

Immigration Battle Could Be Coming To Your Office

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Under increasing pressure from the American public to take steps to curb illegal immigration, and having no luck getting Congress to pass a guest worker program in Congress, the Bush Administration has decided to take action. It announced recently it would start stricter enforcement of immigration laws this fall, beginning with a batch of mismatch letters that will be sent out any day now. These letters inform you that the government is aware the Social Security number submitted by one of your employees on your tax forms does not "match up" with the name associated with that number on the official government rolls.

If you receive a mismatch letter, first check to see if a clerical error caused the mismatch. If not, you must inform the worker about the problem and have him or her complete the I-9 form all over again. The employee completes Section 1 of the form and then has three days to provide proper documentation, including a photo ID, showing that he or she is authorized to work in the country. If the employee can't complete a proper I-9 within 90 days, you cannot continue to employ him or her, or else you could be held with the constructive knowledge of employing an illegal worker.

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