FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Apprentice utilization on public works projects creates opportunities for training and experience that helps ensure we have a trained workforce in the future. This guide will help you understand and be in compliance when it is required on public works projects.

**Is apprentice utilization required on public works projects?**
Yes, either by law and/or through a contractual agreement with the awarding agency.

By law, 15% apprentice utilization is required for projects with an estimated project cost of:

- **$1 Million or more AND the awarding agency is a state agency, school district, or a higher-education institution.**
- **$3 Million or more AND the awarding agency is WSDOT.**

**How is the 15% utilization rate determined?**
It is calculated by dividing the Total Apprentice Labor Hours by the Total Labor Hours worked on the project.

**Who qualifies as an apprentice?**
An *apprentice* is any worker registered in a Washington, Montana, or Oregon State approved apprenticeship training program.

**Where is L&I getting the data for the reports?**
The data is coming from the information you’re entering already for certified payroll reports and affidavits filed online within your *Prevailing Wage Intent & Affidavit (PWIA)* system.

1. **Certified Payroll Reports:** This option provides *real-time data* to help you manage utilization during the project when the reports are filed using L&I’s system.

2. **Affidavits:** Provides the *final utilization data* once the project is completed and all affidavits are filed.

**Apprentice utilization is required on my project, but the system is showing it isn’t required. Can this be changed?**
The awarding agency can change the status within their *Awarding Agency Portal.*
What hours are considered labor hours?

Labor hours are the total hours of workers receiving an hourly prevailing wage who perform work on the public works project and who are subject to prevailing wage requirements. **RCW 39.04.310**

Do labor hours include the hours worked by supervisors, foremen, superintendents, or owners?

Yes, if they are subject to prevailing wage requirements. **RCW 39.04.310(3)**

A supervisor (e.g., foremen, general foremen, superintendents, etc.) is subject to prevailing wage requirements when they perform more than 20% of their week performing manual/physical labor on the project. If the supervisor performs physical labor between **20% and 50%** of their time on public works projects during the week, they must be paid prevailing wages for **each hour worked performing trades work**. These hours must be reported to L&I and also be included in the total labor hours considered for apprentice utilization. If **more than 50%** of the supervisor’s time is spent performing trades work on public works projects during the week, **all the supervisor’s hours for the week** must be paid prevailing wages. These hours must be reported to L&I and also be included in the total labor hours considered for apprentice utilization. **WAC 296-127-015**

An owner/operator that **owns less than 30%** of the business is subject to the prevailing wage requirements. These hours must be reported to L&I and also be included in the total labor hours considered for apprentice utilization. **WAC 296-127-026**

Owner/operators that **own more than 30%** aren't subject to the prevailing wage requirements which means their hours aren't reported to L&I and aren't included in the total labor hours considered for apprentice utilization. **WAC 296-127-026**

Additional questions?

Contact our Prevailing Wage Program at 360.902.5335 or PW1@Lni.wa.gov.