

Live from Workplace Horizons 2025: The New Reality of Immigration Enforcement — Challenges and Solutions for Employers

By Amy L. Peck, Otieno B. Ombok & John E. Exner

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Meet the Authors



Amy L. Peck

Principal

402-391-1991

Amy.Peck@jacksonlewis.com

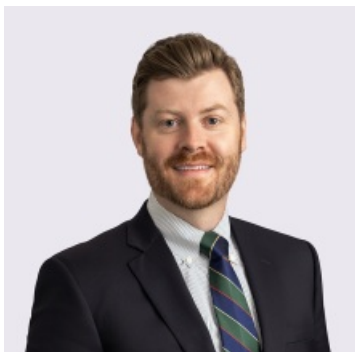


Otieno B. Ombok

Principal

914-872-6895

Otieno.Ombok@jacksonlewis.com



Details

June 3, 2025

Welcome to a special edition of We get work®, recorded live from Workplace Horizons 2025 in New York City, Jackson Lewis' annual Labor and Employment Law Conference. Over 500 representatives from 260 companies gathered together to share valuable insights and best practices on workplace law issues impacting their business today. Here's your personal invitation to get the insights from the conference, delivered directly to you.



Transcript

INTRO

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CONTENT

Alitia Faccione

Senior Director, Business Development

Well, welcome to We get work® Live from Workplace Horizons 2025. John, Amy and Otieno, thank you for joining me in our podcast studio here at the Hilton Midtown this morning. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce John Exner from our Los Angeles office, Amy Peck from our Omaha office and Otieno Ombok from our White Plains office. All principals working in the immigration space, but I'd like you each to tell us a little bit about yourselves. John?

John Exner

Principal, Los Angeles

I'm in Los Angeles. I have been working in immigration law for 20 years, and this year has been one of the busiest, certainly. Lots of questions.

John E. Exner

Principal
213-337-3837
John.Exner@jacksonlewis.com

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Immigration

Faccone

A wild ride. Amy?

Amy Peck

Principal, Omaha

I'm Amy Peck, and I am with the Omaha Office of Jackson Lewis. I have been practicing for more than 20 years, but we're not going to give the number right now. I spend a lot of time with compliance issues and working with employers on I-9 and E-Verify.

Faccone

Otieno?

Otieno Ombok

Principal, White Plains

Yes, my name is Otieno Ombok. I'm based in the White Plains office. I've been with Jackson Lewis for almost 25 years now, and my practice basically focuses on helping employers sponsor visas, both temporary and permanent, for foreign nationals. A small part of my practice also involves immigration compliance – I-9 audits, site visits and the like.

Faccone

We know a lot has happened since the beginning of the year in your practice area. The title of your presentation actually references that, 'The New Reality of Immigration Enforcement Challenges and Solutions.' That's great for employers.

John, why don't you share with our listening audience what you covered in your presentation?

Exner

We took a survey of the room early on to try to feel out what people were most interested in. Honestly, they were interested in just about everything. It was international travel, I-9 compliance, ICE raids, visa sponsorships. How is everything going to change with extreme vetting that's coming out for the new administration? Lots of questions, and lots of interest in where things might be going.

Faccone

Amy, given everything that's going on, how did you even decide what to cover? How did you figure out what issues were going to rise to the top and what our listeners and our attendees needed to know this year?

Peck

We talked about it ahead of time and discussed the types of calls we've been getting since January 20th. There were themes that very quickly developed, and international travel was one of them. One of the things that rose to the top these last couple of days was compliance. There's a lot of concern over worksite raids, worksite

visits, what rights do employers have during those visits, how to protect employees and just the legal landscape and how to protect themselves during all of this.

Facone

Otieno, if you had to answer this question, what would you say were the issues that really rose to the top that resonated with your attendees throughout your presentation?

Ombok

Yes, the attendees were interested in certain programs that have been targeted by the current administration, particularly Humanitarian Parole and Temporary Protected Status. These are two programs that provide work authorization to foreign nationals in the U.S. The Trump administration made announcements in January and February that those programs would be terminated, for instance, with Temporary Protected Status, particularly for two countries—Venezuela and Haiti. They were targeted for termination in April and August this year. Of course, there's been court action, and we've had some reprieve with injunctions issued by the courts. Attendees were asking, what are they going to do in the event these programs are terminated? Do they have to terminate employees? What are the alternatives for obtaining work authorization?

Facone

We've talked about how so much has happened. I can't even imagine what you were talking about last year at this time. If you had to try to answer this question, what do you think is the most significant change and how is that going to impact where we go from here?

Exner

It's a complete reversal. Last year, the conversation was about certain Biden-era executive orders that were streamlining immigration practices and reducing the number of requests for evidence, petitions and things along those lines. There was a push towards bringing people in who had experience in AI. The change now is all of the executive orders that came out in January completely reversed that. They undid the Biden-era executive orders, and they increased the amount of vetting at the consulates, customs and USCIS. It's just been a lot of questions on how to handle that and how to anticipate the litigation that's coming from all of that.

Facone

Otieno, if you could share with our listening audience a few key takeaways to make sure people are keeping on the right track in the midst of all this. What would you say?

Ombok

I-9 compliance and making sure that employers have valid I-9s on file for all current employees, particularly for workers whose work authorization would be terminated. It's critical for employers to know that these workers may not be able to renew their work authorization. That means employers may need to make the difficult decision

of letting some of these workers go and terminating them. It's also critical, particularly for workers who are on Temporary Protected Status, to monitor ongoing litigation. There's so much happening, and it's constantly changing, almost on a day-to-day, weekly basis. Just monitor the situation, review their circumstances and look for alternative options if possible.

More importantly for employers, they need to carry out periodic I-9 audits, re-verify I-9s where necessary and make sure that they stay in full compliance. ICE is issuing I-9 inspection notices, and there's only a three-day notice. Employers have to be ready to present their I-9s within that very short time frame.

Faccone

Proactivity is more important than ever in this case. Amy, I know you have all been working pretty much nonstop since January. How is Jackson Lewis helping employers cope with all of these changes?

Peck

The unique thing about Jackson Lewis is that we have lawyers who see the full spectrum of issues. We are employment lawyers and immigration lawyers. When we get a problem that is immigration focused, we are also able to identify whether there are employment issues that come with that. It makes us very unique and also gives a full scope answer to the problem that's being presented.

Through these last couple of months, when we're working nonstop, when we get issues, we are looking at advising in a way that says, look, here's your problem, but we are helping you for the future as well. We want to prevent these problems. We want to help you build systems and policies that help you in the future when things come up, and that are flexible enough to address this changing landscape. It's been a challenge. It's also been a lot of fun just to work with clients in these difficult times, quite frankly.

Faccone

It's a partnership.

John, Amy and Otieno, thank you so much for taking the time to join us this morning behind the podcast mic. I'll see you at Workplace Horizons 2026.

OUTRO

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