



Tuesday, January 13, 2009

IMPLEMENTATION OF E-VERIFY DELAYED

Effective January 15, 2009, an Executive Order would have required "Federal contractors" to begin using E-Verify for new hires and to re-verify the employment eligibility of any current employees working on contracts with the Federal government. E-Verify is a web-based system that employers can use to verify the employment eligibility of new hires when completing I-9 forms.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce citing many of the same concerns that we have expressed to clients that resulted in our recommending against enrolling in E-Verify unless an employer is absolutely required to do so, was able to obtain a stay of the executive order requiring registration by "Federal contractors" until at least February 20, 2009.

We will continue to keep you

updated regarding all E-verify developments.

ESTA REQUIREMENTS NOW IMPOSED ON VISA WAIVER ENTRIES

Visitors to the U.S. from certain countries were able until now to simply board a flight and did not have to go through the screening usually conducted by American consulates overseas.

Effective immediately however, those wanting to enter without a visa under the visa waiver program must apply for and receive an approval from the government under ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorization) before traveling to the U.S.

For more information about visa waivers and ESTA please visit our website, www.ggwweb.com or visit the government's website at www.cbp.gov/esta

IT'S TIME TO START YOUR H-1B PETITIONS

If you are considering sponsoring someone for an H-1B visa, now is a good time to contact us. By initiating things now, we will have sufficient time to prepare a well-documented petition and sufficient time to resolve any complex issues. Last minute petitions might be especially problematic this year as the Labor Condition Application, an essential part of the H-1B petition, will now take longer to process.

Although we are concerned with the limited number of H-1B visas and the imposition of a lottery as we had during the last few years, we believe that due to the worsened state of the economy, there might be significantly fewer H-1B petitions filed this year and the likelihood of being picked in the lottery should therefore increase.