




Charlie Crist
Governor
Cynthia R. Lorenzo
Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 5, 2010

TO: Regional Workforce Board Executive Directors

FROM: Lois A. Scott, Program Manager, One Stop and Program Support 

SUBJECT: Use of Puerto Rico Birth Certificates for Form I-9 and Verification of Citizenship for Workforce Programs

The Government of Puerto Rico enacted a statute to increase the security of birth certificates to deter fraud and protect the identity and credit of individuals born in Puerto Rico. This statute invalidates all birth certificates issued before July 1, 2010 by the Puerto Rico Health Department through its Vital Statistics Office. Beginning July 1, 2010, the Puerto Rico Vital Statistics Office will issue new birth certificates that incorporate state-of-the-art technology for improved security.

As a consequence of the passage of the Puerto Rico law, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services provided an update to its instructions for completing Form I-9 (verification of right to work). Enclosed is a link to the update. The USCIS update provides information about the statutory change and its effect on the use of Puerto Rico birth certificates for the verification of citizenship/right to work. The effective date of the requirement to use the new Puerto Rico birth certificates instead of the older ones has been pushed back to October 31, 2010.

NOTE: The transition period was originally extended from July 1 to October 1 to October 31. It would, therefore, be useful for staff to refer to the USCIS update as the October 31 deadline approaches.

Birth certificates presented on or before October 30, 2010: There is no change – birth certificates issued on any date by the Puerto Rico Vital Statistics Office are to be accepted as proof of citizenship/right to work.

Birth certificates presented beginning October 31, 2010: The birth certificates must have been issued on or after July 1, 2010. If an employee or client presents a birth certificate issued by the Puerto Rico Vital Statistics Office, the case manager must look at the date the certified copy was issued to ensure that it is still valid.

Agency for Workforce Innovation

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The change only affects the validity of certified copies of Puerto Rico birth certificates. It does not require that the citizenship/work eligibility of existing employees or WIA clients who previously had presented a certified copy of a Puerto Rico birth certificate be re-verified. Other forms of documentation besides birth certificates may be accepted to verify citizenship/right to work.

Please share this information with service providers, workforce partners, and other interested parties. Wagner-Peyser staff who complete I-9 Forms on behalf of employers and WIA staff responsible for eligibility determination must read the USCIS Update in order to know the proper use of Puerto Rico Birth Certificates.

Please address any questions to Isabelle Potts, Isabelle.Potts@flaawi.com, (850) 921-3148.

Links:

[Effects of Invalid Puerto Rico Birth Certificates on the Form I-9 Process](#)

LAS/oip

cc: Barbara Griffin Richard Meik Kevin Neal Cliff Atkinson