



**King County**  
**Dow Constantine**  
King County Executive

**MEMORANDUM**

**From:** Dow Constantine, King County Executive

**To:** Caroline Whalen, Director, Department of Executive Services (DES)  
Ken Guy, Director, Finance and Business Operations Division (FBOD), DES  
Anthony Wright, Director, Facilities Maintenance Division (FMD), DES  
Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)  
Harold Taniguchi, Director, Department of Transportation (DOT)

**Date:** May 10, 2016

**Subject:** Priority Hire Policy at King County

Today, I am directing you to begin implementation of a Priority Hire Pilot Program for King County capital construction projects. Priority hire provisions, developed by the Finance and Business Operations Division, should be included on projects with Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) that are scheduled to go out for bid within the next 12 months.

Priority hire is designed to prioritize economically disadvantaged local workers for inclusion in capital construction projects. It is also referred to as “targeted hire.” It is the right policy for King County because it advances our equity and social justice goals and grows the skilled workforce that will be necessary for our region to continue to prosper. Though many populations and areas of King County are thriving, not all populations, especially many communities of color and those living in economically disadvantaged communities, have access to jobs that pay family wages and economic opportunity. Priority hire will improve access to employment and training programs for workers needing family-wage jobs by supporting the hiring of residents who live in economically distressed areas of King County. Already, many other jurisdictions, including the City of Seattle and San Francisco, have successfully implemented priority hire legislation and programs.

Additionally, DES is currently conducting a review of my 2013 Executive Order regarding the use of PLAs on King County capital construction projects. I would like to broaden this review so that it also includes recommendations for transitioning the Pilot Program into a revised, long-term County approach on the use of PLAs.

I would like to form a task force, led by Dylan Ordoñez, of appropriate staff within your departments to evaluate the use of priority hire on capital construction projects, including lessons learned through the Pilot Program. I would like the task force's recommendations before the end of the Pilot Program so that we may formalize our implementation in 2017.

In the course of evaluating and preparing a recommendation for priority hire, I would like to find ways of leveraging our highly successful apprenticeship and small business contracting programs. Thanks to our regional partnership on small contractor and supplier (SCS) certifications, in 2016 we have more than 2,400 SCS firms that we can access in our inventory. Most of these small businesses are located in our region. In 2015 our apprenticeship program achieved 73,733 labor hours on various construction project resulting in 17.4 percent of all the labor hours being performed by apprentices, exceeding our target requirements by more than 5 percent. With priority hire, we have the opportunity to further enhance employment opportunities for workers who enter apprenticeship programs and/or who work for SCS construction firms.

Your work toward formalizing the long-term implementation plan should be developed in consultation with the King County Council and/or Council staff, and also with input from members of the community, labor, the construction industry, and other interested stakeholders.

I look forward to King County's implementation of priority hire, and I look forward to your stakeholder-informed proposed recommendations.

Sincerely,



Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

cc: King County Councilmembers  
    ATTN: Carolyn Busch, Chief of Staff  
          Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council  
Carrie S. Cihak, Director, Policy and Strategic Initiatives, King County Executive Office  
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget  
Tom Koney, Deputy Director, Department of Executive Services (DES)  
Sandy Hanks, Manager, Business Development and Contract Compliance (FBOD), DES  
Matias Valenzuela, Director, Office of Equity and Social Justice (ESJ), King County  
    Executive Office  
Dylan Ordoñez, Director of External Relations, King County Executive Office