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**JUSTICE NEWS**

**Department of Justice**

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Justice Department Reaches Settlement with South Carolina Food Service Provider to Resolve Immigration-related Unfair Employment Practices**

The Justice Department announced today that it reached an agreement with Centerplate Inc., resolving allegations that the company violated the anti-discrimination provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). Centerplate, based in Spartanburg, S.C., is one of the largest hospitality companies in the world. With over 10,000 employees nationwide, Centerplate provides food service to over 250 stadiums, convention centers and entertainment venues across the country.

The Justice Department's investigation was initiated based on a referral from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) under a memorandum of agreement between the Civil Rights Division and USCIS. The department's investigation concluded that, for at least the past three years, Centerplate engaged in a pattern or practice of treating work-eligible non-U.S. citizens differently from U.S. citizens during the INA's employment eligibility verification processes, including E-Verify, by requiring specific documents issued by the Department of Homeland Security from non-U.S. citizens, while not making similar requests of U.S. citizens.

Under the terms of the agreement, Centerplate has agreed to pay \$250,000 in civil penalties, the third highest amount paid through settlement since enactment of the INA's anti-discrimination provision in 1986. Centerplate has also agreed to fully compensate any victims who lost wages as a result of Centerplate's practices, undergo Justice Department training on the anti-discrimination provision of the INA, and be subject to monitoring of its employment eligibility verification practices for a period of three years. The case settled prior to the Justice Department filing a complaint in this matter.

"Work-eligible applicants – citizens and non-citizens alike – deserve fair and equal treatment in the eligibility verification process," said Thomas E. Perez, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "Therefore, we will continue to vigorously enforce the anti-discrimination provision of the INA."

The Office of Special Counsel for Immigration-Related Unfair Employment Practices (OSC) is responsible for enforcing the anti-discrimination provision of the INA. For more information about protections against employment discrimination under the immigration laws, call the OSC's worker hotline at 1-800-255-7688 (1-800-237-2525, TDD for hearing impaired), call the OSC's employer hotline at 1-800-255-8155 (1-800-362-2735, TDD for hearing impaired), sign up for a no-cost webinar at [www.justice.gov/about/osc/webinars.php](http://www.justice.gov/about/osc/webinars.php), email [oscrt@usdoj.gov](mailto:oscrt@usdoj.gov) or visit the website at [www.justice.gov/crt/about/osc](http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/osc).

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Civil Rights Division