DOL E-Government Initiative: H-2B Electronic Filing System
September 2012

Synopsis: As a component of the Department's E-Government initiative, the Employment and Training Administration's Office of Foreign Labor Certification (OFLC) has developed a new web-based tool that will re-engineer the processing of H-2B applications filed by U.S. employers or their authorized representatives. The release of the new H-2B Program Module will be integrated into the OFLC's existing iCERT Visa Portal System (icert.doleta.gov) which supports the filing and processing of more than 450,000 employer H-1B applications and requests for prevailing wage determinations annually.

The Department believes this new electronic filing capability will enhance the accessibility and quality of visa program services, reduce the data collection and reporting burden on small employers, facilitate more streamlined business processes, and establish a greater level of transparency in the OFLC's decision making.

Target Release Date: **October 15, 2012**

Key Design Features:

- **Online Account Management**: Employers or authorized attorneys/agents can establish and maintain a customized iCERT account, profile information, and sub-account users; manage client membership lists; prepare, submit and track H-2B applications; and *reuse* H-2B applications from previous seasons to reduce data entry time.

- **Automated Data Quality and Integrity Checks**: Strengthens data quality by providing real-time form validation (e-checks) to warn customers of mandatory or missing entries on the ETA Form 9142 that, when not completed, may result in application processing delays. Customers will receive immediate warnings during the data entry and again, in summary form, at the final pre-submission stage of the process.

- **Elimination of Paper-based Submissions**: Significantly reduces administrative time and costs by allowing customers to upload supporting documentation (e.g., recruitment report, signed and dated Appendix B.1) as part of the ETA Form 9142 submission process in either Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, or text file formats for more efficient storage and retrieval by the Chicago NPC in processing the application.

- **E-mail Customer Notifications and Correspondence**: Improves transparency of OFLC decisions by providing customers with e-mail notifications and other official correspondence (e.g., Requests for Further Information) during key points of the business process and quick access to check the status of pending applications.

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