CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS WITH CERTAIN PUBLIC AGENCIES

Act 524 of 1980

AN ACT to provide for the terms of certain construction contracts with certain public agencies; to regulate the payment and retainage of payments on construction contracts with certain public agencies; and to provide for the resolution of certain disputes.

History: 1980, Act 524, Eff. Jan. 1, 1983

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

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125.1561 Definitions.

Sec. 1.

As used in this act:

(a) "Agent" means the person or persons agreed to or selected by the contractor and the public agency pursuant to section 4(2).

(b) "Architect or professional engineer" means an architect or professional engineer licensed under Act No. 299 of the Public Acts of 1980, being sections 339.101 to 339.2601 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, and designated by a public agency in a construction contract to recommend progress payments.

(c) "Construction contract" or "contract" means a written agreement between a contractor and a public agency for the construction, alteration, demolition, or repair of a facility, other than a contract having a dollar value of less than $30,000.00 or a contract that provides for 3 or fewer payments.

(d) "Contract documents" means the construction contract; instructions to bidders; proposal; conditions of the contract; performance bond; labor and material bond; drawings; specifications; all addenda issued before execution of the construction contract and all modifications issued subsequently.

(e) "Contractor" means an individual, sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation, or joint venture, that is a party to a construction contract with a public agency.

(f) "Facility" means a building, utility, road, street, boulevard, parkway, bridge, ditch, drain, levee, dike, sewer, park, playground, or other structure or work that is paid for with public funds or a special assessment.

(g) "Progress payment" means a payment by a public agency to a contractor for work in place under the terms of a construction contract.

(h) "Public agency" means this state, or a county, city, township, village, assessment district, or other political subdivision, corporation, commission, agency, or authority created by law. However, public agency does not include the state transportation department, a school district, junior or community college, the Michigan state housing development authority created in Act No. 346 of the Public Acts of 1966, as amended, being sections 125.1401 to 125.1496 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, and a municipal electric utility or agency. "Assessment district" means the real property within a distinct area upon which special assessments are levied or imposed for the construction, reconstruction, betterment, replacement, or repair of a facility to

be paid for by funds derived from those special assessments imposed or levied on the benefited real property.

(i) "Retainage" or "retained funds" means the amount withheld from a progress payment to a contractor pursuant to section 3.

History: 1980, Act 524, Eff. Jan. 1, 1983

125.1562 Construction contract; designation of person to submit written requests for progress payments; designation of person to whom requests for progress payments to be submitted; manner and times of submissions; deferring the processing of progress payments; payment of requested progress payment; failure of public agency to make timely progress payment; interest.

Sec. 2.

(1) The construction contract shall designate a person representing the contractor who will submit written requests for progress payments, and a person representing the public agency to whom request for progress payments are to be submitted. The written requests for progress payments shall be submitted to the designated person in a manner and at such times as provided in the construction contract.

(2) The processing of progress payments by the public agency may be deferred by the public agency until work having a prior sequence, as provided in the contract documents, is in place and is approved.

(3) Each progress payment requested, including reasonable interest if requested under subsection (4), shall be paid within 1 of the following time periods, whichever is later:

(a) Thirty days after the architect or professional engineer has certified to the public agency that work is in place in the portion of the facility covered by the applicable request for payment in accordance with the contract documents.

(b) Fifteen days after the public agency has received the funds with which to make the progress payment from a department or agency of the federal or state government, if any funds are to come from either of those sources.

(4) Upon failure of a public agency to make a timely progress payment pursuant to this section, the person designated to submit requests for progress payments may include reasonable interest on amounts past due in the next request for payment.

History: 1980, Act 524, Eff. Jan. 1, 1983

125.1563 Retaining portion of each progress payment to assure proper performance of construction contract; retainage; limitations; exceeding pro rata share of public agency's matching requirement; commingling and deposit of retained funds; releasing to contractor retainage and interest earned on retainage; irrevocable letter of credit.

Sec. 3.

(1) To assure proper performance of a construction contract by the contractor, a public agency may retain a portion of each progress payment otherwise due as provided in this section.

(2) The retainage shall be limited to the following:

(a) Not more than 10% of the dollar value of all work in place until work is 50% in place.

(b) After the work is 50% in place, additional retainage shall not be withheld unless the public agency determines that the contractor is not making satisfactory progress, or for other

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specific cause relating to the contractor's performance under the contract. If the public agency so determines, the public agency may retain not more than 10% of the dollar value of work more than 50% in place.

(3) The retained funds shall not exceed the pro rata share of the public agency's matching requirement under the construction contract and shall not be commingled with other funds of the public agency and shall be deposited in an interest bearing account in a regulated financial institution in this state wherein all such retained funds are kept by the public agency which shall account for both retainage and interest on each construction contract separately. A public agency is not required to deposit retained funds in an interest bearing account if the retained funds are to be provided under a state or federal grant and the retained funds have not been paid to the public agency.

(4) Except as provided in section 4(7) and (8), retainage and interest earned on retainage shall be released to a contractor together with the final progress payment.

(5) At any time after 94% of work under the contract is in place and at the request of the original contractor, the public agency shall release the retainage plus interest to the original contractor only if the original contractor provides to the public agency an irrevocable letter of credit in the amount of the retainage plus interest, issued by a bank authorized to do business in this state, containing terms mutually acceptable to the contractor and the public agency.

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125.1564 Construction contract; agreement to submit matters described in subsection (3) to decision of agent; designation of agent; dispute resolution process; use; agent to receive pertinent information and provide opportunity for informal meeting; decision of agent to be final and binding; vacation of decision by circuit court; dispute resolution resulting in decision; final progress payment to original contractor where public agency contracts with subsequent contractor.

Sec. 4.

(1) The construction contract shall contain an agreement to submit those matters described in subsection (3) to the decision of an agent at the option of the public agency.

(2) If a dispute regarding a matter described in subsection (3) arises, the contractor and the public agency shall designate an agent who has background, training, and experience in the construction of facilities similar to that which is the subject of the contract, as follows:

(a) In an agreement reached within 10 days after a dispute arises.

(b) If an agreement cannot be reached within 10 days after a dispute arises, the public agency shall designate an agent who has background, training, and experience in the construction of facilities similar to that which is the subject of the contract and who is not an employee of the agency.

(3) The public agency may request dispute resolution by the agent regarding the following:

(a) At any time during the term of the contract, to determine whether there has been a delay for reasons that were within the control of the contractor, and the period of time that delay has been caused, continued, or aggravated by actions of the contractor.

(b) At any time after 94% of work under the contract is in place, whether there has been an unacceptable delay by the contractor in the performance of the remaining 6% of work under the contract. The agent shall consider the terms of the contract and the procedures normally followed in the industry and shall determine whether the delay was for failure to follow reasonable and prudent practices in the industry for completion of the project.

(4) This dispute resolution process shall be used only for the purpose of determining the rights of the parties to retained funds and interest earned on retained funds and is not intended to alter, abrogate, or limit any rights with respect to remedies that are available to enforce or compel performance of the terms of the contract by either party.

(5) The agent may request and shall receive all pertinent information from the parties and shall provide an opportunity for an informal meeting to receive comments, documents, and other relevant information in order to resolve the dispute. The agent shall determine the time, place, and procedure for the informal meeting. A written decision and reasons for the decision shall be given to the parties within 14 days after the meeting.

(6) The decision of the agent shall be final and binding upon all parties. Upon application of either party, the decision of the agent may be vacated by order of the circuit court only upon a finding by the court that the decision was procured by fraud, duress, or other illegal means.

(7) If the dispute resolution results in a decision:

(a) That there has been a delay as described in subsection (3)(a), all interest earned on retained funds during the period of delay shall become the property of the public agency.

(b) That there has been unacceptable delay as described in subsection (3)(b), the public agency may contract with a subsequent contractor to complete the remaining 6% of work under the contract, and interest earned on retained funds shall become the property of the public agency. A subsequent contractor under this subdivision shall be paid by the public agency from the following sources until each source is depleted, in the order listed below:

(i) The dollar value of the original contract, less the dollar value of funds already paid to the original contractor and the dollar value of work in place for which the original contractor has not received payment.

(ii) Retainage from the original contractor, or funds made available under a letter of credit provided under section 3(5).

(iii) Interest earned on retainage from the original contractor, or funds made available under a letter of credit provided under section 3(5).

(8) If the public agency contracts with a subsequent contractor as provided in subsection (7)(b), the final progress payment shall be payable to the original contractor within the time period specified in section 2(3). The amount of the final progress payment to the original contractor shall not include interest earned on retained funds. The public agency may deduct from the final progress payment all expenses of contracting with the subsequent contractor. This act shall not impair the right of the public agency to bring an action or to otherwise enforce a performance bond to complete work under a construction contract.

History: 1980, Act 524, Eff. Jan. 1, 1983

125.1565 Construction contracts to which act applicable.

Sec. 5.

(1) Except as provided in subsection (2), this act shall apply only to a construction contract entered into after the effective date of this act.

(2) For a construction contract entered into before the effective date of this act, the provisions of this act may be implemented by a public agency, through a contract amendment, upon the written request of the contractor, with such consideration as the public agency considers adequate.

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125.1566 Effective date.

Sec. 6.

This act shall take effect January 1, 1983.

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