

CITY OF SEATTLE
ORDINANCE 127097
COUNCIL BILL 120815

AN ORDINANCE relating to City public works and the priority hire program; modifying the methodology for determining which zip codes are Economically Distressed Areas; authorizing the creation of a regional Priority Hire Implementation and Advisory Committee; and amending Sections 20.37.010 and 20.37.040 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

WHEREAS, in January 2015, following the positive results of a pilot program on the Elliott Bay Seawall project, and after making legislative findings, the Seattle City Council, with concurrence from the Mayor, enacted Chapter 20.37 of the Seattle Municipal Code, titled Priority Hire; and

WHEREAS, Priority Hire requires the Director of Finance and Administrative Services to establish the percentage of labor hours on City public works projects of \$5 million or more to be performed by workers living in Economically Distressed Areas of Seattle and King County, and to establish aspirational goals for hiring of women and people of color; and

WHEREAS, analysis has shown that Priority Hire has improved access to training programs and well-paying construction jobs for local workers in economically distressed neighborhoods and has increased the diversity of the workforce on City construction projects that are covered by Chapter 20.37; and

WHEREAS, the Priority Hire Implementation and Advisory Committee was established to provide an advisory role regarding the Priority Hire program's effectiveness and implementation, which may include making recommendations that reflect the region's evolving urban development and economic equity needs; and

1 WHEREAS, Priority Hire aims to reach people who live in Economically Distressed Areas that
2 have high poverty, high unemployment and low educational attainment, and the Priority
3 Hire Implementation and Advisory Committee recognizes that these areas need to be
4 updated to account for the region’s changing demographics and gentrification; and

5 WHEREAS, the Priority Hire Implementation and Advisory Committee may benefit from a
6 regional approach that increases alignment with similar programs, addresses regional
7 needs, supports a regional workforce, and streamlines the process for collecting input on
8 topics of interest; NOW, THEREFORE,

9 **BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF SEATTLE AS FOLLOWS:**

10 Section 1. Section 20.37.010 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
11 125368, is amended as follows:

12 **20.37.010 Definitions**

13 When used in this Chapter 20.37, the following words and phrases shall have the meanings given
14 below unless the context in which they are included clearly indicates otherwise:

15 * * *

16 “Economically Distressed Area” means a geographic area defined by zip code and found
17 by the Director to have a high concentration, compared to other zip codes, of individuals: 1)
18 living ~~((at or))~~ below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level, 2) unemployed, and or 3) without a
19 college degree~~((, compared to other zip codes))~~. King County zip codes, with a high ~~((density per~~
20 ~~acre))~~ concentration of at least two out of the three criteria, will be identified as Economically
21 Distressed Areas. There shall be two classes of such zip codes: tier one zip codes located
22 partially or entirely within the City of Seattle and tier two zip codes located within King County
23 and outside of the City of Seattle.

1 * * *

2 Section 2. Section 20.37.040 of the Seattle Municipal Code, last amended by Ordinance
3 125368, is amended as follows:

4 **20.37.040 Priority Hire**

5 * * *

6 J. The Director shall establish a Priority Hire Implementation and Advisory Committee
7 that includes representatives of the following groups: 1) Labor Unions, 2) community
8 organizations, 3) Contractors, including at least one WMBE firm, and 4) Apprentice and Pre-
9 apprentice Training Programs. The Committee shall provide an advisory role to the City
10 regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the Priority Hire policy. Each of the four
11 named groups above shall make nominations from among themselves for Committee
12 representatives to the Mayor. The Mayor shall appoint no less than two and no more than four
13 persons from each group to the Committee. The Department will convene the Committee on a
14 regular basis, at least once every quarter, and will provide the Committee with information about
15 program performance. The Director shall assign at least one staff member from the Department
16 to support the work of the Committee. The Committee shall submit an annual report in writing to
17 the Mayor and City Council, and may submit recommendations, findings, or other reports to the
18 Director, Mayor, or City Council, for consideration as appropriate. The Committee shall
19 establish rules for its procedures.

20 K. As an alternative to the Priority Hire Implementation and Advisory Committee, the
21 Director may establish a regional priority hire committee in partnership with other regional
22 public agencies, provided that the regional committee continues to have representatives from
23 each of the groups named in subsection 20.37.040.J. If the Director establishes a regional

- 1 committee, the Mayor shall appoint the City's share of representatives to the regional committee.
- 2 Once a regional committee's positions are filled, the Director may, at the Director's discretion,
- 3 dissolve the Priority Hire Implementation and Advisory Committee.

1 Section 3. This ordinance shall take effect as provided by Seattle Municipal Code
2 Sections 1.04.020 and 1.04.070.

3 Passed by the City Council the 24th day of September, 2024,
4 and signed by me in open session in authentication of its passage this 24th day of
5 September, 2024.

6 

7 President _____ of the City Council

Approved / returned unsigned / vetoed this 3rd day of October, 2024.

8 

9 Bruce A. Harrell, Mayor

10 Filed by me this 3rd day of October, 2024.

11 

12 Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

13 (Seal)

14 Attachments: