

**LOCAL NEWS**

# San Bernardino shooting: Documents of fiancée visa for Tashfeen Malik released

By **RICHARD K. DE ATLEY** | rdeatley@scng.com | The Press-Enterprise  
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A 2013 review of Tashfeen Malik's fiancée visa application to enter the U.S. and marry Syed Rizwan Farook revealed no "derogatory information" about her, the agency that reviewed it said Tuesday.

The visa was granted, and Malik came to the United States to marry Farook in August 2014.

About 16 months later, the couple opened fire at a San Bernardino holiday party, killing 14 and wounding 22 in the deadliest terrorist attack in the United States since 9/11. Farook and Malik, of Redlands, died a few hours later in a gunbattle with police.

A redacted copy of the K-1 visa application was released Tuesday by the House Judiciary Committee, which is investigating whether the visa was properly reviewed and granted.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services spokesman Joseph R. Holstead said Tuesday that Malik "was subjected to numerous background checks at all stages ... and those background checks did not reveal any derogatory information" about her.

The woman's file "contained sufficient evidence to establish that she intended to marry Syed Farook," Holstead said. "This and other evidence provided was legally sufficient to establish that Malik was eligible for a fiancé(e) petition and issuance of a visa to travel to the United States," he said in a statement.

The immigration services office is under the umbrella of the Department of Homeland Security.



"While we continue to sort out the facts surrounding Malik's entry into the U.S., I believe we need to enhance our security vetting processes," Rep. Ken Calvert, R-Corona, said Tuesday.

### **APPLICATION DETAILS**

In Farook's application, he responded to a question about how the two met.

"We met through a matrimonial website. We got engaged on 10/03/13 in Mecca (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) when I went for Hajj," Farook wrote.

The Hajj is a pilgrimage to Mecca that all Muslims try to make at least once in their lifetime.

He said the two had exchanged emails after meeting online.

The couple did not meet through a marriage broker, wrote Farook, who also checked "no" boxes asking whether he had committed any crimes, including murder.

The application shows that Farook, a U.S. citizen born in Chicago, was joined by his mother and father for the meeting with Malik and her family.

Saudi officials confirmed both Farook and Malik were in the country in October 2013.

"We decided to have both of our families meet on Thursday, October 3rd, 2013 at the house of my fiancée's relative who lives not too far from the Ajyad Hotel in Mecca ... it is on this day that we got engaged," Farook wrote in January 2014 in a statement attached to the application.

"My fiance and I intend to marry within the first month of her arriving in the US," he wrote. "Thank you."

Malik arrived in the United States in July 2014 and the couple married in August according to the marriage license in Riverside County records.

Malik's subsequent application for adjustment of her visa status after the marriage included family photos of the couple together.

Malik's birthplace is listed as Dera Ghazi Khan. Her mailing address at the time of the application was in Multan. Both towns are in the province of Punjab, Pakistan.

The application says Malik was at the Multan residence from November 2009 to June 2013, and again starting in October 2013. In between, she listed an address in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where Farook said her parents lived.

### **TIGHTER REVIEWS NEEDED?**

Calvert, the Inland area's senior congressional delegation member, said immigration officials "need to review social media activity of individuals wanting to come to our country and look at how we can use polygraphs where appropriate."

Calvert recently introduced the SAFER Act for Syrian and Iraqi refugees, which calls for such reviews.



Checking social media comments by visa applicants became news earlier this month when The New York Times reported that Malik had made pro-jihad comments on social media that were missed by federal authorities reviewing her visa application.

FBI Director James B. Comey subsequently called that report “garbled” and said Malik’s comments were not on social media, but in private messages that could not be discovered on the open Internet. The Times has since retracted the story. *Staff writer Jeff Horseman contributed to this report.*

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### Richard K. De Atley | Reporter

Richard K. De Atley has been a journalist since 1975, for City News Service in Los Angeles, The Associated Press in Los Angeles and New York, and The Press-Enterprise in Riverside. He has been the entertainment editor, a features writer, a business writer and is now a courts and breaking news reporter. De Atley is a Cal State Long Beach graduate with a double major in journalism and political science.

[rdeatley@scng.com](mailto:rdeatley@scng.com)

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