



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR STANDARDS

CHARLES D. BAKER  
GOVERNOR

KARYN E. POLITO  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

RONALD L. WALKER, II  
SECRETARY

WILLIAM D. MCKINNEY  
DIRECTOR

January 15, 2016

Opinion Letter

PW 2016-01.15.2016

Re: Turf Installation Crews –Job Classification and Prevailing Wage

Dear XXXXXX,

This letter is written in response to your request for a determination of the proper job classification for workers whose duties involve the construction of an outside athletic field, with synthetic turf, on public projects subject to the prevailing wage law, G. L. c. 149, § 26 and 27.

In determining the appropriate job classification and prevailing wage for such public works, DLS looks to the collective agreements and understandings in the private construction industry between organized labor and employers. G.L. c.149, § 26. The tasks associated with the layout and construction of an athletic field represent the gravamens of a laborer's toil: site preparation, clearing, excavating, digging, blasting, laying underground pipe conduit and drainage, backfilling, compacting, grading, loading, handling, and conveying sand, fill and turf. It makes very little difference to these clearly defined, traditional tasks whether the turf finally laid on the laborer's well-prepared field is real or synthetic.

Furthermore, according to the collective bargaining agreement of the Laborers Union<sup>1</sup>, Article XXII, section 35, "the installation of artificial turf and turf like materials along with the cleanup...and related work at athletic fields" falls within the trade autonomy of the Laborers Union. Moreover, it is the prevailing practice that such work is done by laborers. Thus, the appropriate prevailing wage for turf installers on public projects is that of a laborer.

Laborers hourly rates currently reported to this office, as of the date of this letter, are as follows:

Zone 1 - \$56.35

Zone 2 - \$51.25

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<sup>1</sup> *Building and Site Construction Agreement between Massachusetts & Northern New England Laborers' District Council of the Laborers International Union of North America AFL-CIO and the Labor Relations Division of the Associated General Contractors of Massachusetts, Inc. and Building Trades Employers' Association of Boston and Eastern Massachusetts, Inc., Effective, June 1, 2012 – May 31, 2016.*

Zone 3 \_ \$48.31  
Zone 4 - \$42.70

If you have any additional questions, or I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

John H. Ronan  
General Counsel