



**U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services**

December 6, 2016

The Honorable Martin J. Walsh  
Mayor of Boston  
Boston City Hall  
1 City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02109

Dear Mayor Walsh:

Thank you for your October 25, 2016 letter. Secretary Johnson asked that I respond on his behalf.

We share your concern for all those affected by the destruction wrought by Hurricane Matthew in Haiti. As part of the U.S. Government's multifaceted response to the disaster, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) offers immigration relief measures to eligible Haitian nationals who have been affected by the hurricane. USCIS issued a Web alert on October 11, 2016, highlighting the following immigration relief measures that are available on a case-by-case basis, upon request, to individuals affected by Hurricane Matthew:

- Change of nonimmigrant status or extension of nonimmigrant stay for an individual currently in the United States, even if the request is filed after the authorized period of admission has expired;
- Re-parole of individuals previously granted parole by USCIS;
- Expedited processing of advance parole requests;
- Expedited adjudication of requests for off-campus employment authorization for F-1 students experiencing severe economic hardship;
- Expedited adjudication of employment authorization applications, where appropriate;
- Consideration of fee waivers due to an inability to pay;
- Assistance for those who received a Request for Evidence or a Notice of Intent to Deny but were unable to appear for an interview, submit evidence, or respond in a timely manner;
- Replacement of lost or damaged immigration or travel documents issued by USCIS, such as a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card); and
- Rescheduling of a biometrics appointment.

The full news alert is available at <https://www.uscis.gov/news/alerts/uscis-alerts-customers-affected-hurricane-matthew-available-immigration-relief>.

Additionally, the Department of Homeland Security continues to promote safe, orderly avenues for Haitian nationals seeking to immigrate to the United States, including through the Haitian Family Reunification Parole Program, which allows certain eligible U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents to apply for parole for their family members in Haiti.

With respect to Temporary Protected Status (TPS), USCIS is monitoring the evolving conditions and the recovery process in Haiti to determine whether a redesignation of Haiti for TPS might be warranted. Any redesignation would be in addition to the current extension of Haiti's existing designation that runs through July 22, 2017. The discretionary authority to designate or redesignate a country for TPS is based upon specific statutory criteria set out in Immigration and Nationality Act § 244(b)(1) and is vested in the Secretary of Homeland Security. Haiti has been designated for TPS since 2010, and almost 60,000 Haitians in the United States are currently receiving protection under Haiti's designation.

As you may know, some limited removals to Haiti have resumed, consistent with current policy to remove those apprehended at the border attempting to unlawfully enter the United States who have no credible fear of returning to their country. Should you have further questions about the removal process, I encourage you to reach out to my colleagues at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. As the Secretary has reiterated, enhanced border security must be balanced with our responsibility to ensure that those seeking humanitarian protections are afforded the opportunity to do so, consistent with our laws and values.

Thank you again for your letter and interest in this important issue. The other mayors who co-signed your letter will receive separate, identical responses. Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "León Rodríguez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "León" and last name "Rodríguez" clearly distinguishable.

León Rodríguez  
Director