



U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT (ICE) EXPANDING OPERATIONS

APRIL 2008

This past week has been very busy for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement division of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE conducted two multi-state raids and one operation here in the state of Georgia. The largest operation involved Pilgrim's Pride, a poultry processing company, with locations in five states. The smallest operation targeted the owners and operators of several employment agencies that placed workers in Chinese restaurants.

Our clients who own or operate small or medium-sized businesses should pay attention to the recent ICE activity. The operations indicate that ICE is very well coordinated and they have the ability to implement multi-state investigations and raids. ICE is demonstrating the capacity to investigate and enforce immigration and criminal regulations against small and medium-sized businesses. Initially, ICE focused their resources on large companies

and "big-splash" headlines. Now that they have more trained officers and better coordination across agencies, they are capable of initiating and prosecuting cases against smaller businesses. It is important to note that ICE investigations target both foreign nationals and U.S. citizens regardless of their status in the company or immigration status in the country.

The best way for our clients to protect themselves is to follow the requisite I-9 regulations and any additional state regulations that delineate an employer's responsibility for maintaining records on their employees' U.S. work authorization. If you have questions regarding the regulations or how to create and implement a compliance and audit process, then contact Elarbee Thompson's office for assistance at 404-659-6700 or visit www.elarbeethompson.com.