

MCA
Summary of Legislation
December 2012

DGS Announces New Website to Help State Contractors Comply With PA Law Requiring Verification of Employee Citizenship

The PA Department of General Services has announced it has launched a new website to assist contractors, subcontractors and state and local government bodies bidding public works projects in meeting the requirements of the Public Works Employment Verification Act, which goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2013.

The act, which became law on July 5, 2012, requires contractors and subcontractors working on public works projects to verify the employment eligibility of each new employee through the federal government's E-Verify system. The intent of the law is to prevent contractors using non-U.S. citizen employees from participating with public works projects. According to proponents of the law, E-Verify is a fast, free, highly accurate online system by which employers can quickly determine if potential employees are eligible to work in the United States.

The E-Verify system is based on Social Security numbers and can provide online proof of employability within minutes. The new DGS website provides preliminary information including a draft copy of the Statement of Policy (scheduled for publication in the PA Bulletin on Dec. 29, 2012) outlining the department's administration and enforcement of the act, the verification form required by the act and a link to the federal government's E-Verify system.

Access the website for e-verify here:

<http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis/menuitem.eb1d4c2a3e5b9ac89243c6a7543f6d1a/?vgnextoid=75bce2e261405110VgnVCM1000004718190aRCRD&vgnnextchannel=75bce2e261405110VgnVCM1000004718190aRCRD>

Apprenticeship Council Update

In November the PA Department of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeship Council voted to table the requests to lower apprenticeship to journeyman ratios to 1 to 1 for a number of non-union electrical worker programs. That same issue was discussed at the December Council meeting. Without acting on the lower ratio requests, the Council indicated it would develop a set of standards so that these types of requests can be evaluated. There was no timetable given as to when the standards will be brought back to the Council. Presently ratios reflect that of the local bargaining agreements for each trade. Any changes to that system could have an anti-competitive effect on signatory contractors bidding on public works projects.

What's New Is Old

Even though no bills have officially been introduced for the upcoming legislative session, legislators are circulating memos asking their colleagues to cosponsor bills. A couple of these memos are familiar and indicate that some of last session's fights will be renewed in 2013. In particular, Representative Fred Keller (R, Perry County) will be introducing a bill to raise the threshold on prevailing wage projects from \$25 thousand to \$190,000. This same legislation was reported from the House Labor and Industry committee to the full House last session. It was the subject of much debate and speculation but wasn't ever voted on by the House. Likewise, Representative George Dunbar (R, Westmoreland County) is requesting cosponsors for a bill to outlaw project labor agreements in Pennsylvania for publicly funded projects. This bill was also introduced in previous sessions but never received a vote, even in committee. Both bills will officially be introduced shortly and will have bill numbers assigned to them at that time.

Legislative Activity

No bills of interest to the construction industry were acted on by the General Assembly in December. The session ended officially at midnight on November 30. The 2013-14 session begins on January 1.

Upcoming meetings of Interest

2013 HOUSE SESSION SCHEDULE

January	1, 14, 15, 16, 22, 23
February	4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13
March	11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20
April	8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24
May	6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15
June	3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28

2013 SENATE SESSION SCHEDULE

January	1, 22, 23, 28, 29, 30
February	4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 13
March	11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20
April	8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 29, 30
May	1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 13, 14
June	3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28

Copies of all bills of interest can be accessed via the Internet at:

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/BI/billroom.htm>