



Sample Bona Fide Marriage Exemption Declaration

I, [REDACTED], declare under the penalty of perjury that the following is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1. My name is [REDACTED]. I was born on [REDACTED] in Mumbai, India. I currently live with my wife, [REDACTED], at [REDACTED], in Dallas, Texas.
2. [REDACTED] and I request a bona fide marriage exemption under 8 C.F.R. § 204.2(a)(1)(iii)(A). Although we married after I was placed in removal proceedings, we married for reasons unrelated to immigration matters.
3. I first met [REDACTED] when she was working for my former business partner at [REDACTED]. Our first outing was in November 2010 along with the coworkers, and we went to [REDACTED], in Dallas, Texas. Because we worked together, we were friends before we started dating, and I do not recall when I knew exactly that I wanted to be more than friends.
4. In my first declaration, I said that [REDACTED] and I were just friends for the first year. I want to clarify; when I said that we started dating after a year I was talking about when we moved in together. That stuck out to me because it was a change in our relationship. I'm sorry for any confusion about the dates. Sometimes I have difficulty recounting dates and timelines; it gets a little mixed up.
5. When I met [REDACTED] my Immigration hearings were over and I already had Withholding of Removal. Although I now know that this case is still open; I considered it to be closed after I got the decision from the Immigration Judge.
6. I was very physically attracted to [REDACTED], compared to my previous marriage with [REDACTED]. I also was emotionally drawn to her devotion to her family and her community as someone who is very close to his family, I found her non-physical qualities of honesty, commitment, and devotion to be as attractive as her physical attributes. In addition, I found that I was able

[REDACTED]

to communicate honestly with her about my bisexuality, unlike with our families and many of our close friends.

7. I was instantly impressed by [REDACTED]'s commitment to her family. She came from a big family background - her dad has nine brothers and sisters living in Los Angeles, California. She's very close to her family and always went to visit them. In Indian culture, family is the top priority, so I knew any woman I married needed to be as committed to her family as I am to mine. She felt the same way. [REDACTED]'s large family means she had lots of cousins, just like I do. It was easy introduce her to my cousins and she blended in easily. In my previous marriage, my wife was never that friendly with my cousins, or ever spoke to my parents casually over the phone. I knew that if I was going to get married again, my wife would need to be as family oriented as I am.
8. My first wife was never family oriented, and was very individualistic. She was always afraid of sharing finances. Our things were divided as "my things" and "her things." [REDACTED] was the opposite. I remember that one time when we were dating I misplaced my wallet and I asked [REDACTED] to lend me some cash. She gave me her bank card and pin number, and told me to withdraw whatever I needed.
9. [REDACTED] and I started seeing each other casually shortly after we met. It developed naturally. We spent a lot of time together starting that winter and got to know each other really well. I went to Christmas dinner at [REDACTED]'s parents' house that year, in 2010. I had been visiting Los Angeles, California (where her family lives) for business and since I was in town we hung out and she invited me over for dinner and meet her parents for Christmas.
10. In the first year of our relationship, both as friends and romantic partners, [REDACTED] and I travelled a lot together. In March 2011 we went to the San Francisco Bay Area together. In June of that year we attended my cousin [REDACTED]'s wedding in Los Angeles, California (I previously said that this wedding happened in 2012, again I was confused. I am sorry.) In July of 2011 we went to Las Vegas, Nevada together and in August of 2011 [REDACTED] and I traveled New Orleans, Louisiana. I am including photos from our trips and visits with my RFE response to show how we spent time together.
11. One of the things that brought [REDACTED] and I together was a love of eating. We both love all different kinds of food – sushi, Chinese food, burgers and steaks, in addition to the foods of our respective cultures. When we travelled, we always made it a point to eat at a local restaurant of some notoriety.

[REDACTED]

12. I travel a lot for work, and I remember we often stayed up all night talking on the phone while I was on trips. I felt [REDACTED] and I were made for each other and felt like she understood me so much more than anyone else ever had. I was able to share all my secrets with her and I felt normal. I always felt accepted, and not judged.
13. In June of 2011 [REDACTED] and I traveled to California for my cousin [REDACTED]'s wedding. Again, this was in 2011, not 2012 as I mistakenly said before. It was the first time that I was able to introduce [REDACTED] to my family. At that point I knew that I wanted to spend my life with [REDACTED], so I asked her if she would marry me. I was so happy that she said yes. This was actually our informal engagement; we also got formally engaged in the Vietnamese tradition later and had an Indian ceremony that I considered to be like another engagement.
14. I moved into [REDACTED]'s apartment in July of 2011, almost 9 months after we met. After I moved in with her our relationship went to a whole new level. It was hard to live together, we had a lot of differences in how we kept the house. I love to cook and when I do I am messy. But [REDACTED] was a clean freak and couldn't stand when I spilled spices. It was even different to sleep together; I liked the air conditioning cold, at 68 degrees, and I sleep with a lot of blankets. [REDACTED] hated that and wanted it to be a lot warmer. We learned to compromise; for example we kept the air conditioning at 72 degrees. I tried not to cook so much and to be more careful when I did. It was important to me that we get along because I loved [REDACTED] very much.
15. Because family and tradition are important to both of us, [REDACTED] and I got engaged in the traditional Vietnamese way. After my informal proposal at my cousin [REDACTED]'s wedding, we told her parents of our engagement. They requested a traditional Vietnamese engagement ceremony and we agreed. It is traditional to give a diamond ring as an engagement gift in Vietnamese culture. [REDACTED]'s mother had a beautiful diamond ring that she had custom ordered from her jeweler. [REDACTED] loved that ring, so we agreed I should buy it from her mother and it would be [REDACTED]'s engagement ring. I purchased the ring from [REDACTED]'s mother in end of June 2011 and gave it to her at the Vietnamese engagement ceremony, which was a small family gathering at her parents' house in Fountain Valley, California.
16. [REDACTED] and I wanted to keep our families happy by following the tradition of both sides. In November of 2011 [REDACTED] went to India to visit my family, and together they shopped for purchase traditional Indian wedding clothes and jewelry for our upcoming Indian marriage. It was a necessary part of our relationship so that my parents could introduce her to their friends and approve our relationship. While [REDACTED] was in India she caught
- [REDACTED]

typhoid/salmonella, but it was not diagnosed until she was back in the United States. [REDACTED]

was admitted to the Parkland Hospital for nearly two months.

17. I was devastated by [REDACTED]'s illness, and spent nearly every night at the hospital with her. My brother had typhoid as a child, and I remembered how much he suffered, I wanted to ensure that [REDACTED] had the best care and never felt lonely or abandoned at the hospital. I even consulted with my childhood doctor in India, [REDACTED], because I know that doctors in India are far more familiar with typhoid/salmonella. [REDACTED] explained to me the symptoms and also made me understand that she will be cured but she needs lot of rest. He told me that [REDACTED] shouldn't eat any oily food and only to eat soup and fruits light stuff. I brought her soup I made at home, as well as whatever creature comforts she desired. Her family and I worked together to make sure she was cared for and had companionship at all times.
18. In March of 2012 [REDACTED] and I officially began renting a house from my business partner, [REDACTED]. The household utilities were all in [REDACTED]'s name because utilities in Texas to not appear in two names, but I have a few of the bills. The cable was under my name through Verizon, but unfortunately I set up paperless billing and since the account is now closed I cannot access those bills anymore. I do have a copy of our car insurance at this address, which I am attaching.
19. On June 23, 2012 [REDACTED] and I had an Indian engagement and the following day we also had an Indian wedding ceremony, which I think of as part of the engagement because it wasn't a legal wedding. We invited friends and family to join us. It was a smaller ceremony, maybe forty to fifty people, but it was very important to my family. I have never told my parents that I am bi-sexual and I know that they always wanted me to marry in a way that they would approve.
20. This was a wonderful time because I was with the woman that I loved and also my family could celebrate with me. My parents flew from India, and so did my uncle, [REDACTED], and aunt, [REDACTED]. My cousin, [REDACTED], and my uncle, [REDACTED], came from California. [REDACTED]'s mom, dad, and her sisters, [REDACTED], all flew in as well. I considered this event to be another layer of commitment in our relationship. I knew at this point that I was fully committed to [REDACTED], even though we weren't planning to marry for another year.
21. My parents stayed with us for several weeks after the Indian ceremony. [REDACTED], my parents, and I all travelled to New Orleans with the entire family.

[REDACTED]

22. My parents really liked [REDACTED] and they bought her a lot of jewelry as gifts during our relationship. Most of the jewelry was purchased either for [REDACTED] to wear during the wedding or as a wedding present. I have included some receipts. The finger ring was to be worn during the Indian wedding, so my parents bought it in April 2013. The gold chains and coins, as well as the platinum chains, were a wedding present to [REDACTED] from my parents. I believe they were purchased in November and December 2013, right before my parents flew to the United States for our wedding.
23. In the spring of 2013 [REDACTED] and I tried to buy the house that we were renting in [REDACTED] from Imran. Unfortunately, in 2012 my business went through a bankruptcy and my credit was not very good. My attorney suggested that we try and purchase the house in [REDACTED]'s name so that we could qualify for a mortgage. [REDACTED] signed the purchase contract on April 11, 2013 but we couldn't buy the house. [REDACTED]'s dad even offered to co-sign the loan, but ultimately that was not enough for the mortgage company. We decided to continue renting for the foreseeable future. We stayed there until May of 2014 when we moved to our current apartment.
24. On December 28, 2013, [REDACTED] and I were legally married in the Catholic Church. We also had a traditional Vietnamese Tea Ceremony after the ceremony to include our families and traditions even more. That wedding had 150 people at the ceremony and 240 people at the reception; it cost about \$60,000.00.
25. Our families and a lot of our friends came to this wedding. Both of my parents were there, as well as my brother [REDACTED]. My dad's brothers and his cousins also came, as well as my cousins. My parents also invited their friends, [REDACTED]. My college friends were there, my friends [REDACTED], and my business partner, [REDACTED], and his wife were also there.
26. From [REDACTED]'s family, obviously her parents attended. In addition, her two sisters who live in Los Angeles, [REDACTED], attended – they were in the bridal party. Her uncle, [REDACTED], who lives in Allen, Texas, flew to Los Angeles for the wedding. Her aunt, [REDACTED], who lives in Wichita, Kansas, also came to the wedding. [REDACTED] comes from a very large family – her father is one of nine children, and six or seven of them live in the Greater Los Angeles area. Her mother is one of five children. Many of her cousins, both from Los Angeles and Southern California, as well as from all over the country, came to our wedding. It was a very big event.
- [REDACTED]

27. My parents were in Texas for a more than two months after we returned from the wedding in Los Angeles. My brother also visited. We went shopping and were invited by family friends and my partners for dinner at their house. We went to visit Austin for a weekend and we also visited my cousins and family in Houston. My uncle, [REDACTED], was in the final stages of liver cancer so we all, including [REDACTED], visited Houston several times during those months.
28. In May of 2014, [REDACTED] and I moved into our current apartment. The first year my name was not on the lease because it was going to cost extra money to run both rental applications. In 2015 we added my name to the lease when we renewed so that I could get extra keys, etc. as we needed. Most of our utilities are still in [REDACTED]'s name, as utilities are not usually join in Texas, but I do pay for our Amazon subscription and have some receipts from when we have both ordered things from Amazon.
29. Because of my business, and the bankruptcy in 2012, my corporate attorney suggested that we keep our checking and savings accounts separate and that we file taxes as "Married filing Separately" so that [REDACTED] wasn't responsible for paying taxes on my business.
30. In November of 2014 [REDACTED] and I attended the wedding of her sister, Catarina, in Los Angeles. Catarina had a small wedding, even though it was at the same church as our wedding, which surprised me. [REDACTED] had said that we had to have a very big, lavish, wedding because it was Vietnamese tradition. But then her sister had such a small wedding and no one in the family was upset. I was very surprised because I had spent so much money on our wedding thinking that it was a requirement.
31. For Memorial Day weekend in 2015, we went to New York along with one of my business partners, [REDACTED], and his wife, [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] and I were already fighting so badly at that point about her spending. She had started abusing me and picking on me. When she insisted that we go to New York I asked [REDACTED] to come with so that we wouldn't be alone. So I made plans for us to take that trip, despite all that was going on in our marriage. The four of us went to the Empire State Building and Rockefeller Center, we ate Cuban food, and did a lot of other sightseeing and also went for a fine dining restaurant where [REDACTED] insisted that I pick up the tab for everyone so that she would look good.
32. I married [REDACTED] because I loved her and wanted us to have a life together. I'm devastated that my marriage has not worked out the way I planned. I never imagined myself in this situation.
- [REDACTED]