



ICE ANNOUNCES 1,000 NEW WORKPLACE AUDITS

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced the issuance of Notices of Inspection (NOIs) to 1,000 employers across the U.S. whose businesses are connected to public safety and national security on November 19, 2009. The NOIs alert business owners that ICE will audit their hiring records to determine compliance with employment eligibility verification laws. Specifically, the audits will involve a comprehensive review of Form I-9s (Employment Eligibility Verification Form). All employers are required by law to complete and retain a Form I-9 for each employee. The purpose of Form I-9 is to document that each employee is authorized to work in the U.S. based on a verification that the person's identity and employment authorization documentation reasonably appears to be genuine and relates to the employee.

The audits by ICE may result in civil penalties and criminal prosecution of employers who knowingly violate the law. Since the new ICE enforcement strategy was announced in April, ICE has initiated almost 1,900 cases, conducted over 1,000 Form I-9 inspections and issued over 140 Notices of Intent to Fine with maximum possible fines of nearly \$16 million. Of the 654 businesses that received Notices of Inspection in the July surge, previously reported in our Immigration Bulletin, 61 received Notices of Intent to Fine with maximum possible fines of over \$2.3 million, 267 are being evaluated for Notice of Intent to Fine, and 326 were found to be in compliance or were served with a Warning Notice in expectation of future compliance. ICE evaluated one out of every six documents used in the verification process to be suspect.

According to ICE Assistant Secretary John Morton, “[w]e are increasing criminal and civil enforcement of immigration-related employment laws and imposing smart, tough employer sanctions to even the playing field for employers who play by the rules.” ICE has identified Form I-9 audits as the most important administrative tool in building criminal cases and bringing employers into compliance with the law.

For more information, please click on the following link:

[ICE News Release](#)

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