

APPENDIX E

Sections of Massachusetts General Laws

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CHAPTER 30. GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATIVE TO STATE DEPARTMENTS, COMMISSIONS, OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES

Chapter 30: Section 39F. Construction contracts; assignment and subrogation; subcontractor defined; enforcement of claim for direct payment; deposit, reduction of disputed amounts

Section 39F. (1) Every contract awarded pursuant to sections forty-four A to L, inclusive, of chapter one hundred and forty-nine shall contain the following subparagraphs (a) through (i) and every contract awarded pursuant to section thirty-nine M of chapter thirty shall contain the following subparagraphs (a) through (h) and in each case those subparagraphs shall be binding between the general contractor and each subcontractor.

(a) Forthwith after the general contractor receives payment on account of a periodic estimate, the general contractor shall pay to each subcontractor the amount paid for the labor performed and the materials furnished by that subcontractor, less any amount specified in any court proceedings barring such payment and also less any amount claimed due from the subcontractor by the general contractor.

(b) Not later than the sixty-fifth day after each subcontractor substantially completes his work in accordance with the plans and specifications, the entire balance due under the subcontract less amounts retained by the awarding authority as the estimated cost of completing the incomplete and unsatisfactory items of work, shall be due the subcontractor; and the awarding authority shall pay that amount to the general contractor. The general contractor shall forthwith pay to the subcontractor the full amount received from the awarding authority less any amount specified in any court proceedings barring such payment and also less any amount claimed due from the subcontractor by the general contractor.

(c) Each payment made by the awarding authority to the general contractor pursuant to subparagraphs (a) and (b) of this paragraph for the labor performed and the materials furnished by a subcontractor shall be made to the general contractor for the account of that subcontractor; and the awarding authority shall take reasonable steps to compel the general contractor to make each such payment to each such subcontractor. If the awarding authority has received a demand for direct payment from a subcontractor for any amount which has already been included in a payment to the general contractor or which is to be included in a payment to the general contractor for payment to the subcontractor as provided in subparagraphs (a) and (b), the awarding authority shall act upon the demand as provided in this section.

(d) If, within seventy days after the subcontractor has substantially completed the subcontract work, the subcontractor has not received from the general contractor the balance due under the subcontract including any amount due for extra labor and materials furnished to the general contractor, less any amount retained by the awarding authority as the estimated cost of completing the incomplete and unsatisfactory items of work, the

subcontractor may demand direct payment of that balance from the awarding authority. The demand shall be by a sworn statement delivered to or sent by certified mail to the awarding authority, and a copy shall be delivered to or sent by certified mail to the general contractor at the same time. The demand shall contain a detailed breakdown of the balance due under the subcontract and also a statement of the status of completion of the subcontract work. Any demand made after substantial completion of the subcontract work shall be valid even if delivered or mailed prior to the seventieth day after the subcontractor has substantially completed the subcontract work. Within ten days after the subcontractor has delivered or so mailed the demand to the awarding authority and delivered or so mailed a copy to the general contractor, the general contractor may reply to the demand. The reply shall be by a sworn statement delivered to or sent by certified mail to the awarding authority and a copy shall be delivered to or sent by certified mail to the subcontractor at the same time. The reply shall contain a detailed breakdown of the balance due under the subcontract including any amount due for extra labor and materials furnished to the general contractor and of the amount due for each claim made by the general contractor against the subcontractor.

(e) Within fifteen days after receipt of the demand by the awarding authority, but in no event prior to the seventieth day after substantial completion of the subcontract work, the awarding authority shall make direct payment to the subcontractor of the balance due under the subcontract including any amount due for extra labor and materials furnished to the general contractor, less any amount (i) retained by the awarding authority as the estimated cost of completing the incomplete or unsatisfactory items of work, (ii) specified in any court proceedings barring such payment, or (iii) disputed by the general contractor in the sworn reply; provided, that the awarding authority shall not deduct from a direct payment any amount as provided in part (iii) if the reply is not sworn to, or for which the sworn reply does not contain the detailed breakdown required by subparagraph (d). The awarding authority shall make further direct payments to the subcontractor forthwith after the removal of the basis for deductions from direct payments made as provided in parts (i) and (ii) of this subparagraph.

(f) The awarding authority shall forthwith deposit the amount deducted from a direct payment as provided in part (iii) of subparagraph (e) in an interest-bearing joint account in the names of the general contractor and the subcontractor in a bank in Massachusetts selected by the awarding authority or agreed upon by the general contractor and the subcontractor and shall notify the general contractor and the subcontractor of the date of the deposit and the bank receiving the deposit. The bank shall pay the amount in the account, including accrued interest, as provided in an agreement between the general contractor and the subcontractor or as determined by decree of a court of competent jurisdiction.

(g) All direct payments and all deductions from demands for direct payments deposited in an interest-bearing account or accounts in a bank pursuant to subparagraph (f) shall be made out of amounts payable to the general contractor at the time of receipt of a demand for direct payment from a subcontractor and out of amounts which later become payable to the general contractor and in the order of receipt of such demands from subcontractors.

All direct payments shall discharge the obligation of the awarding authority to the general contractor to the extent of such payment.

(h) The awarding authority shall deduct from payments to a general contractor amounts which, together with the deposits in interest-bearing accounts pursuant to subparagraph (f), are sufficient to satisfy all unpaid balances of demands for direct payment received from subcontractors. All such amounts shall be earmarked for such direct payments, and the subcontractors shall have a right in such deductions prior to any claims against such amounts by creditors of the general contractor.

(i) If the subcontractor does not receive payment as provided in subparagraph (a) or if the general contractor does not submit a periodic estimate for the value of the labor or materials performed or furnished by the subcontractor and the subcontractor does not receive payment for same when due less the deductions provided for in subparagraph (a), the subcontractor may demand direct payment by following the procedure in subparagraph (d) and the general contractor may file a sworn reply as provided in that same subparagraph. A demand made after the first day of the month following that for which the subcontractor performed or furnished the labor and materials for which the subcontractor seeks payment shall be valid even if delivered or mailed prior to the time payment was due on a periodic estimate from the general contractor. Thereafter the awarding authority shall proceed as provided in subparagraph (e), (f), (g) and (h).

(2) Any assignment by a subcontractor of the rights under this section to a surety company furnishing a bond under the provisions of section twenty-nine of chapter one hundred forty-nine shall be invalid. The assignment and subrogation rights of the surety to amounts included in a demand for direct payment which are in the possession of the awarding authority or which are on deposit pursuant to subparagraph (f) of paragraph (1) shall be subordinate to the rights of all subcontractors who are entitled to be paid under this section and who have not been paid in full.

(3) "Subcontractor" as used in this section (i) for contracts awarded as provided in sections forty-four A to forty-four H, inclusive, of chapter one hundred forty-nine shall mean a person who files a sub-bid and receives a subcontract as a result of that filed sub-bid or who is approved by the awarding authority in writing as a person performing labor or both performing labor and furnishing materials pursuant to a contract with the general contractor, (ii) for contracts awarded as provided in paragraph (a) of section thirty-nine M of chapter thirty shall mean a person approved by the awarding authority in writing as a person performing labor or both performing labor and furnishing materials pursuant to a contract with the general contractor, and (iii) for contracts with the commonwealth not awarded as provided in forty-four A to forty-four H, inclusive, of chapter one hundred forty-nine shall also mean a person contracting with the general contractor to supply materials used or employed in a public works project for a price in excess of five thousand dollars.

(4) A general contractor or a subcontractor shall enforce a claim to any portion of the amount of a demand for direct payment deposited as provided in subparagraph (f) of

paragraph 1 by a petition in equity in the superior court against the other and the bank shall not be a necessary party. A subcontractor shall enforce a claim for direct payment or a right to require a deposit as provided in subparagraph (f) of paragraph 1 by a petition in equity in the superior court against the awarding authority and the general contractor shall not be a necessary party. Upon motion of any party the court shall advance for speedy trial any petition filed as provided in this paragraph. Sections fifty-nine and fifty-nine B of chapter two hundred thirty-one shall apply to such petitions. The court shall enter an interlocutory decree upon which execution shall issue for any part of a claim found due pursuant to sections fifty-nine and fifty-nine B and, upon motion of any party, shall advance for speedy trial the petition to collect the remainder of the claim. Any party aggrieved by such interlocutory decree shall have the right to appeal therefrom as from a final decree. The court shall not consolidate for trial the petition of any subcontractor with the petition of one or more subcontractors or the same general contract unless the court finds that a substantial portion of the evidence of the same events during the course of construction (other than the fact that the claims sought to be consolidated arise under the same general contract) is applicable to the petitions sought to be consolidated and that such consolidation will prevent unnecessary duplication of evidence. A decree in any such proceeding shall not include interest on the disputed amount deposited in excess of the interest earned for the period of any such deposit. No person except a subcontractor filing a demand for direct payment for which no funds due the general contractor are available for direct payment shall have a right to file a petition in court of equity against the awarding authority claiming a demand for direct payment is premature and such subcontractor must file the petition before the awarding authority has made a direct payment to the subcontractor and has made a deposit of the disputed portion as provided in part (iii) of subparagraph (e) and in subparagraph (f) of paragraph (1).

(5) In any petition to collect any claim for which a subcontractor has filed a demand for direct payment the court shall, upon motion of the general contractor, reduce by the amount of any deposit of a disputed amount by the awarding authority as provided in part (iii) of subparagraph (e) and in subparagraph (f) of paragraph (1) any amount held under a trustee writ or pursuant to a restraining order or injunction.

Chapter 30: Section 39K. Public building construction contracts; payments

Section 39K. Every contract for the construction, reconstruction, alteration, remodeling, repair or demolition of any public building by the commonwealth, or by any county, city, town, district, board, commission or other public body, when the amount is more than five thousand dollars in the case of the commonwealth and more than two thousand dollars in the case of any county, city, town, district, board, commission or other public body, shall contain the following paragraph:— Within fifteen days (30 days in the case of the commonwealth, including local housing authorities) after receipt from the contractor, at the place designated by the awarding authority if such a place is so designated, of a periodic estimate requesting payment of the amount due for the preceding month, the awarding authority will make a periodic payment to the contractor for the work

performed during the preceding month and for the materials not incorporated in the work but delivered and suitably stored at the site (or at some location agreed upon in writing) to which the contractor has title or to which a subcontractor has title and has authorized the contractor to transfer title to the awarding authority, upon certification by the contractor that he is the lawful owner and that the materials are free from all encumbrances, but less (1) a retention based on its estimate of the fair value of its claims against the contractor and less (2) a retention for direct payments to subcontractors based on demands for same in accordance with the provisions of section thirty-nine F, and less (3) a retention not exceeding five per cent of the approved amount of the periodic payment. After the receipt of a periodic estimate requesting final payment and within sixty-five days after (a) the contractor fully completes the work or substantially completes the work so that the value of the work remaining to be done is, in the estimate of the awarding authority, less than one per cent of the original contract price, or (b) the contractor substantially completes the work and the awarding authority takes possession for occupancy, whichever occurs first, the awarding authority shall pay the contractor the entire balance due on the contract less (1) a retention based on its estimate of the fair value of its claims against the contractor and of the cost of completing the incomplete and unsatisfactory items of work and less (2) a retention for direct payments to subcontractors based on demands for same in accordance with the provisions of section thirty-nine F, or based on the record of payments by the contractor to the subcontractors under this contract if such record of payment indicates that the contractor has not paid subcontractors as provided in section thirty-nine F. If the awarding authority fails to make payment as herein provided, there shall be added to each such payment daily interest at the rate of three percentage points above the rediscount rate than charged by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston commencing on the first day after said payment is due and continuing until the payment is delivered or mailed to the contractor; provided, that no interest shall be due, in any event, on the amount due on a periodic estimate for final payment until fifteen days (twenty-four days in the case of the commonwealth) after receipt of such a periodic estimate from the contractor, at the place designated by the awarding authority if such a place is so designated. The contractor agrees to pay to each subcontractor a portion of any such interest paid in accordance with the amount due each subcontractor.

The awarding authority may make changes in any periodic estimate submitted by the contractor and the payment due on said periodic estimate shall be computed in accordance with the changes so made, but such changes or any requirement for a corrected periodic estimate shall not affect the due date for the periodic payment or the date for the commencement of interest charges on the amount of the periodic payment computed in accordance with the changes made, as provided herein; provided, that the awarding authority may, within seven days after receipt, return to the contractor for correction, any periodic estimate which is not in the required form or which contains computations not arithmetically correct and, in that event, the date of receipt of such periodic estimate shall be the date of receipt of the corrected periodic estimate in proper form and with arithmetically correct computations. The date of receipt of a periodic estimate received on a Saturday shall be the first working day thereafter. The provisions of section thirty-nine G shall not apply to any contract for the construction,

reconstruction, alteration, remodeling, repair or demolition of any public building to which this section applies.

All periodic estimates shall be submitted to the awarding authority, or to its designee as set forth in writing to the contractor, and the date of receipt by the awarding authority or its designee shall be marked on the estimate. All periodic estimates shall contain a separate item for each filed subtrade and each sub-subtrade listed in sub-bid form as required by specifications and a column listing the amount paid to each subcontractor and sub-subcontractor as of the date the periodic estimate is filed. The person making payment for the awarding authority shall add the daily interest provided for herein to each payment for each day beyond the due date based on the date of receipt marked on the estimate.

A certificate of the architect to the effect that the contractor has fully or substantially completed the work shall, subject to the provisions of section thirty-nine J, be conclusive for the purposes of this section.

Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, at any time after the value of the work remaining to be done is, in the estimation of the awarding authority, less than 1 per cent of the adjusted contract price, or the awarding authority has determined that the contractor has substantially completed the work and the awarding authority has taken possession for occupancy, the awarding authority may send to the general contractor by certified mail, return receipt requested, a complete and final list of all incomplete and unsatisfactory work items, including, for each item on the list, a good faith estimate of the fair and reasonable cost of completing such item. The general contractor shall then complete all such work items within 30 days of receipt of such list or before the contract completion date, whichever is later. If the general contractor fails to complete all incomplete and unsatisfactory work items within 45 days after receipt of such items furnished by the awarding authority or before the contract completion date, whichever is later, subsequent to an additional 14 days' written notice to the general contractor by certified mail, return receipt requested, the awarding authority may terminate the contract and complete the incomplete and unsatisfactory work items and charge the cost of same to the general contractor and such termination shall be without prejudice to any other rights or remedies the awarding authority may have under the contract. The awarding authority shall note any such termination in the evaluation form to be filed by the awarding authority pursuant to the provisions of section 44D of chapter 149.

Chapter 30: Section 39N. Construction contracts; equitable adjustment in contract price for differing subsurface or latent physical conditions

Section 39N. Every contract subject to section forty-four A of chapter one hundred and forty-nine or subject to section thirty-nine M of chapter thirty shall contain the following paragraph in its entirety and an awarding authority may adopt reasonable rules or

regulations in conformity with that paragraph concerning the filing, investigation and settlement of such claims:

If, during the progress of the work, the contractor or the awarding authority discovers that the actual subsurface or latent physical conditions encountered at the site differ substantially or materially from those shown on the plans or indicated in the contract documents either the contractor or the contracting authority may request an equitable adjustment in the contract price of the contract applying to work affected by the differing site conditions. A request for such an adjustment shall be in writing and shall be delivered by the party making such claim to the other party as soon as possible after such conditions are discovered. Upon receipt of such a claim from a contractor, or upon its own initiative, the contracting authority shall make an investigation of such physical conditions, and, if they differ substantially or materially from those shown on the plans or indicated in the contract documents or from those ordinarily encountered and generally recognized as inherent in work of the character provided for in the plans and contract documents and are of such a nature as to cause an increase or decrease in the cost of performance of the work or a change in the construction methods required for the performance of the work which results in an increase or decrease in the cost of the work, the contracting authority shall make an equitable adjustment in the contract price and the contract shall be modified in writing accordingly.

Chapter 30: Section 39O. Contracts for construction and materials; suspension, delay or interruption due to order of awarding authority; adjustment in contract price; written claim

Section 39O. Every contract subject to the provisions of section thirty-nine M of this chapter or subject to section forty-four A of chapter one hundred forty-nine shall contain the following provisions (a) and (b) in their entirety and, in the event a suspension, delay, interruption or failure to act of the awarding authority increases the cost of performance to any subcontractor, that subcontractor shall have the same rights against the general contractor for payment for an increase in the cost of his performance as provisions (a) and (b) give the general contractor against the awarding authority, but nothing in provisions (a) and (b) shall in any way change, modify or alter any other rights which the general contractor or the subcontractor may have against each other.

(a) The awarding authority may order the general contractor in writing to suspend, delay, or interrupt all or any part of the work for such period of time as it may determine to be appropriate for the convenience of the awarding authority; provided however, that if there is a suspension, delay or interruption for fifteen days or more or due to a failure of the awarding authority to act within the time specified in this contract, the awarding authority shall make an adjustment in the contract price for any increase in the cost of performance of this contract but shall not include any profit to the general contractor on such increase; and provided further, that the awarding authority shall not make any adjustment in the contract price under this provision for any suspension, delay, interruption or failure to act

to the extent that such is due to any cause for which this contract provides for an equitable adjustment of the contract price under any other contract provisions.

(b) The general contractor must submit the amount of a claim under provision (a) to the awarding authority in writing as soon as practicable after the end of the suspension, delay, interruption or failure to act and, in any event, not later than the date of final payment under this contract and, except for costs due to a suspension order, the awarding authority shall not approve any costs in the claim incurred more than twenty days before the general contractor notified the awarding authority in writing of the act or failure to act involved in the claim.