E-VERIFY, a Ruby Red Alert?

Proactive Business Practices Due to Changes in Worksite Enforcement

Worksite Investigations

Testimony of Marcy M. Forman, Director, Office of Investigations, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, before the House Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Homeland Security "Priorities Enforcing Immigration Law"

Release Date: April 2. 2009

Ra Worksite Enforcement

(R Opportunities for employment remain a primary motivation for aliens seeking illegal entry into the United States. As noted recently by Secretary Napolitano, ICE's worksite enforcement program targets unscrupulous employers who prey upon these aliens by subjecting them to poor or unsafe working conditions or paying them sub-standard wages. ICE's multi-faceted worksite enforcement strategy targets employers, whose business model is based upon exploiting an unauthorized workforce, and employers who place our national security at risk by employing unauthorized workers in the sensitive industries in our of Nation's critical infrastructure.

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Employers hire undocumented workers for reasons such as: obtaining a financial advantage over their competitors by paying lower wages, offering few if any benefits, failing to comply with tax laws, and avoiding health and safety related complaints. ICE focuses on the most egregious violators, namely employers who engage in human smuggling, identity theft, and social security fraud. ICE also focuses on employers who use undocumented workers at our Nation's critical infrastructure sites, including airports.

In crafting our worksite enforcement strategy, ICE has restructured the worksite administrative fine process to build a more vigorous program. ICE has established and distributed to all field offices guidance about the issuance of administrative fines and standardized criteria for the imposition of such fines. We expect that the increased use of the administrative fines process will result in meaningful penalties for those who engage in the employment of unauthorized workers.

Worksite Investigations THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

AUGUST 18, 2009

U.S. Intensifies Audits of Employers

MIRIAM JORDAN

LOS ANGELES -- A senior U.S. immigration official said Monday that his agency will intensify a crackdown on employers of workers in the country illegally as part of the Obama administration's new immigration strategy.

John Morton, the new chief of U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement, a unit of the Department of Homeland Security, said that the agency is set to increase the number of companies it will audit and systematically impose fines on violators. Violations could also lead to criminal charges, he said.

On July 1, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano announced an audit of employers to verify whether their employees were eligible to work. Mr. Morton said that 654 companies are currently being audited and that many more employers will be notified soon that they also will be under scrutiny by the government.

E-Verify Required of Government Contractors

- President Bush amended an Executive Order to require E-Verify participation by federal contractors—the Obama Administration agreed.
- Not all contracts are covered by the proposed regulation.
- When applicable, the regulation applies to existing employees as well as new hires working on contract fulfillment.
- If your district competes for federal contracts, you really need to:
 - Determine whether the contracts will likely be covered by regulation.
 - Develop a plan for assessing and remediating existing Form I-9 liability prior to enrolling in the E-Verify program. Region III NAFSA Conference * October 26-29, 2009



Federal Appropriation Requirements

- As of September 8, 2009, the Federal Appropriation Regulations will require that participating vendors (and flow-down subcontractors) initiate E-Verify for active and new employees.
- Accordingly, districts who contract with the federal government for goods or services (including construction)—with certain exceptions for institutions of higher learning—will likely see existing contracts modified to require E-Verify review of
 - (i) all persons hired during the contract term; and
 - (ii) all persons assigned by the contractor to perform work on the federal contract.

Some employers assume that E-Verify only relates to foreign nationals because it is administered by US Customs and Immigration Services. That is not the case--an E-Verify requirement potentially touches upon every employee in the country and is not limited to foreign nationals working in the United States.

So, why be concerned:

 USCIS is data mining E-Verify;





U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement



Historical E-Verify compliance failures (including some related to historical Forms I-9s of existing employees) may be identified during the data mining; and,

The monitoring will result in referrals to Immigration and Customs Enforcement for follow-up, inspection.
Region III NAFSA Conference *October 26-29, 2009

Compliance Requires Vigilance: How Does ICE Initiate an Investigation?

ICE acts on "leads" provided by private individuals, including disgruntled employees, competitors, or other government agencies.

ICE targets specific industries, such as those more likely to employ unauthorized workers and those working near critical infrastructures, such as ports.

Trend toward Task Groups

Priorities: promote national security, protect critical infrastructure, enforce fair labor standards



What are some Investigation Techniques?

Identity Theft Investigations

Public Records

No Match Letters State Workforce Agency

E-Verify

Potential for misuse

Subpoenas

Grand Jury subpoenas Form I-9 Audit—SSA and other Agency discrepancies **Obstruction of Justice**

Search Warrant

Material witnesses/benefits/coordination - Yamato raid Region III NAFSA Conference * October 26-29, 2009 Imaging computers



Recognizing the Government's Litigation Strategies

Social Security No Match letter – sent to company by SSA showing absence or mismatch of SSA record for a number reported by employer on W2.
The Social Security Number Verification System – unauthorized use
Department of Justice position – protected by 6103 because the record is generated from information company puts on W-2
Therefore, the backdoor work around: Plea agreements – 6103 disclosure language:

Disclosure of No Match Letter Information

14. Pursuant to Title 26, United States Code, Section 6103(c), SHIPLEY DO-NUTS hereby authorizes agents of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to disclose for any purpose Educational Correspondence Letters sent by the Social Security Administration to the company or any related entities (including L&S Management) to the extent the IRS deems that information to be protected by Section 6103 as "return information."

Kahlon et al. Indictment (Action Rags USA)

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS HOUSTON DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	§
v.	§ & CRIMINAL NO. 08-496
MUBARIK KAHLON aka "Baco",	§ §
CIRILA BARRON aka "Cici",	\$ \$ \$
and	§
VALERIE RODRIGUEZ,	§
Defendants.	§
<u>INDI</u> THE GRAND JURY CHARGES TH	<u>CTMENT</u> AT:
	I <u>NT ONE</u> nspiracy)
A. <u>INTRODUCTION</u> .	
At all times material hereto:	

- <u>The Company</u>.
- a. Action Rags, USA ("Action Rags") is an export company based in Houston, Texas. Action Rags is a grader and exporter of used clothing, specializing in selling used clothes to worldwide markets including Africa, South America, India and Pakistan.
 - b. Action Rags employs approximately 300 workers and operates at

a warehouse located at 1225 Port Houston Street in Houston, Texas.

c. During the course of an Immigrations Customs Enforcement (ICE) investigation into Action Rags, ICE confidential informants reported worker complaints about the working conditions at the company including inadequate water supply and ventilation.

2. Company Owner and Managers.

a. Defendant MUBARIK KAHLON, also known as "Baco," is the owner of Action Rags.

b. Defendant **CIRILA BARRON**, also known as "Cici," was a manager and supervisor at the Action Rags's warehouse.

c. Defendant VALERIE RODRIGUEZ held herself out as the office manager and a stamp used in connection with the review of Employment Eligibility Verification Forms and which was found by ICE agents at Action Rags's Houston warehouse indicated that VALERIE RODRIGUEZ was affiliated with the human resources department at Action Rags.

d. Mayra Herrera-Gutierrez was a manager of the Action Rags's warehouse.

3. Employee Immigration Forms.

a. Section 274A of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended



title 1 Organization and Functions title 2 Appeals title 3 EOUSA

United States

title 4 Civil title 5 ENRD title 6 Tax

US Attorneys > USAM > Title 9 > USAM Chapter 9-28.000 prev | next | Criminal Resource Manual

9 - 28.000

- 1. Nature and seriousness of the offense
- 2. Company's history and similar conduct
- 3. Company's timely and voluntary disclosure
- 4. Existence and effectiveness of pre-existing compliance program
- 5. Company's remedial actions
- 6. Collateral consequences
- 7. Adequacy of prosecution of individuals
- 8. Adequacy of civil or regulatory remedies

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Immigration	Appoint compliance officer	
Work-Site	Terminate responsible employees	
Enforcement ⁵¹	 Become a member of the IMAGE program (submit to Form I-9 audit by 	v ICE verify SSNs of workers)
	 Use Basic Pilot Verification System 	y roll, verify borvs of workers)
	 Establish ICE internal training program (to be updated semi-annually) 	conducted by knowledgeable individuals t
	· Establish ICE internationing program (to be updated semi-annually)	
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E-Verify is now required for Federal Contractors!

E-Verify is used to confirm that all current employees working on federal contracts and all new hires-*regardless of whether they are working on federal contracts or not-* are authorized to legally work in the United States.

What Government contracts are exempt from EVerify?

- with less that the simplified acquisition threshold of \$100,000.00
- where all work is performed outside the United States
- for a period of performance less than 120 days
- Subcontracts (even if they flow from the prime acquisition contract) that only provide supplies, rather that construction or services
- Commercially available Off-The-Shelf (COTS) items, and related services
- Subcontracts of less that \$3,000.00

What about Colleges and Universities grants and cooperative agreements? Are those agreements covered under "contracts" that are subject to the E-Verify requirement?

- No, the regulations defines the term 'contract' and the term does not include grants or cooperative agreements.
- An executive agency shall use a **grant** agreement as the legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the United States Government and a State, a local government, or other recipient when--
- (1) the principal purpose of the relationship is to transfer a thing of value to the State or local government or other recipient to carry put a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States instead of acquiring (by purchase, lease, or barter) property or services for direct benefit or use of the united States Government; and
- (2) Substantial involvement is not expected between the executive agency and the State, local government, or other recipient when carrying out the activity contemplated in the agreement. 31 U.S.C. § 6304
- An executive agency shall use a cooperative agreement as the legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the United States Government and a State, a local government, or other recipient when-- . . . 31 U.S.C. § 6305

So if it doesn't apply to grants and cooperative agreement, why should the University be concerned with E-Verify?

In my opinion, because the trend is that E-Verify will eventually become part of the employment practices of governmental institutions. If I am granted a government contract, when do I have to enroll in E-V erify?

Within 30 Days of Contract Award Date: Enroll in E-Verify

Note: Contractors may enroll before the contract award date as well, and should probably do so in order to avoid last minute pressure to meet initial deadlines.

OK, so how do I enroll in E-Verify?

- Go to the E-Verify website at <u>https://www.vis-dhs.com/EmployerRegistration</u>.
- Register your company as a federal contractor.
- Select the federal contractor category that best describes your institution, and what groups of current employees you plan to verify (i.e. current employees assigned to the federal contract or your entire workforce). <u>Select the option to</u> <u>verify only current employees assigned to the federal contract.</u>
- Receive an email from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) activating your account and providing you with login instructions, user ID, and password.
- Access E-Verify, once enrolled, through one of 3 methods:
- 1) Employer—performs verification queries for your own employees
- 2) Corporate Administrator—oversight of multiple hiring sites
- 3) Designated Agent—performs verification queries for a client company
- Complete online tutorial before performing queries.
- Access User Manual.
- Post notice of E-Verify participation and an Anti-Discrimination Notice in a visible area for prospective employees (provided by E-Verify).

Within 90 Days of Initial Enrollment

■ Initiate verification queries for employees already on-staff.

Begin verification for new employees.

After 90 Day Period, Within 3 Days of Start Date of a New Hire

Initiation can begin before the start date if the employee has accepted the job and filled out an I-9.

Important: E-Verify can not be utilized as a tool in any pre-screening process for employment. For example, you can not submit the employee's name in E-Verify in order to see if you will receive a confirmation, and subsequently offer the job. <u>The employee must have already accepted the job</u> <u>before using E-Verify.</u>

Initiate verification of new hire.

Performing an E-Verify Query: Basics

- Log-in to E-Verify.
- Submit information provided on the Employee's Form I-9.
- If E-Verify authorizes employment:
 Record a verification number on the I-9. (That's it, pretty simple!)

If E-Verify shows an information mismatch with the SSA or DHS*:

- Prints the non-confirmation notice.
- Review the notice with the employee.
- Refer employee to the proper agency, allowing the employee 8 Federal Government work days to rectify the problem with that agency.
- Employee <u>continues to work</u> while the case is in process of resolution.
- *If E-Verify notes that DHS verification is in process, the usual response is within 24 hours (instead of immediately) with either an authorization or a tentative non-confirmation.

If employee is able to reach resolution:

Employee informs employer upon resolution.

Employer checks/receives a response through the E-Verify system.

Resolve the case in E-Verify.

What if employee decides not to resolve the situation, or is unable to provide evidence of resolution within 8 Federal Government work. days?

Employer may terminate the employee.

Resolve the case in E-Verify.

Who do I contact if I have a problem?

E-Verify Website: <u>www.dhs.gov/E-Verify</u>

E-Verify Customer Support: 1-888-464-4218

E-Verify and the Campus: Overview

- All new hires are e-Verified at OU
- 90% USC hires are immediately approved through e-Verify
- 30% international hires are immediately approved through e-Verify
- 70% international hires are returned as tentative non-confirmations (2008 – 80%)
- "Profiling" does not seem to be a culprit in FN tentative non-confirmations attribute greater number of nonconfirmations due to document/visa issues
- Only one final non-confirmation at OU since e-Verify launched



E-Verify and the Campus: Front-end Process

- OU Payroll Services desk executes I-9
- E-Verify and international payroll specialist help with questions
- All new hires are e-Verified with the exception of transfers with no BIS

OU requires SSN within 90 days of hire

- New hires can be e-Verified with SSN receipt.
- New hire must submit SSN receipt to Payroll as proof of SSN application
- State of Oklahoma assigns temporary tracking number to all new FN hires – temporary tracking number functions as SSN until SSN is issued



E-Verify and the Campus: e-Verify Process

- Lag time between e-Verify and I-9 execution due to SSN application period
- International hires are not held to the 3-day rule for I-9 execution due to the SSN
- Payroll emails international hires after three weeks regarding the SSN card
- 2/10 day rules (POE and SEVIS registration)
- Tentative non-confirmations quickly resolved
- Website generates alert list of tentative non-confirmations for campus
 - USCs can receive tentativenoncomfirmations for name mismatches
 - International hires most common issue is name mismatch
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E-Verify Issues

- Non-confirmations with no student follow-up
- Student must personally call DHS (they do not like this!)
- Responses cannot be "coached"
- DHS has high data integrity expectations – exact matches on name on passport, visa and OU new hire paperwork
- 30+ days prior to new program start date will result in a tentative nonconfirmation
- Slow SSA response rate
- Very quick DHS response rate



General Notes on E-Verify

- OU added one FTE to work with e-Verify after 2007 launch
- Full-time responsibilities to comply with e-Verify in August
- Increased responsibilities to comply with e-Verify in January
- All new hire paperwork has been affected – all new employees must be e-Verified
- E-Verify very user friendly
- Photo match database (LPR cards)
- A few e-Verify anecdotes from the field



Best Practices for Employers in the I-9 process

Don't get caught between a rock and a hard place.

First the Rock: Avoid Unlawful Discrimination in the gathering and use of information in the I-9 Process.

What is Unlawful Discrimination?

Generally the Act has defined four basic areas of unlawful conduct:

- (1) citizenship or immigration status discrimination;
- (2) national origin discrimination;
- (3) unfair documentary practices during the Form I-9 process (document abuse); and
 (4) retaliation.

Also, don't forget about the types of discrimination prohibited by Title VII.

Title VII prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of national origin, race, color, religion, and sex. (Applies to Employers that employ 15 or more employees for 20 or more weeks in the preceding or current calendar year.)

What is the purpose of the I-9 Form?

- The purpose of the I-9 is both to ensure that employees possess proper authorization to work in the United States and that hiring practices do not unlawfully discriminate based on immigration status.
- Every employee hired after 11/6/1986 must complete the I-9 at the time of hire, regardless of immigration status.
- Failure to comply carries the possibility of both civil and criminal penalties.

Form I-9 (Rev. 08/07/09)

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	LIST 4. Documents that Astablish Both Identity and Employment Authorization U	ĸ	LIST D Doctments (bat Esteblish Identity A	ND	LIST C Bocuments that Extabilish Employment Authorization
	U.S. Passport or U.S. Passport Card Pormenent Rasident Card on Alfan Registration Real pt Card (Furm 1-551)	1.	Drivers located on ID early issued by a State or orthying roosession of the United States provided it contains a photograph or information such as name, date of birth, guidet, beight eye order, and address	 	Social Security Account Mamber and other than one that specifies on the fixe that the issuence of the card access not authorize employment in the United States Cortification of Birth Ahmad
3,	Poreign passport that rearises a temporary 5-52 Latang or temporary 5-53 prioted nomice on a muchine reacable inputgrant vise	2.	ID oard issued by foderal, store or local government agencies of antifics, provided it contains a pritograph or reformation auth as name, date with bloth, gender, holgist, systeolor, and inderess		isseed by the Department of State (Dorm PS-545) Certafication of Report of Dinth Isseed by the Department of State
4	Employment A Electration Document that comments a photograph (Form	3.	School ID conf with a photograph		(barm DS 1350)
	:-766)	4.	Voler's registration cont	4	Original or certified copy of birth certificate issued by a State,
5.	fit the case of a noniconfigrent alien authorized in work for a specific		U.S. Military bard or draft record	-	energy, manipleal actionity, or territory of the United States bearing an official scal
	employer incident to status, a foreign payopen with Form 1-94 or Form 1-94A bearing the same name as the		Military dependent's ID eard U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Matiner	; 	
	persent uni centaining an endersement of the alien's nonimmigrant status, as long as the		Card	. 5 .	Native American tribal document
	period of enforcement ins not yet expired and the proposed employment is not in conflict with		Notive American fribai documen: Driver's license issued by a Canadian gevenument adiformly	6	U.S. Citizar (D Card (Futra 7-197)
	any rearrichtors or Sm;tablors Identified on the form		For persons under age 18 who are mable to present a document listed abuve:	7.	Identification Certi for Lise of Resident Citizen in the United States (Perm 1-175)
fi.	Passoort from the Preferated States of Micronesia (FSM) or the Republic of the Microhall Islands (RMD) with	10	. Solated record or report card	8.	Isingloyment authorization
	Form 1-94 or Norm 1-94A Indicating conformigrant admission surder the Compact of Pres Association	13	Clusic, ductor, or heststal record	-	document issued by the Department of Romeland Security
Ba	Between the United States and the FSM or RMI	12	. Day-care or massery school record		

Checklist for Completing Form I-9

For New Hires: Within Day One of Starting Work

- Check to assure use of a current Form I-9.
- Employee completes and signs Section 1.
- Employee provides proper documentation of their choice (among the options provided on the form.)
- Record document details in Section 2.
- If term of employment is to be *less than three days*, complete Sections 2 & 3.

The employee is not obliged to provide his/her Social Security number in Section 1 of the Form I-9, unless he or she is employed by an employer who participates in E-Verify

Within Three Business Days of Employee Start Date

- Original documents must always be submitted by the employee. If they are authorized to work, but are unable to submit the required documents within three business days, they must present a receipt for application of the document(s) within the three days, and the actual document within 90 days.
- Examine original evidence of identity and employment eligibility (not a photocopy) for Section 2.
- Photocopy original evidence of identity and employment eligibility and staples to the back of the I-9.
- Calendar for updating any future expiration dates on any documents.

Sign and date the certification for Section 2. Region III NAFSA Conference * October 26-29, 2009

Updating/Re-verification of Expiring Documents (Section 3)

Section 3 applies only to employees who are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents, and requires the employer to update and re-verify the employment authorization of an employee whose previously valid authorization has expired.

- Request and secure from employee proper new documentation (among the options provided on the form.)
- Check name on document(s) and record any changes in Section 3.
- Examine new original evidence of identity and employment eligibility and record document details in Section 3.
- If within 3 years of original hire, and employee is still eligible on same basis, note date of new eligibility in Section 3.
- Note any additional upcoming expiration dates for future updating.

What should you do with I-9's For All Employees?

- The I-9 must be available for inspection by authorized U.S. Government officials (e.g., Department of Homeland Security, Department of Labor, Office of Special Counsel).
- File the form, along with the attached copies of the original evidence of identity and employment eligibility, in a file dedicated to I-9 documentation. *The I-9 should be kept separate from the employee's personnel file.* <u>Do not use the documents provided by employee for any other purpose.</u>

How long do I have to retain the Form I-9?

If Employee term is less than 2 years:

Retain I-9 for 3 years from date of hire.

If Employee term is more than 2 years:

Retain I-9 for 1 year after termination

What if didn't complete all of my I-9's correctly?

- If the employer can show that he or she has in good faith complied with the Form I-9 requirements, then the employer has established a "good faith" defense with respect to a charge of knowingly hiring an unauthorized alien, unless the government can show that the employer had actual knowledge of the unauthorized status of the employee.
- A good faith attempt to comply with the paperwork requirements of Section 274A(b) of the Act may be adequate notwithstanding a technical or procedural failure to comply, unless the employer has failed to correct the violation within 10 days <u>after notice from DHS.</u>

What are the Employers' criminal penalties for allowing unauthorized alien employees to work?

Persons or entities who are convicted of having engaged in a pattern or practice of knowingly hiring unauthorized aliens continuing to employ aliens knowing that they are or have become unauthorized to work in the United States, may face fines of up to \$3,000 per employee and/or six months imprisonment.

Best Wishes from,

Monica Sharp Director, International Student Services University of Oklahoma phone 405-325-3337 fax 405-325-0197 Visit OU ISS on the web! <u>http://www.ou.edu/iss/</u>

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