

**BARRISTER'S CORNER**



ATTY. KENNETH URSUA REYES

## What to do with conditional green card status in troubled marriages

conditional permanent residence. Such conditional permanent residence status lasts for two years from the date on which it is granted.

Step two of the procedure involves the removal of the conditional label to permanent residence status. Removal of the conditional label is initiated by filing an I-751 Joint Petition to Remove Condition to Permanent Residence ("Joint Petition"). The Joint Petition provides an opportunity for the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS") to inquire as to the legitimacy of the marriage after conditional permanent residence is granted. Accordingly, documentation evidencing that the marriage was entered into for bona-fide reasons should be submitted as part of the Joint Petition. The Joint Petition must be filed with the USCIS service center in the 90 days immediately prior to the second anniversary of the granting of conditional permanent residence.

Typically, upon the filing of the Joint Petition, a one-year extension of the conditional permanent residence is granted. The extension affords the USCIS time to schedule an interview with the person seeking permanent residence, and to make a determination as to whether unconditional permanent residence will be

granted for a ten-year period. In cases in which documentation submitted as part of the Joint Petition clearly show that the marriage is bona-fide and not merely for immigration purposes, INS may approve a Joint Petition without an interview.

The procedure described hereinabove applies in situations where the marriage has not been terminated. Often, the Joint Petition cannot be filed or approved because the marriage, although bona-fide when entered into, has been terminated by divorce. May aliens become threatened of falling out of status once their marriage is in trouble because the spouse often refuse to cooperate or has filed a divorce petition. In such cases there is still hope and the prospect of obtaining unconditional permanent residence status still remains. A waiver of the joint petition requirement may be sought in such cases.

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MARRIAGE for many persons is the culmination of one's life. Getting married signifies the beginning of a new phase in life, both socially and economically. For those persons who lack permanent residency in the United States and have married a United States citizen, marriage also presents an opportunity to obtain permanent residency. However, although the opportunity to obtain permanent residency arises in such situations, one must be aware of and comply with procedures in existence to obtain such status. Due to concerns that persons were becoming married to United States citizens merely to obtain permanent residence status, a two-step procedure under the Immigration Marriage Fraud Amendments of 1986 (IMFA) was set up to ensure such was given to those only in marriages that are bona-fide and not entered into simply for immigration purposes.

Under step one of the procedure, if a person is petitioned by his/her US citizen spouse within 24 months after becoming married, that person is given only

## How not to dial M...

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during this period of testing, we would be a lot happier, healthier and less prone to veer towards lives of quiet desperation if we focused less and less on ourselves and more on the welfare of the other person and commit spontaneous, frequent acts of kindness and generosity to family members, total strangers and even those we struggle to love. It would be a tough slog but doable.

There was one telling incident I never quite forgot. Long ago, I was running breathlessly huffing and puffing in my stilettos to

drop some coins on a parking meter on Wilshire Boulevard I knew had expired because of a long, drawn-out presentation I was making on the upper floor of a nearby high rise. Fortunately, I narrowly missed getting a thirty-some dollar fine from the parking enforcer because a panhandler had dropped some coins for my car's meter, from his can of coins. It stunned me to see him feeding all the meters that were expiring on that block. Of course, he may have been merely trying to annoy the heck out of

the parking enforcer. Who knows? I only saw the kindness in the act. That stayed with me. From then on, I would remember and always be inspired by the completely anonymous gesture of that person who had practically nothing but still gave of the little he had.

That's when I knew kindness is contagious like the flu.

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## Robertson Honda makes quality service a must

If there's a saving grace from the economic crisis, it is the fact that it has made us wiser with how we spend, save or invest our money. It has motivated us to have our priorities straightened once and for all so we could achieve the goals we want for ourselves and our loved ones and be financially secure—economic crisis or not. When it comes to products and services, we always aim for a name we could rely on to give us the quality we deserve. And as for quality automotive services, you can get exactly that at Robertson Honda, where quality service is a must as customers are always valued and provided with the best service all the time. Receiving the 2007 and 2008 Council of Excellence (COE) Award for their strong commitment to a rewarding relationship with Honda Financial Services (HFS) and as the No. 1 Filipino Honda Dealership in the San Fernando Valley are further proof of their commitment to serve their customers with unparalleled excellence.

The Robertson Honda team—composed of Danny Reyes, General Sales Manager; Mike Reyes, Desk Manager; and a Filipino Fleet Department—are always committed to give the highest quality of financial services to their customers.

Danny Reyes, the person behind the 10-people-strong Filipino Department, is faithful in giving the lowest possible monthly payments while making sure that the buyers get the Honda that they want and need. He also helped in establishing a strong foundation of Filipinos from various islands of the Philippines who are willing to serve every person that comes in. So whether you are Visayan, Bicolano, Kapampangan and so on—chances are, they speak your native tongue.

The Filipino fleet has definitely set a high

standard when it comes to the car dealership business as more and more Filipinos in the San Fernando Valley area trust



Mike Reyes, Filipino Desk Manager

Robertson Honda over the others. And getting to drive home your dream vehicle does not mean Robertson Honda is done with you as their service continues and continues. They have several programs that reach out to the community's needs, one of which is the Newly Graduate Program, which can help rebuild your credit by giving you a car even if you have a bankruptcy or repossession at a very minimal downpayment.

Meanwhile, Robertson Honda's Parts and Service Department headed by Joe DeRobertis is responsible for servicing your Honda vehicles and maintaining them at tiptop condition. Here you can relax and mingle with kababayans while sitting in their waiting area where coffee is complimentary, snacks and reading materials are within reach and a state-of-the-art plasma TV with hundreds of channels to choose from can kill your boredom before it even starts.

So let Robertson Honda provide you with its quality service and make the "Number One Filipino Honda Store" for 40 years your choice. Visit Robertson Honda at 5841 Lankershim Blvd. in North Hollywood, and experience quality service that will exceed your expectations. For inquiries, please call 1-800-813-3467 or log on to www.robertsonhonda.com.

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## LONGO TOYOTA: Giving full customer satisfaction for 42 years



Butch Gabutina

Cesar Macalino

Mel Castelo

Raymond Perez

THERE is no doubt that if one would like to purchase the car which is a good fit for his or her needs and lifestyle, he or she could easily go to any car dealership in the California area where there are several car dealerships to choose from. Some of which have existed for a few years, others 10 or 20 years, all of which claim that they have the best deals for you. However, if you are looking for a car which is a PERFECT fit for your needs and lifestyle, the best place to go to is Longo Toyota, a Penske Company, located at 3534 North Peck Road, El Monte, CA.

As the no. 1 Toyota dealer in the US for 42 consecutive years from 1966-2007 based on TMS total new retail vehicle sales, Longo Toyota needs no further proof to show that they are your best option when you are in search of the perfect car. After all, they do not say "Why go anywhere else?" on their website for nothing; there are several good reasons behind it. And having a rating of AA under the Better Business Bureau (BBB) doesn't hurt either.

Longo Toyota, as an affiliate of Penske Motor Group, is all about commitment and great customer satisfaction. What's more, the Longo Toyota staff boasts of a remarkable sales team composed of talented and highly skilled Filipinos namely Mel Castelo, Butch Gabutina, Raymond Perez and Cesar Macalino—all of whom are always ready to commit and wholly serve their customers for their automotive needs. These three guys never falter in making sure their customers get the service they are entitled to, especially their kababayans of course. It is no wonder a record number of Filipino residents in California have visited Longo Toyota for their car needs, including service, parts and repairs.

Longo Toyota also offers several amenities to assure every customer's car-buying experience

is a pleasant one including a business center, wireless internet access, courtesy shuttle (within 15 miles for service guests, excluding Sundays) and an Automobile Club of Southern California (AAA) office located in their showroom, open 9am to 9pm for insurance services.

Currently, Longo Toyota's inventory of Toyota vehicles with over 25 mpg EPA rating is the largest in the USA and also has the largest scion inventory. They have the latest and most sought-after Toyota models including Avalon, Camry, Camry Hybrid, Camry Solara, Corolla, Highlander Hybrid, Matrix, Prius, RAV4 and Yaris. Longo Toyota also knows the value of your hard-earned money and offers a Value Zone where fully functional used vehicles under \$10,000 are available. Also, a 0% financing on approved Tier 1, 2 and 3 credit with Toyota Financial Services are available for 11 different new Toyota models.

So if you want to take the first step in buying a car just right for you, look no further than Longo Toyota. Visit their office at 3534 North Peck Road, El Monte, CA; their Sales office is open Sundays, from 830am-9pm; Saturdays, from 8am-10pm; and Mondays thru Fridays, from 8am-10pm. You may also call them at 800-745-4291 or log on to www.longotoyota.com for more information.

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