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Payroll Processing Can Be Dangerous
US Immigration and Customs Enforcement cracks down on “harboring” of illegal employees

Lewisville, Texas – May 3, 2007 – Are you prepared to go to jail for your employees? The U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) will show you the way if they find that you are “harboring” workers not legally eligible to work in this country. Your penance can range from six months to 10 years. A recent example of this accelerated crack-down occurred at IFCO Systems of North America, Inc. According to an informant, the company committed the following felonies:

- Hired workers without social security cards or used someone else’s card
- Told payroll employees to use eight allowances on W-4s because some workers were not going to file tax returns
- Arranged to transport illegal workers from Texas to New York
- Provided housing for illegal aliens and charged them rent
- Transported illegal workers back and forth to work

The ICE also found more than 50 percent of social security numbers listed on IFCOs payroll were false or did not match the person claiming it. The investigation resulted in seven managers being arrested and charged with felonies. In addition, 1,187 illegal aliens employed by IFCO around the country have been arrested and will most likely be deported. Another company, Rosenberg-Cunningham International, Inc., faces similar charges. Its managers have entered pleas to: harboring illegal aliens, false statements on tax returns, aiding and abetting unlawful employment of aliens and trafficking in means of identification.

It sometimes seems there aren’t enough qualified workers available for open positions. Filling these roles with illegal aliens is never the answer. The ICE can and will charge payroll employees who knowingly participate in hiring illegal aliens with a felony. For your protection, all applicants must show proper paperwork confirming their legal status. If you suspect these procedures are not being followed you must make an immediate internal report. If it is not heeded or you believe your job is in jeopardy take your complaint to your local immigration office.

Payrollonabudget.com is part of Custom Payroll Associates, Inc. (CPAI), a full service payroll processing company with more than 16 years of experience in the payroll industry. They currently serve clients in more than 42 states and territories by offering paperless payroll and other small business payroll services. Founder and President Charles J. Read is a CPA.

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