



**Premium Pay
Under The
American Rescue Plan Act**

Policy Statement

Fiscal Recovery Funds payments may be used by recipients to provide premium pay to eligible workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency. These are workers who were forced to work and have been and continue to be relied on to maintain continuity of operations of essential critical infrastructure sectors. The Fiscal Recovery Funds will help respond to the needs of essential workers by allowing recipients to remunerate essential workers for the elevated health risks they have faced and continue to face during the public health emergency. To ensure that premium pay is targeted to workers that faced or face heightened risks due to the character of their work, the interim final rule defines “essential work” as work that (1) is not performed while teleworking from a residence and (2) involves either (i) regular, in-person interactions with patients, the public, or coworkers of the individual that is performing the work or (ii) regular physical handling of items that were handled by, or are to be handled by, patients, the public, or coworkers of the individual that is performing the work. Premium pay or grants provided under this section respond to workers performing essential work if it addresses the heightened risk to workers who must be physically present at a jobsite. Such workers include janitors, sanitation workers, public health, transit staff, food production, social services and human services staff. A worker would not be engaged in essential work and, accordingly may not receive premium pay, for telework.

During the public health emergency, employers’ policies on COVID-19-related hazard pay have varied widely, with many essential workers not yet compensated for the heightened risks they have faced and continue to face. Many of these workers earn lower wages on average and live in socioeconomically vulnerable communities as compared to the general population. The low pay of many essential workers

makes them less able to cope with the financial consequences of the pandemic or their work-related health risks, including working hours lost due to sickness or disruptions to childcare and other daily routines, or the likelihood of COVID-19 spread in their households or communities. Thus, the threats and costs involved with maintaining the ongoing operation of vital facilities and services have been, and continue to be, borne by those that are often the most vulnerable to the pandemic. Webb County will respond to the COVID-19 public health emergency and its economic impacts by providing premium pay to those low income essential Webb County Full-time Employees who meet criteria set forth in the ARPA guidelines.

As per ARPA regulations if premium pay would increase a worker's total pay above 150 percent of their residing County's average annual wage for all occupations, as defined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, on an annual basis, local government must provide a written explanation to the US Dept. of Treasury and make publicly available, whether for themselves or on behalf of a grantee, which will include a written justification of how the premium pay or grant is responsive to workers performing essential worker during the public health emergency. The average annual pay for the County of Webb according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics is \$38,480, based on \$740 dollars per week. Webb County will cap premium pay 150 percent of the County's average annual wage to reduce the risk of recoupment for not complying with ARPA regulations.

ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

As a condition of receipt of federal financial assistance from the Department of the Treasury, the Webb County (hereinafter referred to as "the Recipient") provides the assurances stated herein. The federal financial assistance may include federal grants, loans and contracts to provide assistance to the recipient's beneficiaries, the use or rent of Federal land or property at below market value, Federal training, a loan of Federal personnel, subsidies, and other arrangements with the intention of providing assistance. Federal financial assistance does not encompass contracts of guarantee or insurance, regulated programs, licenses, procurement contracts by the Federal government at market value, or programs that provide direct benefits. This assurance applies to all federal financial assistance from or funds made available through the Department of the Treasury, including any assistance that the Recipient may request in the future. The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 provides that the provisions

of this assurance apply to all of the recipient's programs, services and activities, so long as any portion of the recipient's program(s) is federally assisted in the manner proscribed above.

1. Recipient ensures its current and future compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, which prohibits exclusion from participation, denial of the benefits of, or subjection to discrimination under programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance, of any person in the United States on the ground of race, color, or national origin (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.), as implemented by the Department of the Treasury Title VI regulations at 31 CFR Part 22 and other pertinent executive orders such as Executive Order 13166, directives, circulars, policies, memoranda, and/or guidance documents.
2. Recipient acknowledges that Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency," seeks to improve access to federally assisted programs and activities for individuals who, because of national origin, have Limited English proficiency (LEP). Recipient understands that denying a person access to its programs, services, and activities because of LEP is a form of national origin discrimination prohibited under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Department of the Treasury's implementing regulations. Accordingly, Recipient shall initiate reasonable steps, or comply with the Department of the Treasury's directives, to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities. Recipient understands and agrees that meaningful access may entail providing language assistance services, including oral interpretation and written translation where necessary, to ensure effective communication in the Recipient's programs, services, and activities.
3. Recipient agrees to consider the need for language services for LEP persons when Recipient develops applicable budgets and conducts programs, services, and activities. As a resource, the Department of the Treasury has published its LEP guidance at 70 FR 6067. For more information on taking reasonable steps to provide meaningful access for LEP persons, please visit <http://www.lep.gov>.
4. Recipient acknowledges and agrees that compliance with the assurances constitutes a condition of continued receipt of federal financial assistance and is binding upon Recipient and Recipient's successors, transferees, and assignees for the period in which such assistance is provided.

5. Recipient acknowledges and agrees that it must require any sub-grantees, contractors, subcontractors, successors, transferees, and assignees to comply with assurances 1-4 above, and agrees to incorporate the following language in every contract or agreement subject to Title VI and its regulations between the Recipient and the Recipient's sub-grantees, contractors, subcontractors, successors, transferees, and assignees:

The sub-grantee, contractor, subcontractor, successor, transferee, and assignee shall comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits recipients of federal financial assistance from excluding from a program or activity, denying benefits of, or otherwise discriminating against a person on the basis of race, color, or national origin (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.), as implemented by the Department of the Treasury's Title VI regulations, 31 CFR Part 22, which are herein incorporated by reference and made a part of this contract (or agreement). Title VI also includes protection to persons with "Limited English Proficiency" in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., as implemented by the Department of the Treasury's Title VI regulations, 31 CFR Part 22, and herein incorporated by reference and made a part of this contract or agreement.

6. Recipient understands and agrees that if any real property or structure is provided or improved with the aid of federal financial assistance by the Department of the Treasury, this assurance obligates the Recipient, or in the case of a subsequent transfer, the transferee, for the period during which the real property or structure is used for a purpose for which the federal financial assistance is extended or for another purpose involving the provision of similar services or benefits. If any personal property is provided, this assurance obligates the Recipient for the period during which it retains ownership or possession of the property.

7. Recipient shall cooperate in any enforcement or compliance review activities by the Department of the Treasury of the aforementioned obligations. Enforcement may include investigation, arbitration, mediation, litigation, and monitoring of any settlement agreements that may result from these actions. The Recipient shall comply with information requests, on-site compliance reviews and reporting requirements.

8. Recipient shall maintain a complaint log and inform the Department of the Treasury of any complaints of discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, and limited English proficiency covered by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and implementing regulations and provide, upon request, a list

of all such reviews or proceedings based on the complaint, pending or completed, including outcome. Recipient also must inform the Department of the Treasury if Recipient has received no complaints under Title VI. 9. Recipient must provide documentation of an administrative agency's or court's findings of non-compliance of Title VI and efforts to address the non-compliance, including any voluntary compliance or other agreements between the Recipient and the administrative agency that made the finding. If the Recipient settles a case or matter alleging such discrimination, the Recipient must provide documentation of the settlement. If Recipient has not been the subject of any court or administrative agency finding of discrimination, please so state.

10. If the Recipient makes sub-awards to other agencies or other entities, the Recipient is responsible for ensuring that sub-recipients also comply with Title VI and other applicable authorities covered in this document State agencies that make sub-awards must have in place standard grant assurances and review procedures to demonstrate that that they are effectively monitoring the civil rights compliance of sub recipients.