

Questions and Answers about the 2017 Workforce Goals

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is MDHR increasing workforce goals?

Minnesota communities are changing. Minnesota's future workforce will be more diverse. The Minnesota Department of Human Rights is updating workforce participation goals in construction to meet the state's changing demographics.

Why were these goals chosen?

Minnesota Workforce Participation Goals for construction were based on data from the state demographer and input from an advisory taskforce comprised of individuals representing contractors, unions, members of the various trades and the public including Christa Seaberg, Diversity Manager at JE Dunn, who served as a co-chair with MDHR Commissioner Kevin Lindsey.

Currently, Minnesota employers have more than 100,000 open positions. In 2016, there were 5,671 openings in the construction industry, according to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. Employers without inclusive hiring practices will be at a competitive disadvantage as more than one in five Minnesotans will be over 65-years old and 43 percent of the Twin Cities metropolitan area will identify as a person of color in 15 years.

What contracts are subject to construction workforce participation goals?

Workforce participation goals apply to all construction contracts over \$100,000 entered into by the Metropolitan Sports Facility Authority, Metropolitan Council, Metropolitan Airports Commission, Metropolitan Mosquito Control Commission and the State of Minnesota on or after July 17, 2017.

Are projects that have already been initiated by contractors impacted by new workforce goals?

Workforce participation goals do not apply retroactively to construction projects. The new workforce participation goals apply to construction projects that begin on or after July 17, 2017.

I am contractor. How can I increase the diversity in my workforce?

MDHR provides resources and technical assistance for contractors on our website at mn.gov/mdhr. The [2017 Workforce Goals Report](#) was designed specifically for contractors with key information and resources. As part of the MDHR Workforce Goals Webinar series, MDHR will offer a webinar specifically designed for state contractors and businesses interested in the 2017 [Workforce Participation Goals at 2 p.m.](#) on July 24 called **Strengthening and Diversifying Minnesota's workforce**. The webinar is the

second in the series that includes topics such as Internships and Apprentices, Hiring Policies and Practices After “Ban the Box,” Implicit Bias, and Best Practices in Diversity and Inclusion. The series will run through 2018.

Does MDHR have information that can assist contractors on achieving good faith efforts?

Yes, the [2017 Workforce Goals Report](#) identifies strategies for contractors and our website assists contractors in complying with Minnesota Rules 5000.3400 to 5000.3600 and in implementing their Affirmative Action Plans. Visit mn.gov/mdhr for information on being an equal employment opportunity employer.

If you have questions and would like to speak with someone, you may contact the MDHR Contract Compliance unit at (651) 539-1100, 711/1-800-627-3529 MN Relay or toll-free at 800-657-3704. You may also contact us by email at compliance.MDHR@state.mn.us or send us a fax at (651) 296-9042.

What happens when a contractor fails to achieve the workforce participation goal set for a project?

Failing to achieve a workforce participation goal on a project is taken into consideration by MDHR in determining the contractor’s good faith efforts and when to schedule audits of contractors. The Department evaluates the good faith efforts of all contractors and when substantial deficiencies are identified, the agency enters into conciliation agreements with contractors. Contractors may have their workforce certificate suspended or revoked by the Commissioner for failing to make good faith efforts or for failing to fulfill the terms of their conciliation agreement, but the majority of contractors comply with conciliation agreements within 60 days. Contractors whose workforce certificate has been suspended or revoked are ineligible to be awarded state or metropolitan agency contracts.

I am a contractor. How do I obtain a workforce certificate from MDHR?

Contractors obtain a workforce certificate from MDHR by submitting their affirmative action plan to MDHR and paying the \$150 application processing fee.

What do contractors need to do to maintain their workforce certificate?

Contractors maintain their MDHR workforce certificate by being equal employment opportunity employers. MDHR evaluates whether the contractor has made good faith efforts to: 1) implement its affirmative action plan; 2) comply with Minnesota Administrative Rule 5000; 3) comply with anti-discrimination laws; 4) comply with the terms of their public contract; and 5) achieve the workforce participation goals set for the project. If MDHR believes the contractor is not making a good faith effort, the Commissioner may issue a compliance letter to the contractor, execute a conciliation agreement with the contractor or take action to suspend or revoke the contractor’s workforce certificate.

How can I learn more about careers in trades?

MDHR’s 2017 Minnesota Workforce Goals report offers resources for learning about the trades. Also, job seekers can visit [DEED’s Workforce Centers online](#) and in person for assistance.