



NEWS RELEASE

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September 4, 2001

INS Extends Temporary Protected Status For Nationals of Sierra Leone

WASHINGTON – The Immigration and Naturalization Service announced today that the Temporary Protected Status (TPS) program for nationals of Sierra Leone would be extended for an additional year. The extension of TPS is effective November 2, 2001, and will remain in effect until November 2, 2002.

Nationals of Sierra Leone who are currently registered under the TPS program must re-register during the 90-day period from August 31, 2001, until November 29, 2001. The extension of TPS will affect approximately 6,102 nationals of Sierra Leone.

Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act authorizes the Attorney General to grant TPS to aliens in the United States who are nationals of countries that are subject to ongoing armed conflict, environmental disaster, or other extraordinary and temporary conditions. In the case of Sierra Leone, there is an ongoing armed conflict and, due to such conflict, requiring nationals of Sierra Leone to return home would pose a serious threat to their personal safety.

To re-register for the extension, a TPS applicant must submit Form I-821 and Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization), as well as two identification photographs. Both forms must be submitted for re-registration. If the applicant is only seeking to re-register for TPS and not seeking work authorization, there is no filing fee. However, all applicants seeking an extension of employment authorization until November 2, 2002 must submit a \$100 filing fee with Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization).

The applicant may request a fee waiver in accordance with the regulations. Applicants for an extension of TPS benefits do not need to submit new fingerprints and, therefore, do not need to submit a \$25 fee. Children who are beneficiaries of TPS and who have reached the age of 14, but who were not previously fingerprinted, must pay the \$25 fingerprint fee with their application for extension. Furthermore, attesting in part 1 of the Form I-821 to the continued maintenance of the conditions of eligibility will generally preclude the need for supporting documents or evidence.

INS, however, reserves the right to request additional information and/or documentation on a case-by-case basis.

A late initial registrant must file a complete application package, including supporting documentation and all applicable fees, in accordance with the regulations. In addition to the requirements described above for re-registration under the extension, a late initial registrant must submit a \$50 fee with Form I-821 and, if 14 years of age or older, a \$25 fingerprint fee. These forms are available from the toll-free INS Forms line, 1-800-870-3676, or from the INS Web site, www.ins.gov.

TPS registrants who need to travel outside the United States during the coming year must receive advance parole from their local INS office prior to departing the United States. Failure to do so may jeopardize their ability to return to the United States. Advance parole allows an individual to travel abroad and return to the United States. Advance parole is issued on a case-by-case basis. Individuals who are granted TPS may apply for advance parole by filing Form I-131 at their local INS district office.

An application for TPS does not preclude or adversely affect an application for asylum or any other immigration benefit.