

Ramsey County approves prevailing wage ordinance

Written by
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The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners approved an update of its longstanding prevailing wage ordinance Tuesday that ties the wage more directly to the state prevailing wage. Since 1977, Ramsey County has maintained a prevailing wage policy that is required to be included in all solicitations for bids on contracts for the purchase of labor and materials.

The ordinance approved last Tuesday was supported by organized labor and codifies in law the county's longstanding prevailing wage policy.

"The county wants to make sure that the services and goods we buy with taxpayer money are of the highest quality," said Board Chair Rafael E. Ortega. "We also want to ensure that the people who work on county projects or who provide good and services to us are fairly compensated."

The ordinance requires that hourly wages paid to workers keep pace with the prevailing wage rates established by the state and that disputes be referred to the county attorney's office.

For state-funded construction projects, the prevailing wage for general laborers in Ramsey, Hennepin, Dakota, Washington and Anoka counties is \$29 per hour, as well as \$16.12 in fringe benefits.



Ramsey County Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt, who chairs the board's budget committee, said the ordinance is a win-win for county residents, many of whom work in construction trades. "This ordinance means that taxpayers get the highest value for their dollar and makes sure that the men and women who perform work for Ramsey County can also afford to live, work and raise their families in our county."

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As the Ramsey County Board of Commissioners considers the ordinance, the county is also looking at the impact of the ordinance on the county's budget and the ability to pay prevailing wages to county employees.