

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION  
165 W. 46th St.  
New York, N. Y.

*Inactive*

WALLING COORDINATES WAGE-HOUR AND PUBLIC CONTRACT LAWS

Smoother and more efficient administration of the coinciding provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Walsh-Healey Act is rapidly resulting from recent action of President Roosevelt naming a single administrator for both.

This was pointed out today by L. Metcalfe Walling, Administrator of both the Wage and Hour Division (Fair Labor Standards Act) and the Division of Public Contracts (Walsh-Healey Act.) Both are Divisions of the U. S. Department of Labor.

Since assuming administration of the Wage and Hour Division in March, while retaining administration of the Division of Public Contracts, which he has directed since its formation in 1937, Mr. Walling has endeavored to eliminate overlapping administrative functions. Such conditions existed in instances where employers subject to the Wage-Hour Law obtained contracts for the production of government goods, the fulfillment of which requires compliance with the Walsh-Healey Act as well.

Among objectives being gained since Mr. Walling's assumption of the dual role are elimination of wage rate discrepancies where the Walsh-Healey Act rate is 40 cents an hour or less, elimination of conflicting learner and handicapped worker restrictions, and smoother operations through decentralization of the field personnel of the Division of Public Contracts. The latter is being accomplished through the stationing of Public Contracts personnel in Regional and Branch offices of the Wage-Hour Division.

Wage rate discrepancies between the two Acts occurred in some instances because the Walsh-Healey Act requires that contractors on government orders of \$10,000 and over pay a "prevailing" rate, while the Wage-Hour Law requires a minimum of 30 cents an hour, unless a higher rate, not exceeding 40 cents an hour, has been estab-

lished by wage order based on an industry committee recommendation. Difficulties in administration arose when a contractor operating under a Wage-Hour Law wage order for more than 30 cents an hour received a government contract for production of the same goods at a "prevailing" rate determination by the Division of Public Contracts for a rate of pay less than the Wage-Hour Law wage order minimum.

Elimination of such administrative obstacles now is being attained through the issuance of wage determinations for the Division of Public Contracts establishing rates at at least the level required under the Wage-Hour Law. In the same manner, regulations are being adopted to bring "tolerances" for learners and handicapped workers permitted under the Public Contracts Law in line with the more rigid learner and handicapped worker restrictions of the Wage-Hour Law.

Another step toward bringing the two Acts into accord is the recent order lowering the age limit for employment of girls under the Walsh-Healey Act from 18 years to 16 years, in certain industries, in accordance with a request by the Secretary of War. The Wage-Hour Law basic age is 16 years, also.

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