

Significant Penalties and Fines Abound For Those Who Hire Undocumented Workers

By: Ted Ciricillo (August 01 2008)

Article Link: http://www.legalemployer.com/html/i-9_penalties1.php

Do you know that if your business is not I-9 compliant you are at risk for substantial federal penalties? Some of these fines can reach as high as \$10,000 per unauthorized worker. Being I-9 Compliant simply means that you as an employer have verified, using a process set-up by the Federal Government (Form I-9 and in some cases E-Verify) to verify that each of your employees is eligible to legally work in the United States.

Federal penalties for hiring or continuing to employ unauthorized workers range from a first offense of \$250 - \$2,000 per individual to a second offense of \$2,000 - \$5,000 per unauthorized worker. A third offense will yield you a fine anywhere from \$3,000 to \$10,000 per unauthorized worker.

Employers found not complying with existing federal I-9 Form requirements could face fines ranging from \$100 - \$1,000 per offense.

And employers who knowingly employ unauthorized workers could be faced with imprisonment of up to six months.

Some busy business owners may feel, especially in smaller mom and pop type businesses, that I-9 forms are a waist of time and an unnecessary burden. As more and more municipalities seek to enforce existing I-9 laws to curb the burden that illegal immigration is putting on their communities, I-9 Compliance becomes not only required, but essential.

Joseph Gardino, the owner of a hair salon in Arizona knows all too well. "I never filled out an I-9 form for anybody. I only have six employees. Honestly, I never heard of an I-9 form", Gardino admits. "I was audited and it turns out that one of my employees was here illegally – I never knew. The fine was not too bad, but I had some negative press that has really set me back", he added.

Business owners just need to ensure that they go through the I-9 process, have the documents on file and then forget about it. Whether they do the I-9 process themselves or hire a partner to walk them through the process - I-9 is becoming an essential part in businesses of all sizes across the country.

Ted Ciricillo is an I-9 compliance and awareness expert. Ted is available for interviews, seminars and consultations about I-9 compliance.

Ted Ciricillo is the co-Founder of Legal Employer, Inc. – a federally approved E-Verify designated agent and I-9 compliance awareness and verification service provider. Legal Employer offers a comprehensive seal program that visually demonstrates to consumers a company's commitment to exclusively employing documented workers.

www.LegalEmployer.com