

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF MINNESOTA
Civil No.

CHANTHAVONG, Ijeoma Miriam	)	
	)	
Petitioner,	)	
	)	DECLARATION OF
	)	JAMES L. VAN DER VAART
v.	)	
	)	
Merrick G. Garland	)	
U.S. Attorney General, et al.,	)	
	)	
Respondents.	)	

James L. Van Der Vaart, Deportation Officer, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE"), Department of Homeland Security, for his declaration under 28 U. S. C. § 1746 hereby states as follows:

1. The following declaration is based on a review of the Plaintiff's alien file and statements.

2. I am and have been employed with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) since April 1, 2007. I began my career as an Immigration Enforcement Agent. On September 20, 2015, I was promoted to Deportation Officer.

3. As a Deportation Officer, my assigned duties are to identify, locate, and arrest aliens illegally present in the United States. Additionally, I am charged with the responsibility of overseeing the cases of aliens in removal proceedings. These duties include the review of alien files for sufficiency, the detention and release of aliens in ICE custody, monitoring the progress of cases through the hearing process, and enforcement of the immigration court's decision, including the execution of removal orders. I am also responsible for presenting criminal immigration cases to the United States Attorney's Office for possible criminal prosecution.

4. On August 30, 2017, CHANTHAVONG, Ijeoma Miriam, a citizen and national of Nigeria, entered the United States at John F. Kennedy International Airport in Queens, New York. CHANTHAVONG was in possession of a valid B-2 VISA (Temporary Visitor for pleasure). Attached as Exhibit 1 is a true and correct copy of CHANTHAVONG's Form I-213.

5. On March 23, 2018, CHANTHAVONG filed form I-131 (Application for Travel Documents, Parole Documents, and Arrival/Departure Records, receipt number [REDACTED]) with United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), form I-130 (Petition for Alien Relative, receipt number [REDACTED]), form I-485 (Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status, receipt number [REDACTED]) USCIS issued alien registration number (A# [REDACTED]).

6. On April 30, 2018, CHANTHAVONG filed form I-765 (Application for Employment Authorization).

7. On January 02, 2019, USCIS approved the I-765 application for Employment Authorization, authorizing employment from January 02, 2019, to January 01, 2020.

8. On March 06, 2019, CHANTHAVONG failed to appear for the scheduled USCIS interview regarding the pending applications.

9. On March 08, 2019, USCIS ordered an abandonment denial notice to be issued.

10. On March 11, 2019, USCIS sent a denial notice to the address provided by CHANTHAVONG.

11. On January 28, 2022, CHANTHAVONG filed form I-13, receipt number 1 [REDACTED] form I-360 (Petition for Amerasian, Widow(er), or Special Immigrant, receipt number [REDACTED]) with USCIS.

12. On June 09, 2022, USCIS approved application form I-131 [REDACTED]. The application was valid from June 09, 2022, to June 08, 2022.

13. On December 26, 2023, CHANTHAVONG filed application form I-131, receipt number [REDACTED] and application form I-765, receipt number [REDACTED] with USCIS.

14. On April 19, 2023, The District Court of Minnesota convicted CHANTHAVONG of Conspiracy to Commit International Money Laundering, in violation of 18 U.S.C §§1956(h) and 1956(a)(2)(B)(i) (Criminal Court case 0:22-CR-00210-DWF (1)). CHANTHAVONG was sentenced to 36 months probation and fined \$148,500.00. CHANTHAVONG is currently on federal probation. Attached as **Exhibit 2**

is a true and correct copy of CHANGTHAVONG's conviction records.

15. On June 20, 2024, USCIS approved application form I-131, receipt number [REDACTED] and application form I-765, receipt number [REDACTED]. Both applications were valid from June 20, 2024, to June 19, 2029.

16. On February 14, 2025, USCIS sent a notice of intent to deny application form I-360, receipt number [REDACTED].

17. On April 18, 2025, CHANTHAVONG filed application form I-601 application for Waiver of Grounds of Inadmissability.

18. On August 27, 2025, USCIS ordered a denial notice for form I-601 application.

19. On August 28, 2025, USICS sent a notice of denial regarding application form I-360 [REDACTED] and form I-601, receipt number [REDACTED].

20. On December 04, 2025, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers located and arrested CHANTHAVONG due to a "conviction for Money laundering. ICE officers processed CHANTHAVONG as a Final Administrative Order of Removal. CHANTHAVONG requested asylum during processing and will be submitted to USCIS for an asylum interview.

21. On December 22, 2025, ICE issued a Final Administrative Removal Order for CHANTHAVONG. *See* Ex. 1 at 4.

22. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

23. Further your affiant sayeth not.

JAMES L VAN
DER VAART

Digitally signed by
JAMES L VAN DER VAART
Date: 2026.01.05 12:11:10
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James L. Van Der Vaart, Deportation Officer
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement