

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the prevailing wage?

A: By law, workers on government funded construction projects must be paid prevailing wages. In California, the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR) sets the prevailing wage rate for each craft. The Board of Supervisors has adopted these rates for City funded projects.

Q: How do I know what is the correct prevailing wage rate?

A: The current prevailing wage rates are available on the Internet at <http://www.dir.ca.gov/DLSR/PWD>

Q: How do I know what is the correct craft or classification for the work my employees are doing?

A: The scope of work for each craft is listed on the DIR website and on some of the wage determinations. If you have questions about the type of work that may be performed by each craft, please call the OLSE at (415) 554-6573 or DLSR at (415) 703-4774.

Q: If owners or partners work on a project, do they have to be paid prevailing wages?

A: Yes. Anyone who works on a project must be paid the prevailing wage rate for all hours worked.

Q: What should I do if an employee performs more than one type of work each day?

A: You must keep accurate records of how many hours the employee works in each classification. The employee must be paid the prevailing wage rate for each craft, classification, and type of work performed. If accurate records are not kept, the highest wage rate may be required.

Q: What if an employee is just learning a trade or is just a helper on the project. Can I pay him/her a lesser wage?

A: No. All employees must be paid the prevailing wage rate for the type of work they perform. Only apprentices who are enrolled in a state-approved program are allowed to be paid less than the prevailing wage rate for the craft they perform.

Q: What happens if I don't understand the prevailing wage rates?

A: If you are unsure of the rate you should pay, you can call the Office of Labor Standards Enforcement at 554-6573 or DLSE Prevailing Wage Unit at (415) 703-4774.