

OFFERED BY COUNCILOR BRIAN WORRELL



## **CITY OF BOSTON**

**IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY SIX**

### **ORDER FOR A HEARING TO REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE BOSTON RESIDENTS JOBS POLICY IN IMPROVING EQUITY AND EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ON PROJECTS THROUGHOUT THE CITY**

**WHEREAS,** Established in 1983 to set equitable employment standards meant to improve the share of labor worked by residents, people of color, and women on construction sites throughout the City, the Boston Residents Jobs Policy (BRJP) remains a crucial tool in shaping the diversity and inclusivity of our city's workforce by setting hiring goals for public development projects and private development projects over 50,000 square feet that include hiring 51% Boston residents, 40% people of color and 12% women to work on each project; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The BRJP is housed in the Office of Workforce Compliance (OWC), which staffs 7 people to monitor approximately 165 construction projects per year across the city, and recommends any necessary sanctions to the Boston Employment Commission (BEC), which is charged with imposing fines on noncompliant firms; *and*

**WHEREAS,** According to OWC, the BRJP Office is allowed to give feedback on firms and their project compliance rates to the contract awarding authority, but they are not allowed to make decisions on which companies the City will continue to work with; *and*

**WHEREAS,** After advocacy from the City Council and resident workers, BEC developed a database and public dashboard to identify hiring trends across projects – including a breakdown of differences in trades and hours worked on job sites by residents, women and people of color – to help decision-makers ensure contracts are awarded to those who prioritize diversity in employment, and to help uphold a nature of accountability and transparency in the work of achieving the City's goals for a diverse workforce through the publication of this data; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The ordinance tasks the BEC to gather and report this data assessing compliance rates of developers, general contractors, construction managers and subcontractors for all projects across the city, to be presented to the City Council at biannual hearings for review; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The BRJP dashboard shows that hours worked by women have on average steadily decreased since 2022 and, in May of 2025 the OWC reported to the City

Council that about 21% of work hours have gone to Boston residents, reflecting a decrease from 28% in late 2018; *and*

**WHEREAS,** In 2025, the Planning Department estimated that “full compliance with [the BRJP] across all trades would result in 3 million additional construction hours worked by Boston residents, earning \$174.4 million in wages at prevailing wage rates”; *and*

**WHEREAS,** With 7 monitors to juggle the casework and a reported capacity to review about 7% of active projects at any one time, the BEC and OWC continue to face staffing strains that impact their ability to efficiently monitor all projects in the city, to ensure all necessary compliance reporting is completed in a timely and efficient manner, and to translate the City’s workforce equity goals to tangible outcomes in construction hiring trends to ensure these trends actually align with BRJP standards; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Even on projects monitored by BRJP representatives and located in areas with the highest displacement rates from development, there remain common disparities in hiring practices, trades and associated wage levels amongst contractors – with workers of color, women and especially women workers of color, as well as residents being relegated more often than not to some of the lowest paid trades and fewest amount of work hours in any given month of a project’s timeline; *and*

**WHEREAS,** It is important to explore practices to enhance enforcement mechanisms for noncompliant firms, help firms improve rates of compliance, and to continue updating the database of compliance reports with the most comprehensive information available – including wage breakdowns, union versus non-union work hours, and discrepancies in diversity across higher paid trades and journeymen versus apprenticeship positions – to gain better insight into the labor disparities endured by different communities, and a better understanding of the real economic mobility of Boston’s residents; ***NOW, THEREFORE BE IT***

**ORDERED:** That the Boston City Council hold a hearing every six (6) months to review the BRJP and the BEC’s work as it pertains to meeting the city’s hiring goals, to consider whether the goals for worker hours should be adjusted based on the data presented, and to explore ways of improving the BRJP. Representatives from the Boston Employment Commission, the Worker Empower Cabinet, the Office of Workforce Development, Procurement, and trade and union representatives should be invited to attend.

Filed on: January 26, 2026