



Office of Communications

**U.S. Citizenship
and Immigration
Services**

Press Release

February 12, 2008

E-VERIFY PROGRAM SURPASSES 52,000 EMPLOYERS

Employment Eligibility Verification Program Growing by 1,000 Employers Each Week

WASHINGTON—U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced today that more than 52,000 employers have voluntarily signed up to participate in E-Verify, the nation's employment authorization status verification program. The program has been growing by approximately 1,000 new employers each week since last October.

"We began with a small number of pilot employers in five states testing the viability of such a program," said USCIS Director Emilio Gonzalez. "Today, more than 52,000 employers across the nation are participating in E-Verify. This program is proving to be a key component in promoting the integrity of the employment verification process of our workforce. E-Verify is a valuable tool, and we congratulate the thousands of employers who are making a positive impact on our nation's security."

[E-Verify](#) is a free, easy to use Web-based system that allows participating employers to electronically verify the employment eligibility of newly-hired employees. E-Verify evolved from the Basic Pilot/Employment Eligibility Verification Program which was originally developed in 1997 and was made available to employers as a Web-based program in 2004. USCIS operates the program in partnership with the Social Security Administration.

As part of President Bush's fiscal year 2009 budget, \$100 million was requested to further support the expanded usage of E-Verify and to extend USCIS program operations outside of Washington, D.C. USCIS is currently recruiting new personnel for the first regional verification center in Buffalo, N.Y.

Since the program's inception, USCIS has launched major enhancements to improve E-Verify. The agency unveiled a new photo screening tool in September that allows employers to compare photos on a new hire's employment authorization document or permanent resident card against nearly 15 million images stored in DHS immigration databases. USCIS has also improved contact services for customers to obtain program information and assistance through its National Customer Service Center.

Participation in E-Verify is voluntary. However, a number of states require certain employers to participate in and comply with a federal work authorization verification program. Arizona is a prominent example of such a state with more than 18,000 employers currently participating in E-Verify compared to just 325 one year ago.

Details on the program are available on the E-Verify Web site at www.uscis.gov/e-verify. A fact sheet on the program follows this release.

– USCIS –



Fact Sheet

February 12, 2008

E-VERIFY

Strengthening the Employment Eligibility Document Review Process for the Nation's Employers

- E-Verify (formerly known as the Basic Pilot/Employment Eligibility Verification Program) is an Internet-based system operated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA) that allows participating employers to electronically verify the employment eligibility of their newly hired employees. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) administers the program.
- E-Verify is free and voluntary and is the best means available for determining employment eligibility of new hires and the validity of their Social Security Numbers. The program provides participating employers an automated Internet-based resource to verify the employment eligibility of newly hired employees. Employment eligibility verification queries authorization checks on all newly hired employees, including U.S. citizens and non-U.S. citizens, can be run against SSA and DHS databases. Through this process, E-Verify assists employers in maintaining a legal workforce and protects jobs for authorized U.S. workers.
- USCIS began testing a photo screening tool enhancement to EEV and formally launched it on Sept. 17, 2007. The tool allows a participating employer to check the photos on Employment Authorization Documents (EAD) or Permanent Resident Cards (green card) against images stored in USCIS databases. The goal of the photo tool is to help employers determine whether the document presented reasonably relates to the individual and contains a valid photo. The former program did not include this identity fraud component.
- More than 52,000 employers are currently using the E-Verify program to verify that their new hires are authorized to work in the United States. There is no charge to participate. The President's FY2009 budget request includes \$100 million to expand and improve E-Verify.
- Employers can register for E-Verify on-line at www.dhs.gov/E-Verify. The site provides instructions for completing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) needed to officially register for the program.
- Once registered, employers use E-Verify by entering information captured on the Employment Eligibility Verification form (I-9). E-Verify compares employee information against more than 425 million records in the SSA database and more than 60 million records stored in the DHS database. Currently, 93 percent of an employer's queries are instantly verified as work authorized.
- *The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA)* first authorized the program. The *Basic Pilot Extension and Expansion Act of 2003* extended E-Verify until November 2008. Employers can obtain additional information about E-Verify by visiting www.dhs.gov/E-Verify.