



Clarifying the Auditor Office's Wage Enforcement Authority

Agenda

- Background
- Proposed Clarifications
- Any questions?

Background

- Auditor's Office has enforced the prevailing wage ordinance since 1950 even as the structure and function of the office has changed.
- Denver voters amended the charter in 2006 to make the Auditor independent.
- Since 2016, City Council has made significant updates to the Auditor's ability to enforce minimum wage, prevailing wage, and wage theft.

Background: Prevailing Wage Enforcement

- The 2016 update improved processes, removed outdated references, and clarified the scope of the prevailing wage.
- In 2023, Council updated the law to streamline processes.
- Auditor's Office has authority to issue interpretations and clarifications of the law, and to update wage rates.
 - The office created an independent Prevailing Wage Administrator to do these things.

Background: Minimum Wage Enforcement

- On January 1, 2020, the Auditor began enforcing Denver's minimum wage ordinance on a complaint basis.
- In 2022, the Auditor's Office gained the authority to conduct proactive/agency-initiated investigations into high-risk industries, such as the valet and bar/restaurant sectors.
- Since 2020, the Auditor's Office has informed thousands of businesses and tens of thousands of workers of the law and their rights. They have recovered millions of dollars for thousands of workers for minimum wage violations.

Background: Wage Theft Enforcement

- In 2023, City Council passed the Civil Wage Theft Ordinance, expanding the Auditor's enforcement authority to include action over any wage violation in Denver, whether based on Denver law, state law, federal law, or a contract.
- In 2024, Council granted the Auditor's Office subpoena power to help enforce the Civil Wage Theft Ordinance.
- In the last 10 years, the Auditor's Office has collected approximately \$10 million in restitution and enforced the rights of more than 15,000 workers.

What This Bill Clarifies

- The Denver Auditor's office has been conducting wage-related enforcement since 1950.
- City Council has repeatedly expanded the office's authority to conduct wage-related enforcement through ordinance.
- This updates charter language to reflect the Auditor's Office's long history of wage enforcement by simply making it clear the office's duties include the enforcement of wage, worker protection, and workplace rights, as the Council by ordinance requires.

Questions?