

What Employers Everywhere Need to Know About the New Form I-9

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services released a revised version of the I-9 form for general use. Every employer must complete a Form I-9 when they hire new employees. Some recent improvements to the form include a reformatted structure to minimize errors, clearer instructions and new fields. Some of the new fields include spaces for email addresses and employees' foreign passport information. With the new and improved instructions, employees and employers will be able to better understand exactly what information should be entered in each section. The new form will span two pages without the instructions and will provide a list of acceptable documentation options. The Department of Homeland Security also published a recent notice regarding the I-9 change in the Federal Register.

The new I-9 forms must be used by employers for all new hires and for any re-verification attempts made for current workers. If employers have older but completed I-9 forms on file for current employees, there is no need to file a new one. The USCIS also emphasized that employers should avoid unnecessary re-verification procedures to avoid possible penalties. If an employee does not require re-verification, employers using this practice may find themselves in violation of

Immigration and Nationality Act's discrimination provisions.

May 2013 marks the cutoff for using the older version of the Form I-9. The USCIS provided an extended period after the initial effective date of this change to allow employers using electronic methods of verification to alter their practices accordingly. To ensure they are using the correct form, employers should check the revision date of the I-9. This number can be found in the lower left corner of the page. There is also a Spanish version of the Form I-9, which is only available for use in Puerto Rico. While Spanish-speaking employers are free to use the form in the U.S. for reference, they must use the English version of the form for filing purposes. If employers fail to use the new forms or do not file the English version instead of the Spanish version, they will face penalties imposed by the USCIS.

It is important for employers everywhere to modify their verification procedures if needed. Since the Form I-9 is subject to change from time to time, employers should stay aware of any updates as they surface. To learn more about the I-9 changes or for answers to other questions, discuss concerns with an agent.



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