

Access, Inclusion and Diversity in the Project Labor Agreement

Holyoke Soldiers' Home Reconstruction Project

The Project Labor Agreement for the Holyoke Soldiers' Home Reconstruction Project (PLA) is precedent setting in the commitments it makes to support and expand access, inclusion, and diversity. A brief overview of provisions of the PLA that are access, inclusion and diversity focused are highlighted below. Interested parties, especially those considering bidding on the projects should review the entire PLA document thoroughly.

- **Small Business Enterprise Contracts - Opportunities for MBE/WBE/VBE Non-Signatories:** The PLA includes Small Business Enterprise Contract provisions that provide Supplier Diversity Office certified MBE, WBE and VBE firms that are not union signatories the ability to use their existing workforce on the Holyoke Soldiers' Home Project (Project), rather than having to hire workers unknown to them through the union halls. The Small Business Enterprise Contract provisions are limited to contracts of \$1,000,000 and under. Under these provisions, firms pay their employees the legally required prevailing wage, can maintain their existing employee benefits and are not subject to paying into union benefits funds for their workforce. Firms working under Small Business Enterprise Contracts will be required to sign a Letter of Assent to the PLA and will be bound by those provisions of the PLA applicable to firms performing Small Business Enterprise Contracts. This opportunity is a first in a PLA in Massachusetts and provides non-signatory MBE, WBE and VBE firms and their employees meaningful opportunities to work on the Project. (Article II, sections 8 & 9)
- **Core Employee Provisions:** Allows firms that are not union signatures, including MBE, WBE and VBE firms for contracts that exceed the Small Business Enterprise Contract dollar cap discussed above, the ability to staff the Project by utilizing up to four members of their existing workforce. Firms can bring in a one-to-one ratio of one existing employee then one worker from the union hall, followed by another existing employee then another worker from the union hall, with a cap of up to four of the firm's existing workforce per trade. Beyond those first eight workers, the remainder would come from the union hall. This provision is the first of its kind in Massachusetts and will provide opportunities for non-union signatories and workers, including MBE/WBE/VBE firms, that would not otherwise participate on the Project. Under the core worker provisions non-signatory firms must make the same benefit fund payments to the applicable union benefit funds on behalf of their up to four existing employees, as they would have had the workers been referred from the union membership, irrespective of the benefits the firm itself already provides those employees. (Article IV, sections 9 & 10)
- **Expanded Apprenticeship Opportunities:** The PLA includes a commitment to expanding the pool of workers in the construction trades with a commitment to achieving 20% apprenticeship participation on the Project and with the further commitment that of those apprentices 40% will be minorities, women, or veterans. While the Project is subject to the current state workforce goals of 15.3% minority and 6.9% women workers, the PLA includes a Veteran workforce goal of 7%. These commitments will not only increase opportunities and participation, they will also provide minority, women and veteran workers unprecedented access to enter careers in the construction industry. (Article XII and Appendix C)
- **Outreach and Training:** The PLA includes numerous other commitments to diversity, access and inclusion both in outreach to and support of minority, women and veteran owned businesses and workers. These include working with other organizations and programs that provide pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training opportunities and to minorities, women and workers interested in working on the Project or in the entering the construction trades. Every worker on the Project will receive training on diversity, discrimination and creating and maintaining a respectful jobsite. (Article III, Article XII, Appendix C)

Business Participation Goals

MBE 4.7%
WBE 7.7%
VBE 3.0%

Project Workforce Goals

Minority Workers 15.3%
Women Workers 6.9%
Veteran Workers 7.0%

Apprentice Commitments

20% - 1 of 5 workers
40% - of apprentices will be minorities,
women or veterans

Firms interested in providing services on the Project should contact the Commodore|Walsh at info@commodorewalsh.com

(PLA Appendix C)

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