USCIS Update

Sept. 1, 2009

Federal Contractors Required to Use E-Verify Beginning Sept. 8, 2009

WASHINGTON—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is reminding federal contractors and subcontractors that effective Sept. 8, 2009, they will be required to use the E-Verify system to verify their employees' eligibility to work in the United States. In July, Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano strengthened employment eligibility verification by announcing the Administration's support for the regulation that will award federal contracts only to employers who use E-Verify to check employee work authorization.

E-Verify, which compares information from the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9) against federal government databases to verify workers' employment eligibility, is a free web-based system operated by DHS in partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA). The system facilitates compliance with federal immigration laws and helps to deter unauthorized individuals from attempting to work and also helps employers avoid employing unauthorized aliens.

The E-Verify federal contractor rule extends use of the E-Verify system to covered federal contractors and subcontractors, including those who receive American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. Applicable federal contracts awarded and solicitations issued after Sept. 8 will include a clause committing government contractors to use E-Verify.

Companies awarded a contract with the E-Verify clause after Sept. 8 will be required to enroll in E-Verify within 30 days of the contract award date. E-Verify must be used to confirm that all new hires, whether employed on a federal contract or not, and existing employees directly working on these contracts are legally authorized to work in the United States.

More than 145,000 participating employers at nearly 550,000 worksites nationwide currently use E-Verify to electronically verify their workers' employment eligibility. Since Oct. 1, 2008, more than 7.6 million employment verification queries have been run through the system and approximately 97 percent of all queries are now automatically confirmed as work-authorized within 24 hours or less.

More information on the program is available on the E-Verify Web site at www.dhs.gov/e-verify. E-Verify customer support is also available by calling toll free (888) 464-4218.

– USCIS –