

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Office of  
The Governor

No. 7 FY 23/24  
DATE May 6, 2024

### **AN ORDER REGARDING WOMEN IN CONSTRUCTION**

**WHEREAS**, landmark infrastructure investments from the federal government, including through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, are creating millions of construction jobs nationwide in the transportation, clean energy, and manufacturing sectors, providing an opportunity to significantly expand access to high quality jobs in the State of Maine;

**WHEREAS**, the State of Maine is experiencing an increased demand for construction work in order to repair and rebuild from the substantial damage to public and commercial infrastructure, working waterfronts, and private properties from severe storms in recent months, heightening the need to expand Maine's construction workforce;

**WHEREAS**, there is a high demand in Maine for workers in the trades who can help the State achieve its clean energy goals, including through projects in the wind and solar sectors, as well as helping the State adapt to the impacts of climate change through stormwater, wastewater and other infrastructure projects;

**WHEREAS**, the State of Maine is experiencing a workforce shortage that is particularly acute in the construction sector given Maine's increased in-migration rate and the expansion of both residential and commercial construction, and an increased demand for all kinds of housing;

**WHEREAS**, the State of Maine is committed to strategies that strengthen our state's infrastructure workforce and that improve access to good jobs for historically underrepresented groups;

**WHEREAS**, the State of Maine is committed to ensuring access to good jobs with fair and equal pay, safe and healthy workplaces, and work environments that are free from discrimination and harassment and other impediments to full employment;

**WHEREAS**, job openings in construction are near record levels, and jobs in construction can provide sustainable wages and benefits and meaningful careers;

**WHEREAS**, jobs in construction and skilled trades in Maine as elsewhere, are male-dominated and present certain barriers for women who make up only 11% of the industry nationally and only 4% of trade occupations nationally;

**WHEREAS**, occupational segregation creates inequities in the labor market, contributes to lower wages for women, and inhibits our ability to fill vacant positions and to achieve more robust labor force participation;

**WHEREAS**, Maine women earn a median of over \$9,000 a year less than men for the same amount of time worked, and Maine is committed to addressing this historical gender wage gap and occupational segregation and increasing our labor force participation by encouraging women to enter non-traditional jobs, including male-dominated jobs in construction, clean energy, transportation, and manufacturing;

**WHEREAS**, increased earnings and benefits for women workers will increase economic growth for the entire State of Maine;

**WHEREAS**, robust training and mentorship programs, access to supportive services, and improved working conditions are important to recruiting and retaining women in construction careers;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine, by the authority vested in me, do hereby Order as follows:

- I. **Baseline Data Collection.** The Department of Labor and the Department of Transportation shall jointly compile existing data and survey Maine-based construction contractors, staffing agencies, subcontractors, labor unions, and those who procure workforce for construction projects in Maine in order to determine:
  - A. The number and role of individuals regularly employed by those entities, disaggregated by gender;
  - B. The existing barriers and accommodations available for women to pursue jobs with those entities;
  - C. Avenues for broader recruitment and retention of women in those entities;
  - D. Outreach and recruitment efforts by those entities to increase the number and role of women employed in the construction sector.
  
- II. **Industry Consultation.** The Department of Labor shall consult with statewide entities representing businesses in the construction industry in Maine, with staffing agencies and with unions representing workers in the building trades in Maine, in order to identify, encourage, and promote skills training, child care, health insurance, employee codes of conduct, transportation, and any other actions that will increase the number of women in the construction industry.



- III. **Public-Private Coordination.** The Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Economic and Community Development shall proactively connect businesses in the construction sector with participants in the “ASPIRE” (Additional Support for People in Retraining and Employment) program, “WIOA” (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity) program, Maine’s apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs, vocational rehabilitation, “CSSP” (Competitive Skills Scholarship) program, training programs with Adult Education, Jobs for Maine Graduates, the Maine Community College and University of Maine Systems, individuals receiving unemployment benefits and persons registered with the Career Centers in order to recruit, market, promote, and train women for traditionally male jobs in the construction industry.
- IV. **Workforce Data Collection and Sharing.** The Department of Transportation, Department of Economic and Community Development, Governor’s Energy Office, and other agencies distributing federal infrastructure funds, in partnership with Department of Labor, shall develop data collection and reporting criteria to regularly gather workforce information from contractors and subcontractors receiving Federal or state funds for construction projects to include:
- A. Workforce needs, such as the expected number of jobs, job hours, and job hours by occupations;
  - B. Worker demographics, including gender and other workforce characteristics;
  - C. Availability of non-salary benefits, including training, and/or supportive services.
- V. **Grant Funding Opportunities.** The Department of Labor, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Economic and Community Development, and the Governor’s Office of Policy Innovation and the Future shall identify and promptly implement any available incentives for the hiring and retention of women in the construction industry.
- VI. **Reporting.** The Department of Labor shall submit regular updates on the progress of the above action items, commencing sixty days from the date of this Executive Order.
- VII. **Effective Date.** This Order is effective immediately upon signature.



Janet T. Mills, Governor