



Ask Fred

Are your employees allowed to be employed in the United States?

Question: I'm allowed to hire anyone I want to work for me in my contractor business, even if they aren't a U.S. citizen, right?

Answer: Yes, as an employer you may hire anyone so long as he or she may legally be employed in the United States. In order to ensure that persons who may be legally hired are in fact, those that are being hired, the Office of Homeland Security requires all employers to file an I-9 Form. The purpose of the I-9 Form is to document that each new employee, whether a U.S. Citizen or non-citizen, hired after November 6, 1986, is authorized to work in the United States. The form must be completed no later than the time of hire, which is the actual beginning of employment. Providing a social security number is voluntary, except for employees hired by employers participating in the USCIS Electronic Employment Eligibility Verification Program (E-Verify). You must keep the I-9 Form in your employee records and make it available for inspection by the U. S. Government if asked. You may order I-9 Forms by downloading them online from USCIS at www.uscis.gov/forms or you may also call a toll-free number 1/800/870-3676. If you need more information about the proper way to comply with the I-9 Form you may contact the USCIS at 1/888/464-4218.