



Apprenticeship Initiative Contractor Webinar

Q&A 9/18/2025

1. If a current project bid opening receiving state loan funding occurred before the May date noted, is it exempt from the new requirements (or 'goals')? What is the cutoff date?

Answer: Projects that were bid on before July 28, 2023, would be exempt from the new 5% goal requirement, not from the 10% goal. Projects are eligible for a blanket waiver if they were bid after July 28, 2023, and bid up until 12/31/2025. The state agency funding the project can submit a Blanket Waiver Request to the Office of Illinois Works to request a waiver for those projects.

2. Who is held liable for these goals, the grantee or contractor?

Answer: The person or governing body who is contractually obligated to the state is ultimately liable for ensuring that the goals are met. The Grantee, Loan Recipient, or Contractor would have to include language in their contract with subcontractors to enforce measures and ensure that the subcontractors meet apprenticeship goals.

3. What is the time frame in which IL Works has to approve/deny Budget Supplements, Update Requests, Waivers, etc.?

Answer: All forms are reviewed by Illinois Works within 5 business days. Waivers must receive a determination from the state agency within 45 days of submission to DCEO Illinois Works, or they will be automatically approved.

4. Projects that were bid or completed before July 28, 2023, are they also eligible for the blanket waiver? Can they request waivers now?

Answers: These projects are exempt from the new 5% goal, as the law was not in place. There is no need to request a waiver to meet that goal for these projects. Projects can request a waiver/reduction at any time, but ideally as early as possible, if they are not able to meet the compliance goals, if the waiver uses one of the criteria



the law allows, and if technical evidence is submitted to support the waiver/reduction request.

5. To clarify, do projects that have been awarded since July 28, 2023, require a NEW budget supplement to be submitted? Do we also need to resubmit all the quarterly reports? We've had projects bid, awarded, constructed, and in substantial completion since then. I'm not quite understanding the requirements. We need to back-track almost 2.5 years, or is the request to start using the new forms on projects that haven't had budget supplements and quarterly reports submitted?

Answer: No, they will not be required to submit new forms if they have approved original forms on file. Depending on the project timelines. If the project was executed after July 28, 2023, and there are outstanding forms, use the new forms. For projects before that date, visit the [Apprenticeship Initiative](#) website or contact your state agency to determine which forms apply based on the project timelines.

6. Does the agency know we have good contractors that will no longer bid on these projects due to this requirement?

Answer: We understand that some contractors may no longer wish to participate in state-funded public works projects, and that is their right. However, these goals are legally mandated, and we have an obligation to enforce them.

7. The forms appear to be set up for agency data entry - yet the requirement appears to be on the contractor. Several references to E "executive Director" signatures and agency budget/funding.

Answer: The forms reference "Executive Director or Equivalent," which is to encompass a person's authority within an entity. The person who fills out the form would be whoever is contractually obligated to the state (it may be a contractor/grantee/or loan recipient)

8. We find that many of the state agencies do not understand the program to help contractors. Is the training for them a new process?



Answer: Illinois Works provides Technical Assistance to all state agencies reporting to Illinois Works. This is not a new process. If a state agency does not understand the process, please notify us at ceo.apprenticeshipinitiative@illinois.gov, and we will work with the agency to resolve any issues they may have.

9. Have the state agencies all been trained and have sufficient resources to take on the additional compliance forms if they are to help us complete them? The program relies on the state agency to enable this, but our experience is that the state agency lacks the capacity and is not up to speed/proficient with all the requirements.

Answer: State agencies are not required to complete the forms; they are to assist you with any questions that you may have in filling them out. Illinois Works provides Technical Assistance and webinars to state agency staff to ensure they understand the compliance process and the required documentation. If there is anything they cannot answer, Illinois Works will assist them in resolving the issue.

10. Is there going to be training on how to complete the Bid Credit Apprentice Report?

Answer: Yes, the Bid Credit Program staff hold weekly Technical Assistance sessions for contractors every Thursday from 10 am to 11 am. Please go to the [Bid Credit Program](#) website to register.

11. Please restate the date of the 2023 legislation.

Answer: July 28, 2023.

12. All communications from CEO.OGM.ILWorks@illinois.gov have only mentioned the 10% requirement. Is it safe to assume that the 5% requirement does not apply to our project? Is it safe to assume they have always submitted whatever waiver is required?

Answer: We are working with all state agencies to ensure they submit blanket waiver requests applicable to the 5% goal requirement to the Office of Illinois Works. We would encourage you to reach out to your state agency staff to ask if your project was included in their blanket waiver submission. If it has not been submitted yet, it is not an issue; just ask that the project be included in their next blanket waiver submission.



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13. How should a contractor handle a sub if throughout the whole project, the goals had been met by everybody on the project up until the last sub completed their work, and they provided no apprentice? They wouldn't provide any paperwork to justify why they didn't? How can we hold subs accountable? Will the general be penalized, or will the penalty be passed down to the sub who didn't comply?

Answer: Whoever is contractually obligated to the state would be held accountable. We suggest that the subcontractor's contract include provisions requiring compliance with the goals and imposing penalties for noncompliance.

14. What type of training is provided to contractors if they aren't aware of this webinar?

Answer: This webinar was recorded and will be posted on the [Illinois Works Apprenticeship Initiative Program Partner Guide](#). Illinois Works will also hold monthly contractor webinars in the future.

15. Is this a requirement of the overall project (prime and subcontractors as a whole), or does this goal apply to each contractor on the project?

Answer: Depending on the workflow, the project may be evaluated only on the state-funded portion or on the entire project. If the entire project qualifies, Illinois Works evaluates it by each prevailing wage classification used on the project.

16. Does each subcontractor need to submit a waiver for 5% of the 10%, or is that requirement just on a general basis?

Answer: It will be the general contractor's responsibility to determine whether a waiver is required, as they have all the information about the entire project. The General Contractor may require the subcontractor(s) to provide technical evidence supporting a waiver request.

17. If a prevailing wage classification has more than 5% and another one has less, does that balance out overall, or does it have to be line by line?

Answer: Per the law, the 5% is required for each prevailing wage classification.

18. Is there any chance the blanket waiver will be extended to pre-apprentice graduates? There are very few pre-apprentice programs/graduates in our area, and the goal will not be met for any projects in our area. By forcing us to use this state of Illinois product (pre-apprentice graduate) before it is even available, it unnecessarily creates a TON of individual waivers and workload that the state agency is not ready for.

Answer: Projects are currently eligible only for the blanket waiver through 12/31/2025. At this time, no extensions are planned, and projects will need to begin submitting individual waivers for the 5% pre-apprenticeship graduate requirement in each prevailing wage classification after the blanket waiver eligibility period. Illinois Works has graduated over 4,000 people, and the Illinois Works Career Services team is ready to help contractors locate graduates where and when they need them.

19. The contractor will submit forms to the grantee (local Government), and then the grantee will submit them to the IL Agency. Is this the correct flow of the forms?

Answer: In this case, the contractor must provide the grantee with the information for reporting, and the grantee would submit it to the state agency, which then submits it to the Office of Illinois Works at DCEO.

20. What happens if you do not meet the goals by the end of the project and submit a waiver, but it gets denied?

Answer: If a waiver is denied, the contractor may resubmit within 30 days of the denial to correct any deficiency in the request. If the waiver is not approved and the project ends noncompliant, the state agency will determine what action to take for failing to meet the goals (they can take any actions outlined in the law for not complying with the Illinois Works requirements).

21. You have a blanket waiver right now for pre-apprentice graduates, which is the more difficult part of this goal. Once that expires, the waiver quantity will jump dramatically.



Answer: Illinois Works has 45 days to finalize a determination on waiver requests; otherwise, they are automatically approved. The Office of Illinois Works has a technologically based process in place to review and approve waivers promptly.

22. Will the Q&A be provided in writing along with the recording of this?

Answer: Yes. It will be made available at the Illinois Works [Apprenticeship Initiative Program Partner Guide](#).

23. If we were not previously aware of the new requirements and do not have the legal language in ongoing contracts, how are we able to enforce this on the contractor?

Answer: The new requirements are eligible for a blanket waiver for projects bid before 120/31/2025. This blanket waiver period was authorized to give all parties ample time to incorporate the new requirements into their contracts.

24. If we are only in the hall and they do not have any graduates within the hall, would that be a sufficient reason for a waiver? Are we expected to look outside the union?

Answer: You can contact the Career Services and submit a Work Order Request to verify whether a list of graduates is available. If no graduates are available, the contractor would obtain an email confirming that none are available, which would be sufficient evidence for a waiver of the 5% graduate requirement. If the union hall has no graduates, ensure they provide written verification of their lack of apprentices and submit it with your waiver/reduction request.

25. Is there a state agency contacting and informing unions/halls about this program and the need for letters?

Answer: Unions are aware of the requirements. As a signatory of the union in good standing, there should not be an issue obtaining letters from the union hall. For non-union companies, the letter would need to come from a US Department of Labor-registered apprenticeship program, [Apprenticeship USA](#). Also, our Career Services team is actively communicating with union and non-union programs to inform them of the Illinois Works requirements.



26. Will action be taken against the grantee or the contractor if they do not meet these goals, as the grantee does not handle the hiring on projects?

Answer: The state agency will take action against the grantee if it chooses to do so. The grantee would hold the general contractor accountable, and the general contractor would hold the subcontractors accountable through contract agreements.

27. It was stated that a waiver request must be submitted either within 90 days or 30 days of the project end date (I heard both, but I believe 30 days was the final timeframe stated). Is that from the date entered on the request by the contractor, or is it from the date the state agency (e.g., IEPA for SRF-funded projects) would submit their (hopefully) recommendation to grant the waiver request? There could be a delay at IEPA's end due to uncertainty about their review process. From prior discussions, it seems like they are not entirely clear on these new requirements and the added burden.

Answer: The correct timeline is 30 days after the project ended to submit a waiver request. Waivers are evaluated on an individual basis. If it is determined that there was a delay due to the state agency not submitting the waiver, the Office of Illinois Works will evaluate the waiver and issue a determination based on the waiver's merit on a case-by-case basis.

28. I understand there is a waiver. If there is no justification, who is responsible, the grantee or the contractor?

Answer: Ultimately, it would be whoever is contractually obligated to the state. The grantee would hold the contractor accountable through the contract.

29. What if only 1 or 2 work classifications do not meet the apprentice goals, but other classifications do? Can they receive a waiver?

Answer: They are only eligible for a waiver if they meet one of the five criteria and provide technical evidence supporting the request.

30. Can you please include the minimus info on the supplement and reports? Never heard that this is allowed.



Answer: These minimum requirements are not included in the reports, as all prevailing wage classifications must be reported on the project. The de minimis threshold is applied only to waiver requests. Illinois Works does not require contractors to provide technical evidence for prevailing wage classifications with fewer than 100 estimated hours to obtain a waiver. However, this is a good-faith estimate. Suppose the estimated time is 90 hours, and 1,000 hours are worked on the classification. This would not be considered a good-faith estimate.

31. In a pass-through grant (such as SRF), how do you recommend that the owner/grantee confirm the veracity of the information submitted by the contractor in the Periodic Report?

Answer: We suggest verifying certified payroll if there are any questions about the report's accuracy.

32. Can you go over - or point to where it is written - the "de minimus" answer? Or provide a more complete example, using what the threshold is, and both the 10% and 5% goals?

Answer: These minimum requirements are not included in the reports, as all prevailing wage classifications must be reported on the project. The de minimis threshold is applied only to waiver requests. Illinois Works does not require contractors to provide technical evidence for prevailing wage classifications with fewer than 100 estimated hours to obtain a waiver. However, this is a good-faith estimate. Suppose the estimated time is 90 hours, and 1,000 hours are actually worked on the classification. This would not be considered a good-faith estimate.

33. We are a union signatory contractor and work with many unions and have not yet received any letters.

Answer: Illinois Works regularly receives letters from union halls across the state. There should be no reason why they refuse to give you a letter if you requested apprentices and they did not have any available. We would suggest contacting the union and escalating the issue if they refuse to issue a letter, and if you request apprentices and they are unable to provide them with a project (assuming you are signatory to their union).

34. What if a contractor does not need to hire new employees for a project? Is the expectation to hire apprentices regardless of whether they are needed or not?

Answer: Yes, this is a legally mandated requirement for projects that are eligible to comply with the Jobs Program Act.

35. Union Local 50 (Teamsters) does not consider any of their drivers as apprentices. How should this be reflected on IL Works forms?

Answer: Illinois Works recognizes that Truck Drivers are having great difficulty complying with apprenticeship requirements. We are discussing internally how to deal with this issue and will provide further guidance in the future. We continue to encourage contractors to use apprentices where available, or to obtain a letter from the Teamsters or a US Department of Labor registered apprenticeship program as justification for a waiver request when needed.

36. To clarify and make sure I understand. 10% of the overall labor must be apprentices, but on the periodic form, it appears only to be focused on the pre-apprenticeship workers. Are we listing our non-"pre-apprentice" workers on this same form and leaving out info in columns D & E? We have apprentices in our local, but they're not available in the pre-apprentice programs listed. I am confused about the apprentice reporting for the 10% goal.

Answer: The 10% goal is reported in columns H and I on the new Periodic Report form.

37. Should the grantee apply "Noncompliance Action Plan" components to their contractors if the goal is not being met and there is no technical evidence for the waiver? Will the state agency suspend the grant?

Answer: The Grantee should have compliance components in their contracts with contractors, but Illinois Works can't require this. That is completely up to the Grantee regarding contract enforcement. The state agency administering the contract/grant/loan will determine the penalties. The contract/grant/loan recipient will face noncompliance with the Jobs Program Act as determined by the Office of Illinois Works. At that point, the state agency funding the project must report back to



Illinois Works actions taken, if any, against the contractor/grantee/loan recipient within 30 days of receiving notice of noncompliance.

38. Thank you for rolling this program out to the contractors on form data entry and compliance requirements. We have received minimal information from the agency, even statements that this is a "Springfield" program. Can DCEO provide the agency contacts for the State of Illinois?

Answer: We recommend that you contact the state agency that is executing the contract/grant/loan directly. The Office of Illinois Works ensures compliance with these requirements through the state agencies that fund and execute capital projects. If you do not get the information you need, please reach out to us at: CEO.ApprenticeshipInitiative@Illinois.gov.

39. How are owner/operator hours handled regarding apprenticeship?

Answer: Owner/operator hours are not subject to apprenticeship requirements and should not be included in labor hours in the Budget Supplement.

40. The \$500k is construction cost (contractor agreement) or the total project cost (including engineer and other costs)?

Answer: The \$500k is the total project cost for the initial eligibility evaluation (this includes all costs associated with the project).

41. IDNR asked how they're supposed to report the IL Works Compliance, which reinforces how unaware the state agencies are.

Answer: Illinois Works is currently working with IDNR and providing Technical Assistance to ensure IDNR understands the Illinois Works program requirements.