

New wage rates approved for H-2B workers

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New H-2B wage rates for common construction positions were approved by United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, according to an announcement from Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero on Monday.

These rates will not change until December 2021.

The new rates only affect applications filed with the Guam Department of Labor on or after December 13, 2019. Rates for current approvals remain at the old rates until the valid labor certification expires.

“We continue to face a labor shortage even as the demand for construction projects

continues to rise. I am pleased that the prevailing wage rates were approved for common construction jobs,” Leon Guerrero said. “We have placed more than 1,000 people in skilled apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship programs since the start of this administration because we know that skilled labor is a passport to economic success for Guam’s working families.”

The three most common occupations for which H-2B workers are imported saw modest increases in the wage rates, according to the announcement: carpenters and reinforcing metalworkers saw about a 6% increase and cement mason rates were increased by about 4.5%.

U.S. workers employed in the same companies and occupations as H-2B workers will see pay increases as new or extended workers get certified under the new rates later next year, the announcement stated.

The new wages are as follows:

- Camp cook, \$11.78
- Painters, \$12.86
- Structural steel workers, \$14.90
- Cement masons, \$14.92
- Carpenters, \$15.48
- Reinforcing metal workers, \$15.61
- Pipefitters, \$16.52
- Plumbers, \$16.52
- Operating engineer (heavy equipment operators), \$16.58
- Sheet metal workers, \$16.73
- Construction equipment mechanics, \$18.32
- HVAC and refrigeration mechanics, \$18.43
- Welders, \$18.49
- Electricians, \$18.52
- Plasterers, \$22.89

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