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Welcome to Screening Solutions

Screening Solutions is designed to keep you on top of all the latest employment screening news, including legal updates, industry trends and new product information.



Understanding Immigration Reform *How the New Worker Verification System Affects Employers*

With both houses of Congress and the Bush Administration wrangling over immigration law reform, many employers are worried that Draconian rules and regulations will hamper their ability to find suitable and legal employees. The Senate and the House bills propose sweeping changes to worksite enforcement, including heavy fines and criminal penalties for employers who hire illegal workers, while the Bush Administration is pushing for a worker verification system that is effective and easy for employers to use.

A federal database program created in the late 1990's could be at the heart of a solution. Created in 1997, the **Basic Pilot Program** electronically searches a combination of Social Security and Department of Homeland Security databases to verify an employee's status. Currently slated to run until 2008, the small, voluntary program is available at no cost to roughly 6,000 employers in California, Florida, Illinois, New York, Texas and Nebraska.

The Basic Pilot Program would extend to more than 8 million employers in all 50 states if current legislation passes in both houses of Congress and the president signs it into law. It would replace a cumbersome paper-based process in which employers certify on an I-9 form that they have examined the veracity of their workers' documentation and that it is in fact authentic.

Under the Basic Pilot Program, employers submit their workers' information via the phone or internet, and software checks it against Social Security Administration and immigration data. If an applicant isn't immediately cleared, government workers manually search the records to see if any information was overlooked – a process that can take several days.

While some of the operational details are being finalized, many agree that the program was riddled with errors in nearly a decade of early, small-scale tests; often it couldn't distinguish between workers who were here legally and those who were not. A Government Accountability Office report last fall was critical of an inability to catch identity fraud, for database flaws and for the possibility of employer abuse of the system.

House and Senate legislation differ over how quickly the program can be implemented and whether it would apply to all current employees or just new hires. While no additional money has officially been slated for the project, the Congressional Budget Office estimates it would cost at least \$1 billion over the next five years to expand the program nationally.

Still, many in Washington see the Basic Pilot Program as the only feasible way to check the residency status of employees. Representative James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-Wis.) is a proponent of the program, and Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff has said that a comprehensive, nationwide system is an essential tool for enforcing existing law.

New Rules to Affect Social Security Validity Checks

Unfortunately many employers don't take the time to check the validity of job applicants' social security numbers. Even for those employers that do check, sometimes situations arise in which the Social Security number which they enter appears to be invalid.



A new rule proposed by the Bush administration for immigration reform would target employers who receive notice from the Social Security Administration that an employee's Social Security data does not match the information on record. It would require companies to investigate or face potential penalties.

Of the 250 million wage reports the Social Security Administration receives each year, as many as 10% include names of employees that don't correspond to their Social Security numbers. In many instances the agency sends a letter alerting a business to the mismatch, but there is no penalty if the business fails to investigate.

Under the new rule, employers who follow up on the letters would be protected from court action. If they do not and their workers turn out to be illegal, their failure to act could be used against them. The rule would formally require employers to ensure there is no paperwork error and then contact the employee. If the discrepancy remains they would be required to terminate employment.

A second regulation would allow employers to retain records in electronic form. For firms with thousands of employees or high turnover, the cost and storage space that paper records require can be a burden.



JCAHO Compliance *Nursing Ranks to Grow, Study Shows*

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, nursing is expected to see the largest growth of any profession in the country over the next six years. With the influx of new workers, most hospitals will be required to perform criminal background screening on nursing applicants to comply with JCAHO guidelines.

Created in 1951, JCAHO, the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organization, is the only entity in most states with the authority to oversee hospital quality. In 1965 Congress passed the Social Security Amendments with a provision that hospitals accredited by JCAHO are in compliance with federal rules and therefore able to participate in Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Many states rely on this accreditation as a substitute for their own inspection programs, with only a handful of states not recognizing JCAHO accreditation. The Joint Commission certifies almost 20,000 healthcare organizations, including 80% of the nation's hospitals. It also accredits home health agencies, clinical labs, ambulatory surgical centers and hospices.

In 2004 the Joint Commission revised its standards and mandated that background checks be performed on all persons having any opportunity for patient interaction. The benefits for healthcare organizations that utilize professional criminal background screening include:

- A greater level of confidence that staff members have met the rigorous requirements set by JCAHO.
- An added source of information to assist in making informed choices among job applicants.
- Assistance in improving the quality and safety of care delivered to patients.

Corporate Screening has created background screening programs for many nursing schools and hospitals nationwide. For questions or more information on how we can assist in your JCAHO compliance, contact your CSS sales rep today.

Employee Background Checks

Resume Padding is Becoming Increasingly Difficult to Detect



As college seniors graduate and enter the work force, many learn the tricks to tweaking their resumes. Strategic wording and inflated titles often find their way onto job applications given to potential employers. Some people take doctoring resumes to a whole new level – false information can range from exaggeration about experiences to outright lies about education and the listing of fictitious degrees.

The result is often unfortunate since many of these perpetrators are eventually discovered and fired. Such was the case recently with David Edmondson, the CEO of RadioShack, as well as executives from Bausch & Lomb, Veritas Software and the U.S. Olympic Committee.

It's easier for those listing a fake education on their resumes to back up their lie through the use of online degrees, which often come from credible sounding academic institutions but are in fact fraudulent. With thousands of colleges and universities in the United States, it's increasingly difficult to detect which academic degrees are legitimate and which are not.

With all the fake degrees and lies listed on resumes it's increasingly important for HR departments to distinguish truth from falsehoods. Over the course of six months, a popular resume-writing business, ResumeDoctor.com, found that 43% of the 1,000 resumes they surveyed contained "one or more significant inaccuracies."

Experts contend that individuals who lie on their resumes often have an inclination toward other forms of deception and unethical behavior, which can often harm a business. These individuals may cripple the credibility of a company, creating problems with shareholders or other financial backers. In the wake of Enron, corporate corruption has become a main focus of critics.

With increased scrutiny, it has become essential for companies to conduct background checks verifying the credibility of both potential and existing employees. If an individual can lie to get a job, they may also lie on crucial financial statements or internal reports to executives, exposing themselves, their co-workers, and ultimately the company to unnecessary risks and negative exposure.

To determine whether your hiring practices comply with The Americans with Disabilities Act and related state statutes, call your CSS representative or visit www.CorporateScreening.com.

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PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT: *Oral Fluid Drug Testing is Simple, Fast and Cost Effective*

Oral drug testing may not be the newest form of drug testing, but with improved laboratory-based methods and results, it may become the preferred way. With emerging technologies, oral fluid drug testing can detect the NIDA-5 drug panel, which includes marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, and PCP. These drugs are often the most commonly screened by employers in workplace drug tests.

Oral fluid testing not only identifies whether or not the drug exists in a person's system, but also the recent usage. Other methods, such as urine testing, cannot detect the presence of drugs until four hours after drug use. Oral fluid tests can detect drugs that exist in the body for a time span of one-to-three days.

Oral drug testing follows a simple procedure. First, a swab is used to wipe a sample of the inner mouth tissue. Then, the oral fluid samples are screened using enzyme immunoassay technology. According to the Encyclopedia of Pharmaceutical Technology, this technology uses the enzyme as a labeled marker to monitor antigen-antibody interaction.

If the sample tests positive, then it is subjected to the latest drug confirmation technology known as gas chromatography/mass spectrometry/mass spectrometry (GC/MS/MS). This tandem "MS," as it's called, provides the most sensitive fingerprint of the drug target available.

Like other laboratory-based testing methods, oral fluid results are logged into a computer and electronically reported to the employer or Medical Review Officer.

Oral fluid drug testing is currently used in workplace, criminal justice and drug rehabilitation treatment markets. Benefits cited for this method include

- Simplified collection
- Faster results
- Cost savings
- Minimized risk of adulteration, since collection is directly observed

Talk to your Corporate Screening representative to find out if oral fluid drug testing can assist your drug-free work place program.

Survey Says...

Corporate Screening's client partners have responded positively to our annual survey, pointing out strengths and weaknesses, and helping us to define a direction for future products, services and technology. Here are your replies to some of our survey questions:

- OVERALL SERVICE satisfaction rating — **97%**
- WOULD RECOMMEND Corporate Screening to colleagues — **97%**
- CASE REPORTING PROCESS satisfaction rating — **97%**
- CSS EASE online reporting system satisfaction rating — **99%**
- CUSTOMER SERVICE satisfaction rating — **97.3%**
- PREFER EMAIL as the main communications source — **78%**

On behalf of our entire organization, THANKS for participating in our annual survey!

What On Earth Is This?

(Find Out Later This Summer!)