

COMMISSION FILE NO: 25-174-12 **DATE INTRODUCED:** December 15, 2025

INTRODUCED BY: Executive Director (Signature on File in the Office of the Commission)

REFERRED BY COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON TO: Policy, Finance, and Personnel Committee

RELATING TO: Direction on Local Workforce Program Implementation

SUMMARY:

Commission Policy 1-78.01, Procurement Practices to Ensure Competition and a Resilient Workforce [title proposed December 2025], directs District staff to implement a local workforce program to promote the utilization of local workers to maximize the economic impact of the District's annual operating and capital spending. The local workforce program is implemented through Administrative Policy 2-78.21, Apprentice Utilization and Local Workforce Participation on District Construction Projects. This Administrative Policy requires that a percentage (typically 45%) of labor hours are performed by workers residing in the Sanitary Sewer Service Area (SSSA) and that a percentage of labor hours (typically 20%) are performed by workers qualifying as "Target Area Workers."

A Target Area Worker is defined by:

1. Resident of a target area zip code; and/or
2. Certified Communities in Need (COIN) worker (Milwaukee Public Schools Program); and/or
3. Certified Residents Preference Program (RPP) worker (City of Milwaukee Program); and/or
4. Graduate or participant of the District's Workforce Development Training and Placement Program, who resides within the SSSA; and/or
5. An employee of the prime or subcontractor, who has been certified by the District or its designee as low income, whose residence is within the SSSA and whose household income is at or below the poverty threshold.

ATTACHMENTS: **BACKGROUND** ☐ **KEY ISSUES** ☐ **RESOLUTION** ☒
FISCAL NOTE ☐ **S/W/MBE** ☐ **OTHER** ☐

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COMMITTEE ACTION: _____ **DATE:** _____

COMMISSION ACTION: _____ **DATE:** _____

SUMMARY (Cont'd)

Direction on Local Workforce Program Implementation

In practice, District contractors have relied largely on zip codes to determine a Target Area Worker.

Historically, the District has recognized separate categories for minority- and women-owned business enterprises and has required vendors to make good faith efforts to include businesses from each category. In professional services procurements, points were awarded in the evaluation of proposals for participation by minority- and women-owned businesses. Recent legal developments, including a July 29, 2025, guidance document from the federal Office of the Attorney General, citing *Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023), leads to a recommendation to move the District to a program that is race and gender neutral.

In this action, the Commission is directing staff to research and propose revisions to the local workforce administrative policy and implementation with the following goals:

- Prioritize workers who have completed a District-sponsored or similar workforce development program, including construction pre-apprentice programs.
- Prioritize workers who have struggled with period of unemployment or have a household income below a specified threshold.
- Reduce reliance on geography as a qualifying element.

District staff shall make a recommendation for revisions in June 2026.

RESOLUTION

Direction on Local Workforce Program Implementation

RESOLVED, by the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage Commission, that staff is directed to research and propose modifications to the implementation of the local workforce program by June 2026.