

## **ICE Focuses on Mid-South for More I-9 Audits**

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Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced in March 2010 that it is focusing on the mid-south for its next round of I-9 audits. ICE has issued notices to 180 employers in Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas that they will be inspecting those employers' hiring records to determine compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA).

This announcement is the third time in less than a year ICE has announced a series of I-9 audits of employers. In the first two announcements, ICE stated it was auditing over 650 and 1,000 employers, respectively. The ICE audits of employers' I-9 forms are part of ICE's new comprehensive strategy to reduce the demand for illegal employment.

Although your company may not have been chosen yet, it is best not to wait until ICE is knocking on your door with a Notice of Inspection in hand. Be pro-active and have your immigration legal counsel conduct their own I-9 audit to identify and correct problems. This step can be helpful in preventing being assessed costly penalties and fines from ICE, when they conduct their audit.