met the applicable requirements of § 656.10 and of *Schedule A* (§ 656.5); reviews the application; and determines whether or not the alien is qualified for and intends to pursue the *Schedule A* occupation. The *Schedule A* determination of DHS is conclusive and final. The employer, therefore, may not appeal from any such determination under the review procedures at § 656.26.

(f) *Refiling after denial.* If an application for a *Schedule A* occupation is denied, the employer, except where the occupation is as a physical therapist or a professional nurse, may at any time file for a labor certification on the alien beneficiary's behalf under § 656.17. Labor certifications for professional nurses and for physical therapists shall not be considered under § 656.17.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 73 FR 78068, Dec. 19, 2008]

§ 656.16 Labor certification applications for sheepherders.

(a) *Filing requirements and required documentation.* (1) An employer may apply for a labor certification to employ an alien (who has been employed legally as a nonimmigrant sheepherder in the United States for at least 33 of the preceding 36 months) as a sheepherder by filing an *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form directly with DHS, not with an office of DOL.

(2) A signed letter or letters from each U.S. employer who has employed the alien as a sheepherder during the immediately preceding 36 months, attesting the alien has been employed in the United States lawfully and continuously as a sheepherder for at least 33 of the immediately preceding 36 months, must be filed with the application.

(b) *Determination.* An Immigration Officer reviews the application and the letters attesting to the alien's previous employment as a sheepherder in the United States, and determines whether or not the alien and the employer(s) have met the requirements of this section.

(1) The determination of the Immigration Officer under this paragraph (b) is conclusive and final. The employer(s) and the alien, therefore, may not make use of the review procedures

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set forth at §§ 656.26 and 656.27 to appeal such a determination.

(2) If the alien and the employer(s) have met the requirements of this section, the Immigration Officer must indicate on the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form the occupation, the immigration office that made the determination, and the date of the determination (see § 656.30 for the significance of this date). The Immigration Officer must then promptly forward a copy of the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form, without attachments, to the Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) Administrator.

(c) *Alternative filing.* If an application for a shepherd does not meet the requirements of this section, the application may be filed under § 656.17.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 71 FR 35523, June 21, 2006]

§ 656.17 Basic labor certification process.

(a) *Filing applications.* (1) Except as otherwise provided by §§ 656.15, 656.16, and 656.18, an employer who desires to apply for a labor certification on behalf of an alien must file a completed Department of Labor *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form (ETA Form 9089). The application must be filed with an ETA application processing center. Incomplete applications will be denied. Applications filed and certified electronically must, upon receipt of the labor certification, be signed immediately by the employer in order to be valid. Applications submitted by mail must contain the original signature of the employer, alien, attorney, and/or agent when they are received by the application processing center. DHS will not process petitions unless they are supported by an original certified ETA Form 9089 that has been signed by the employer, alien, attorney and/or agent.

(2) The Department of Labor may issue or require the use of certain identifying information, including user identifiers, passwords, or personal identification numbers (PINS). The purpose of these personal identifiers is to allow the Department of Labor to associate a given electronic submission with a single, specific individual. Personal identifiers

can not be issued to a company or business. Rather, a personal identifier can only be issued to specific individual. Any personal identifiers must be used solely by the individual to whom they are assigned and can not be used or transferred to any other individual. An individual assigned a personal identifier must take all reasonable steps to ensure that his or her personal identifier can not be compromised. If an individual assigned a personal identifier suspects, or becomes aware, that his or her personal identifier has been compromised or is being used by someone else, then the individual must notify the Department of Labor immediately of the incident and cease the electronic transmission of any further submissions under that personal identifier until such time as a new personal identifier is provided. Any electronic transmissions submitted with a personal identifier will be presumed to be a submission by the individual assigned that personal identifier. The Department of Labor's system will notify those making submissions of these requirements at the time of each submission.

(3) Documentation supporting the application for labor certification should not be filed with the application, however in the event the Certifying Officer notifies the employer that its application is to be audited, the employer must furnish required supporting documentation prior to a final determination.

(b) *Processing.* (1) Applications are screened and are certified, are denied, or are selected for audit.

(2) Employers will be notified if their applications have been selected for audit by the issuance of an audit letter under § 656.20.

(3) Applications may be selected for audit in accordance with selection criteria or may be randomly selected.

(c) *Filing date.* Non-electronically filed applications accepted for processing shall be date stamped. Electronically filed applications will be considered filed when submitted.

(d) *Refiling procedures.* (1) Employers that filed applications under the regulations in effect prior to March 28, 2005, may, if a job order has not been placed pursuant to those regulations, refile

such applications under this part without loss of the original filing date by:

(i) Submitting an application for an identical job opportunity after complying with all of the filing and recruiting requirements of this part 656; and

(ii) Withdrawing the original application in accordance with ETA procedures. Filing an application under this part stating the employer's desire to use the original filing date will be deemed to be a withdrawal of the original application. The original application will be deemed withdrawn regardless of whether the employer's request to use the original filing date is approved.

(2) Refilings under this paragraph must be made within 210 days of the withdrawal of the prior application.

(3) A copy of the original application, including amendments, must be sent to the appropriate ETA application processing center when requested by the CO under § 656.20.

(4) For purposes of paragraph (d)(1)(i) of this section, a job opportunity shall be considered identical if the employer, alien, job title, job location, job requirements, and job description are the same as those stated in the original application filed under the regulations in effect prior to March 28, 2005. For purposes of determining identical job opportunity, the original application includes all accepted amendments up to the time the application was withdrawn, including amendments in response to an assessment notice from a SWA pursuant to § 656.21(h) of the regulations in effect prior to March 28, 2005.

(e) *Required pre-filing recruitment.* Except for labor certification applications involving college or university teachers selected pursuant to a competitive recruitment and selection process (§ 656.18), *Schedule A* occupations (§§ 656.5 and 656.15), and shepherders (§ 656.16), an employer must attest to having conducted the following recruitment prior to filing the application:

(1) *Professional occupations.* If the application is for a professional occupation, the employer must conduct the recruitment steps within 6 months of filing the application for alien employment certification. The employer must

maintain documentation of the recruitment and be prepared to submit this documentation in the event of an audit or in response to a request from the Certifying Officer prior to rendering a final determination.

(i) *Mandatory steps.* Two of the steps, a job order and two print advertisements, are mandatory for all applications involving professional occupations, except applications for college or university teachers selected in a competitive selection and recruitment process as provided in § 656.18. The mandatory recruitment steps must be conducted at least 30 days, but no more than 180 days, before the filing of the application.

(A) *Job order.* Placement of a job order with the SWA serving the area of intended employment for a period of 30 days. The start and end dates of the job order entered on the application shall serve as documentation of this step.

(B) *Advertisements in newspaper or professional journals.* (1) Placing an advertisement on two different Sundays in the newspaper of general circulation in the area of intended employment most appropriate to the occupation and the workers likely to apply for the job opportunity and most likely to bring responses from able, willing, qualified, and available U.S. workers.

(2) If the job opportunity is located in a rural area of intended employment that does not have a newspaper with a Sunday edition, the employer may use the edition with the widest circulation in the area of intended employment.

(3) The advertisements must satisfy the requirements of paragraph (f) of this section. Documentation of this step can be satisfied by furnishing copies of the newspaper pages in which the advertisements appeared or proof of publication furnished by the newspaper.

(4) If the job involved in the application requires experience and an advanced degree, and a professional journal normally would be used to advertise the job opportunity, the employer may, in lieu of one of the Sunday advertisements, place an advertisement in the professional journal most likely to bring responses from able, willing, qualified, and available U.S. workers.

Documentation of this step can be satisfied by providing a copy of the page in which the advertisement appeared.

(ii) *Additional recruitment steps.* The employer must select three additional recruitment steps from the alternatives listed in paragraphs (e)(1)(ii)(A)-(J) of this section. Only one of the additional steps may consist solely of activity that took place within 30 days of the filing of the application. None of the steps may have taken place more than 180 days prior to filing the application.

(A) *Job fairs.* Recruitment at job fairs for the occupation involved in the application, which can be documented by brochures advertising the fair and newspaper advertisements in which the employer is named as a participant in the job fair.

(B) *Employer's Web site.* The use of the employer's Web site as a recruitment medium can be documented by providing dated copies of pages from the site that advertise the occupation involved in the application.

(C) *Job search Web site other than the employer's.* The use of a job search Web site other than the employer's can be documented by providing dated copies of pages from one or more website(s) that advertise the occupation involved in the application. Copies of web pages generated in conjunction with the newspaper advertisements required by paragraph (e)(1)(i)(B) of this section can serve as documentation of the use of a Web site other than the employer's.

(D) *On-campus recruiting.* The employer's on-campus recruiting can be documented by providing copies of the notification issued or posted by the college's or university's placement office naming the employer and the date it conducted interviews for employment in the occupation.

(E) *Trade or professional organizations.* The use of professional or trade organizations as a recruitment source can be documented by providing copies of pages of newsletters or trade journals containing advertisements for the occupation involved in the application for alien employment certification.

(F) *Private employment firms.* The use of private employment firms or placement agencies can be documented by

providing documentation sufficient to demonstrate that recruitment has been conducted by a private firm for the occupation for which certification is sought. For example, documentation might consist of copies of contracts between the employer and the private employment firm and copies of advertisements placed by the private employment firm for the occupation involved in the application.

(G) *Employee referral program with incentives.* The use of an employee referral program with incentives can be documented by providing dated copies of employer notices or memoranda advertising the program and specifying the incentives offered.

(H) *Campus placement offices.* The use of a campus placement office can be documented by providing a copy of the employer's notice of the job opportunity provided to the campus placement office.

(I) *Local and ethnic newspapers.* The use of local and ethnic newspapers can be documented by providing a copy of the page in the newspaper that contains the employer's advertisement.

(J) *Radio and television advertisements.* The use of radio and television advertisements can be documented by providing a copy of the employer's text of the employer's advertisement along with a written confirmation from the radio or television station stating when the advertisement was aired.

(2) *Nonprofessional occupations.* If the application is for a nonprofessional occupation, the employer must at a minimum, place a job order and two newspaper advertisements within 6 months of filing the application. The steps must be conducted at least 30 days but no more than 180 days before the filing of the application.

(i) *Job order.* Placing a job order with the SWA serving the area of intended employment for a period of 30 days. The start and end dates of the job order entered on the application serve as documentation of this step.

(ii) *Newspaper advertisements.* (A) Placing an advertisement on two different Sundays in the newspaper of general circulation in the area of intended employment most appropriate to the occupation and the workers likely to apply for the job opportunity.

(B) If the job opportunity is located in a rural area of intended employment that does not have a newspaper that publishes a Sunday edition, the employer may use the newspaper edition with the widest circulation in the area of intended employment.

(C) Placement of the newspaper advertisements can be documented in the same way as provided in paragraph (e)(1)(i)(B)(3) of this section for professional occupations.

(D) The advertisements must satisfy the requirements of paragraph (f) of this section.

(f) *Advertising requirements.* Advertisements placed in newspapers of general circulation or in professional journals before filing the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* must:

- (1) Name the employer;
- (2) Direct applicants to report or send resumes, as appropriate for the occupation, to the employer;
- (3) Provide a description of the vacancy specific enough to apprise the U.S. workers of the job opportunity for which certification is sought;
- (4) Indicate the geographic area of employment with enough specificity to apprise applicants of any travel requirements and where applicants will likely have to reside to perform the job opportunity;
- (5) Not contain a wage rate lower than the prevailing wage rate;
- (6) Not contain any job requirements or duties which exceed the job requirements or duties listed on the ETA Form 9089; and
- (7) Not contain wages or terms and conditions of employment that are less favorable than those offered to the alien.

(g) *Recruitment report.* (1) The employer must prepare a recruitment report signed by the employer or the employer's representative noted in § 656.10(b)(2)(i) describing the recruitment steps undertaken and the results achieved, the number of hires, and, if applicable, the number of U.S. workers rejected, categorized by the lawful job related reasons for such rejections. The Certifying Officer, after reviewing the employer's recruitment report, may request the U.S. workers' resumes or applications, sorted by the reasons the workers were rejected.

(2) A U.S. worker is able and qualified for the job opportunity if the worker can acquire the skills necessary to perform the duties involved in the occupation during a reasonable period of on-the-job training. Rejecting U.S. workers for lacking skills necessary to perform the duties involved in the occupation, where the U.S. workers are capable of acquiring the skills during a reasonable period of on-the-job training is not a lawful job-related reason for rejection of the U.S. workers.

(h) *Job duties and requirements.* (1) The job opportunity's requirements, unless adequately documented as arising from business necessity, must be those normally required for the occupation and must not exceed the Specific Vocational Preparation level assigned to the occupation as shown in the O*NET Job Zones. To establish a business necessity, an employer must demonstrate the job duties and requirements bear a reasonable relationship to the occupation in the context of the employer's business and are essential to perform the job in a reasonable manner.

(2) A foreign language requirement can not be included, unless it is justified by business necessity. Demonstrating business necessity for a foreign language requirement may be based upon the following:

- (i) The nature of the occupation, e.g., translator; or
- (ii) The need to communicate with a large majority of the employer's customers, contractors, or employees who can not communicate effectively in English, as documented by:

(A) The employer furnishing the number and proportion of its clients, contractors, or employees who can not communicate in English, and/or a detailed plan to market products or services in a foreign country; and

(B) A detailed explanation of why the duties of the position for which certification is sought requires frequent contact and communication with customers, employees or contractors who can not communicate in English and why it is reasonable to believe the allegedly foreign-language-speaking customers, employees, and contractors can not communicate in English.

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(3) If the job opportunity involves a combination of occupations, the employer must document that it has normally employed persons for that combination of occupations, and/or workers customarily perform the combination of occupations in the area of intended employment, and/or the combination job opportunity is based on a business necessity. Combination occupations can be documented by position descriptions and relevant payroll records, and/or letters from other employers stating their workers normally perform the combination of occupations in the area of intended employment, and/or documentation that the combination occupation arises from a business necessity.

(4)(i) Alternative experience requirements must be substantially equivalent to the primary requirements of the job opportunity for which certification is sought; and

(ii) If the alien beneficiary already is employed by the employer, and the alien does not meet the primary job requirements and only potentially qualifies for the job by virtue of the employer's alternative requirements, certification will be denied unless the application states that any suitable combination of education, training, or experience is acceptable.

(i) *Actual minimum requirements.* DOL will evaluate the employer's actual minimum requirements in accordance with this paragraph (i).

(1) The job requirements, as described, must represent the employer's actual minimum requirements for the job opportunity.

(2) The employer must not have hired workers with less training or experience for jobs substantially comparable to that involved in the job opportunity.

(3) If the alien beneficiary already is employed by the employer, in considering whether the job requirements represent the employer's actual minimums, DOL will review the training and experience possessed by the alien beneficiary at the time of hiring by the employer, including as a contract employee. The employer can not require domestic worker applicants to possess training and/or experience beyond what the alien possessed at the time of hire unless:

(i) The alien gained the experience while working for the employer, including as a contract employee, in a position not substantially comparable to the position for which certification is being sought, or

(ii) The employer can demonstrate that it is no longer feasible to train a worker to qualify for the position.

(4) In evaluating whether the alien beneficiary satisfies the employer's actual minimum requirements, DOL will not consider any education or training obtained by the alien beneficiary at the employer's expense unless the employer offers similar training to domestic worker applicants.

(5) For purposes of this paragraph (i):

(i) The term "employer" means an entity with the same Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), provided it meets the definition of an employer at § 656.3.

(ii) A "substantially comparable" job or position means a job or position requiring performance of the same job duties more than 50 percent of the time. This requirement can be documented by furnishing position descriptions, the percentage of time spent on the various duties, organization charts, and payroll records.

(j) *Conditions of employment.* (1) Working conditions must be normal to the occupation in the area and industry.

(2) Live-in requirements are acceptable for household domestic service workers only if the employer can demonstrate the requirement is essential to perform, in a reasonable manner, the job duties as described by the employer and there are not cost-effective alternatives to a live-in household requirement. Mere employer assertions do not constitute acceptable documentation. For example, a live-in requirement could be supported by documenting two working parents and young children in the household, and/or the existence of erratic work schedules requiring frequent travel and a need to entertain business associates and clients on short notice. Depending upon the situation, acceptable documentation could consist of travel vouchers, written estimates of costs of alternatives such as babysitters, or a detailed listing of the frequency and

length of absences of the employer from the home.

(k) *Layoffs.* (1) If there has been a layoff by the employer applicant in the area of intended employment within 6 months of filing an application involving the occupation for which certification is sought or in a related occupation, the employer must document it has notified and considered all potentially qualified laid off (employer applicant) U.S. workers of the job opportunity involved in the application and the results of the notification and consideration. A layoff shall be considered any involuntary separation of one or more employees without cause or prejudice.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (k)(1) of this section, a related occupation is any occupation that requires workers to perform a majority of the essential duties involved in the occupation for which certification is sought.

(1) *Alien influence and control over job opportunity.* If the employer is a closely held corporation or partnership in which the alien has an ownership interest, or if there is a familial relationship between the stockholders, corporate officers, incorporators, or partners, and the alien, or if the alien is one of a small number of employees, the employer in the event of an audit must be able to demonstrate the existence of a bona fide job opportunity, *i.e.*, the job is available to all U.S. workers, and must provide to the Certifying Officer, the following supporting documentation:

(1) A copy of the articles of incorporation, partnership agreement, business license or similar documents that establish the business entity;

(2) A list of all corporate/company officers and shareholders/partners of the corporation/firm/business, their titles and positions in the business' structure, and a description of the relationships to each other and to the alien beneficiary;

(3) The financial history of the corporation/company/partnership, including the total investment in the business entity and the amount of investment of each officer, incorporator/partner and the alien beneficiary; and

(4) The name of the business' official with primary responsibility for inter-

viewing and hiring applicants for positions within the organization and the name(s) of the business' official(s) having control or influence over hiring decisions involving the position for which labor certification is sought.

(5) If the alien is one of 10 or fewer employees, the employer must document any family relationship between the employees and the alien.

§ 656.18 Optional special recruitment and documentation procedures for college and university teachers.

(a) *Filing requirements.* Applications for certification of employment of college and university teachers must be filed by submitting a completed *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form to the appropriate ETA application processing center.

(b) *Recruitment.* The employer may recruit for college and university teachers under § 656.17 or must be able to document the alien was selected for the job opportunity in a competitive recruitment and selection process through which the alien was found to be more qualified than any of the United States workers who applied for the job. For purposes of this paragraph (b), documentation of the "competitive recruitment and selection process" must include:

(1) A statement, signed by an official who has actual hiring authority from the employer outlining in detail the complete recruitment procedures undertaken; and which must set forth:

(i) The total number of applicants for the job opportunity;

(ii) The specific lawful job-related reasons why the alien is more qualified than each U.S. worker who applied for the job; and

(2) A final report of the faculty, student, and/or administrative body making the recommendation or selection of the alien, at the completion of the competitive recruitment and selection process;

(3) A copy of at least one advertisement for the job opportunity placed in a national professional journal, giving the name and the date(s) of publication; and which states the job title, duties, and requirements;

(4) Evidence of all other recruitment sources utilized; and

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(5) A written statement attesting to the degree of the alien's educational or professional qualifications and academic achievements.

(c) *Time limit for filing.* Applications for permanent alien labor certification for job opportunities as college and university teachers must be filed within 18 months after a selection is made pursuant to a competitive recruitment and selection process.

(d) *Alternative procedure.* An employer that can not or does not choose to satisfy the special recruitment procedures for a college or university teacher under this section may avail itself of the basic process at § 656.17. An employer that files for certification of employment of college and university teachers under § 656.17 or this section must be able to document, if requested by the Certifying Officer, in accordance with § 656.24(a)(2)(ii), the alien was found to be more qualified than each U.S. worker who applied for the job opportunity.

§ 656.19 Live-in household domestic service workers.

(a) *Processing.* Applications on behalf of live-in household domestic service occupations are processed pursuant to the requirements of the basic process at § 656.17.

(b) *Required documentation.* Employers filing applications on behalf of live-in household domestic service workers must provide, in event of an audit, the following documentation:

(1) A statement describing the household living accommodations, including the following:

(i) Whether the residence is a house or apartment;

(ii) The number of rooms in the residence;

(iii) The number of adults and children, and ages of the children, residing in the household; and

(iv) That free board and a private room not shared with any other person will be provided to the alien.

(2) Two copies of the employment contract, each signed and dated prior to the filing of the application by both the employer and the alien (not by their attorneys or agents). The contract must clearly state:

(i) The wages to be paid on an hourly and weekly basis;

(ii) Total hours of employment per week, and exact hours of daily employment;

(iii) That the alien is free to leave the employer's premises during all non-work hours except the alien may work overtime if paid for the overtime at no less than the legally required hourly rate;

(iv) That the alien will reside on the employer's premises;

(v) Complete details of the duties to be performed by the alien;

(vi) The total amount of any money to be advanced by the employer with details of specific items, and the terms of repayment by the alien of any such advance by the employer;

(vii) That in no event may the alien be required to give more than two weeks' notice of intent to leave the employment contracted for and the employer must give the alien at least two weeks' notice before terminating employment;

(viii) That a duplicate contract has been furnished to the alien;

(ix) That a private room and board will be provided at no cost to the worker; and

(x) Any other agreement or conditions not specified on the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* form.

(3) Documentation of the alien's paid experience in the form of statements from past or present employers setting forth the dates (month and year) employment started and ended, hours of work per day, number of days worked per week, place where the alien worked, detailed statement of duties performed on the job, equipment and appliances used, and the amount of wages paid per week or month. The total paid experience must be equal to one full year's employment on a full-time basis. For example, two year's experience working half-days is the equivalent of one year's full time experience. Time spent in a household domestic service training course can not be included in the required one year of paid experience. Each statement must contain the name and address of the person who signed it and show the date on which the statement was signed. A

statement not in English shall be accompanied by a written translation into English certified by the translator as to the accuracy of the translation, and as to the translator's competency to translate.

§ 656.20 Audit procedures.

(a) Review of the labor certification application may lead to an audit of the application. Additionally, certain applications may be selected randomly for audit and quality control purposes. If an application is selected for audit, the Certifying Officer shall issue an audit letter. The audit letter will:

(1) State the documentation that must be submitted by the employer;

(2) Specify a date, 30 days from the date of the audit letter, by which the required documentation must be submitted; and

(3) Advise that if the required documentation has not been sent by the date specified the application will be denied.

(i) Failure to provide documentation in a timely manner constitutes a refusal to exhaust available administrative remedies; and

(ii) The administrative-judicial review procedure provided in § 656.26 is not available.

(b) A substantial failure by the employer to provide required documentation will result in that application being denied under § 656.24 and may result in a determination by the Certifying Officer pursuant to § 656.24 to require the employer to conduct supervised recruitment under § 656.21 in future filings of labor certification applications for up to 2 years.

(c) The Certifying Officer may in his or her discretion provide one extension, of up to 30 days, to the 30 days specified in paragraph (a)(2) of this section.

(d) Before making a final determination in accordance with the standards in § 656.24, whether in course of an audit or otherwise, the Certifying Officer may:

(1) Request supplemental information and/or documentation; or

(2) Require the employer to conduct supervised recruitment under § 656.21.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 71 FR 35523, June 21, 2006]

§ 656.21 Supervised recruitment.

(a) *Supervised recruitment.* Where the Certifying Officer determines it appropriate, post-filing supervised recruitment may be required of the employer for the pending application or future applications pursuant to § 656.20(b).

(b) *Requirements.* Supervised recruitment shall consist of advertising for the job opportunity by placing an advertisement in a newspaper of general circulation or in a professional, trade, or ethnic publication, and any other measures required by the CO. If placed in a newspaper of general circulation, the advertisement must be published for 3 consecutive days, one of which must be a Sunday; or, if placed in a professional, trade, or ethnic publication, the advertisement must be published in the next available published edition. The advertisement must be approved by the Certifying Officer before publication, and the CO will direct where the advertisement is to be placed.

(1) The employer must supply a draft advertisement to the CO for review and approval within 30 days of being notified that supervised recruitment is required.

(2) The advertisement must:

(i) Direct applicants to send resumes or applications for the job opportunity to the CO for referral to the employer;

(ii) Include an identification number and an address designated by the Certifying Officer;

(iii) Describe the job opportunity;

(iv) Not contain a wage rate lower than the prevailing wage rate;

(v) Summarize the employer's minimum job requirements, which can not exceed any of the requirements entered on the application form by the employer;

(vi) Offer training if the job opportunity is the type for which employers normally provide training; and

(vii) Offer wages, terms and conditions of employment no less favorable than those offered to the alien.

(c) *Timing of advertisement.* (1) The advertisement shall be placed in accordance with the guidance provided by the CO.

(2) The employer will notify the CO when the advertisement will be placed.

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(d) *Additional or substitute recruitment.* The Certifying Officer may designate other appropriate sources of workers from which the employer must recruit for U.S. workers in addition to the advertising described in paragraph (b) of this section.

(e) *Recruitment report.* The employer must provide to the Certifying Officer a signed, detailed written report of the employer's supervised recruitment, signed by the employer or the employer's representative described in § 656.10(b)(2)(ii), within 30 days of the Certifying Officer's request for such a report. The recruitment report must:

(1) Identify each recruitment source by name and document that each recruitment source named was contacted. This can include, for example, copies of letters to recruitment sources such as unions, trade associations, colleges and universities and any responses received to the employer's inquiries. Advertisements placed in newspapers, professional, trade, or ethnic publications can be documented by furnishing copies of the tear sheets of the pages of the publication in which the advertisements appeared, proof of publication furnished by the publication, or dated copies of the web pages if the advertisement appeared on the web as well as in the publication in which the advertisement appeared.

(2) State the number of U.S. workers who responded to the employer's recruitment.

(3) State the names, addresses, and provide resumes (other than those sent to the employer by the CO) of the U.S. workers who applied for the job opportunity, the number of workers interviewed, and the job title of the person who interviewed the workers.

(4) Explain, with specificity, the lawful job-related reason(s) for not hiring each U.S. worker who applied. Rejection of one or more U.S. workers for lacking skills necessary to perform the duties involved in the occupation, where the U.S. workers are capable of acquiring the skills during a reasonable period of on-the-job training, is not a lawful job-related reason for rejecting the U.S. workers. For the purpose of this paragraph (e)(4), a U.S. worker is able and qualified for the job opportunity if the worker can acquire

the skills necessary to perform the duties involved in the occupation during a reasonable period of on-the-job training.

(f) The employer shall supply the CO with the required documentation or information within 30 days of the date of the request. If the employer does not do so, the CO shall deny the application.

(g) The Certifying Officer in his or her discretion, for good cause shown, may provide one extension to any request for documentation or information.

§ 656.24 Labor certification determinations.

(a)(1) The Office of Foreign Labor Certification Administrator (OFLC Administrator) is the National Certifying Officer. The OFLC Administrator and the certifying officers in the ETA application processing centers have the authority to certify or deny labor certification applications.

(2) If the labor certification presents a special or unique problem, the Director of an ETA application processing center may refer the matter to the Office of Foreign Labor Certification Administrator (OFLC Administrator). If the OFLC Administrator has directed that certain types of applications or specific applications be handled in the ETA national office, the Directors of the ETA application processing centers shall refer such applications to the OFLC Administrator.

(b) The Certifying Officer makes a determination either to grant or deny the labor certification on the basis of whether or not:

(1) The employer has met the requirements of this part.

(2) There is in the United States a worker who is able, willing, qualified, and available for and at the place of the job opportunity.

(i) The Certifying Officer must consider a U.S. worker able and qualified for the job opportunity if the worker, by education, training, experience, or a combination thereof, is able to perform in the normally accepted manner the duties involved in the occupation as customarily performed by other U.S. workers similarly employed. For the purposes of this paragraph (b)(2)(i), a

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U.S. worker is able and qualified for the job opportunity if the worker can acquire the skills necessary to perform the duties involved in the occupation during a reasonable period of on-the-job training.

(ii) If the job involves a job opportunity as a college or university teacher, the U.S. worker must be at least as qualified as the alien.

(3) The employment of the alien will not have an adverse effect upon the wages and working conditions of U.S. workers similarly employed. In making this determination, the Certifying Officer considers such things as: labor market information, the special circumstances of the industry, organization, and/or occupation, the prevailing wage in the area of intended employment, and prevailing working conditions, such as hours, in the occupation.

(c) The Certifying Officer shall notify the employer in writing (either electronically or by mail) of the labor certification determination.

(d) If a labor certification is granted, except for a labor certification for an occupation on *Schedule A* (§ 656.5) or for employment as a sheepherder under § 656.16, the Certifying Officer must send the certified application and complete Final Determination form to the employer, or, if appropriate, to the employer's agent or attorney, indicating the employer may file all the documents with the appropriate DHS office.

(e) If the labor certification is denied, the Final Determination form will:

(1) State the reasons for the determination;

(2) Quote the request for review procedures at § 656.26 (a) and (b);

(3) Advise that failure to request review within 30 days of the date of the determination, as specified in § 656.26(a), constitutes a failure to exhaust administrative remedies;

(4) Advise that, if a request for review is not made within 30 days of the date of the determination, the denial shall become the final determination of the Secretary;

(5) Advise that if an application for a labor certification is denied, and a request for review is not made in accordance with the procedures at § 656.26(a) and (b), a new application may be filed at any time; and

(6) Advise that a new application in the same occupation for the same alien can not be filed while a request for review is pending with the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals.

(f) If the Certifying Officer determines the employer substantially failed to produce required documentation, or the documentation was inadequate, or determines a material misrepresentation was made with respect to the application, or if the Certifying Officer determines it is appropriate for other reasons, the employer may be required to conduct supervised recruitment pursuant to § 656.21 in future filings of labor certification applications for up to two years from the date of the Final Determination.

(g)(1) The employer may request reconsideration within 30 days from the date of issuance of the denial.

(2) For applications submitted after July 16, 2007, a request for reconsideration may include only:

(i) Documentation that the Department actually received from the employer in response to a request from the Certifying Officer to the employer; or

(ii) Documentation that the employer did not have an opportunity to present previously to the Certifying Officer, but that existed at the time the Application for Permanent Labor Certification was filed, and was maintained by the employer to support the application for permanent labor certification in compliance with the requirements of § 656.10(f).

(3) Paragraphs (g)(1) and (2) of this section notwithstanding, the Certifying Officer will not grant any request for reconsideration where the deficiency that caused denial resulted from the applicant's disregard of a system prompt or other direct instruction.

(4) The Certifying Officer may, in his or her discretion, reconsider the determination or treat it as a request for review under § 656.26(a).

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 71 FR 35523, June 21, 2006; 72 FR 27945, May 17, 2007]

§ 656.26 Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals review of denials of labor certification.

(a) *Request for review.* (1) If a labor certification is denied, if a labor certification is revoked pursuant to § 656.32, or if a debarment is issued under § 656.31(f), a request for review of the denial, revocation, or debarment may be made to the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals by the employer or debarred person or entity by making a request for such an administrative review in accordance with the procedures provided in paragraph (a) of this section. In the case of a finding of debarment, receipt by the Department of a request for review, if made in accordance with this section, shall stay the debarment until such time as the review has been completed and a decision rendered thereon.

(2) A request for review of a denial or revocation:

(i) Must be sent within 30 days of the date of the determination to the Certifying Officer who denied the application or revoked the certification;

(ii) Must clearly identify the particular labor certification determination for which review is sought;

(iii) Must set forth the particular grounds for the request; and

(iv) Must include a copy of the Final Determination.

(3) A request for review of debarment:

(i) Must be sent to the Administrator, Office of Foreign Labor Certification, within 30 days of the date of the debarment determination;

(ii) Must clearly identify the particular debarment determination for which review is sought;

(iii) Must set forth the particular grounds for the request; and

(iv) Must include a copy of the Notice of Debarment.

(4)(i) With respect to a denial of the request for review, statements, briefs, and other submissions of the parties and amicus curiae must contain only legal argument and only such evidence that was within the record upon which the denial of labor certification was based.

(ii) With respect to a revocation or a debarment determination, the BALCA proceeding may be de novo.

(b) Upon the receipt of a request for review, the Certifying Officer immediately must assemble an indexed Appeal File:

(1) The Appeal File must be in chronological order, must have the index on top followed by the most recent document, and must have consecutively numbered pages. The Appeal File must contain the request for review, the complete application file, and copies of all the written material, such as pertinent parts and pages of surveys and/or reports upon which the denial was based.

(2) The Certifying Officer must send the Appeal File to the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals, Office of Administrative Law Judges, 800 K Street, NW., Suite 400-N, Washington, DC 20001-8002.

(3) The Certifying Officer must send a copy of the Appeal File to the employer. The employer may furnish or suggest directly to the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals the addition of any documentation that is not in the Appeal File, but that was submitted to DOL before the issuance of the Final Determination. The employer must submit such documentation in writing, and must send a copy to the Associate Solicitor for Employment and Training Legal Services, Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington, DC 20210.

(c) *Debarment Appeal File.* Upon the receipt of a request for review of debarment, the Administrator, Office of Foreign Labor Certification, immediately must assemble an indexed Appeal File:

(1) The Appeal File must be in chronological order, must have the index on top followed by the most recent document, and must have consecutively numbered pages. The Appeal File must contain the request for review, the complete application file(s), and copies of all written materials, such as pertinent parts and pages of surveys and/or reports or documents received from any court, DHS, or the Department of State, upon which the debarment was based.

(2) The Administrator, Office of Foreign Labor Certification, must send the Appeal File to the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals, Office of Administrative Law Judges, 800 K St.,

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NW., Suite 400-N, Washington, DC 20001-8002.

(3) The Administrator, Office of Foreign Labor Certification, must send a copy of the Appeal File to the debarred person or entity. The debarred person or entity may furnish or suggest directly to the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals the addition of any documentation that is not in the Appeal File. The debarred person or entity must submit such documentation in writing, and must send a copy to the Associate Solicitor for Employment and Training Legal Services, Office of the Solicitor, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20210.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 72 FR 27945, May 17, 2007]

§ 656.27 Consideration by and decisions of the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals.

(a) *Panel designations.* In considering requests for review before it, the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals may sit in panels of three members. The Chief Administrative Law Judge may designate any Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals member to submit proposed findings and recommendations to the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals or to any duly designated panel thereof to consider a particular case.

(b) *Briefs and Statements of Position.* In considering the requests for review before it, the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals must afford all parties 30 days to submit or decline to submit any appropriate Statement of Position or legal brief. The Certifying Officer is to be represented solely by the Solicitor of Labor or the Solicitor's designated representative.

(c) *Review on the record.* The Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals must review a denial of labor certification under § 656.24, a revocation of a certification under § 656.32, or an affirmation of a prevailing wage determination under § 656.41 on the basis of the record upon which the decision was made, the request for review, and any Statements of Position or legal briefs submitted and, except in cases over which the Secretary has assumed jurisdiction pursuant to 29 CFR 18.95, must:

(1) Affirm the denial of the labor certification, the revocation of certification, or the affirmation of the PWD; or

(2) Direct the Certifying Officer to grant the certification, overrule the revocation of certification, or overrule the affirmation of the PWD; or

(3) Direct that a hearing on the case be held under paragraph (e) of this section.

(d) *Notifications of decisions.* The Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals must notify the employer, the Certifying Officer, and the Solicitor of Labor of its decision, and must return the record to the Certifying Officer unless the case has been set for hearing under paragraph (e) of this section.

(e) *Hearings*—(1) *Notification of hearing.* If the case has been set for a hearing, the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals must notify the employer, the alien, the Certifying Officer, and the Solicitor of Labor of the date, time, and place of the hearing, and that the hearing may be rescheduled upon written request and for good cause shown.

(2) *Hearing procedure.* (i) The “Rules of Practice and Procedure For Administrative Hearings Before the Office of Administrative Law Judges,” at 29 CFR part 18, apply to hearings under this paragraph (e).

(ii) For the purposes of this paragraph (e)(2), references in 29 CFR part 18 to: “administrative law judge” mean the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals member or the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals panel duly designated under § 656.27(a); “Office of Administrative Law Judges” means the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals; and “Chief Administrative Law Judge” means the Chief Administrative Law Judge in that official's function of chairing the Board of Alien Labor Certification Appeals.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 85 FR 13029, Mar. 6, 2020; 85 FR 30615, May 20, 2020]

§ 656.30 Validity of and invalidation of labor certifications.

(a) *Priority date.* (1) The filing date for a Schedule A occupation or sheepherders is the date the application was dated by the Immigration Officer.

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(2) The filing date, established under § 656.17(c), of an approved labor certification may be used as a priority date by the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State, as appropriate.

(b) *Expiration of labor certifications.* For certifications resulting from applications filed under this part and 20 CFR part 656 in effect prior to March 28, 2005, the following applies:

(1) An approved permanent labor certification granted on or after July 16, 2007 expires if not filed in support of a Form I-140 petition with the Department of Homeland Security within 180 calendar days of the date the Department of Labor granted the certification.

(2) An approved permanent labor certification granted before July 16, 2007 expires if not filed in support of a Form I-140 petition with the Department of Homeland Security within 180 calendar days of July 16, 2007.

(c) *Scope of validity.* For certifications resulting from applications filed under this part or 20 CFR part 656 in effect prior to March 28, 2005, the following applies:

(1) A permanent labor certification for a Schedule A occupation or sheepherders is valid only for the occupation set forth on the *Application for Alien Employment Certification* (Form ETA 750) or the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* (Form ETA 9089) and only for the alien named on the original application, unless a substitution was approved prior to July 16, 2007. The certification is valid throughout the United States unless the certification contains a geographic limitation.

(2) A permanent labor certification involving a specific job offer is valid only for the particular job opportunity, the alien named on the original application (unless a substitution was approved prior to July 16, 2007), and the area of intended employment stated on the *Application for Alien Employment Certification* (Form ETA 750) or the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* (Form ETA 9089).

(d) *Invalidation of labor certifications.* After issuance, a labor certification may be revoked by ETA using the procedures described in § 656.32. Addition-

ally, after issuance, a labor certification is subject to invalidation by the DHS or by a Consul of the Department of State upon a determination, made in accordance with those agencies' procedures or by a court, of fraud or willful misrepresentation of a material fact involving the labor certification application. If evidence of such fraud or willful misrepresentation becomes known to the CO or to the Chief, Division of Foreign Labor Certification, the CO, or the Chief of the Division of Foreign Labor Certification, as appropriate, shall notify in writing the DHS or Department of State, as appropriate. A copy of the notification must be sent to the regional or national office, as appropriate, of the Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General.

(e) *Duplicate labor certifications.* (1) The Certifying Officer shall issue a duplicate labor certification at the written request of a Consular or Immigration Officer. The Certifying Officer shall issue such duplicate labor certifications only to the Consular or Immigration Officer who initiated the request.

(2) The Certifying Officer shall issue a duplicate labor certification to a Consular or Immigration Officer at the written request of an alien, employer, or an alien's or employer's attorney/agent. Such request for a duplicate labor certification must be addressed to the Certifying Officer who issued the labor certification; must include documentary evidence from a Consular or Immigration Officer that a visa application or visa petition, as appropriate, has been filed; and must include a Consular Office or DHS tracking number.

(3) A duplicate labor certification shall be issued by the Certifying Officer with the same filing and expiration dates, as described in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this section, as the original approved labor certification.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 72 FR 27946, May 17, 2007]

§ 656.31 Labor certification applications involving fraud, willful misrepresentation, or violations of this part.

The following provisions apply to applications filed under both this part and 20 CFR part 656 in effect prior to

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March 28, 2005, and to any certifications resulting from those applications.

(a) *Denial.* A Certifying Officer may deny any application for permanent labor certification if the officer finds the application contains false statements, is fraudulent, or was otherwise submitted in violation of the Department's permanent labor certification regulations.

(b) *Possible fraud or willful misrepresentation.* (1) If the Department learns an employer, attorney, or agent is involved in possible fraud or willful misrepresentation in connection with the permanent labor certification program, the Department will refer the matter to the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, or other government entity, as appropriate, for investigation, and send a copy of the referral to the Department of Labor's Office of Inspector General (OIG). In these cases, or if the Department learns an employer, attorney, or agent is under investigation by the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, or other government entity for possible fraud or willful misrepresentation in connection with the permanent labor certification program, the Department may suspend processing of any permanent labor certification application involving such employer, attorney, or agent until completion of any investigation and/or judicial proceedings. Unless the investigatory agency, in writing, requests the Department to do otherwise, the Department shall provide written notification to the employer of the suspension in processing.

(2) A suspension pursuant to paragraph (b)(1) of this section may last initially for up to 180 days. No later than 180 days after the suspension began, if no criminal indictment or information has been issued, or judicial proceedings have not been concluded, the National Certifying Officer may resume processing some or all of the applications, or may extend the suspension in processing until completion of any investigation and/or judicial proceedings.

(c) *Criminal indictment or information.* If the Department learns that an employer, attorney, or agent is named in

a criminal indictment or information in connection with the permanent labor certification program, the processing of applications related to that employer, attorney, or agent may be suspended until the judicial process is completed. Unless the investigatory or prosecutorial agency, in writing, requests the Department to do otherwise, the Department shall provide written notification to the employer of the suspension in processing.

(d) *No finding of fraud or willful misrepresentation.* If an employer, attorney, or agent is acquitted of fraud or willful misrepresentation charges, or if such criminal charges are withdrawn or otherwise fail to result in a finding of fraud or willful misrepresentation, the Certifying Officer shall decide each pending permanent labor certification application related to that employer, attorney, or agent on the merits of the application.

(e) *Finding of fraud or willful misrepresentation.* If an employer, attorney, or agent is found to have committed fraud or willful misrepresentation involving the permanent labor certification program, whether by a court, the Department of State or DHS, as referenced in § 656.30(d), or through other proceedings:

(1) Any suspension of processing of pending applications related to that employer, attorney, or agent will terminate.

(2) The Certifying Officer will decide each such application on its merits, and may deny any such application as provided in § 656.24 and in paragraph (a) of this section.

(3) In the case of a pending application involving an attorney or agent found to have committed fraud or willful misrepresentation, DOL will notify the employer associated with that application of the finding and require the employer to notify DOL in writing, within 30 days of the notification, whether the employer will withdraw the application, designate a new attorney or agent, or continue the application without representation. Failure of the employer to respond within 30 days of the notification will result in a denial. If the employer elects to continue representation by the attorney or agent, DOL will suspend processing of

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affected applications while debarment proceedings are conducted under paragraph (f) of this section.

(f) *Debarment.* (1) No later than six years after the date of filing of the labor certification application that is the basis for the finding, or, if such basis requires a pattern or practice as provided in paragraphs (f)(1)(iii), (iv), and (v) of this section, no later than six years after the date of filing of the last labor certification application which constitutes a part of the pattern or practice, the Administrator, Office of Foreign Labor Certification, may issue to an employer, attorney, agent, or any combination thereof a Notice of Debarment from the permanent labor certification program for a reasonable period of no more than three years, based upon any action that was prohibited at the time the action occurred, upon determining the employer, attorney, or agent has participated in or facilitated one or more of the following:

(i) The sale, barter, or purchase of permanent labor applications or certifications, or any other action prohibited under § 656.12;

(ii) The willful provision or willful assistance in the provision of false or inaccurate information in applying for permanent labor certification;

(iii) A pattern or practice of a failure to comply with the terms of the Form ETA 9089 or Form ETA 750;

(iv) A pattern or practice of failure to comply in the audit process pursuant to § 656.20;

(v) A pattern or practice of failure to comply in the supervised recruitment process pursuant to § 656.21; or

(vi) Conduct resulting in a determination by a court, DHS or the Department of State of fraud or willful misrepresentation involving a permanent labor certification application, as referenced in § 656.31(e).

(2) The Notice of Debarment shall be in writing; shall state the reason for the debarment finding, including a detailed explanation of how the employer, attorney or agent has participated in or facilitated one or more of the actions listed in paragraphs (f)(1)(i) through (v) of this section; shall state the start date and term of the debarment; and shall identify appeal opportunities under § 656.26. The debarment

shall take effect on the start date identified in the Notice of Debarment unless a request for review is filed within the time permitted by § 656.26. DOL will notify DHS and the Department of State regarding any Notice of Debarment.

(g) *False statements.* To knowingly and willfully furnish any false information in the preparation of the *Application for Permanent Employment Certification* (Form ETA 9089) or the *Application for Alien Employment Certification* (Form ETA 750) and any supporting documentation, or to aid, abet, or counsel another to do so is a Federal offense, punishable by fine or imprisonment up to five years, or both under 18 U.S.C. 2 and 1001. Other penalties apply as well to fraud or misuse of ETA immigration documents and to perjury with respect to such documents under 18 U.S.C. 1546 and 1621.

[72 FR 27946, May 17, 2007]

§ 656.32 Revocation of approved labor certifications.

(a) *Basis for DOL revocation.* The Certifying Officer in consultation with the Chief, Division of Foreign Labor Certification may take steps to revoke an approved labor certification, if he/she finds the certification was not justified. A labor certification may also be invalidated by DHS or the Department of State as set forth in § 656.30(d).

(b) *Department of Labor procedures for revocation.* (1) The Certifying Officer sends to the employer a *Notice of Intent to Revoke* an approved labor certification which contains a detailed statement of the grounds for the revocation and the time period allowed for the employer's rebuttal. The employer may submit evidence in rebuttal within 30 days of receipt of the notice. The Certifying Officer must consider all relevant evidence presented in deciding whether to revoke the labor certification.

(2) If rebuttal evidence is not filed by the employer, the *Notice of Intent to Revoke* becomes the final decision of the Secretary.

(3) If the employer files rebuttal evidence and the Certifying Officer determines the certification should be revoked, the employer may file an appeal under § 656.26.

(4) The Certifying Officer will inform the employer within 30 days of receiving any rebuttal evidence whether or not the labor certification will be revoked.

(5) If the labor certification is revoked, the Certifying Officer will also send a copy of the notification to the DHS and the Department of State.

Subpart D—Determination of Prevailing Wage

§ 656.40 Determination of prevailing wage for labor certification purposes.

(a) *Application process.* The employer must request a PWD from the NPC, on a form or in a manner prescribed by OFLC. Prior to January 1, 2010, the SWA having jurisdiction over the area of intended employment shall continue to receive and process prevailing wage determination requests in accordance with the regulatory provisions and Department guidance in effect prior to January 1, 2009. On or after January 1, 2010, the NPC shall receive and process prevailing wage determination requests in accordance with these regulations and with Department guidance. The NPC will provide the employer with an appropriate prevailing wage rate. The NPC shall determine the wage in accordance with sec. 212(t) of the INA. Unless the employer chooses to appeal the center's PWD under § 656.41(a) of this part, it files the Application for Permanent Employment Certification either electronically or by mail with the processing center of jurisdiction and maintains the PWD in its files. The determination shall be submitted to the CO, if requested.

(b) *Determinations.* The National Processing Center will determine the appropriate prevailing wage as follows:

(1) Except as provided in paragraphs (e) and (f) of this section, if the job opportunity is covered by a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) that was negotiated at arms-length between the union and the employer, the wage rate set forth in the CBA agreement is considered as not adversely affecting the wages of U.S. workers similarly employed, that is, it is considered the "prevailing wage" for labor certification purposes.

(2) If the job opportunity is not covered by a CBA, the prevailing wage for labor certification purposes shall be the arithmetic mean, except as provided in paragraph (b)(3) of this section, of the wages of workers similarly employed in the area of intended employment. The wage component of the DOL Occupational Employment Statistics Survey shall be used to determine the arithmetic mean, unless the employer provides an acceptable survey under paragraph (g) of this section.

(3) If the employer provides a survey acceptable under paragraph (g) of this section that provides a median and does not provide an arithmetic mean, the prevailing wage applicable to the employer's job opportunity shall be the median of the wages of workers similarly employed in the area of intended employment.

(4) The employer may utilize a current wage determination in the area under the Davis-Bacon Act, 40 U.S.C. 276a *et seq.*, 29 CFR part 1, or the McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act, 41 U.S.C. 351 *et seq.*

(c) *Validity period.* The National Processing Center must specify the validity period of the prevailing wage, which in no event may be less than 90 days or more than 1 year from the determination date. To use a prevailing wage rate provided by the NPC, employers must file their applications or begin the recruitment period required by §§ 656.17(e) or 656.21 of this part within the validity period specified by the NPC.

(d) *Similarly employed.* For purposes of this section, similarly employed means having substantially comparable jobs in the occupational category in the area of intended employment, except that, if a representative sample of workers in the occupational category can not be obtained in the area of intended employment, similarly employed means:

(1) Having jobs requiring a substantially similar level of skills within the area of intended employment; or

(2) If there are no substantially comparable jobs in the area of intended employment, having substantially comparable jobs with employers outside of the area of intended employment.

(e) *Institutions of higher education and research entities.* In computing the prevailing wage for a job opportunity in an occupational classification in an area of intended employment for an employee of an institution of higher education, or an affiliated or related nonprofit entity, a nonprofit research organization, or a Governmental research organization, the prevailing wage level takes into account the wage levels of employees only at such institutions and organizations in the area of intended employment.

(1) The organizations listed in this paragraph (e) are defined as follows:

(i) *Institution of higher education* means an institution of higher education as defined in section 101(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965. Section 101(a) of that Act, 20 U.S.C. 1001(a)(2000), provides an institution of higher education is an educational institution in any state that:

(A) Admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate;

(B) Is legally authorized within such state to provide a program of education beyond secondary education;

(C) Provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor's degree or provides not less than a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree;

(D) Is a public or other nonprofit institution; and

(E) Is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association or, if not so accredited, is an institution that has been granted preaccreditation status by such an agency or association that has been recognized by the Secretary of Education for the granting of preaccreditation status, and the Secretary of Education has determined there is satisfactory assurance the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such an agency or association within a reasonable time.

(ii) *Affiliated or related nonprofit entity* means a nonprofit entity (including but not limited to a hospital and a medical or research institution) connected or associated with an institu-

tion of higher education, through shared ownership or control by the same board or federation, operated by an institution of higher education, or attached to an institution of higher education as a member, branch, cooperative, or subsidiary.

(iii) *Nonprofit research organization or Governmental research organization* means a research organization that is either a nonprofit organization or entity primarily engaged in basic research and/or applied research, or a United States Government entity whose primary mission is the performance or promotion of basic research and/or applied research. Basic research is general research to gain more comprehensive knowledge or understanding of the subject under study, without specific applications in mind. Basic research is also research that advances scientific knowledge, but does not have specific immediate commercial objectives although it may be in fields of present or commercial interest. It may include research and investigation in the sciences, social sciences, or humanities. Applied research is research to gain knowledge or understanding to determine the means by which a specific, recognized need may be met. Applied research includes investigations oriented to discovering new scientific knowledge that has specific commercial objectives with respect to products, processes, or services. It may include research and investigation in the sciences, social sciences, or humanities.

(2) *Nonprofit organization or entity*, for the purpose of this paragraph (e), means an organization qualified as a tax exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, section 501(c)(3), (c)(4), or (c)(6) (26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3), (c)(4) or (c)(6)), and which has received approval as a tax exempt organization from the Internal Revenue Service, as it relates to research or educational purposes.

(f) *Professional athletes.* In computing the prevailing wage for a professional athlete (defined in Section 212(a)(5)(A)(iii)(II) of the Act) when the job opportunity is covered by professional sports league rules or regulations, the wage set forth in those rules

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or regulations is considered the prevailing wage (see Section 212(p)(2) of the Act). INA Section 212(a)(5)(A)(iii)(II), 8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(5)(A)(iii)(II) (1999), defines “professional athlete” as an individual who is employed as an athlete by—

(1) A team that is a member of an association of six or more professional sports teams whose total combined revenues exceed \$10,000,000 per year, if the association governs the conduct of its members and regulates the contests and exhibitions in which its member teams regularly engage; or

(2) Any minor league team that is affiliated with such an association.

(g) *Employer-provided wage information.* (1) If the job opportunity is not covered by a CBA, or by a professional sports league’s rules or regulations, the NPC will consider wage information provided by the employer in making a PWD. An employer survey can be submitted either initially or after NPC issuance of a PWD derived from the OES survey. In the latter situation, the new employer survey submission will be deemed a new PWD request.

(2) In each case where the employer submits a survey or other wage data for which it seeks acceptance, the employer must provide the NPC with enough information about the survey methodology, including such items as sample size and source, sample selection procedures, and survey job descriptions, to allow the NPC to make a determination about the adequacy of the data provided and validity of the statistical methodology used in conducting the survey in accordance with guidance issued by the OFLC national office.

(3) The survey submitted to the NPC must be based upon recently collected data.

(i) A published survey must have been published within 24 months of the date of submission to the NPC, must be the most current edition of the survey, and the data upon which the survey is based must have been collected within 24 months of the publication date of the survey.

(ii) A survey conducted by the employer must be based on data collected within 24 months of the date it is submitted to the NPC.

(4) If the employer-provided survey is found not to be acceptable, the NPC will inform the employer in writing of the reasons the survey was not accepted.

(5) The employer, after receiving notification that the survey it provided for NPC consideration is not acceptable, may file supplemental information as provided by paragraph (h) of this section, file a new request for a PWD, or appeal under § 656.41.

(h) *Submittal of supplemental information by employer.* (1) If the employer disagrees with the skill level assigned to its job opportunity, or if the NPC informs the employer its survey is not acceptable, or if there are other legitimate bases for such a review, the employer may submit supplemental information to the NPC.

(2) The NPC will consider one supplemental submission about the employer’s survey or the skill level the NPC assigned to the job opportunity or any other legitimate basis for the employer to request such a review. If the NPC does not accept the employer’s survey after considering the supplemental information, or affirms its determination concerning the skill level, it will inform the employer of the reasons for its decision.

(3) The employer may then apply for a new wage determination or appeal under § 656.41 of this part.

(i) *Frequent users.* The Secretary will issue guidance regarding the process by which employers may obtain a wage determination to apply to a subsequent application, when the wage is for the same occupation, skill level, and area of intended employment. In no case may the wage rate the employer provides the NPC be lower than the highest wage required by any applicable Federal, State, or local law.

(j) *Fees prohibited.* No SWA or SWA employee may charge a fee in connection with the filing of a request for a PWD, responding to such a request, or responding to a request for a review of a SWA prevailing wage determination under § 656.41.

[69 FR 77386, Dec. 27, 2004, as amended at 73 FR 78068, Dec. 19, 2008; 85 FR 63915, Oct. 8, 2020; 86 FR 70731, Dec. 13, 2021]

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§ 656.41 Review of prevailing wage determinations.

(a) *Review of NPC PWD.* Any employer desiring review of a PWD made by a CO must make a request for such review within 30 days of the date from when the PWD was issued. The request for review must be sent to the director of the NPC that issued the PWD within 30 days of the date of the PWD; clearly identify the PWD from which review is sought; set forth the particular grounds for the request; and include all the materials pertaining to the PWD submitted to the NPC up to the date of the PWD received from the NPC.

(b) *Processing of request by NPC.* Upon the receipt of a request for review, the NPC will review the employer's request and accompanying documentation, and add any material that may have been omitted by the employer, including any material the NPC sent the employer up to the date of the PWD.

(c) *Review on the record.* The director will review the PWD solely on the basis upon which the PWD was made and, upon the request for review, may either affirm or modify the PWD.

(d) *Request for review by BALCA.* Any employer desiring review of the director's determination must make a request for review by the BALCA within 30 days of the date of the Director's decision.

(1) The request for review, statements, briefs, and other submissions of the parties and amicus curiae must contain only legal arguments and only such evidence that was within the record upon which the director made his/her affirmation of the PWD.

(2) The request for review must be in writing and addressed to the director of the NPC making the determination. Upon receipt of a request for a review, the director will assemble an indexed appeal file in reverse chronological order, with the index on top followed by the most recent document.

(3) The director will send the Appeal File to the Office of Administrative Law Judges, BALCA. The BALCA handles the appeals in accordance with §§ 656.26 and 656.27.

[73 FR 78069, Dec. 19, 2008]