

Nearly 700 Workers Arrested in Record Setting ICE Raid In Mississippi

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Practice Areas

Business Immigration

On August 7, 2019, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) executed multiple federal criminal search warrants at several agricultural processing plants across Mississippi as part of an ongoing HSI worksite enforcement criminal investigation, according to an ICE statement.

HSI is the federal law enforcement agency responsible for upholding the laws established by the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), which requires employers to verify the identity and employment authorization of individuals hired. As part of this raid, federal agents arrested approximately 680 employees believed to be working at the plants without proper authorization.

According to the ICE statement, agents also seized company records related to the federal criminal investigation. ICE had stated it was "determining on a case-by-case basis, based on the totality of the circumstances, which individuals will be detained and which persons may be released from custody."

By Thursday, August 8th, approximately 300 people arrested had been released. Matthew Albence, ICE's acting director, told The Associated Press that the companies involved could face charges for knowingly hiring individuals not authorized to work in the U.S. and for various forms of fraud.