

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY GRANTS 18-MONTH
EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY PROTECTED STATUS TO ELIGIBLE
HONDURANS AND NICARAGUANS**

BCIS

April 30, 2003

Employment Authorization Document (EAD) Automatically Extended to December 5, 2003

WASHINGTON - As part of the Administration's ongoing efforts to assist countries affected by Hurricane Mitch, the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Service (BCIS) announced today the extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for Honduras and Nicaragua for a period of 18 months until January 5, 2005. The extension of TPS for Hondurans and Nicaraguans is effective July 5, 2003 and will remain in effect until January 5, 2005. The 60-day TPS re-registration period begins May 2, 2003 and will remain in effect for 60-days.

In an effort both to provide ample time for eligible Hondurans and Nicaraguans to re-register for Temporary Protected Status (TPS) and to prevent potential gaps in employment authorization while such individuals wait for their applications to be processed, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is granting an automatic extension of the expiration date of the Employment Authorization Document (EAD) to December 5, 2003. "This additional 18-month extension reflects the Administration's continued commitment to provide assistance to the countries devastated by Hurricane Mitch," said Eduardo Aguirre, Acting Director, Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.

The automatic EAD extension is designed only to prevent gaps in employment authorization while re-registration applications are processed, but it does not relieve TPS beneficiaries of the responsibility to re-register for TPS benefits. This extension of TPS covers an estimated 85,000 Hondurans and 6,000 Nicaraguans applied for TPS. For more information, please visit the BCIS web site for the Salvadoran TPS Fact Sheet: <http://www.bcis.gov> or call the BCIS National Customer Service Center at 1-800-375-5283.

Important reminder to all employers:

BCIS reminds employers that the laws prohibiting unfair immigration-related employment practices remain in full force. For questions, employers may call the Service's Office of Business Liaison Employer Hotline at 1-800-357-2099 to speak to a Service representative. Also, employers may call the office of Special Counsel for Immigration Related Unfair Employment Practices (OSC) Employer Hotline at 1-800-255-8155. Employees or applicants may call the OSC Employee Hotline at 1-800-255-7688 for information regarding the automatic extension.