

E-Verify Your Employees With Help From Big Brother

E-Verify is a free service operated jointly by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Social Security Administration (SSA). The purpose of E-Verify is to allow employers to check the work status of new hires online by comparing information from an employee's I-9 form against SSA and DHS databases. Although this program is generally voluntary, recent regulations now make it mandatory for contractors and subcontractors working on federal contracts.

Starting January 15, 2009, contractors and subcontractors working on certain federal contracts must use E-Verify to check their employees' eligibility to legally work in the United States. The rule requiring this is set forth in the Federal Acquisition Regulations and requires federal contractors to:

1. Agree, through language inserted into their federal contracts, to use E-Verify to confirm the employment eligibility of all persons hired during a contract term.
2. Confirm the employment eligibility of federal contractors' current employees who perform contract services for the federal government within the United States.
3. Enroll in E-Verify within 30 days of the contract award date from the federal government.

Subcontractors performing federal subcontracts in excess of \$3,000 must also use E-Verify to check the status of their employees. Contracts that may be exempt from this rule include those that are for less than \$100,000 and those that are for commercially available off-the-shelf items.

Here's How to Get Working With E-Verify

Before you can start using E-Verify, you need to enroll your company in the program. Visit <http://www.vis-dhs.com/EmployerRegistration> to begin the following process.

1. You will be asked to provide basic contact information for your company and agree to follow the rules of the program.
2. At the end of the enrollment process, you will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that provides the terms of agreement between your company and DHS.
3. Once you have completed the enrollment process, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services will review your information and activate your account.
4. After the account is activated, you will receive an email with your login instructions, user ID, and password.

Additional information regarding the use of E-Verify can be found on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Website at <http://www.uscis.gov>.