

MITRATECH

Taking the Labor Out of I-9 & E-Verify Compliance

The two sides of your situation:
compliance and efficiency



Table of Contents

- 1** The State of Affairs: What you can expect from manual I-9 & E-Verify compliance
 - 1.1. It's labor-intensive
 - 1.2. It comes with hard choices
 - 1.3. The two sides of your solution

- 2** How can you reduce workload without sacrificing compliance?
 - 2.1. Employ error-proof manager self-service
 - 2.2. Make documents simple and foolproof
 - 2.3. Ensure Section 1 is easy
 - 2.4. Can you efficiently track and manage I-9 file attachments?
 - 2.5. Give every field manager their own personal project manager
 - 2.6. Ensure field managers can learn it by looking at it
 - 2.7. Monitor all compliance items from your desktop, at a glance
 - 2.8. Combine I-9 and E-Verify into a single process
 - 2.9. Set operations the way you want, then walk away
 - 2.10. Streamline operations with single sign-on
 - 2.11. Automate the full workflow end-to-end
 - 2.12. Process compliant remote hires without meeting in person
 - 2.13. Leverage batch processes
 - 2.14. Self-audit in minutes
 - 2.15. Save days of effort in the event of an ICE audit

- 3** Summary

The State of Affairs: What you can expect from manual I-9 & E-Verify compliance

It's labor-intensive

If you're an HR executive who oversees a fair volume of hiring, chances are you're frustrated by the ongoing level of resources you have to devote to pursuing I-9 compliance levels that protect your business. In order to achieve high compliance with paper I-9s, an organization has to devote 107 minutes of labor for every new employee it hires¹. This is a high price to pay. Organizations that devote this level of resources may end up with high compliance levels but suffer the consequences: their organizations drown in a sea of urgent tasks and interruptions, all of them tactical.

And for many organizations, devoting this level of resources simply is not infeasible. Yet without devoting excessive resources, HR is relatively powerless to increase I-9 compliance levels or protect the organization from potential liability. On average, each new paper I-9 creates a potential liability of \$555(1). So for every 1,000 employees your organization hires, you increase your potential I-9 fine liability by \$555,000.

In order to achieve high compliance with paper I-9s, an organization has to devote 107 minutes of labor for every new employees it hires¹.

It comes with hard choices

One thing is clear: if you manually process I-9s and E-Verify, the only way to lower your overhead is to also lower your compliance goals. With manual processing, you will never have low labor overhead and high compliance levels. The two are mutually exclusive.

With manual processing, you can choose low labor or high compliance, but not both.

The two sides of your solution

An electronic I-9 and E-Verify solution can lower your labor costs while also achieving higher compliance. However, not every solution focuses on the same goals. Solutions that focus on compliance can forget to the

importance of addressing the labor side of your equation, and might not make significant improvements to your labor overhead.

So how can you tell in advance how much an I-9 solution will reduce your labor overhead? This paper outlines the system capabilities and attributes that significantly reduce the resources required for compliant I-9 and E-Verify processing. It arms you with the information you need to choose an I-9 solution that will eliminate the vast majority of your staff's effort while providing full I-9 & E-Verify compliance.

Not every electronic I-9 solution will significantly reduce your I-9 labor overhead.

How can you reduce workload without sacrificing compliance?

1. Employ error-proof manager self-service

Keep in mind:

In a large distributed organization, HR relies on field managers to process the I-9s for new hires. But who expects field managers to be experts on the I-9's 66-page manual and all the different scenarios that may be presented? It is not feasible for an organization with hundreds of locations to deploy an I-9 specialist at each office, and what's more, each compliance task has a very short and unforgiving deadline. As a result, significant vigilance is required of the HR team to ensure the organization's I-9s are completed properly and on time.

How to solve it:

Your electronic I-9 application should be so intuitive that it guides non-specialists to successfully complete I-9s in all scenarios. Look for a solution that removes all guesswork for the hiring managers and is simple for them to use. It should present intuitive tips and prompts as they complete the I-9 so they get it right the first time. If managers make an error your solution should flag it instantly and provide simple corrective steps.



Insider tips:

- Before making a decision, walk through a demo and make sure the interface is intuitive every step of the way.
- Try making an error on each field and see what happens
- Ask yourself: is this interface so intuitive that it guides non-specialists to successfully complete any and every I-9?

2. Make documents simple and foolproof

Keep in mind:

On average, more than 55% of paper I-9 errors have to do with documents. It is not surprising, given that there are more than 25 document choices with different information collected from different places on the various documents. Look for a solution that makes documents easy and foolproof. It should make available only the documents applicable to the selected citizenship status, and only the fields applicable to the selected document.



What to look for:

Since finding the document number is challenging on many document types, look for a solution that provides an image of the selected document, shows where to find the required document information, and provides helpful tips about the document.

Insider tips:

- Walk through this functionality in the demo.
- Check that in Section 3, the system presents only the documents relevant to Section 3.
 - Make sure you are not presented with List B documents or any other documents that are not relevant to Section 3.
- Make sure to select a few documents you are not familiar with, as well as documents that are known to be especially problematic such as the permanent resident card and employment authorization card.



3. Ensure Section 1 is easy

Keep in mind:

15% of paper I-9 errors occur in Section 1, so it is worth the time to make sure the solution makes it clear and simple.

You want to ensure the electronic solution makes Section 1 easy for someone who has no knowledge of an I-9. If any fields or instructions are not clear and simple, your new employee will take extra time trying to figure them out, your field manager will take extra time answering questions, and the chance of error and re-work will increase.

Insider tips:

- Check that once a citizenship status is entered, the solution exposes only fields relevant to that citizenship status.
- As you evaluate how the system handles Section 1, make sure to select the Alien Authorized to Work citizenship status and ensure the system makes it simple and error-proof, as this one can be especially problematic.

15% of paper I-9 errors occur in Section 1



4. Can you efficiently track and manage I-9 file attachments?

Keep in mind:

There are often separate files that support an I-9, such as images of documents presented for Section 2 or 3 that must be retained according to your I-9 policy, copies of any documents that require an E-Verify photo match step, and signed TNC notices you presented to the employee.

Insider tips:

- Check that the electronic solution gives you the capabilities you need to easily upload, track and manage these document files.
- Ensure the solution supports all the file types you will need to upload, including image and .pdf files.
- Since image files can be large, check that the file size limitations are not too restrictive.
- Make sure you can add meta-data to files, such as a title and description, so they can be more easily recognized and retrieved.
- Since an I-9 can require more than one file attachment, make sure you can attach multiple files per record.
- Ensure you can see at a glance whether an I-9 has any attached files. Determine that with the right permissions you'll be able to delete files and keep your records clean.



5. Give every field manager their own personal project manager

Keep in mind:

It is inefficient for each person who processes I-9s to come up with their own manual system to organize their compliance tasks and track due dates for signatures, re-verifications and purges. It is also ineffective, leading to incomplete or missing forms and late signatures.

Gut check:

- Does the I-9 solution guide field managers on all required next actions with their own personal dashboard that shows their daily to-do's?
- Does it use strong visual indicators such as color coding for priority tracking?
- Do managers have one-click access to records with incomplete information, missing signatures or other required next actions?
- Are the dashboard completely focused and uncluttered, showing only the records and functions relevant to the field manager?



6. Ensure field managers can learn it by looking at it

Keep in mind:

Another sizeable piece of the overhead burden on HR organizations is training; that is, training field managers on manual I-9 and E-Verify processing or on an electronic system. With manual processing, HR typically spends at least an hour on I-9s and at least a half hour on E-Verify. Many electronic solutions have a learning curve too, and require field managers to become system specialists.

Even if the vendor provides classes, identify whether this will not provide the kind of overhead relief you need, as your HR managers will still be the ones who spend time coaching the field managers up the learning curve.

How to solve it:

Look for an electronic I-9 & E-Verify solution that reduces your training burden vs. manual I-9 and E-Verify processing. Once you train a field manager on the basics of the Form I-9 and the specifics of your company's I-9 process, they should be able to log in to the I-9 system and begin smoothly producing flawless I-9s with few if any questions and no frustration.



They should need very little up-front training as the I-9 solution itself should serve as their expert guide, walking them easily through any scenario as it comes, training them on the spot. The knowledge they need should be presented exactly when they need it, in a simple and digestible format.

Gut check:

- Estimate the amount of time HR spends to train each new field manager with your current process.
- Then ask the electronic I-9 vendor how long it takes a new field manager to become proficient with their product, and what the process entails.
- Training a new field manager on the electronic I-9 & E-Verify system should take significantly less time than training a new field manager on manually processing I-9s and E-Verify.
- A rule of thumb? The new I-9 system should eliminate at least 75% of HR's training burden.

The new I-9 system should eliminate at least 75% of HR's training burden.



7. Monitor all compliance items from your desktop, at a glance

If your organization manually processes I-9s and E-Verify, you know the frustration of relying on the field for compliance, with no way to track in real-time how the field is doing. You have no good way to know how many compliance tasks are open, much less how many are perilously close to being late. If you're like others in HR, you probably piece together spreadsheets, to-do lists, emails and phone calls to try to keep track of open compliance items and shepherd them to completion before they are late.

An electronic I-9 solution should give you insight into your organization's I-9 compliance risk currently open at the present moment, at a glance. The solution should provide a visual indication of your company's current vulnerability in aggregate as well as across any grouping of worksites you choose. It should allow you to drill down for more detail on any open issue. This allows you to catch potential problems while there is still time to correct them.

Make sure the I-9 solution gives you an easy way to catch potential issues while there is still time to correct them.



8. Combine I-9 and E-Verify into a single process

Keep in mind:

If you don't E-Verify today, you will likely need to in the future, so look for an I-9 solution that combines I-9 and E-Verify into a single process.

Process priorities:

To save your organization significant time while keeping your E-Verify cases on track, look for a solution that has these capabilities:

- **Submit with a single click**
 - » As each I-9 is completed the user should be presented with the ability to submit a query to E-Verify with the press of a button. You should also be able to configure the system to submit E-Verify queries automatically, saving you even more time.
 - » These capabilities eliminate redundant processes, duplicate data entry and errors. They also reduce your training burden. New field managers no longer need to be trained on how to log into the E-Verify site (which requires they retrieve and input an extremely complex password).
- **Keep the statuses of E-Verify cases in the solution**
 - » You also won't need to train them on how to submit a new query, which requires they complete and click through a minimum of four E-Verify web pages.
 - » And since your submission to E-Verify is due the same day the I-9 must be signed – within three days of the employee's start date – this also eliminates the need to separately track and manage your E-Verify submission deadline.
- **Keep the statuses of E-Verify cases in the solution**
 - » You should be able to see the status of all open E-Verify cases in the I-9 solution, on one screen, so you never have to check the E-Verify website.
 - » This eliminates the need to continually log into the E-Verify site to check on cases requiring follow-up – including cases that were not authorized immediately, Tentative Nonconfirmations (TNCs), or cases that need to be closed.

- **Get results immediately:**
 - » The electronic solution should allow you to be notified immediately of any sensitive E-Verify results such as new TNCs, TNC referral results or final results, and Final Nonconfirmations (FNCs).
 - » This gives you peace of mind that you will be alerted to E-Verify status changes as soon as they are posted, and eliminates the need to continually check for them. A report by Westat Corporation reported that up to 5% of FNCs could be avoided by informing the employee of the TNC and its required action in a timely manner². Immediate notification to any sensitive E-Verify results will ensure you avoid these inaccurate FNCs.
- **Get automatic advice:**
 - » The system should provide guidance for resolving TNCs, with detailed instructions that advise the manager of the steps to take with the employee.
 - » During completion of the I-9, if a document is specified that requires an E-Verify photo match step, the user should be prompted to retain a copy of that document, as this is required by E-Verify.
- **Get the info upfront**
 - » The system should ensure the field manager captures social security number for all records you've deemed eligible for E-Verify, which eliminates surprises and re-work later.
- **Eliminate errors**
 - » The system should prevent you from inadvertently submitting a case to E-Verify for someone who is ineligible (such as someone with a start date before your company registered with E-Verify), or for a worksite location you didn't want to participate in E-Verify.
- **Build in backups:**
 - » If the government servers are down, the system should automatically re-submit to E-Verify until the submission is completed, so you don't have to take any action.

9. Set operations the way you want, then walk away

Keep in mind:

You want to make sure the electronic I-9 system has the level of operational flexibility required to give you high resource savings.

Many solutions have a rigid pre- defined structure that requires you to change your workflows and processes to fit. This not only leads to lengthy and painful implementation cycles, but also typically means that users have to continually contact others to accomplish certain required functions, which more than doubles the time spent on the task and adds a new communication overhead.

How to solve it:

Look for a solution that comes with a consultative implementation process that builds the workflows and processes unique to your business.

The system should be smart enough to easily accommodate those less common but not unexpected scenarios your field managers will encounter. To maximize productivity for everyone involved, eliminate any scenarios that require HR to step in. Some example scenarios:

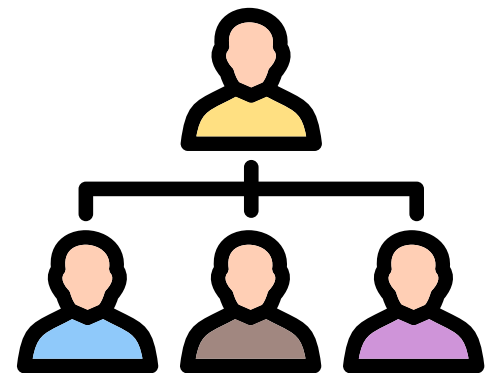
- The I-9 solution should be flexible enough to accommodate the new documentation when it is time to re-verify an employee whose citizenship status has changed since their I-9 was originally created.
- Make sure the I-9 solution gives you the flexibility to edit the data that will be submitted to E-Verify if needed. For example, U.S. Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) requires that you enter employee names correctly on the I-9, which means you must include the period if their name is something like “St. George.” But a period is one of the characters that is rejected by E-Verify. Your solution must account for these scenarios.
- Make sure the I-9 solution displays duplicate records and allows you to proceed as appropriate. For example, if a “new hire” is a former employee who is being rehired, he or she may have a social security number that is already in the I-9 system.



Gut check:

- Can you set up roles and hierarchies that map to your unique organizational structure, and configure permissions independent of those roles?
- Does the I-9 system give you the flexibility you need to align record access to the way your organization defines its roles?
- Does the platform allow you to streamline your process? For example, if your field managers are responsible for multiple locations, look for the ability to set up groupings of locations. This way when a new manager joins the company, you can attach the new manager to the grouping of worksites you've already pre-defined.
- Make sure you can selectively set permissions, defining, for example, who can submit or edit an E-Verify case, who can purge I-9s, and who can delete records.

To maximize productivity for everyone involved, eliminate any scenarios that require HR to step in.



10. Streamline operations with single sign-on

Keep in mind:

Look for a system that supports fully integrated single sign-on (SSO). This will allow staff to work seamlessly between the I-9 system and other applications, streamlining operations and saving time with fewer urls, logins and passwords to remember and type in.

For example, if field staff rely heavily on intranet, you may want to place a link on the intranet to the I-9 system. Clicking this link should use SSO to pass over the user's credentials and, if they are authorized, log them into the I-9 system automatically. Single sign-on saves significant time by eliminating a user management administrative burden.



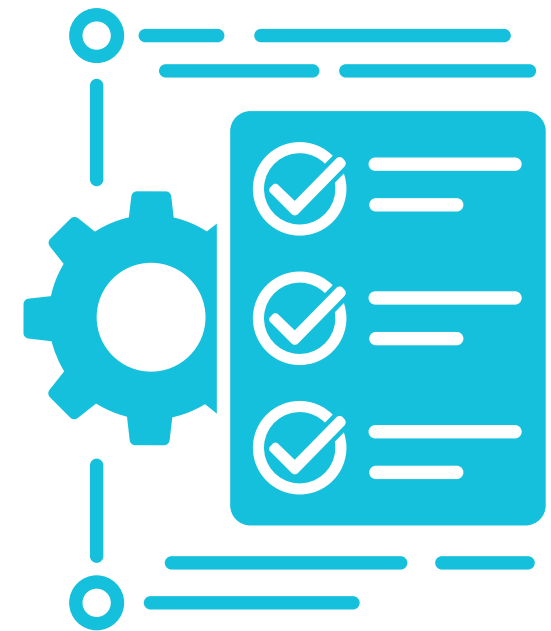
11. Automate the full workflow end-to-end

Keep in mind:

To reduce your overhead as much as possible, look for an I-9 solution that allows you to integrate with other systems to display critical information, trigger processes, and keep data synchronized.

Here are some example time-saving processes:

- A new employee is entered in your HR system: Automatically trigger an action to create a new I-9 along with an email to the new hire with instructions and a one-time login to Section 1. If you choose to allow information from your HR system to be used to pre-fill Section 1 for further time-savings, make sure the I-9 solution supports this.
- A new field manager is entered in your HR system: Automatically trigger an action to create a new user account in the I-9 system populated with relevant data, along with an email to the new manager with their login and password.
- A field manager is terminated in your HR system: Automatically trigger an action to deactivate their account in the I-9 system.



- An employee is terminated in your HR system: Automatically trigger an action to send the termination date over to the I-9 system which should use it to calculate the retention of their I-9 according to ICE rules. You should be able to run a report on all records ready to purge.
- Your field managers rely heavily on your intranet or some other application: Expose a list of their I-9 open actions in that application, using the same strong visual indicators for priority tracking, and providing the same one one-click access to records requiring action mentioned elsewhere in this paper.

To achieve high efficiencies, you also want data to stay synchronized automatically across systems. Here are some scenarios that are common:

- Your company may open new stores or locations. It may close or move locations. It may even bring on hundreds of new locations at once due to an acquisition. Whatever the cause of the change, you want worksite alignment to be automated across systems. When information about worksites is changed into your HR system, you want the update to be automatically populated into your I-9 system.



- Employees may change job locations from one worksite to another. You'll want these data changes to be automatically synchronized over to the I-9 system.
- A field manager may be given responsibility for a new location. This update should be synchronized into your I-9 system.

12. Process compliant remote hires without meeting in person

Consider this:

Hiring people who live or work far away from any of your offices is a challenging issue, since completing the Form I-9 in a compliant manner requires a face-to-face interaction within the first three days of the new hire's employment. To reduce the labor involved in onboarding remote hires, look for an I-9 solution that allows you to process remote hires without the need for your HR staff to meet them in person or to re-key any data.

Look for an I-9 solution that allows you to process these hires without the need for HR staff to meet them in person or to re-key any data.



13. Leverage batch processes

Look for a system that lets you process similar records simultaneously and with a single command to save your team time. One example? Purge all eligible I-9s at once. It is much more efficient to purge I-9s on a regular cycle rather than one at a time as each record reaches its qualifying purge date.

Insider tips:

- The I-9 solution should let you run a report that shows all your I-9 records ready for purge, and should let you purge them all with a single click.
- Make sure your solution allows you to close all authorized E-Verify cases at once. You want to be able to review a list of all authorized E-Verify cases, and close them all at once with a click.



14. Self-audit in minutes

Keep in mind:

Some organizations that use paper I-9s conduct an annual audit of a sampling of their annual new hire records. Since paper records have to be pulled and reviewed, the process is extremely time-consuming, especially since 70% of paper records have at least one error. An organization can expect to spend a total of about 32 hours of labor for each 100 paper records they audit and remediate.

Since compliance performance typically varies across managers, a limitation of a paper audit is that it only helps you understand your error rate in a general sense. Unless you take the time to check each manager's error rate, the audit won't give you an understanding of the areas that most need work.

How to solve it:

An electronic I-9 system should provide fast and easy self-audits that provide in-depth insight of your personnel. Because the I-9 system should prevent missing forms (by creating an I-9 for every new employee entered in your HR system) and any field errors, an audit will only capture personnel matters, such as when managers fail to complete an I-9 or sign it on time. What that means? Your self-audits deliver accurate, actionable information.



Insider tips:

- You should be able to run self-audits on any group of I-9s and assess compliance performance by individual, location, team and region
- You should be able to analyze performance by time period to see how it trends over time.
- This allows you to set performance goals, easily track how each person, location and region is performing against their goals, and detect any “hot spots” immediately.

15. Save days of effort in the event of an ICE audit

Keep in mind:

If your company has paper I-9s and gets a Notice of Inspection (NOI) from ICE, you are in for a hefty amount of work, and you have 72 hours to complete it. On average, it takes the equivalent of 5-6 days of labor to prepare the audit response for up to 1,000 records from a single work location, assuming you have a fairly organized filing system. If the Notice of Inspection requests more records or records from more offices, the effort increases accordingly. If your I-9 files are not neatly organized, the effort also increases.

The effort usually entails HR leadership and staff spearheading the response, contacting and working with the management team at the location being audited, and trouble-shooting and triaging problems and risks that come up. In addition to pulling all the needed records, the field person or team typically also pulls payroll reports which they then use in an attempt to discover any missing I-9s.

If there is time in the 72-hour ICE response window, they may try to create a new I-9 for any that are missing in the hopes of getting a late signature fine (\$110) instead of a missing form fine (\$1,100) for missing records.

How to solve it:

Instead of spending days pulling paper files, your electronic I-9 solution should allow you to simply request a copy of all applicable electronic I-9 records, notices and letters in a matter of minutes. Your errors should be limited to late signatures. Your late signature rate should be very small – close to 1% – given you’ve chosen an electronic solution that provides the capabilities outlined in this paper.

Can your team handle five to six days of work in the 72-hour turnaround time?



Summary

No HR executive should ever again spend excessive time or resources to achieve I-9 and E-verify compliance. With the insight and best practices provided in this paper, you're now equipped to evaluate electronic I-9 & E-Verify solutions and ensure that the solution you choose will dramatically reduce your overhead for compliant I-9 and E-Verify processing, and eliminate errors that can potentially be even more costly.

Learn about I-9 Complete

I-9 Complete addresses the comprehensive set of business problems that I-9 and E-Verify compliance presents to large organizations. It eliminates over 90 minutes of labor per hire – reducing resources by more than 85% – while delivering full compliance and complete visibility.

- Unlike I-9 solutions that simply provide a fillable .pdf or an online form with some field validation, I-9 Complete automates the entire compliance workflow and transforms hiring compliance into a highly efficient and reliable operation for the enterprise.
- Leveraging manager self-service, it guides field managers easily through successful completion of each I-9 with no special training, eliminating guesswork, errors, re-work and training time.
- It integrates with all leading HR systems for further process automation and efficiencies. It gives HR up-to-the-minute insight into the human element of I-9 compliance performance across the organization for early detection of trouble spots.
- It provides the level of operational flexibility large organizations need to accommodate their unique and evolving organizational structures.

(1) Tracker Corp I-9 & E-Verify Calculator

(2) Westat Corporation report: [Evaluation of the Accuracy of E-Verify Findings](#), July 2012

About Mitratesch

Mitratesch is a proven global technology partner for corporate legal, risk & compliance, and HR professionals seeking to maximize productivity, control expense, and mitigate risk by deepening operational alignment, increasing visibility, and spurring collaboration across their organization.

With Mitratesch's proven portfolio of end-to-end solutions, organizations worldwide are able to implement best practices and standardize processes across all lines of business to manage risk and ensure business continuity.

Mitratesch serves over 1,500 organizations worldwide, including 30% of the Fortune 500 and over 500,000 users in 160 countries.

For more info, visit: www.mitratesch.com

MITRATESCH

CONTACT US

info@mitratesch.com
www.mitratesch.com

Mitratesch US

+1 (512) 382.7322

Mitratesch EMEA

+44 (0) 1628.600.900

Mitratesch AUS

+61 (0)3.9521.7077