

Fact Sheet #81: The Davis-Bacon Wage Survey Process

This fact sheet provides general information regarding the process for determining prevailing wage rates under the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA).

The Davis-Bacon and Related Acts

The DBRA generally require the payment of prevailing wages to laborers and mechanics employed on the site of the work of certain federally funded or assisted contracts for construction, alteration, or repair. For more information about coverage under the DBRA, visit <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction>.

DBRA prevailing wages are determined based on wages paid to various classes of laborers and mechanics employed on specific types of construction projects in a geographic area. To determine prevailing wages, the U.S. Department of Labor’s Wage and Hour Division (WHD) obtains and compiles wage rate information through a survey program conducted in accordance with the DBRA’s implementing regulations.

General Wage Determinations

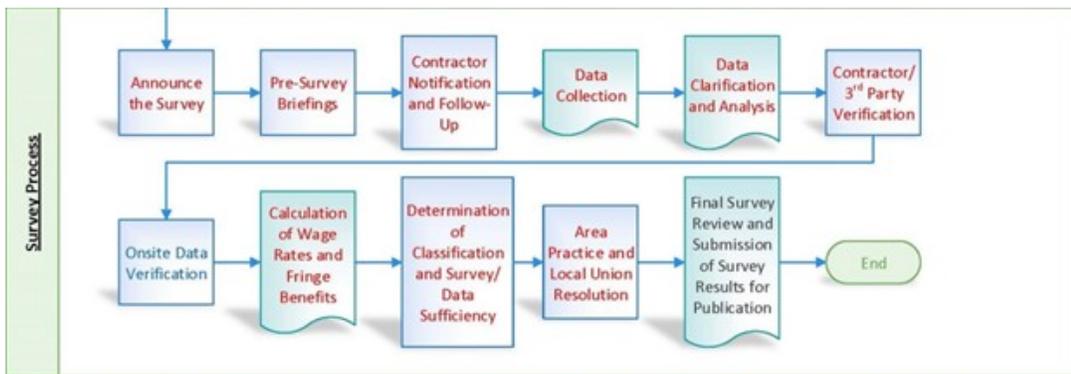
The wage rate information collected through WHD surveys is used to publish “general” wage determinations. General wage determinations are published on the Wage Determinations Online website at <https://SAM.gov> and reflect those rates determined by WHD to be prevailing in a specific geographic area, typically a county, for the type of construction described, i.e., building, residential, highway, or heavy construction. If there is a general wage determination applicable to a DBRA-covered project, the contracting agency may incorporate the wage determination into the contract without consulting the Department of Labor.

The Davis-Bacon Wage Survey Process

The Davis-Bacon wage survey process is intended to collect wage rate and fringe benefit data on the crafts typically used within the given category of construction in order to publish complete wage determinations. WHD develops an annual survey plan prior to the beginning of each fiscal year and posts updates to current surveys on its website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction/surveys/status>. Surveys are conducted by the Branch of Wage Surveys. Surveys involve the following steps:

- **Determine survey parameters:** WHD first sets the survey parameters, which include the geographic scope of the survey, the type of construction to be surveyed, and the survey time frame.
- **Obtain Project List.** WHD reviews “Dodge Reports” to identify active projects in the area to be surveyed. The reports include the construction type, expected duration, prime contractor, and project value for each listed project.

- Conduct pre-survey briefings. Pre-survey briefings typically are conducted just before the survey is scheduled to start. These meetings are conducted to provide a thorough explanation of the survey process to contractors and other interested parties. They include a detailed explanation of survey parameters as well as guidance on completing the WD-10 data collection form.
- Notify interested contractors and parties. All contractors identified on the relevant Dodge Reports are notified of the survey. Notification letters are also sent to interested third parties such as congressional delegations, international and local unions, and national and local contractor associations. These letters outline survey parameters and offer to provide pre-survey briefings.
- Collect and analyze data. The Branch of Wage Surveys contacts contractors and interested parties to collect the survey data and then analyzes the collected survey data to determine prevailing wages.
- Publication. After the Branch of Wage Surveys completes its analysis and review of the wage data and the prevailing wage rates that it recommends be published based on that data, the survey results are transmitted to the Branch of Construction Wage Determinations for final review and publication. All surveys are reviewed for accuracy and compliance with established procedures.



Important Additional Information

- All contractors and other interested parties are strongly encouraged to participate in the survey process.
- WHD does not use data submitted during the course of a survey for purposes of enforcement.
- Participation in the survey process is critical to the publication of prevailing wage and fringe benefit rates that accurately reflect the rates paid in the area being surveyed.
- Data is collected on ALL construction projects that satisfy the survey parameters. Data submission is NOT limited to federally funded construction projects – data from private construction projects is also considered.
- WD-10 forms submitted by contractors and other interested parties will be kept confidential to the maximum extent possible under existing law.
- WHD staff are available to provide additional information and assistance in completing WD-10 forms.

Websites

- <https://sam.gov> – For general wage determinations and other information relevant to the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts.
- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction/surveys> – For information regarding the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts and the survey process.
- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction/surveys/status> – For information on the status of all surveys planned, in progress, or recently published.
- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction/surveys/wd10> – For an electronic WD-10 form, including instructions on how to complete the form.
- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction/faq> – For frequently asked questions.
- <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction/regions> – For Branch of Wage Survey Team Information

For additional information, visit our Wage-Hour Website: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd> and/or call our Wage-Hour toll-free information and helpline, available 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in your time zone, 1-866-4USWAGE (1-866-487-9243).

This publication is for general information and is not to be considered in the same light as official statements of position contained in the regulations.

U.S. Department of Labor
Frances Perkins Building
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

1-866-4-USWAGE
TTY: 1-866-487-9243
[Contact Us](#)