



Pay or Play Program Operating Procedures

Background

The Pay or Play Program was established with Ordinance 2007-534 on July 1, 2007 and is governed by Executive Order 1-7. The Pay or Play Program (POP) creates a more level playing field and enhances fairness in the bid process between competing contractors that choose to offer health benefits to their workforce and those who do not. The program also recognizes and accounts for the fact that there are costs associated with providing health care for the uninsured citizens of Houston and Harris County area.

Administration:

- Vendors are required to begin complying with POP within 30 days of contract award by utilizing the designated system, *B2G Workforce Module*, at <https://houston.mwdbe.com> to complete/review POP activities.
- Vendors are required to utilize *JP Morgan Chase Pay Connexion (Pay Connexion)* portal that will accept POP payments electronically. B2G Workforce Module will provide a direct link to *Pay Connexion* where contractors may submit payment via Debit Card, Credit Card, Automated Clearing House (ACH) and/or Electronic Checks (e-checks). Contractors will be charged a convenience fee per transaction.
- Vendors who onboard new employees are allowed a 60-day waiting period upon each new employee's start date to begin participating in POP. After the 60-day period has lapsed, Vendor must include the employee in POP reporting.
- The Office of Business Opportunity (OBO) has citywide administrative oversight of the program, including audit responsibilities. Vendor's compliance with POP requirements will be directly managed by the City Department with whom Vendor has contracted (Contracting Department). Questions about POP should be referred to the Contracting Department's POP Liaison. A contact list for POP Liaisons is available at <http://www.houstontx.gov/obo/popforms.html> or by contacting the OBO POP Administrator at 832-393-0633 or Brianne.Maxwell@houstontx.gov.



Pre-bid/Pre-Proposal Forms:

- Vendors must complete and return the following forms before contract award by the Contracting Department:
 - *Acknowledgment Form* (POP-1)
 - *Certification of Compliance* (POP-2)
 - *Participating Subcontractors Form* (POP-3)

Prime/Subcontractor Waiver Request (Form POP-4):

- Completed by Contracting Department prior to City Council approval contract award, for contract(s) that may meet exemption criteria as stated in EO 1-7. Form POP-4 must be signed by Contracting Department and forwarded, along with supporting documentation, to OBO POP Administrator for final decision.
- A new Form POP-4 is not needed for contract amendments and/or extensions, as the POP requirements in the original contract continues to apply.
- Contractors that utilize self-employed, owner/operator individuals to complete services (e.g., Truck Drivers, Day Laborers, 10-99, etc.) are POP exempt.
- Vendors should not submit a Form POP-4 for contracts enumerated in section 4.2 of EO 1-7, as those contracts are not covered under POP.

Pay Option Reporting (Workforce Audit):

- Vendors will create a *Workforce Employee List* showcasing all active employees working on the City of Houston project. Vendors will complete a weekly workforce audit by the end of each month. Vendors must provide the Total Hours Worked and individual Hours Worked by each covered employee as part of the weekly workforce audit.
 - Total Hours Worked = Total Number of Hours Employee worked for Employer.
 - Hours Worked = Total Number of Hours Employee worked on COH project.

Invoice Submission:

- Invoices are created from monthly *Workforce Audits* reports. Payments are due to the contracting department 30 business days after receipt of invoice. Payments



may be made through the *Pay Connexion*. Prime Vendor is responsible to the City for compliance of covered employees of covered subcontractors.

- Vendors will “Pay” by contributing \$1.00 per covered employee per regular hour for work performed under the contract with the City, not to exceed \$40.00 per employee.
 - POP will not accept partial payments; invoices must be paid in full.

Play Option Reporting (Workforce Audit):

- Vendors will create a *Workforce Employee List* showcasing all active employees working on the City of Houston project.
- Vendors will complete a quarterly workforce audits by month end of October, January, April, and July by providing proof of insurance for all active and covered employees for previous three (3) months.
- Vendors will “Play” by providing health benefits to covered employees. Health benefits must meet or exceed the following standards:
 - The employer will contribute no less than 75% of the monthly premium toward the total premium cost covered employee per month.
 - The employee contribution, if any amount, will be no greater than 25% of the monthly premium cost.

Note: Proof of coverage (in the form of the most current Company Insurance invoice or individual employee insurance card) for POP covered employees that work on the City Project.

Employee Waiver Request (Form POP-8):

- Vendor may request employee POP program waiver by submitting a request on the City of Houston Pay or Play (POP) *Employee Waiver Request* (Form POP-8); if a covered employee has refused health coverage through their employer or if a covered employee has acquired health coverage on their own.
 - Vendor will attach approved Form POP-8 to respective employees’ workforce profile in the designated system.



Self-Insured Contractor Request (Form POP-9):

- Vendor may request for Self-Insured Status if the employer is using their own money to cover their employees' claims.
- Vendors awarded Self-Insured Status will be PLAY participants and required to report once a year.