

2018 Seattle City Council Statement of Legislative Intent

Ready for Notebook

Tab	Action	Option	Version
281	1	A	1

Budget Action Title: Report by HSD on disparities between internal and contracted human service provider wages and ways to mitigate those disparities

Ongoing: No

Primary Sponsor: O'Brien, Mike

Councilmembers: Bagshaw; Harris-Talley; Johnson; Sawant

Staff Analyst: Asha Venkataraman

Date		Total	SB	KH	LG	BH	LH	RJ	DJ	MO	KS
	Yes										
	No										
	Abstain										
	Absent										

Statement of Legislative Intent:

This Statement of Legislative Intent (SLI) directs the Human Services Department (HSD) to submit to Council a report on wages for direct human services providers, including the following types: (1) workers funded by social service contracts administered by HSD and (2) all internal HSD staff providing direct services through Areas of Aging Agencies and Medicaid funding.

The report should include:

- The entire wage data set for each type of worker;
- A comparison of the average, median, and mode wages for each type of worker and the current market rates for human service workers;
- Where there are wage differences between types of workers, a description of the numbers of individuals served in each type of worker's caseload and the types of populations reflected in that caseload;
- A statement regarding the social impacts of wage disparities for each type of worker and a comparison of the wages with 70 percent of the state's median income (the standard used to qualify for the City's Utility Discount Program); and
- A comparison of contracted wages funded through Federal, State, County, and City funding, including differences in hourly rates and benefits provided, and which types of governmental funding include inflation increases.

Using this data set and comparison of wages, HSD should provide a proposal to mitigate any existing wage disparities between worker types by analyzing the effectiveness, costs, benefits and drawbacks, and risks of the following and any other strategies HSD deems appropriate:

- Creating funding opportunities to make inflationary and cost-of-living adjustments for human service wages in all HSD contracts;
- Using a good values and good governance metric to make human service wages in all contracts proportionate to equivalent work done by internal HSD direct service workers;
- Expanding "prevailing wage" as used in the construction industry to human service wages in all HSD contracts;
- Making human service workers employees of the City for the purpose of receiving workers' compensation benefits, rather than being employed by subcontractors to which the City of Seattle provides funding;
- Establishing a task force of Executive and Legislative Department members to annually review human service wages for all HSD contracts, contract standards, and potential inflationary adjustments prior to adopting the budget for the next year;
- Creating a metric to use for the Request for Proposal process for all HSD contracts, including a set selection criteria for wages, healthcare, and retirement that ensures recruitment and retention;
- Forming a mitigation fund to ensure all human service wages for all HSD contracts meet Seattle market workforce standards; and
- Defining sufficiency standards in all HSD contracts to guarantee that human service wages for all HSD contracts are above eligibility standards for public safety net services.

HSD should design and analyze study methods in collaboration with contracted human service managers, contracted human service workers, and workforce representatives that work in the human service field.

Responsible Council Committee(s): Human Services and Public Health Committee

Date Due to Council: August 31, 2018