



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**  
**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services**

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**DHS Concludes Temporary Protected Status  
For Nationals of Sierra Leone**  
*Employment Authorization Documents Extended for Six Months*

Washington, D.C- The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) today announced the conclusion of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for nationals of Sierra Leone and a six month extension of Employment Authorization Documents (EADs) until May 3, 2004. Approximately, 2,700 nationals of Sierra Leone who presently receive benefits under the Sierra Leone TPS designation will be affected.

Upon the conclusion of TPS status, former TPS beneficiaries return to the same immigration status they maintained before registering for TPS (unless that status has since expired or been terminated), or to any other status they may have acquired while registered for TPS.

Accordingly, if an individual maintained no lawful status prior to receiving TPS benefits, and did not obtain any other status during the TPS period, he or she will revert to that unlawful status upon the termination of the TPS designation for Sierra Leone. Such individuals are expected to depart the United States on or before May 3, 2004. Those who do not comply with this requirement may be subject to removal.

Former TPS beneficiaries will no longer be eligible for a stay of removal or an Employment Authorization Document pursuant to the TPS program. TPS-related employment documents expire on May 3, 2004, and will not be renewed.

The conclusion of the TPS designation for Sierra Leone does not necessarily affect pending applications for other forms of immigration relief or protection. Former beneficiaries may begin to accrue unlawful presence as of May 3, 2004 if they have not been granted any other immigration status or protection, or if they have no pending application for certain benefits. Individuals who accrue certain periods of unlawful presence in the United States may be barred from admission to the United States for a specified period of time.

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On March 1, 2003, U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) became one of three former INS components to join the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. USCIS is charged with fundamentally transforming and improving the delivery of immigration and citizenship services, while enhancing the integrity of our nation's security.