



U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services

Asylum and Internal Relocation Guidance

A message sent by the acting director to USCIS asylum officers regarding asylum and internal relocation guidance.

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The crisis at our Southern border continues to be severe. Every day, USCIS faces an unprecedented number of aliens overwhelming our asylum system, many of whom are ineligible for asylum and are attempting to enter and remain in the country in violation of our laws. This guidance further clarifies current regulations and policies that are already in place regarding **internal relocation** of an alien in their home country, eliciting testimony for credible fear screenings, and documenting outcomes. As detailed in the Department of State country conditions reports for these countries, private violence is not pervasive across the entirety of each Northern Triangle country. I am writing to provide a reminder of the importance of assessing a person's ability to safely relocate to another part of his or her home country. This is an important regulatory factor in the consideration of credible fear screenings and determinations.

When confronted with evidence of private violence, you must consider whether internal relocation is possible. 8 CFR 208.13(b)(3) provides that factors adjudicators should consider include but are not limited to "whether the applicant would face other serious harm in the place of relocation; ongoing civil strife in the country; administrative, economic or judicial infrastructure; geographic limitations; and social and cultural constraints such as age, gender, health and social and family ties."

Many of the cases arising at the Southern border are cases of individuals that are willing to engage in costly and dangerous international travel – neither of which would be necessary if they sought refuge within their home country, particularly given the fact that there are areas that are generally very safe within each of the countries that currently make up the bulk of our credible fear cases. Asylum officers should be eliciting testimony to determine if the alien attempted to internally relocate to any safe areas prior to the alien's travel to the United States.

The Asylum Division work is very important, and your dedication to the mission has not gone unnoticed. If you have any questions concerning the procedures contained in the memorandum, please contact Asylum Headquarters. Thank you for your continued commitment to our mission and to safeguarding the integrity of the U.S. immigration system.

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