

## Personal Narrative in Support of Petition for T Nonimmigrant Status

I, Rudy Alexander Villeda Mejía, swear under penalty of perjury as proscribed by the laws of the State of Colorado and of the United States of America that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

1. I was born on March 22, 1979, in Tocoa, Colon, Honduras.
2. I am married to Mabel Mirium Shaffer, who is a citizen of the United States. We have lived together for over ten years, and I know her children very well. Together, we built a roofing business that was also prospering until my most recent detention by ICE.
3. I write to explain how I was kidnapped and brought into the United States in 2010 and why I am asking that USCIS grant my petition for T nonimmigrant status.
4. Before I describe the events of 2010, I would like to give you an idea of my background so you can fully understand how these events affected me.
5. I grew up in Honduras. My childhood was marred by the violence that runs throughout the entire country. I remember that when I was about ten years old, I saw the severed head of one of my teachers as I was passing his house.
6. As I grew older, the gangs in Honduras repeatedly tried to recruit me. Revolted at the thought of joining in their violence, I refused, but their threats about what they would do to me if I did not join became ever more

frightening. I finally concluded that my life would not be safe if I stayed in Honduras, so I left in 2007.

7. I spent the next few months traveling to the United States. It was a hard journey, and by the time I crossed the border and was detained by the border patrol officers, I was very sick.
8. I told the officers that I was afraid of returning to Honduras, but I never received a credible fear interview. The officers pressured me to sign a document, telling me that I would not receive medical treatment unless I had a pending case, that it would be months before I saw an asylum officer, and that it would be better for me to voluntarily leave the United States and live than stay and die. They assured me that I would be able to return lawfully to the United States.
9. I tried to continue with my claim for protection, but my health kept getting worse and worse, and I was not receiving any treatment. Eventually, to save my own life, I agreed to sign the paper.
10. I had no idea that I was signing a request to dissolve the credible fear process or that by doing so, I would be accepting an order of removal.
11. I went back to Honduras and received emergency medical treatment there. I did try resuming my life there, but I was forced to leave only a couple of years later.
12. In October 2009, I was working at a computer repair store. Some gang members came in and demanded that I repair their phones. While doing so, I

inadvertently came across videos showing the gang members killing and hurting people while dressed like officers from the Honduran authorities. The videos were somehow deleted during the repair process, and this led the gang members to suspect that I was trying to assemble evidence against them. They threatened me at gunpoint and told me to restore the videos to their phones. I was able to do so, but I knew that I could not safely remain in Honduras.

13. I did try relocating to another part of Honduras, but the gang members tracked me and my cousin down and beat us severely. I fled Honduras for a second time and traveled through Guatemala until I reached Mexico.
14. I made my way through several Mexican states. I started in Chiapas and then traveled north, passing through Laredo and arriving in Tamaulipas.
15. I arrived in Tamaulipas in June or July 2010 and stayed for a while at a migrant shelter. One day, when I was near a bus station in Tamaulipas, two men approached me. They were armed. They said that they were called Pantera (Panther) and Cuervo (Crow). They told me to follow them and not say anything. They also said that they could get documents for me to work legally in the United States.
16. I followed them to a car, which then drove for some distance. It seemed to me that we arrived in an area of desert that was open to the sky.
17. They took me into a patio, where there were perhaps 15 people dressed only in underwear. They shouted at me, pushed me, and took all my clothing. I

spent the night with the other people in the patio, while two or three people kept watch over us.

18. I think it was the next day when they demanded that I give them phone numbers for my family members. They especially wanted to know whether I had relatives in the United States. I told them that my father, Victor Villeda Ulloa, was indeed in the United States and provided them his phone number. I also gave them the phone number for my sister, Maby Margoth Villeda Mejía, who was in Honduras at the time.
19. They tried calling my family at the numbers I provided, and the first two times they called, they did not get a response. So they beat me. The third time, they got through and shouted down the line, “We took him yesterday, and if you don’t pay, we’ll send him back in pieces!”
20. They then put the phone near my mouth to prove that they had me in their power. I do not remember what I said, but my sister could tell that it was indeed I talking on the phone.
21. I suffered many indignities at their hands, though they did receive some money from my family. I tried my best to remain calm. They fed us a can of beans every other day to keep us alive. Many of my fellow captives complained and cried at this mistreatment, but that only led to their receiving more beatings. Oftentimes, they disappeared, and I never saw them again. After endless days of misery, few remained of those who had been present when I was first brought to that place.

22. One morning, I was told to get dressed. I was terrified; I had no idea what was going to happen. They led me out, and I followed, too afraid to say a word. They took me to a car. It was a black Dodge Durango and did not look very old. I saw a driver and Pantera and Cuervo, the same two men who had initially approached me.
23. We all got into the car. It drove for several hours, and then I felt it stop. One of the men stayed in the back with me. I kept my eyes forward, said nothing, and did my best to pretend that I was sleeping. They talked among themselves and then kept driving.
24. I believe that we drove for about five hours before we arrived at the southern border of the United States. They told me to stay calm and say nothing.
25. After a long while, a border patrol official stopped us. He spoke with Pantera and Cuervo for a time, looked at me in the back of the car, and then waived us through. That was how I last entered the United States — I have not left this country since then.
26. I was very confused and disoriented that day. I tried to stay calm, but it was hard because I had no idea where they were taking me. We kept driving and driving. I needed a restroom desperately, but I feared to say anything.
27. When we arrived at our destination, they yelled at me to get out of the car. They shoved me into a van with maybe five other people and blindfolded me. This treatment scared me even more since I still had no idea what my ultimate fate would be.

28. We eventually arrived at what, from the little I could see through the blindfold, looked to be an abandoned house. They continued to mistreat me. They pushed me into a small room—it was the size of a closet—crowded with people on the floor. There was a constant background noise of complaints and crying.
29. I saw a bathroom and tried to go in, my need was so desperate. But no sooner had I gone in than I was hit on the feet with a piece of wood with such force that I thought I had been struck by metal. The pain was indescribable. But I could not say anything to stop the abuse.
30. They tried calling my father that day. When he failed to respond, they beat me even more.
31. The next day, they tried calling my family again. This time, they reached my sister. They hit me before putting me on the line with her. I have no memory of what I said because I had eaten very little for many days, was given almost no water, and felt weak from the constant anxiety about whether I would live or die in the end.
32. The mistreatment continued every day. I could not sleep for the sounds of women weeping and men crying out in pain that never seemed to fade.
33. Since I was constantly held in the dark, I have no idea how long I spent there. All I can say is that it seemed that I spent an interminable time in that horrible house.

34. One day, I heard my name shouted. My fear spiked as I once more wondered whether they meant to kill me. I was pushed into a van and again blindfolded. I prayed to God that this would not be my last day on Earth.
35. They drove for a long time. I had heard from others that long drives were the prelude to one's being killed, so I grew increasingly certain that I was going to go the same way. The car stopped. I almost passed out — my fear was so acute.
36. I heard a shout that I should get out of the car. I did so. They told me not to speak of what had happened. They warned me that they would keep track of me always. Then, they told me to walk straight forward and not to go left or right, else they would shoot me.
37. I walked for a long time. Eventually, I realized that I was in a mall, and it felt like everyone was staring at me. I was free. I was free, but it did not feel real.
38. I looked for someone to help me get in touch with my family. I knew that they must have paid the ransom and that it must have taken them all this time to get the money together, and I wanted to tell them where I was.
39. I found a store with Spanish-speaking people. I asked for help, but they did not want to provide me any assistance.
40. As I was walking out of the store, I ran into a family. I asked them to help me. They bought something, and then the wife gave me a cup with coins in it that she had gotten from the family car.

41. Using these coins, I called my family and learned that they had paid Los Zetas in three installments totaling \$3,000.
42. After that, I moved to Washington State and did my best to work as a productive member of society. I have never committed a crime anywhere in the world.
43. To this day, I am still experiencing the after-effects of my ordeal with Los Zetas. I find it very difficult to trust anyone, cannot be in a room with the lights off, and have a lot of nightmares. I have also been diagnosed with Bell's Palsy as a result of what I went through.
44. In 2014, I was detained by ICE. I told an asylum officer about my fear of returning to Honduras and was allowed to present my case to the Immigration Court. During that process, I was released on a \$5,000 bond.
45. The Immigration Judge ultimately denied my requests for protection in the United States, and my appeal was also denied. After that, ICE let me remain in this country. They simply required that I check in at the Seattle Field Office periodically.
46. I attended all the check-ins from August 2018 to April 2025. My next check-in was scheduled for April 16, 2026.
47. I was not able to attend the check-in because on March 30, 2026, I was detained at the Denver International Airport without any explanation of why I was being taken into custody. I am still detained at the detention center in Aurora, Colorado.

48. This months-long detention has not improved matters for me. To be so unable to control my own movement is deeply disturbing to me.

49. It is my understanding that my father reported the calls from Los Zetas to police officers in Washington State, who eventually passed the information on to the Department of Homeland Security. My sister was terrified by the gang's threats and paid the ransom before my kidnappers could be arrested.

50. Despite the horrors of my journey into the United States, I have felt safer here than anywhere else. I have already described the life I have built here with my family.

51. I implore the government of the United States not to make me go back to Honduras, where gangs still do what they want throughout the country. I could not take my family there, and they need me. My wife needs me to help take care of her. She has serious hip problems.

52. All I ask is for the opportunity to obtain lawful immigration status, remain here with my family, and continue to contribute to American society.

By my signature, I attest to the veracity and completeness of the foregoing.

  
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Signature

June 19, 2026

Date

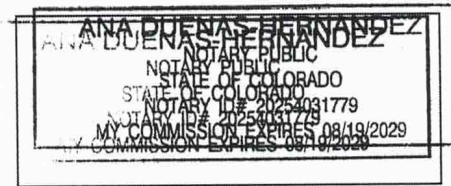
State of Colorado  
County of Adams

Signed before me on June 19, 2026, by Rudy Alexander Villeda Mejía

  
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(Notary's official signature)

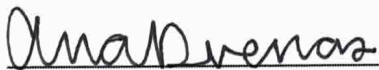
Notary Public

Commission Expiration: 08/19/2029



### CERTIFICATE OF INTERPRETATION

I, Ana Dueñas-Hernández, hereby certify that I am competent to interpret between the English and Spanish languages and that, to the best of my ability, I accurately interpreted the complete text of this **Personal Narrative of Rudy Alexander Villeda Mejía** into the Spanish language before he affixed his signature thereto.

  
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Interpreter's Signature

June 19, 2026

Date