Homeland Security

DHS Unveils Initiatives to Enhance E-Verify

Release Date: March 17, 2010

For Immediate Release
Office of the Press Secretary
Contact: 202-282-8010

Agreement with Department of Justice and Outreach Initiatives Will Strengthen E-Verify for Employers and Employees

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano today joined U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Alejandro Mayorkas to announce a trio of initiatives to strengthen the efficiency and accuracy of the E-Verify system.

These initiatives include a new agreement with the Department of Justice that will streamline the adjudication process in cases of E-Verify misuse and discrimination; an informational telephone hotline for employees to provide a more timely, effective and seamless customer experience for workers seeking E-Verify information; and new training videos focusing on E-Verify procedures and policies, employee rights and employer responsibilities in English and Spanish.

“E-Verify is a smart, simple and effective tool that helps employers across the country maintain a legal workforce,” said Secretary Napolitano. “The initiatives announced today will provide essential information to workers about their rights and ensure that E-Verify is used fairly while bolstering the Department's efforts to protect critical employment opportunities.”

“USCIS continues to partner with our federal colleagues, as well as industry and employee representatives, to build a verification program that is accurate, efficient and fair for employers and workers alike,” said Director Mayorkas. “We look forward to working with our colleagues in the Department of Justice to ensure the continued integrity and improvement of E-Verify.”

“This agreement will better enable us to protect individuals who are authorized to work in this country from national origin or citizenship-status discrimination,” said Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights Division Thomas Perez. “We will not hesitate to take action against employers who violate our nation’s civil rights laws.”

The Memorandum of Agreement signed between USCIS and the Department of Justice’s Office of Special Counsel for Unfair Immigration-Related Employment Practices establishes a streamlined process for addressing potential cases of discrimination and employer misuse of E-Verify and establishes protocol between USCIS and the Department of Justice for referring matters that fall within the agencies’ respective jurisdictions.

The two new, educational training videos, explaining E-Verify procedures and policies, employee rights and employer responsibilities in English and Spanish were created by the DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and are viewable at www.dhs.gov/e-verify and www.youtube.com/ushomelandsecurity.

Additionally, the USCIS E-Verify help line will now offer employees information about the E-Verify process, as well as assistance in completing the Form I-9 (Employment Eligibility Verification). Callers can also use the help line to file complaints about possible discrimination or employer misuse of the E-Verify program. The hotline number is (888) 897-7781 and will be active beginning April 5, 2010.

E-Verify is a free, easy-to-use Web-based system—operated in partnership by USCIS and the Social Security Administration—that allows participating employers to electronically verify the employment eligibility of newly-hired employees. More than 192,000 participating employers at more than 705,000 worksites nationwide currently use E-Verify to electronically verify their workers’ employment eligibility. Since Oct. 1, 2009, E-Verify has processed more than six million queries.

For more information, visit www.dhs.gov/e-verify.
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AILA InfoNet Doc. No. 10031771. (Posted 03/17/10)

This page was last reviewed/modified on March 17, 2010.

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