

Secretary Napolitano, ICE Assistant Secretary Morton and USCIS Director Mayorkas Announce New Campaign to Recognize Employers Committed to Maintaining a Legal Workforce



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Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Janet Napolitano today was joined by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Assistant Secretary John Morton and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Director Alejandro Mayorkas to announce the new "I E-Verify" campaign to recognize the approximately 170,000 businesses nationwide that seek to maintain legal workforces by using E-Verify—DHS' online system to verify employment eligibility of new hires.

The "I E-Verify" campaign highlights employers' commitment to working with DHS to maintain a legal workforce and reduce the use of fraudulent identity documents through enrollment in the modern and effective E-Verify system.

"E-Verify is a smart, simple and effective tool that reflects our continued commitment to working with employers to maintain a legal workforce," said Secretary Napolitano. "The 'I E-Verify' program will let consumers know which businesses are working hard to follow the law and are committed to protecting employment opportunities."

"Employment verification is not just good business, it's the law," said ICE Assistant Secretary John Morton. "The main reason people enter the United States illegally is the opportunity to work. The public can and should choose to reward companies who follow the law and employ a legal workforce."

"USCIS, in partnership with ICE, is providing tools to companies and engaging with them to help ensure the employment of a legal workforce, a key component of responsible corporate citizenship," said Director Mayorkas.

Today's announcement came at the "2009 Government and Employers: Working Together to Ensure a Legal Workforce" symposium, hosted by ICE and USCIS, where Secretary Napolitano urged businesses to enroll in E-Verify and praised the numerous employers in attendance who are already participating.

Symposium attendees currently participating in E-Verify include:

- American Council on International Personnel (ACIP)
- Cargill Meat Solutions
- Fragomen, Del Ray, Bernsen & Loewy, LLP
- General Dynamics
- H2A Complete LLC
- Hillsborough County
- Hilton Naples
- Immigration and Customs Solutions
- Jackson Lewis LLP
- Keystone Foods
- Marriott International, Inc.
- MASLabor
- North Carolina Growers Association
- Talent Tree, Inc.
- Tyson Foods
- Underwriters Laboratories, Inc.
- University of Utah
- Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

More than 150 representatives from the private sector and senior managers from ICE, USCIS, the DHS Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, and the Departments of Labor and Justice participated in the symposium—designed to enhance the dialogue between DHS and the private sector about steps businesses can take to employ a legal workforce.

In her remarks, Secretary Napolitano also underscored the message she delivered on comprehensive immigration reform last

week—outlining the urgent need for legislation that includes serious and effective immigration law enforcement; a better system for families and workers coming to the United States legally; and a firm but fair way to deal with those who are already here.

E-Verify, which compares information from the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (I-9) against federal government databases to verify workers' employment eligibility, is a free web-based system operated by DHS in partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA). Today, more than 169,700 total employers representing more than 647,500 locations nationwide have enrolled in E-Verify. Since January, more than 7.9 million queries have run through the system.

"E-Verify" will also recognize employers who are part of the ICE Mutual Agreement Between Government and Employers (IMAGE) Program—which requires E-Verify in addition to other best practice strategies designed to ensure compliance with employment and immigration laws. Under IMAGE, ICE provides employer training on proper hiring procedures, fraudulent document detection and how to use E-Verify. Member companies must enroll in E-Verify, undergo an I-9 audit, adhere to IMAGE best hiring practices and sign an official IMAGE partnership agreement with ICE.

For more information, visit www.ice.gov, www.uscis.gov or www.dhs.gov.

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