

NEW YORK ENFORCEMENT BEGINS ON ALIEN RULES

The New York Times

September 2, 1987, Wednesday, Late City Final Edition

Copyright 1987 The **New York** Times Company

Section: Section B; Page 2, Column 1; Metropolitan Desk

Length: 729 words

Byline: By HOWARD W. FRENCH

Body

Federal officials have **begun** enforcing the **new** immigration law in the **New York** region, saying they will investigate 18 businesses believed to have knowingly violated the law.

Investigators of the Immigration and Naturalization Service in **New York** said that the 18 employers had been briefed by the agency on the law, but that agents had "reason to believe violations were continuing."

Under the law, described as the most sweeping change in immigration regulations since 1952, businesses were given until yesterday to verify that employees hired since Nov. 7, 1986, are either American citizens or **aliens** approved for work in this country. Also under the **new** law, any **alien** who can prove continuous residence in this country since before 1982 is eligible for legal residence.

The employers are required to collect and verify immigration forms -known as I-9's - from all employees, regardless of their nationality or origin, who were hired since Nov. 7, 1986. Employers are not required to verify the status of people hired before then. #500 Briefings a Week Two months ago, acting to counter widespread confusion about corporate responsibilities and workers' rights under the **new** law, the immigration agency **began** educational visits by its agents to employers, and has since announced that early **enforcement** would be limited to companies that have been briefed on the law.

In the **New York** district, which includes **New York** City, Long Island and seven other counties in the southern part of the state, immigration officials said more than 3,000 educational visits to employers had been made. The briefings, officials said, have recently been stepped up, reaching about 500 a week.

The businesses in the **New York** region expected to be most affected by the law - including textiles, hotels, restaurants and light manufacturing -have complained of the paper work that compliance will require and expressed fear they would be the target of lawsuits filed by **aliens** who are dismissed because they fail to produce their work authorization documents.

Others predict a shortage of workers in unskilled service and manufacturing jobs that Americans typically shun, and many have asked for a postponement of **enforcement**.

Businesses Investigated Before

Dimitrious Georgakopoulos, an agency official who supervises employer investigations in the **New York** district, said the 18 employers were suspected of "knowingly violating the law" and had been notified that they would be inspected "in the next few days." If they fail the inspections, he said, they will be warned that they are risking fines.

NEW YORK ENFORCEMENT BEGINS ON ALIEN RULES

Mr. Georgakopoulos said the 18 employers, whom he declined to identify or describe, had been investigated by the immigration agency before.

Fines under the **new** law range from \$250 per employee for the first instance of "knowing" violation, to \$10,000 per employee in the case of recurring violations.

In cases where a company has failed to collect and store I-9 forms as an "oversight," the immigration agency will levy fines ranging from \$100 to \$1,000, Mr. Georgakopoulos said.

Warning Issued in Los Angeles

Nationwide, the agency is not keeping track of warnings, said a spokesman, Verne Jervis. But he said several more warnings have been issued to employers since the first one was issued in Los Angeles on Aug. 21.

He said the pace of citations should pick up, and he expects that the first fines for repeat or flagrant offenders will probably be issued this month.

The agency's director for the **New York** district, Charles C. Sava, said that during the first eight to 10 months of **enforcement**, random inspections of employers who have been briefed by the agency will be performed, along with audits of businesses prompted by written complaints of violations.

Mr. Georgakopoulos said the random inspections would **begin** this month.

Muzaffar Chishti, director of the immigration project run by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, complained that the educational efforts by the immigration agency had not been aggressive enough. "I just started hearing about these educational visits in the last two weeks," he said.

Mr. Chishti criticized the educational visits as cursory. "The I.N.S. agent will come, provide the I-9 forms, and say, 'Look, we will be back, so you should get rid of any people who are not legal,' " he said.

Graphic

Photo of Anne Fiore, Lynn Vigliotti, Mary Ann Decesare and Hal Floyd (NYT/David Bookstaver)

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: IMMIGRATION (93%); LEGISLATION (90%); IMMIGRATION LAW (90%); INVESTIGATIONS (89%); US STATE IMMIGRATION LAW (78%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); LABOR & EMPLOYMENT LAW (77%); DELAYS & POSTPONEMENTS (75%); FACTORY WORKERS (75%); SUITS & CLAIMS (73%); LITIGATION (73%); LABOR SHORTAGES (72%)

Company: IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE (US) IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (91%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (91%)

Organization: IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (91%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION

NEW YORK ENFORCEMENT BEGINS ON ALIEN RULES

SERVICE (91%); IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE (US) IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (91%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (91%)

Industry: FACTORY WORKERS (75%); RESTAURANTS (72%); HOTELS & MOTELS (50%)

Geographic: NEW YORK, NY, USA (79%); NEW YORK, USA (94%); UNITED STATES (92%)