
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 877 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY GALLOWAY, HILL-EVANS, MACKENZIE, MILLARD,
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APRIL 5, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND INDUSTRY, APRIL 5, 2019

AN ACT

1 Requiring construction industry employers to verify the Social
2 Security numbers of all employees for purposes of wage
3 reporting and employment eligibility; providing for powers
4 and duties of the Department of Labor and Industry;
5 prescribing sanctions; and establishing good faith immunity
6 under certain circumstances.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. Short title.

10 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Construction
11 Industry Employment Verification Act.

12 Section 2. Definitions.

13 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
14 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
15 context clearly states otherwise:

16 "Construction." Erection, reconstruction, demolition,
17 alteration, modification, custom fabrication, building,
18 assembling, site preparation and repair work or maintenance work
19 done on any real property or premises under contract, whether or

1 not the work is for a public body or paid for from public funds.

2 "Construction industry employer." An individual,
3 partnership, association, joint stock company, corporation,
4 business trust or any other business entity, person or group of
5 persons that acts directly or indirectly to employ persons to
6 provide or perform services in the construction industry for
7 remuneration.

8 "Employee." An individual for whom a construction industry
9 employer is required by law to file a Form W-2 with the Internal
10 Revenue Service.

11 "EVP." The E-Verify Program operated by the Department of
12 Homeland Security.

13 "INA." The Immigration and Nationality Act (66 Stat. 163, 8
14 U.S.C. § 1101 et seq.).

15 "NVS." The Social Security Number Verification Service
16 operated by the Social Security Administration.

17 "Secretary." The Secretary of Labor and Industry of the
18 Commonwealth.

19 "Willful." Action or conduct undertaken intentionally or
20 with reckless disregard for or deliberate ignorance of the
21 requirements and obligations established by this act.

22 Section 3. Verification.

23 (a) Duty of construction industry employers.--

24 (1) Except as set forth in paragraph (2), a construction
25 industry employer shall participate in NVS and EVP and shall
26 do the following, subject to the requirements of Federal law
27 governing the use of NVS and EVP:

28 (i) within 60 days following the effective date of
29 this section, use NVS to verify, for wage reporting
30 purposes, the Social Security numbers of the construction

1 industry employer's employees in existence on the
2 effective date of this section; and

3 (ii) within three days following the first day of
4 employment of a new employee, use EVP to verify, for
5 employment eligibility purposes, the Social Security
6 number of the new employee.

7 (2) This subsection does not apply to an employee who is
8 authorized to work under Federal law in the United States
9 without a Social Security number.

10 (b) Verification statements.--A construction industry
11 employer shall submit a verification statement annually to the
12 Department of Revenue with the construction industry employer's
13 State income tax return. The statement shall be on a form
14 prescribed by the Department of Revenue and shall comply with
15 the following requirements:

16 (1) The statement shall represent that the construction
17 industry employer has verified the Social Security numbers of
18 the construction industry employer's employees through NVS or
19 EVP, as appropriate, as required by subsection (a).

20 (2) The statement shall include a certification that the
21 information in the statement is true and correct and that the
22 person signing the statement understands that the submission
23 of false or misleading information in connection with the
24 verification shall subject the person and the construction
25 industry employer to sanctions provided by law.

26 (3) The statement shall be signed by a representative of
27 the construction industry employer who has sufficient
28 knowledge and authority to make the representation and
29 certifications contained in the statement.

30 (c) Discrimination prohibited.--In conducting the Social

1 Security number verification required by this section, a
2 construction industry employer shall not discriminate against an
3 employee on the basis of race, ethnicity, color or national
4 origin.

5 Section 4. Violations.

6 It is a violation of this act for a construction industry
7 employer to:

8 (1) Employ an employee whose Social Security number has
9 not been verified by NVS or EVP as required by this act
10 except during a period of time in which the employer is
11 awaiting resolution by the Federal Government of a wage
12 reporting or employment eligibility issue or dispute
13 regarding the employee.

14 (2) Make a false statement or misrepresentation in a
15 verification statement required by this act.

16 Section 5. Enforcement and sanctions.

17 (a) General rule.--The secretary shall enforce the
18 provisions of this act.

19 (b) Investigation of complaints.--The secretary shall
20 accept, review and investigate in a timely manner any credible
21 complaint that a construction industry employer has violated a
22 provision of this act.

23 (c) Audits.--To ensure compliance with the requirements of
24 this act, the secretary shall conduct complaint-based and random
25 audits of construction industry employers in this Commonwealth.
26 In conducting an audit, the secretary shall utilize NVS and EVP
27 to verify the Social Security numbers for wage reporting
28 purposes and employment eligibility of employees in accordance
29 with Federal law governing the use of those systems.

30 (d) Sanctions.--The following sanctions shall apply to a

1 violation of section 274A of the INA (8 U.S.C. § 1324a) or of
2 this act:

3 (1) A construction industry employer that violates
4 section 274A of the INA or engages in the violation described
5 in section 4(1) may be required, at the discretion of the
6 secretary, to forfeit all licenses or certifications issued
7 by the Commonwealth that authorize the construction industry
8 employer to conduct business in this Commonwealth, including
9 corporate articles and franchises, for a period of up to 90
10 days for a first violation and for a period of up to three
11 years for a subsequent violation.

12 (2) A construction industry employer that willfully
13 violates section 274A of the INA or willfully engages in the
14 violation described in section 4(1) shall be required to
15 forfeit all licenses or certifications issued by the
16 Commonwealth that authorize the construction industry
17 employer to conduct business in this Commonwealth, including
18 corporate articles and franchises, for a period of three
19 years.

20 (3) The Office of Attorney General shall have the same
21 authority to revoke corporate articles and franchises under
22 this act as it has under 15 Pa.C.S. § 503 (relating to
23 actions to revoke corporate franchises).

24 (e) Notice and appeal.--Actions taken under subsection (d)
25 shall be subject to the notice, appeal and other provisions of 2
26 Pa.C.S. (relating to administrative law and procedure).

27 Section 6. Protection from retaliation.

28 (a) General rule.--It shall be unlawful for a construction
29 industry employer to discharge, threaten or otherwise retaliate
30 or discriminate against an employee regarding compensation or

1 other terms or conditions of employment because the employee:

2 (1) participates in an investigation, hearing or inquiry
3 held by the secretary or any other governmental authority
4 under this act; or

5 (2) reports or makes a complaint regarding the violation
6 of this act to a construction industry employer or
7 governmental authority.

8 (b) Actions.--

9 (1) An employee who suffers retaliation or
10 discrimination in violation of this section may bring an
11 action in a court of common pleas in accordance with
12 established civil procedures of this Commonwealth.

13 (2) The action must be brought within three years from
14 the date the employee knew of the retaliation or
15 discrimination.

16 (c) Relief.--If an employee prevails in an action commenced
17 under this section, the employee shall be entitled to the
18 following relief:

19 (1) Reinstatement of the employee, if applicable.

20 (2) Restitution equal to three times the amount of the
21 employee's wages and fringe benefits calculated from the date
22 of the retaliation or discrimination.

23 (3) Reasonable attorney fees and costs of the action.

24 (4) Any other legal and equitable relief as the court
25 deems appropriate.

26 Section 7. Good faith immunity.

27 A construction industry employer that relies in good faith on
28 NVS and EVP procedures to verify the Social Security number of
29 employees shall be immune from the sanctions authorized under
30 section 5 and shall have no liability to an individual who is

1 not hired or who is discharged from employment in the event that
2 incorrect information has been provided to the construction
3 industry employer.

4 Section 8. Effective date.

5 This act shall take effect in 180 days.