

Office of the Purchasing Agent - Living Wage Policy

The living wage policy, as it pertains to County Contracts, is covered in §4-103 of the Arlington County Purchasing Resolution.

Listed below are questions and answers about the policy. If you need clarification of any of the answers, or have more specific questions, please contact the Purchasing office at 703-228-3410.

Q: When did the policy go into effect?

A: The changes to the Resolution went into effect on June 28, 2003.

Q: What is the current Living Wage rate?

A: Effective July 1, 2016, the rate is \$14.50 per hour.

Q: Does the new rate apply to existing contracts?

A: The new rate applies to contracts covered by the policy that are awarded or renewed after the effective date of July 1, 2016. For existing contracts, the new rate only applies beginning upon their next renewal period.

Q: How often will the rate change?

A: The rate will be established on an annual basis, effective July 1 of each year. Any adjustment to the rate would be posted on the Purchasing Website by July 1, and would be applicable to any affected contract in effect on July 1, or any affected contract that is awarded during the twelve month period following July 1.

Q: What types of contracts are covered?

A: The policy generally applies only to County contracts awarded under competitive bidding or competitive negotiation, with an annual value greater than \$100,000 and that are performed on County-owned or controlled property. The policy does not generally not apply to contracts for professional services, contracts for construction, construction management contracts, design build contracts, contracts for goods, or contracts procured by emergency or by sole source. The County may decide, on a limited basis, to expand the limits to include certain other contracts.

Q: How will the County ensure that a contractor is paying the living wage to its employees?

A: Any contractor who is awarded a contract that includes the living wage requirement must provide a quarterly report to the Office of the Purchasing Agent that shows that they, and any subcontractors they may have, are paying the living wage to all employees who are working under the contract. The County will review these reports as needed to verify compliance.

Q: What should an employee do if the contractor they are working for is not paying them the Living Wage?

A: Any employee who is not paid the living wage can file a complaint with the Purchasing Agent. The Purchasing Agent will investigate the claim, and if it is valid the contractor will be required to pay the employee the amount of the unpaid wage, plus interest. Contractors are not permitted to retaliate against an employee who files a complaint that a contractor is not paying them the proper rate, or who takes any other action related to enforcement of the living wage policy.

Q: What will happen to a contractor if they fail to pay the correct wage after the Purchasing Agent has notified them?

A: Failure to pay the correct wage may be grounds for the Purchasing Agent to terminate the contract, and debar the contractor under the Article 6 of the Purchasing Resolution.