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/ NJ Labor Department Urges School Districts to Utilize the NJ Wage Hub for Prevailing Wage Compliance as the Summer Construction Season Approaches

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2025

TRENTON – As we gear up for a busy school construction season this summer, the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL) is calling on school boards, school districts and local governments to utilize the [NJ Wage Hub](#) to comply with the state's prevailing wage on public works projects. In addition, [New Jersey public works contractors](#) are reminded of their responsibility under state law to fund paid job training and career opportunities as part of New Jersey's flourishing apprenticeship programs.

Why It Matters

Public contracting is a privilege, not a right. Public works projects represent significant investments in communities, and it's essential that these investments support local employment, engage local contractors, and help build robust local workforces and economies. Adhering to these standards creates a fair and thriving environment for New Jersey businesses, workers and communities.

These efforts are made possible through compliance with the New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act and the Public Works Contractor Registration Act (N.J.S.A. 34:11-56.25 et seq.). These regulations are designed to protect workers and ensure fair competition by setting a standard wage for laborers, craftsmen, and apprentices on public works projects. The Act mandates that workers receive the prevailing wage rate applicable to their specific craft, as determined by the Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development.

"Even when classes aren't in session, NJDOL's commitment to equitable wages and workers' rights is in full swing," **said Labor Commissioner Robert Asaro-Angelo**. "The New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act is a cornerstone of pay equity that ensures every worker is compensated fairly, during summer breaks and year-round."

Benefits of the NJ Wage Hub

For public bodies involved in public works projects, the **NJ Wage Hub** offers invaluable compliance assistance through its comprehensive database. We encourage all schools to make full use of its capabilities:

- **Digital Records:** Obtain and access digital records of certified payrolls submitted by contractors, ensuring compliance, better organization, and efficiency.
- **Bid Award Process Assistance:** Verify the status of Public Work Contractors using our extensive database to make informed bid award decisions.
- **Public Work Oversight:** View and manage your prevailing wage projects via the database, filter multiple categories, and access certified payroll records submitted by contractors.
- **Bid Verification:** Check the status of Public Work Contractors (Contractor Registration status, and debarment list) to ensure a well-informed bid award process.

"The NJ Wage Hub is an incredible information resource for local governmental entities that are preparing to start public works projects in their communities," **said New Jersey Department of Community Affairs Commissioner Jacquelyn A. Suárez**. "Our Division of Local Government Services actively encourages all local governments across New Jersey to use this tool to ensure they are complying with the state's prevailing wage and public contracting laws that provide good paying job opportunities and apprenticeship programs for its residents."

"School facilities projects are an essential part of providing each student with a safe and welcoming learning environment," **said Kevin Dehmer, Commissioner of Education**. "As the summer school-construction season approaches, we support the Department of Labor in their effort to raise awareness about the NJ Wage Hub, and we encourage school officials to use this tool to ensure compliance with all relevant laws and standards and that all school construction projects are conducted ethically and responsibly."

Collaboration and Compliance

NJDOL actively collaborates with the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and the New Jersey Department of Education to provide essential information and support. Public bodies must be diligent when working with contractors and subcontractors, focusing on key responsibilities such as:

- Incorporating provisions about the Prevailing Wage Act and the Public Works Contractor Registration Act in all public work contracts.
- Ensuring contracts with general contractors include appropriate prevailing wage determinations.
- Requiring submission of weekly certified payrolls for all work under the Prevailing Wage Act.
- Verifying contractor and subcontractor registration and eligibility on the NJDOL website before awarding contracts.
- Developing a process to maintain certified payroll records that are accessible for public and NJDOL review, which can be achieved by registering online via the **NJ Wage Hub**.
- Ensuring that significantly low bids (below 10% of the nearest low bidder) include certification that the lowest bidder will pay the prevailing wage.

Building a Skilled Workforce

In 2019, Governor Murphy revised the Public Works Contractor Registration Act to mandate that contractors on public projects participate in a USDOL Registered Apprenticeship program. This approach not only builds a skilled workforce but also offers participants the chance to earn wages while training. Employers benefit from reduced turnover and fewer mistakes. Since 2018, New Jersey has seen a more than 130 percent increase in registered apprenticeship programs.

As of August 15, 2024, contractors involved in public work must submit certified payroll records via the **NJ Wage Hub**. For comprehensive details, refer to the [N.J. Local Public Contracts Law and Regulation Reference Guide](#), updated as of April 2024.

Engaging and Supporting the Community

The department has also been actively engaging with leaders and members from over a dozen statewide public and private organizations through events, meetings, and webinars. In 2024 alone, these efforts reached well over 3,300 in-person attendees and more than 62,000 total members across organizations, including but not limited to:

- New Jersey School Boards Association
- New Jersey Personnel Administrators Association
- Rutgers University
- Municipal Clerks Association of New Jersey
- New Jersey Society of Municipal Engineers
- New Jersey Association of School Business Officials
- New Jersey Association of County Purchasing Officials
- National Institute of Governmental Purchasing Northern NJ Chapter 7
- Governmental Purchasing Association of New Jersey
- Government Finance Officers Association of New Jersey
- Bergen County Municipal Clerks' Association
- New Jersey League of Municipalities
- New Jersey Schools Development Authority

“NJDOL is sincerely grateful to our partners for their dedication in championing compliance with New Jersey’s prevailing wage and public contracting laws,” **added Commissioner Asaro-Angelo**. “The department’s ongoing mission is to widen our outreach efforts to empower both workers and employers with the knowledge needed to foster a fair and just work landscape across the Garden State.”

For more information on New Jersey’s worker benefits and protections, visit [\[myworkrights.nj.gov\]](https://myworkrights.nj.gov)MyWorkRights.nj.gov.

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