



August 16, 2005

Press Release

DHS Announces 12-Month Extension of Temporary Protected Status for Liberia

WASHINGTON – The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) today announced a 12-month extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Liberia until October 1, 2006. Under this extension, those who have already been granted TPS are eligible to live and work in the United States for an additional year and continue to maintain their TPS status. Persons covered by this extension must promptly re-register with USCIS using the instructions below.

Section 244 of the Immigration and Nationality Act authorizes the Secretary of Homeland Security (the “Secretary”) to grant TPS to aliens in the United States who are nationals of countries that are suffering the effects of ongoing armed conflict, environmental disaster, or other extraordinary and temporary conditions. On August 25, 2004, the Secretary re-designated TPS for Liberia based on the extraordinary and temporary conditions existing in Liberia that prevent nationals of Liberia from returning to Liberia in safety. Since that time, the U.S. Government has continued to examine conditions in Liberia and DHS has determined that an extension of TPS is warranted because the extraordinary and temporary conditions that prompted the current re-designation persist.

The extension of Liberia’s designation for TPS is effective October 1, 2005 and will remain in effect until October 1, 2006. Nationals of Liberia (or those with no nationality who last habitually resided in Liberia) who have been granted TPS must re-register for the 12-month extension during the 60-day re-registration period, which begins on August 16, 2005 and will remain in effect until October 14, 2005. **To ensure timely scheduling for biometric collection at a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Application Support Center (ASC) and to prevent a lapse in employment authorization, Liberia TPS beneficiaries are encouraged to file their applications as quickly as possible.**

To ensure minimal disruption of employment authorization while TPS re-registration applications are processed, a sticker will be affixed to the current EAD of an eligible TPS beneficiary at the time biometrics are collected at the ASC. **This sticker will extend the current EAD through February 28, 2006. Therefore, all re-registrants who have previously been issued a TPS-related EAD must bring their current EAD to the ASC.** They should bring their ASC appointment notice and TPS receipt notice. Note that the EAD extension sticker will be provided only at the ASC. The USCIS district offices and sub-offices will not be providing this service.

Instructions for re-registering for TPS have changed. Re-registration applications must be mailed to the USCIS Lockbox addresses noted below. Applicants should **not** submit applications to USCIS District Offices or sub-offices as they have done in the past.

To re-register for TPS under this extension, each applicant must submit Form I-821 (Application for Temporary Protected Status) without filing fee, Form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization), and a \$70 biometric services fee. Applicants under the age of 14, who are not requesting an Employment Authorization Document (EAD), need not submit the \$70 biometric services fee. All applicants seeking a new EAD to be valid through October 1, 2006, must also submit a \$175 filing fee. An applicant who seeks only to re-register for TPS and does not seek an EAD need not submit the \$175 filing fee but still must submit the Form I-765. Applicants may request a fee waiver for the Form I-765 in accordance with the regulations; however, the biometric services fee will not be waived. Failure to properly complete and submit Forms I-821 and I-765 with all applicable fees or fee waivers may delay processing or lead to the rejection of the re-registration application.

Unlike previous re-registration periods, applicants are not required to submit a photograph with their re-registration material, as both photographs and fingerprints, *i.e.*, biometrics, will be collected at the ASC. In order to obtain an appointment at the ASC, you must file a re-registration package (including I-821, I-765 and required fees as stated above). Applicants will then be notified of their ASC appointment by mail.

The Form I-821, Form I-765, fees, and any required supporting documentation must be filed at the USCIS Chicago Lockbox at:

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Attn: TPS Liberia
P.O. Box 87583
Chicago, IL 60680-0583

Or, for non-United States Postal Service deliveries:

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Attn: TPS Liberia
427 S. LaSalle – 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60605

Please note that these addresses are not the same as where TPS application packages were submitted during previous re-registration periods for Liberia. Also note that USCIS has published a revised Form I-821. **Only Form I-821 with Revision Date 11/5/04 will be accepted.** Earlier versions of this form will be rejected. The newly revised form, as well as other forms, are available on the USCIS web site at www.uscis.gov, at local USCIS offices, and via the USCIS Forms line, 1-800-870-3676.

Employers with questions on how to verify an employee's work authorization may also consult the USCIS web site at <http://uscis.gov/graphics/services/employerinfo/index.htm> or call the USCIS Office of Business Liaison Employer Hotline at 1-800-357-2099 to speak to a USCIS representative. Also, employers may call the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair

Employment Practices (OSC) Employer Hotline at 1-800-255-8155 or 1-800-362-2735 (TDD). Employees or applicants may call the OSC Employee Hotline at 1-800-255-7688 or 1-800-237-2515 (TDD) for information regarding the automatic extension. Assistance with Spanish and other languages is available through the OSC Employer Hotline and OSC Employee Hotline. Additional information is available on the OSC web site at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/osc/index.html>.

More information can be obtained from the USCIS National Customer Service Center toll-free number: 1-800-375-5283.

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On March 1, 2003, U.S Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) became one of three former Immigration and Naturalization Service (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.



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Questions and Answers

DHS EXTENDS TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS FOR LIBERIA FOR 12 MONTHS

USCIS announced today that the Secretary of Homeland Security extended the designation of Liberia for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for 12 months, effective October 1, 2005 through October 1, 2006, based on extraordinary and temporary conditions in Liberia. TPS is granted to eligible nationals of designated countries suffering the effects of an ongoing armed conflict, environmental disaster, or extraordinary and temporary conditions. During the period for which the Secretary of Homeland Security has designated a country for TPS, beneficiaries may not be removed from the United States and are authorized to engage in employment.

TPS does not lead to permanent resident status, however. When the Secretary terminates a country's designation, the alien will return to the status he/she had prior to TPS or to any other status he/she may have obtained while registered for TPS.

Q. Specifically, what factors were considered in making the decision to grant a 12-month extension of TPS for Liberia?

A. The Secretary of DHS is extending the designation of Liberia for TPS because the extraordinary and temporary conditions in Liberia that prompted re-designation persist. Further, it is determined that it is not contrary to the national interest of the United States to permit aliens who are eligible for TPS based on the designation of Liberia to remain temporarily in the United States. Although disarmament and demobilization of the warring factions has been completed with the disarmament of over 100,000 ex-combatants, funding shortfalls and a lack of sufficient rehabilitation and reintegration programs have the potential to destabilize the security situation in Liberia, and have led to riots among ex-combatants in Ganta. The National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) is unable to provide employment (unemployment is at 85 percent) or essential social services. Eighty percent of pre-war housing stock is still reported as damaged. Although agricultural activities have started to expand, the percent of arable land under cultivation remains at less than ten percent. Therefore, the extension of Liberia for TPS is warranted.

Q. Who is eligible to re-register for the 12-month TPS extension?

A. Re-registration is limited to nationals of Liberia (or in the case of an alien having no nationality, a person who last habitually resided in Liberia) who have previously registered for TPS. Those who have never registered for TPS may be eligible to late initial register, as described below. An individual who has been convicted in the United States of either a felony or two or more



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misdeemeanors is not eligible for TPS. Likewise, an individual subject to a criminal or security-related bar, or the bars to asylum, is also ineligible for TPS.

Q. How do I re-register for a TPS extension?

A. If you already have been granted TPS under the Liberia TPS designation, you may re-register during the 60-day re-registration period beginning on August 16, 2005 and ending October 14, 2005. To ensure timely scheduling for biometric collection at a U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Application Support Center (ASC) and to prevent a lapse in employment authorization documentation, Liberia TPS beneficiaries are strongly urged to file their re-registration materials as soon as possible. Unlike previous registration procedures, TPS re-registrants do not need to submit photographs with the TPS application because photographs will be taken when the applicant appears at an ASC for the collection of biometrics. When an applicant submits a re-registration application, he/she will automatically receive an appointment at an ASC, and will be notified of the appointment by mail. Applicants must bring their current Employment Authorization Document (EAD) to the ASC. USCIS advises that all TPS applicants bring the ASC appointment notice and receipt notice to the appointment at the ASC.

To re-register, submit the following:

- Completed Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status, without fee;
- Completed Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization (see below to determine if you need to include the \$175 fee with your application); and
- A \$70 biometric services fee for each applicant under 14 who requests an EAD and for **all** applicants age 14 or older.

Note: USCIS has published an updated Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status. Only Form I-821 with a Revision Date of 11/5/04 will be accepted. The Revision Date is located in the bottom right corner of the form. The newly revised form is available on the USCIS web site at www.uscis.gov, at local USCIS offices, and via the USCIS Forms Line at 1-800-870-3676.

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

Fees: All applicants seeking an EAD, valid through October 1, 2006, must submit a \$175 fee with Form I-765. Applicants who only seek to re-register for TPS and do not seek an EAD need not submit the \$175 fee, but nonetheless must submit the Form I-765 for data-gathering purposes. The applicant may request a fee waiver for the I-765 fee of \$175 in accordance with the regulations. A \$70 biometrics services fee must be submitted for all applicants age 14 or older and for applicants under the age of 14 requesting an EAD. The biometric services fee will not be waived.



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Failure to submit the required fees will result in the rejection of the re-registration application.

Postmark: USCIS will accept re-registration applications containing a postmark dated on or prior to October 14, 2005, the end of the registration period. However, USCIS encourages applicants to mail their applications well in advance of the end of the registration period to prevent a lapse in employment authorization documentation.

Q. The re-registration period ends after my EAD expires. My EAD expires before the registration period ends? Am I authorized to work during the re-registration period? A. Eligible TPS re-registrants may have their current EADs extended through February 28, 2006 when they appear at the ASC for biometrics collection. USCIS will grant this extension by attaching a sticker to the back of an applicant's current EAD. Thus, Liberian TPS re-registrants must bring their current EADs to their appointments at the ASC in order to have their EAD extended. Liberian TPS re-registrants who are seeking to renew their current EADs are encouraged to re-register as soon as possible to avoid a lapse in employment authorization.

Note that the EAD extension will be provided only at the ASC. The USCIS district offices will NOT be providing this service.

Q. If an employer or a re-registrant needs further clarification regarding the EAD extension, what resources are available to assist?

A. Employers with questions on how to verify an employee's work authorization may also consult the USCIS web site at <http://uscis.gov/graphics/services/employerinfo/index.htm> or call the USCIS Office of Business Liaison Employer Hotline at 1-800-357-2099 to speak to a USCIS representative. Also, employers may call the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices (OSC) Employer Hotline at 1-800-255-8155 or 1-800-362-2735 (TDD).

Employees or re-registrants may call the OSC Employee Hotline at 1-800-255-7688 or 1-800-237-2515 (TDD) for information regarding the automatic extension. Assistance with Spanish and other languages is available through the OSC Employer Hotline and OSC Employee Hotline. Additional information is available on the OSC web site at <http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/osc/index.html>. More information can be obtained from the USCIS National Customer Service Center toll-free number: 1-800-375-5283.

Q. What should I bring to my appointment at the ASC?

A. If you have previously been issued a TPS-related EAD, you must bring your current EAD in order to receive a sticker that extends the validity of your EAD until February 28, 2006. You should also bring your ASC appointment notice and receipt notice. In order to obtain an appointment at the ASC, you must file a TPS re-registration package (including I-821, I-765, and required fees, as stated above).

Q. Who is eligible to file for late initial registration?



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A. Some persons may be eligible for late initial registration under sections 244(c)(1)(A) and (c)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (“Act”) and the regulations at Title 8 of the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), Part 244.2 To apply for late initial registration an applicant must:

- (1) Be a national of Liberia (or an alien who has no nationality and who last habitually resided in Liberia);
- (2) Have been continuously physically present in the United States since August 25, 2004;
- (3) Have continuously resided in the United States since October 1, 2002; and
- (4) Be both admissible as an immigrant, except as provided under section 244(c)(2)(A) of the Act, and not ineligible under section 244(c)(2)(B) of the Act.

Additionally, the applicant must be able to demonstrate that during the registration period for the most recent re-designation of Liberia for TPS (from August 25, 2004 to February 21, 2005), he or she:

- (1) Was a nonimmigrant or had been granted voluntary departure status or any relief from removal;
- (2) Had an application for change of status, adjustment of status, asylum, voluntary departure, or any relief from removal or change of status pending or subject to further review or appeal;
- (3) Was a parolee or had a pending request for parole; or
- (4) Was the spouse or child of an alien currently eligible to be a TPS registrant.

An applicant for late initial registration must file an application no later than 60 days after the expiration or termination of the conditions described above. 8 C.F.R. 244.2(g).

Q. How do I apply for late initial registration?

A late initial registrant must file:

- Completed Form I-821, Application for Temporary Protected Status, with \$50 fee;
- Completed Form I-765, Application for Employment Authorization;
- \$175 fee for Form I-765 for those applicants between the ages of 14 and 65 (inclusive) who are requesting employment authorization with their application;
- Supporting evidence as stated in 8 CFR 244.9, including evidence of identity and nationality, proof of residence, evidence of eligibility under section 244(c)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, and evidence of valid immigrant or nonimmigrant status; and
- A \$70 biometric services fee for each applicant age 14 or older and each applicant under age 14 who is requesting employment authorization with their application.
 - The applicant may request a fee waiver in accordance with the regulations, however the biometric services fee will not be waived.



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Q. Where should I submit the application for re-registration or for late initial registration?

A. Applications for re-registration or late initial registration should be mailed to Chicago, IL lockbox address listed below:

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Attn: TPS Liberia
P.O. Box 87583
Chicago, IL 60680-0583

Or, for non-United States Postal Service deliveries:

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
Attn: TPS Liberia
427 S. LaSalle – 3rd Floor
Chicago, IL 60605

Please note that the filing location has changed from previous registration periods. Applicants should not submit applications to USCIS District Offices, as this may result in the rejection of or delay processing of their applications.

Q. Are Liberia TPS beneficiaries permitted to travel abroad during the TPS extension?

A. Those granted TPS must receive advance permission to return to the United States before traveling abroad. This advance permission is called Advance Parole and can be obtained by filing Form I-131, Application for Travel Document, with USCIS. Failure to obtain advance parole prior to traveling abroad may result in the withdrawal of your TPS and/or the institution or re-calendar of removal proceedings.

Q. If I entered the United States after October 1, 2002, would I qualify for benefits under TPS?

A. No. This extension does not change the required dates of continuous residence and continuous physical presence in the United States for TPS beneficiaries under the Liberia designation. To be eligible for TPS, nationals of Liberia (or in the case of an alien having no nationality, a person who last habitually resided in Liberia) must have been continuously physically present in the U.S. since August 25, 2004 and continuously resided in the U.S. since October 1, 2002.



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Q. Where can I obtain forms and additional information?

A. Information concerning TPS is available at the USCIS web site: www.uscis.gov or the USCIS National Customer Service Center, at 1-800-375-5283. Applicants may obtain forms from the USCIS web site or by contacting the USCIS Forms Line, 1-800-870-3676.

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