E-Verify Keeps Getting in the News – That is the Way USCIS Wants it

Article By:

David Grunblatt

United States Citizenship and Immigration Services is heavily invested in the success of the E-Verify program, which it sees as the core for all future employer compliance programs. "E-Verify is an internet-based system that compares information from an employee's Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, to data from U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Social Security Administration records to confirm employment eligibility". For the most part, it is a voluntary program, which USCIS on its website describes as being "used nationwide by more than 500,000 employers of all sizes at more than 1.4 million hiring sites with 1,400 new participating companies every week".

It is mandatory for certain federal contractors and in some states, use of the federal voluntary program is now required under state law. The program is well funded and no other program of USCIS is so well promoted with ongoing efforts to make it as user friendly as possible. On its website, www.USCIS.gov/E-Verify, you can find on an ongoing basis, a schedule of webinars on all aspects of E-Verify in English and in Spanish, including myE-Verify, a website that offers workers and job seekers free self-service features to participate in the E-Verify process. This includes Self-Check, which allows an individual to check whether his/her records are properly on file; and Self-Lock, which allows an individual to "lock" a social security number to prevent document theft.

USCIS is now rolling out myE-Verify accounts in Arizona, Idaho, Colorado, Mississippi, Virginia, and the District of Columbia, with the promise to expand it in the near future.

myE-Verify provides you with a secure account to use services related to E-Verify. As a myE-Verify account holder you can lock your social security number (SSN) to prevent anyone else from using it in E-Verify and Self-Check. You can also use Self-Check to check your employment eligibility against the same records that E-Verify checks.

Currently, Self-Check is available to anyone in the United States over the age of 16. It allows one to confirm employment eligibility.

Ten Years' Worth of Records Only

One limitation on the program announced by USCIS in conformance with overall government policy and guidelines is an announcement that only 10 years of E-Verify records will be kept on file, and,

implementation will begin effective January 1, 2015. As of that date, transaction records more than 10 years old will be deleted from the system. However, an employer can create a Historic Records Report which must be created and downloaded before December 31, 2014 to maintain records created before December 31, 2004 and will provide the option to create additional such reports year to year.

While much about U.S. immigration law is up for dispute, there may be something near to consensus that E-Verify or something closely equivalent to it will be a core element in any employer compliance program in the foreseeable future.

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