

WEEKLY IMMIGRATION ALERT
SEPTEMBER 9 – SEPTEMBER 15, 2006



by

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Long, Chang & Associates, L.L.P. provides the following summary of immigration news for the week of September 9 - September 15, 2006. This weekly immigration alert is published in both the English and Korean languages as a service to the Korean community. Additional news can be found on Long, Chang & Associates, L.L.P.'s website at www.longchangoonline.com:

OCTOBER 2006 VISA BULLETIN NOW ONLINE: The October 2006 Visa Bulletin, which summarizes the availability of immigrant visas in family-based and employment-based immigration cases during October 2006, is now available online at www.longchangoonline.com. To access the Visa bulletin, go to www.longchangoonline.com, click on "Processing Times" and then click on "Visa Bulletin". Processing times for all USCIS Service Centers and local immigration offices can also be found online at www.longchangoonline.com.

STATUS OF LABOR CERTIFICATION CASES AT BACKLOG REDUCTION CENTERS: Do you have a labor certification case filed under the pre-PERM labor certification system which is now pending at a Backlog Reduction Center? If so, you can now find out the status of your case online. We link to this online cases status system through our website (www.longchangoonline.com). To access this link from our website, click [here](#) or www.pbls.doleta.gov/pbls_pds.cfm.

USCIS IMMIGRATION OFFICE IN DURHAM: As previously reported on www.longchangoonline.com, a second USCIS immigration office is scheduled to open in Durham, NC in May 2007. This new office will function much the way the current office in Charlotte, NC functions. It will handle the same types of cases. This is good news for those individuals in the eastern portion of North Carolina who will be able to use a much closer immigration office in Durham. The bad news is that staff is expected to be split 50/50 between the Charlotte office and Durham office. This may slow down the Charlotte office which has been adjudicating cases fairly quickly in recent months.

STAFFING LEVELS AT THE USCIS IMMIGRATION OFFICE IN CHARLOTTE: The USCIS recently announced that there are 21 immigration officers working at the Charlotte immigration office. Beginning October 1, 2006, that number will drop to 14. This may increase the processing times of cases at the Charlotte office. Currently, adjustment of status (green card) cases and naturalization cases are taking

approximately 6 months to process in Charlotte. USCIS Charlotte is concentrating on its older, continued cases during the month of September in an effort to resolve as many continued cases as possible.

HELPFUL TIPS FOR FILING A K-1 FIANCE VISA PETITION: We often meet with U.S. citizens who are planning a trip to another country to meet with his or her fiancé or potential fiancé. They ask what types of documentation they need to prepare if they want to file a fiancé visa petition when they return to the United States. The most important type of documentation is proof or evidence that the couple has met in person. As a result, we recommend getting copies of the following types of documentation: copies of passport pages (showing entry and exit stamps to and from the country), airline tickets, baggage claim receipts, pictures of the couple at various locations during the trip, receipts from the trip (hotels, restaurants, etc.), and other similar evidence showing the couple did in fact meet in person within the 2-year period before the filing of the K-1 fiancé visa petition. It is important to remember that if you are taking pictures with a camera that prints a date on the photograph that the date is actually the correct date! Otherwise, it may be difficult to prove that the couple did in fact meet during a particular overseas trip.

Kristen A. Chang and David J. Long are attorneys in the immigration law firm of Long, Chang & Associates, L.L.P. Ms. Chang and Mr. Long are members of the North Carolina State Bar and the American Immigration Lawyers Association (AILA). Ms. Chang is fluent in both the Korean and English languages. Mr. Long has been certified by the North Carolina State Bar as a Specialist in Immigration Law. They may be reached via telephone at (336) 855-5700 or via e-mail at info@longchangoonline.com.

This article should not be taken as legal advice for any individual case or situation. This information is intended to be general and should not be relied upon for any specific situation. For legal advice, consult an attorney experienced in immigration law.