

# DISABILITY PAID AT SPECIAL MINIMUM WAGE

## NOTICE TO WORKERS WITH DISABILITIES PAID AT SPECIAL MINIMUM WAGES

This establishment has a certificate authorizing the payment of special minimum wages to workers who are disabled for the work they are performing. Authority to pay special minimum wages to workers with disabilities applies to work covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), McNamara-O'Hara Service Contract Act (SCA), and/or Walsh-Healey Public Contracts Act (PCA). Such special minimum wages are referred to as "commensurate wage rates" and are less than the basic hourly rates stated in an SCA wage determination and less than the FLSA minimum wage of \$4.75 per hour beginning October 1, 1996 and \$5.15 per hour beginning September 1, 1997. A "commensurate wage rate" is based on the worker's individual productivity, no matter how limited, in proportion to the wage and productivity of experienced non-disabled workers performing essentially the same type, quality, and quantity of work in the geographic area from which the labor force of the community is drawn.

### **Workers With Disabilities**

For purposes of payment of commensurate wage rates under a certificate, a worker with a disability is defined as: An individual whose earnings or productivity capacity is impaired by a physical or mental disability, including those related to age or injury, for the work to be performed.

Disabilities which may affect productive capacity include blindness, mental illness, mental retardation, cerebral palsy, alcoholism, and drug addiction. The following do not ordinarily affect productive capacity for purposes of paying commensurate wage rates: educational disabilities; chronic unemployment; receipt of welfare benefits; non-attendance at school; juvenile delinquency; and correctional parole or probation.

### **Key Elements of Commensurate Wage Rates**

**Non-disabled worker standard**—The objective gauge (usually a time study of the production of workers who are not disabled for the job) against which the productivity of a worker with a disability is measured.

**Prevailing wage rate**—The wage paid to experienced workers who are not disabled for the same or similar work and who are performing such work in the area. Most SCA contracts include a wage determination specifying the prevailing wage rates to be paid for SCA covered work.

**Evaluation of the productivity of the worker with a disability**—Documented measurement of the production of the worker with a disability (quantity and quality).

The wages of all workers paid commensurate wages must be reviewed and adjusted, if appropriate, at periodic intervals. At a minimum, the productivity of hourly paid workers must be reevaluated every six months and a new prevailing wage survey must be conducted at least once every twelve months.

### **Overtime**

Generally, if you are performing work subject to the FLSA, SCA, and/or PCA, you must be paid at least 1½ times your regular rate of pay for all hours worked over 40 in a workweek.

### **Child Labor**

Minors younger than 18 years old must be employed in accordance with the child labor provisions of FLSA. No persons under 16 may be employed in manufacturing or on a PCA contract.

### **Fringe Benefits**

Neither the FLSA nor the PCA have provisions requiring vacation, holiday, or sick pay nor other fringe benefits such as health insurance or pension plans. SCA wage determinations may require such fringe benefit payments (or a cash equivalent). Workers paid under a certificate authorizing commensurate wage rates must receive the full fringe benefits listed on the wage determination.

### **Worker Notification**

Each worker with a disability and, where appropriate, the parent or guardian of such worker, shall be informed orally and in writing by the employer of the terms of the certificate under which such worker is employed.

### **Petition Process**

Workers with disabilities paid at special minimum wages may petition the Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor for a review of their wage rates by an Administrative Law Judge. No particular form of petition is required, except that it must be signed by the worker with a disability or his or her parent or guardian and should contain the name and address of the employer. Petitions should be mailed to: Administrator, Wage and Hour Division, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-3502, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210.

*Employers shall display this poster where employees and the parents and guardians of workers with disabilities can readily see it. Complaints or questions regarding the terms and conditions of employment under a certificate may be directed to the Wage and Hour Division office nearest you — listed in your telephone directory under United States Government, Labor.*

U.S. Department of Labor WH Publication 1284  
Employment Standards Administration Revised October 1996  
Wage and Hour Division Washington, D.C. 20210