

# THE NATIONAL LAW REVIEW

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## ICE Announces Enforcement Priorities, Raids Nearly 100 7-Eleven Stores

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On January 10, 2018 [ICE issued a press release](#) setting forth its three-pronged approach to worksite enforcement compliance: “compliance, through I-9 inspections, civil fines and referrals for debarment; enforcement, through the arrest of employers, knowingly employing undocumented workers, and the arrest of unauthorized workers for violation of laws associated with working without authorization; and outreach, through the [ICE Mutual Agreement between Government and Employers \(IMAGE\) program](#), to instill a culture of compliance and accountability.”

On 6:00 a.m. that same day, immigration agents raided 98 7-Eleven stores across 17 states. They served audit notices, interviewed employees and managers and arrested 21 workers. Characterized as a “show of force” to highlight the Trump administration’s zero tolerance policy with regard to undocumented individuals, this operation is the largest to date under the current administration. ICE noted that this raid was a follow-up on their 2013 investigation of 7-Eleven franchises. [In that investigation](#), there were arrests of nine franchise owners and managers as well as criminal fines for more than \$2.6 million for wire fraud and concealing and harboring undocumented individuals.

Inspection notices were served at 7-Eleven franchises in California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Washington and Washington, D.C. Sixteen of the franchises were in the New York City area. The franchisees have three days to comply with audit requests and supply information regarding the immigration status of their employees.

Thomas Homan, Acting Director of ICE, noting that undocumented workers are a “pull factor” for illegal immigration, [stated that](#) “[t]oday’s actions send a strong message to U.S. businesses that hire and employ an illegal workforce: ICE will enforce the law, and if you are found to be breaking the law, you will be held accountable.”

Texas-based 7-Eleven, Inc. [noted that the stores are owned as franchises](#) by independent business owners who are solely responsible for verifying employment authorization and that “it has terminated the franchise agreements of franchisees convicted of violating these laws.”

ICE published news accounts of the 7-Eleven raids on its Twitter account to further emphasize its stringent enforcement priorities with regard to employers and undocumented workers themselves.

Jackson Lewis P.C. © 2019



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