



Living Wage Ordinance Questions and Answers

Q: If an employee doing a “Measurable Amount of Work” does works, say, 5 hours on an eligible County contract, do they get paid the appropriate living wage for the entire week? Or just for the 5 hours?

A: Contractor/vendor employees that do measurable amounts of work in increments less than 40 hours a week will be required to be paid the appropriate living wage only for those hours worked on the contract.

Q: How does King County enforce the living wage requirement in its contracts?

A: The living wage requirement is included in the contract terms and conditions of applicable contracts. Upon contract execution, any eligible employee of a contractor/subcontractor who is not paid the appropriate living wage puts the contractor/subcontractor in breach of their contract. Upon discovery of that breach, all applicable remedies, followed by any penalties may be applied to that contractor until the breach is reconciled or the contract is terminated. Per the ordinance, all applicable civil penalties may be pursued with non-compliant contractors. As with other elements of the contract, the county retains the right of record inspection, including as necessary payroll records.

Q: What about contracts that are of a dollar value such as “not-to-exceed \$250,000” during the contract’s lifetime, but are not necessary going to have \$100,000 spend on them? Do these contracts have the Living Wage requirement?

A: The ordinance requires a living wage for any contract valued at \$100,000 or over. Any contract with a total possible contract value at or over that dollar figure will need to be compliant with the living wage ordinance, even if that contract never actually reaches \$100,000 in expenditures.

Q: Do the contractors/vendors and or subcontractors need to execute any form?

A: No forms are presently required. The contractor/vendor agrees to the living wage requirement by executing and/or accepting the contract.

Q: As is required for federal and state minimum wage laws, do signs or other notices pertaining to the Living Wage Ordinance have to be published in the contractor’s workplace? And if so, where, and for how long?

A: At present, no signs or other postings are necessary in the workplace. The contractor/vendor is required to inform all workers performing measurable amounts of work on a county contract of their pay status, and to pay those workers in accordance with the ordinance’s published pay rates.

Q: If I have a potential complaint regarding a contract (such as an employee working on a contract not receiving a living wage), whom do I contact?

A: Each contract document has an associated buyer who created it. If you do not have access to the contract document and would like to make a comment or inquiry, please contact 206-263-9400 to request assistance. King County Supervisor Roy L. Dodman is also a contact for assistance. You may reach him at 206-263-9293, or by e-mail at roy.dodman@kingcounty.gov