

# The Davis-Bacon Act, As Amended

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U.S. Department of Labor  
Employment Standards Administration  
Wage and Hour Division

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## DAVIS-BACON ACT

[Public - No. 403 - 74th Congress]

[S. 3303]

AN ACT

To amend the Act approved March 3, 1931, relating to the rate of wages for laborers and mechanics employed by contractors and subcontractors on public buildings.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Act entitled "An Act relating to the rate of wages for laborers and mechanics employed on public buildings of the United States and the District of Columbia by contractors or subcontractors, and for other purposes," approved March 3, 1931, is amended to read as follows:

"That the advertised specifications for every contract in excess of \$2,000, to which the United States or the District of Columbia is a party, for construction, alteration, and/or repair, including painting and decorating, of public buildings or public works of the United States or the District of Columbia within the geographical limits of the States of the Union or the District of Columbia, and which requires or involves the employment of mechanics and/or laborers shall contain a provision stating the minimum wages to be paid various classes of laborers and mechanics which shall be based upon the wages that will be determined by the Secretary of Labor to be prevailing for the corresponding classes of laborers and mechanics employed on projects of a character similar to the contract work in the city, town, village, or other civil subdivision of the State in which the work is to be performed, or in the District of Columbia if the work is to be performed there; and every contract based upon these specifications shall contain a stipulation that the contractor or his subcontractor shall pay all mechanics and laborers employed directly upon the site of the work, unconditionally and not less often than once a week, and without subsequent deduction or rebate on any account, the full amounts accrued at time of payment, computed at wage rates not less than those stated in the advertised specifications, regardless of tiny contractual relationship which

may be alleged to exist between the contractor or subcontractor and such laborers and mechanics, and that the scale of wages to be paid shall be posted by the contractor in a prominent and easily accessible place at the site of the work: and the further stipulation that there may be withheld from the contractor so much of accrued payments as may be considered necessary by the contracting officer to pay to laborers and mechanics employed by the contractor or any subcontractor on the work the difference between the rates of wages required by the contract to be paid laborers and mechanics on the work and the rates of wages received by such laborers and mechanics and not refunded to the contractor, subcontractors or their agents.

"Sec. 2. Every contract within the scope of this Act shall contain the further provision that in the event it is found by the contracting officer that any laborer or mechanic employed by the contractor or any subcontractor directly on the site of the work covered by the contract has been or is being paid a rate of wages less than the rate of wages required by the contract to be paid as aforesaid, the Government may, by written notice to the contractor, terminate his right to proceed with the work or such part of the, work as to which there has been a failure to pay said required wages and to prosecute the work to completion by contract or otherwise, and the contractor and his sureties shall be liable to the Government for any excess costs occasioned the Government thereby.

"Sec. 3. (a) The Comptroller General of the United States is hereby authorized and directed to pay directly to laborers and mechanics from any accrued payments withheld under the terms of the contract any wages found to be due laborers and mechanic pursuant to this Act; and the Comptroller General of the United States is further authorized and is directed to distribute

a list to all departments of the Government giving the names of persons or firms whom he was found to have disregarded their obligations to employees and subcontractors. No contract shall be awarded to the persons or firms appearing on this list or to any firm, corporation, partnership, or association in which such persons or firms have an interest until three years have elapsed from the date of publication of the list containing the names of such persons or firms.

"(b) If the accrued payments withheld under the terms of the contract, as aforesaid, are insufficient to reimburse all the laborers and mechanics with respect to whom there has been a failure to pay the wages required pursuant to this Act, such laborers and mechanics shall have the right of a action and/or of intervention against the contractor and his sureties conferred by law upon persons furnishing labor or materials, and in such proceedings it shall be no defense that such laborers and mechanics accepted or agreed to accept less than the required rate of wages or voluntarily made refunds.

"Sec. 4. This Act shall not be construed to supersede or impair any authority otherwise granted by Federal law to provide for the establishment of specific wage rates.

"Sec. 5. This Act shall take effect thirty days after its passage, but shall not affect any contract then existing or any contract that may thereafter be entered into pursuant to invitations for bids that are outstanding at the time of the passage of this Act.

"Sec. 6. In the event of a national emergency the President is authorized to suspend the provisions of this Act.

"Sec. 7. The funds appropriated and made available by the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935 (Public Resolution Numbered 11, 74th Congress), are hereby made available for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1936, to the Department of Labor for expenses of the administration of this Act."

Approved, August 30, 1935.

## AMENDMENT

[Public - No. 633 - 76th Congress]

[Chapter 373 - 3d Session]

[S. 3650]

### AN ACT

To require the payment of prevailing rates of wages on Federal public works in Alaska and Hawaii.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 1 of the Act entitled "An Act relating to the rate of wages for laborers and mechanics employed on public buildings of the United States and the District of Columbia by contractors and subcontractors, and for other purposes," approved March 3, 1931 (46 Stat. 1494), as amended, is further amended by striking out the words "States of the Union or the District of Columbia" and inserting in lieu thereof "States of the Union, the Territory of Alaska, the Territory of Hawaii, or the District of Columbia"; and by striking out the words "or other civil subdivision of the State" and inserting in lieu thereof "or other civil subdivision of the State, or the Territory of Alaska, or the Territory of Hawaii".*

Sec. 2. The amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the thirtieth day after the date of enactment of this Act, but shall not affect any contract in existence on such effective date or made thereafter pursuant to invitations for bids outstanding on the date of enactment of this Act.

Approved, June 15, 1940.

[40 U.S. Code, sec. 276a-7]

The fact that any contract authorized by any Act is entered into without regard to section 5 of Title 41, or upon a cost-plus-a-fixed-fee basis or otherwise without advertising for proposals, shall not be construed to render inapplicable the provisions of sections 276a to 276a-5 of this title, if such Act would otherwise be applicable to such contract. March 23, 1941, 12 noon, ch. 26, 55 Stat. 53; Aug. 21, 1941, ch. 395, 55 Stat. 658.

# AMENDMENT

[Public - No. 88-349 - 88th Congress]

July 2, 1964

[H.R. 6041]

## AN ACT

To amend the prevailing wage section of the Davis-Bacon Act, as amended; and related sections of the Federal Airport Act, as amended; and the National Housing Act, as amended.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representative of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That section 1 of the Act of March 3, 1931, as amended (46 Stat. 1494, as amended; 40 U.S.C. 276a), is hereby amended by designating the language of the present section as subsection (a) and by adding at the end thereof the following new subsection (b)

"(b) As used in this Act the term 'wages', 'scale of wages', 'wage rates', 'minimum wages', and 'prevailing wages' shall include-

"(1) the basic hourly rate of pay; and

"(2) the amount of-

"(A) the rate of contribution irrevocably made by a contractor or subcontractor to a trustee or to a third person pursuant to a fund, plan, or program; and

"(B) the rate of costs to the contractor or subcontractor which may be reasonably anticipated in providing benefits to laborers and mechanics pursuant to an enforceable commitment to carry out a financially responsible plan or program which was communicated in writing to the laborers and mechanics affected,

for medical or hospital care, pensions on retirement or death, compensation for injuries or illness resulting from occupational activity, or insurance to provide any of the foregoing, for unemployment benefits, life insurance, disability and sickness insurance, or accident insurance, for vacation and holiday pay, for defraying costs of apprenticeship or other similar programs, or for other bona fide fringe benefits, but only where the contractor or subcontractor is not required by other Federal, State, or local law to provide any such benefits:

Provided, That the obligation of a contractor or subcontractor to make payment in accordance with the prevailing wage determinations of the Secretary of Labor, insofar as this Act and other Acts incorporating this Act by reference are concerned may be discharged by the making of payments in cash, by the making of contributions of a type referred to in paragraph (2) (A), or by the assumption of an enforceable commitment to bear the costs of a plan or program of a type referred to in paragraph (2) (B), or any combination thereof, where the aggregate of any such payments, contribution, and costs is not less than the rate of pay described in paragraph (1) plus the amount referred to in paragraph (2).

"In determining the overtime pay to which the laborer or mechanic is entitled under any Federal law, his regular or basic hourly rate of pay (or other alternative rate upon which premium rate of overtime compensation is computed) shall be deemed to be the rate computed under paragraph (1), except that where the amount of payments, contributions, or costs incurred with respect to him exceeds the prevailing wage applicable to him under this Act, such regular or basic hourly rate of pay (or such other alternative rate) shall be arrived at by deducting from the amount of payments, contributions, or costs actually incurred with respect to him, the amount of contributions or costs of the types described in paragraph (2) actually incurred with respect to him, or the amount determined under paragraph (2) but not actually paid, whichever amount is the greater."

SEC. 2. Section 15(b) of the Federal Airport Act, as amended (60 Stat. 178, as amended ; 49 U.S.C. 1114(b)), is hereby amended by inserting the words "in accordance with the Davis-Bacon Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 276a-276a-5)" after the words "Secretary of Labor,".

SEC. 3. Section 212(a) of the National Housing Act, as amended (53 Stat. 208, as amended; 12 U.S.C. 1715(c)), is hereby amended by inserting the words "in accordance with the Davis-Bacon Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 276a-276a-5)," after the words "Secretary of Labor,".

SEC. 4. The amendments made by this Act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after the date of enactment of this Act, but shall not affect any contract in existence on such effective date or made thereafter pursuant to invitations for bids outstanding on such effective date and the rate of payments specified by section 1 (b) (2) of the Act of March 3, 1931, as amended by this Act, shall, during a period of two hundred and seventy days after such effective date, become effective only in those cases and reasonable classes of cases as the Secretary of Labor, acting as rapidly as practicable to make such rates of payments fully effective, shall by rule or regulation provide.

Federal construction contract laborers  
Fringe benefits.  
49 Stat. 1011

78 STAT. 238  
78 STAT. 239

Trustee contribution.

Benefit costs.

Payor obligations, method of payment.

Overtime pay computation, exclusion of benefit costs.

Airport project.  
63 Stat. 480  
49 Stat. 1011  
Housing projects.

53 Stat. 807  
73 Stat. 667.  
12 USC 1715c.  
Effective date.  
78 STAT. 239  
78 STAT. 240