

DOA: 1/26/26

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the
District of Arizona

United States of America)

v.)

Edwin FLORES Rosales,
a.k.a. Alexander Ayala Soberames)

Case No. 26-3017MS

*Defendant***CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

COUNT ONE

On or about November 18, 2024, in Maricopa County, in the District of Arizona, the defendant, EDWIN FLORES ROSALES, did knowingly use false attestations, that is, statements that he is a United States Citizen and that his name is "Alexander Ayala Soberames," on an employment eligibility Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, for the purpose of satisfying a requirement of section 274A(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

In violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1546(b)(3).

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See Attached Statement of Probable Cause Incorporated By Reference Herein

 AUTHORIZED BY: PATRICK SLOANE
☒ Continued on the attached sheet.ERIC P
JOHNSONDigitally signed by
ERIC P JOHNSON
Date: 2026.01.27
16:16:26 -07'00'*Complainant's signature*Eric Johnson
HSI Special Agent

Sworn to telephonically.

Date:

Jan. 28, 2026


 Printed name and title
Judge's signature

City and state: Phoenix, Arizona

Michael T. Morrissey, United States Magistrate
Judge*Printed name and title*

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

I, Special Agent Eric Johnson, declare under penalty of perjury that the following is true and correct.

1. I am a Special Agent with Homeland Security Investigations. I have learned the facts recited herein from direct participation in the investigation and from the reports and communications of other agents and officers.

a. Zipps Investigation

2. In February 2025, HSI Phoenix Special Agents received a tip alleging that Zipps Sports Grill's fourteen restaurant locations in Arizona are employing illegal aliens to staff their kitchens. The reporting party indicated that management is aware these employees are using fraudulent identification documents to verify their eligibility to work, via the E-Verify web-based system.
3. In March 2025, HSI personnel served all 14 Zipps Restaurant locations, plus their corporate headquarters with a Notice of Inspection (NOI) requiring the company to produce their Forms I- 9. The following week, HSI personnel received compliance documents from Zipps, including a list that alleged to contain the original Forms I-9 for all current and former employees within the past two years. The compliance from Zipps did not include any photocopies of supporting documentation used by prospective employees during the hiring process.
4. HSI personnel reviewed the employment documents provided by Zipps pursuant to the NOI, which identified a list of current and former employees. Analysis of the records

revealed multiple instances in which the name, social security number, and date of birth on Form I-9 were being misused to gain employment.

5. A request was made to the Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) to provide a 2024 and 2025 wage report for each SSN identified during the NOI. DES reported wages are tracked by the individual social security number. The social security numbers listed on the employee Forms I-9 were run in the DES database. DES provided information which showed how many jobs were attributed to each SSN during quarter 2 (April, May and June) of 2025.
6. The review identified seventy-six (76) employees that had three (3) to forty-two (42) active employers other than Zipps Sports Grill in quarter 2 of 2025. These 76 individuals certified themselves as United States citizens, which means that they were not required to list an A-number on their Forms I-9.
7. The DES reports showed multiple jobs and extremely high wages earned in the same quarter which is consistent with aggravated identity fraud. This pattern is consistent among all the individuals who completed their paperwork in the same manner. At this time, investigators cannot identify the true names of these individuals based solely on the DES data because these individuals are presumably using someone else's identity documents.

b. Identification of Edwin FLORES Rosales

8. A Verification Form I-9 contains two sections. Section 1 contains the "Employee Information and Attestation" for the employee to fill out, sign and date. Section 1 of the Verification Form I-9 for employee "Alexander Ayala Soberames" contains an

“Check” next to the box stating that the employee is a citizen of the United States. It further contains a provision in bold stating, “I am aware that federal law provides for imprisonment and/or fines for false statements, or the use of false documents, in connection with the completion of this form. I attest, under penalty of perjury, that this information, including my selection of the box attesting to my citizenship or immigration status, is true and correct.” Underneath that attestation is a box for the signature of the employee which contains a printed name to be “Alexander Ayala” with a signature date of November 18, 2024. The Verification Form 1-9 is signed by a General Manager representing P.M.G. Publishing LLC. DBA Zipps Sports Grills dated November 18, 2024.

9. On January 26, 2026, at approximately 5:00 p.m., HSI Special Agent Brad Lazna and Border Patrol Agent Luis Trigueros interviewed the worker known as “Alexander Ayala” at Zipps Sports Grill located at 1860 E. Warner Road, Tempe, Arizona. Ayala admitted that his true name is Edwin FLORES Rosales. FLORES had no identity documents on his person at the time of the interview.
10. Prior to being interviewed, FLORED was advised of his *Miranda* warnings which FLORES knowingly waived. FLORES told agents he had previously crossed into the U.S. illegally sometime in December 2023 near Juarez, Mexico (El Paso, Texas). FLORES does not currently have legal status to reside or remain in the U.S. and does not currently have any petitions pending. FLORES stated that, in approximately October or early November of 2024, a former acquaintance of FLORES, Carlos GONZALEZ Soldana, told him (FLORES) that his (Carlos’) uncle had recently left a

job as an assistant cook at the Zipps Sports Grill in Tempe, Arizona. Carlos told FLORES to contact “Manny” who was working as the kitchen director at the Zipps Sports Grill. Manny told FLORES that he needed to get fake documents to get hired at Zipps and put FLORES in touch with “Jose” a former Zipps employee. Jose provided FLORES with the phone number of a person (unknown name) who could make the fake documents. Manny told FLORES he needed the documents to work at Zipps. The unknown document vendor provided FLORES with a fake Arizona ID and SS card in the name of Alexander Ayala Soberames and charged FLORES \$500. The document vendor also provided FLORES with a fake food handlers card for an additional \$50. FLORES told agents he knew that the name and social security number belonged to a real person, and that he knew it was illegal to receive and possess the documents and use them to gain employment.

11. Furthermore, FLORES stated that Manny met FLORES at the Zipps Sports Grill and filled out Section 1 of Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification form for FLORES, using the name and corresponding social security number of Alexander Ayala Soberames. FLORES signed the name “Alexander Ayala” in section 1 of Form I-9. FLORES told agents he knew it was wrong to sign the form with somebody else’s name. FLORES wasn’t sure who filled out section 2 of Form I-9, but he thought it was somebody other than Manny.

12. For these reasons, this affiant submits that there is probable cause to believe that on or about November 18, 2024, the date the Verification Form I-9 was signed, Edwin FLORES Rosales did knowingly use a false attestation, that is, a statement that he is a United

States Citizen with the name Alexander Ayala, on an employment eligibility Verification Form I-9, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1546(b)(3).

13. This affidavit was sworn to telephonically before a United States Magistrate Judge legally authorized to administer an oath for this purpose. I have thoroughly reviewed the affidavit and the attachments to it, and attest that there is sufficient evidence to establish probable cause that the defendant violated Title 18, United States Code, Section 1546(b)(3).

ERIC P
JOHNSON

Digitally signed by
ERIC P JOHNSON
Date: 2026.01.27
16:17:29 -07'00'

Eric Johnson
Special Agent
Homeland Security Investigations

Sworn to telephonically on
January 28, 2026

M Morrissey

Michael T. Morrissey
United States Magistrate Judge