

Benefits Buzz

Benefits Buzz is brought to you each month courtesy of Wine Sergi & Co, LLC, 225 Smith Road, St. Charles, IL, partnering with Zywave. For more information, please contact us at benefits@winesergi.com or (630) 513-6600.

WINE SERGI
INSURANCE

Key Issues Facing Business Owners

DID YOU KNOW?

As of July 24, 2009, the federal minimum wage for covered non-exempt employees rose from \$6.55 to \$7.25 per hour.

To get a federal minimum wage poster, go to: www.dol.gov/esa/whd/regs/compliance/posters/flsa.htm.

E-Verify

E-Verify is an Internet-based system operated by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in partnership with the Social Security Administration (SSA) that allows participating employers to electronically verify the employment eligibility of their newly hired employees. E-Verify is free and voluntary, and is the best means available for determining employment eligibility of new hires and the validity of their Social Security numbers. Form I-9 continues to be valid beyond the current expiration date of June 30, 2009.

The effective date of the final rule requiring certain federal contractors and subcontractors to use E-Verify has been delayed until September 8, 2009. The rule will only affect federal contractors who are awarded a new contract after that date that includes the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) E-Verify clause.

Federal contractors may NOT use E-Verify to verify current employees until the rule becomes effective and they are awarded a contract that includes the FAR E-Verify clause. For more information, see www.uscis.gov.

Healthy Families Act

Employers should be aware of the Healthy Families Act of 2009 (HFA) that was introduced in the House of Representatives earlier this year. It seeks to guarantee full-time employees 56 hours of paid sick leave each year to address their own health needs and the health needs of their families. Part-time employees would receive a pro-rata amount of leave. This federal legislation would apply to employers with 15 or more employees and would guarantee them one paid hour off for each 30 hours worked. Unused sick leave could be

carried over from one year to the next. This leave would be in addition to any leave provided under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or a state's workers' compensation law. Employers would have to amend their existing leave policies to make sure that they meet the requirements of the HFA.

While this legislation has a long way to go before enactment, and may face many changes along the way, employers should keep their eye on it.