



PRIORITY HIRE

ON CITY CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

Training and Jobs

The City of Seattle supports construction jobs and meaningful employment for those in our community through programs that prepare and train workers for careers with family-sustaining wages. In early 2015, the Seattle City Council adopted a new City law, proposed by Mayor Ed Murray, to create construction career opportunities for those in our community. The new priority hire law:

- ▶ Provides priority to community members who are underrepresented in the construction industry.
- ▶ Prioritizes local workers living in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods, creating access to training and employment within the construction workforce.
- ▶ Supports women and people of color to become part of the trained construction workforce, with direct access to a construction career.
- ▶ Creates a better work environment with safety protections, dispute resolution and a grievance process.

The City of Seattle piloted priority hire on the Elliott Bay Seawall Replacement project with outstanding results. The percentage of hours performed by women is nearly three times percentages on traditional City construction projects. Over 150 apprentices worked about 90,000 hours in nearly two years, gaining better opportunities to become trained for high-paying senior jobs. Thirty-five percent of apprentice hours were performed by women, and 50 percent were performed by people of color.

Seawall workers living in economically distressed neighborhoods have collectively earned nearly \$5.5 million in direct wages through September 2015.



Marquies Patterson, a pre-apprenticeship graduate and Laborers apprentice, puts finishing touches on a newly installed section of seawall.

Ordinance Facts

Priority Hire

City construction projects worth at least \$5 million have new priority hire requirements, including:

- ▶ Setting the goal for workers from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods to work a percent of all construction hours on priority hire projects. Workers from Seattle neighborhoods are at the top of the list, then King County and then any other economically distressed areas.
- ▶ Requiring every contractor to seek people of color and women workers for these jobs.
- ▶ Providing contractor education and strong enforcement so contractors can meet the priority hire requirements.

Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship

To create opportunities and assure a worker supply, the City is looking at strengthening pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs and requirements.

Pre-apprentice and apprentice efforts include:

- ▶ Contractors must hire apprentices and give on-the-job training to help prepare them for a construction career.
- ▶ Workers who are new to construction can participate in a registered pre-apprenticeship program that prepares them to successfully compete for on-the-job registered apprenticeship slots.
- ▶ The City will fund more construction training classes, curriculum, worker scholarships and student expenses to get workers through training programs and access to work on City construction projects.

Community Workforce Agreement

These efforts require strong partnerships with contractors. The City signed a Community Workforce Agreement with labor unions to ensure stable and consistent working conditions, with priorities for hiring workers living in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Labor unions have guaranteed training to those workers and will prioritize hiring of any who step forward, become trained and are ready to work. The Community Workforce Agreement allows:

- ▶ Open-shop contractors to bring five of their own workers, and then to prioritize hiring trained workers from economically distressed neighborhoods.
- ▶ Open-shop contractors to be reimbursed for existing employer-sponsored health and pension costs when required to pay into a labor trust fund.
- ▶ Workers and contractors to maintain their union or open-shop status; they only work under the union approach for the duration of the project.
- ▶ Technical assistance and support to all contractors interested in working under a community workforce agreement.

Program Evaluation

The City's Labor Equity Program will evaluate and report annually to the Mayor and City Council. In addition, priority hire goals will be based on past performance and reset annually.



At 13 percent, women on the Seawall are working nearly three times the percentage of hours compared to past City projects.

Implementation Timeline

- ▶ The City negotiated and signed the agreement with labor unions in early 2015. New projects include workforce diversity requirements in contracts.
- ▶ The City is assisting construction training programs and students who are beginning training, as well as program graduates who are looking for work in the construction field.

Questions?

More information is online at www.seattle.gov/city-purchasing-and-contracting/social-equity/labor-equity.

Labor Equity Program

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Priority Hire Advisory Committee

The advisory committee provides input regarding the priority hire program as needed. Members represent the following stakeholder groups:

- ▶ Labor unions
- ▶ Pre-apprentice and apprentice training programs
- ▶ Community organizations
- ▶ Contractors, including at least one woman- or minority-owned contractor
- ▶ Regional partners

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