

26.13 Early release of retained funds.

Payments made by a governmental entity or the state department of transportation for the construction of public improvements and highway, bridge, or culvert projects shall be made in accordance with the provisions of chapter 573, except as provided in this section. For purposes of this section, "*department*" means the state department of transportation.

1. At any time after all or any part of the work on the public improvement or highway, bridge, or culvert project is substantially completed, the contractor may request the release of all or part of the retained funds owed. The request shall be accompanied by a sworn statement of the contractor that, ten calendar days prior to filing the request, notice was given as required by subsection 7 to all known subcontractors, sub-subcontractors, and suppliers.
2. Except as provided under subsection 3, upon receipt of the request, the governmental entity or the department shall release all or part of the retained funds. Retained funds that are approved as payable shall be paid at the time of the next monthly payment or within thirty days, whichever is sooner. If partial retained funds are released pursuant to a contractor's request, no retained funds shall be subsequently held based on that portion of the work. If within thirty days of when payment becomes due the governmental entity or the department does not release the retained funds due, interest shall accrue on the amount of retained funds at the rate of interest that is calculated as the prime rate plus one percent per year as of the day interest begins to accrue until the amount is paid.
3. If at the time of the request for the release of the retained funds labor or materials are yet to be provided, an amount equal to two hundred percent of the value of the labor or materials yet to be provided, as determined by the governmental entity's or the department's authorized contract representative, may be withheld until such labor or materials are provided. For purposes of this section, "*authorized contract representative*" means the person chosen by the governmental entity or the department to represent its interests or the person designated in the contract as the party representing the governmental entity's or the department's interest regarding administration and oversight of the project.
4. An itemization of the labor or materials yet to be provided, or the reason that the request for release of retained funds is denied, shall be provided to the contractor in writing within thirty calendar days of the receipt of the request for release of retained funds.
5. For purposes of this section, "*substantially completed*" means the first date on which any of the following occurs:
 - a. Completion of the public improvement project or the highway, bridge, or culvert project or when the work on the public improvement or the highway, bridge, or culvert project has been substantially completed in general accordance with the terms and provisions of the contract.
 - b. The work on the public improvement or on the designated portion is substantially completed in general accordance with the terms of the contract so that the governmental entity or the department can occupy or utilize the public improvement or designated portion of the public improvement for its intended purpose. This paragraph shall not apply to highway, bridge, or culvert projects.
 - c. The public improvement project or the highway, bridge, or culvert project is certified as having been substantially completed by either of the following:
 - (1) The architect or engineer authorized to make such certification.
 - (2) The authorized contract representative.

d. The governmental entity or the department is occupying or utilizing the public improvement for its intended purpose. This paragraph shall not apply to highway, bridge, or culvert projects.

6. The contractor shall release retained funds to the subcontractor or subcontractors in the same manner as retained funds are released to the contractor by the governmental entity or the department. Each subcontractor shall pass through to each lower tier subcontractor all retained fund payments from the contractor.

7. Prior to applying for release of retained funds, the contractor shall send a notice to all known subcontractors, sub-subcontractors, and suppliers that provided labor or materials for the public improvement project or the highway, bridge, or culvert project. The notice shall be substantially similar to the following:
"NOTICE OF CONTRACTOR'S REQUEST FOR EARLY RELEASE OF RETAINED FUNDS

You are hereby notified that [name of contractor] will be requesting an early release of funds on a public improvement project or a highway, bridge, or culvert project designated as [name of project] for which you have or may have provided labor or materials. The request will be made pursuant to Iowa Code section 26.13. The request may be filed with the [name of governmental entity or department] after ten calendar days from the date of this notice. The purpose of the request is to have [name of governmental entity or department] release and pay funds for all work that has been performed and charged to [name of governmental entity or department] as of the date of this notice. This notice is provided in accordance with Iowa Code section 26.13."

2006 Acts, ch 1017, §13, 42, 43