

PODCAST

Labor attorney urges hoteliers to prepare for arrival of ICE agents

Make a plan, communicate it and train on it, expert says



(Getty Images)

By **Bryan Wroten**

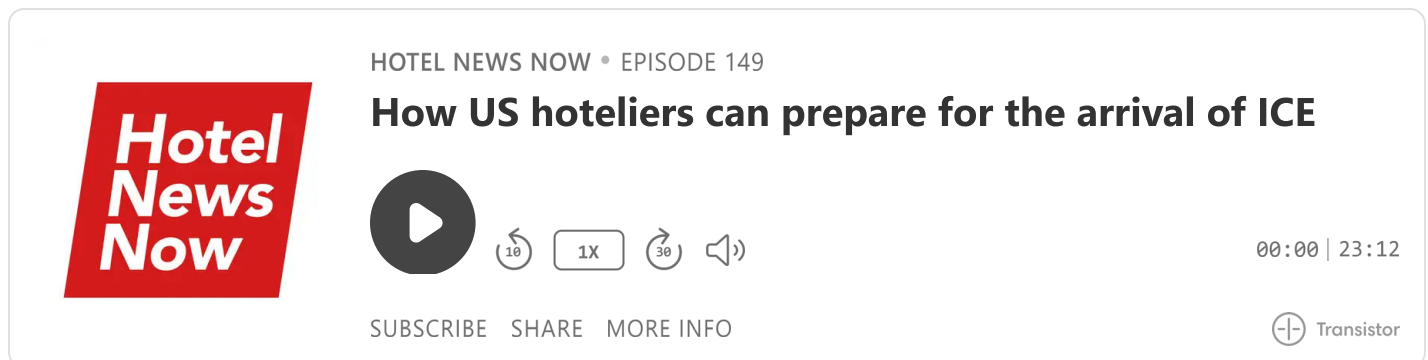
CoStar News

July 9, 2025 | 8:38 AM



The U.S. federal government has intensified its focus on arresting and deporting illegal immigrants and legal immigrants who have lost their protected status, and many of them work in the hotel industry.

As such, employers in the hotel industry will likely find their properties being visited by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents and other law enforcement agents looking for people who are not eligible for work in the U.S.



HOTEL NEWS NOW • EPISODE 149

How US hoteliers can prepare for the arrival of ICE

Hotel News Now

00:00 | 23:12

SUBSCRIBE SHARE MORE INFO

Transistor

“They need to prepare,” said Jessica Cook, a partner at law firm Fisher Phillips who has a specialty in immigration employment. “The government is laser focused when it comes to immigration compliance right now, and we’re going to see the worksite enforcement continue.”

It’s critical that employers in the hotel industry, from the large owner-operators and third-party management companies with sizeable portfolios down to the small family operations, prepare and have a response plan in place so they and their property teams are prepared if ICE agents walk through their doors, she said.

One thing they can do is create a team who will be a hotel’s immigration point people. They will be the employees designated to interface with the federal agents, who understand the company’s rights and responsibilities and understand what judicial and administrative warrants are and what they mean.

Once a plan is in place, those hotel teams need training on it, Cook said. The plan should be written down and clear and easy to understand. Even a video call with

the team from the corporate office can help walk them through what an ICE raid or visit can look like so they know what to expect.

“You don’t just want to train whoever are going to be the immigration point people,” she said. “You also want to make sure that the higher level managers or leaders within the company or within the hotel who may be there on the ground that day also understand what the protocol is.”

It’s also important to remember that if ICE or other Department of Homeland Security agents come to a hotel, that doesn’t mean it’s a raid, so the hotel team should make sure they understand clearly why they’re there, Cook said. A federal agent may be there to provide a notice of inspection for an I-9 audit, which reviews a company’s I-9 forms to determine the employment eligibility of workers. That does not give the agent authorization to get into areas besides the public spaces or seize documents.

“It is very important to know the difference, because we are seeing ICE come into properties without proper documentation and trying to see if an employer will authorize them and consent to a search or consent for them to come and walk around their property and talk to their employees and just hang out and see what they can find out,” she said. “You don’t want to ever do that.”

For more from the interview with Jessica Cook, listen to the podcast embedded above.

[Click here to read more hotel news on CoStar Hotels.](#)

Follow us on Social Media

Have feedback or questions? Email us at news@costar.com
