

Equal Pay Day 2025



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March 25 is Equal Pay Day this year, a date that fittingly falls within Women’s History Month and highlights the persistent issue of the pay gap. Over the past two decades, the disparity between men's and women's earnings has barely improved. According to the American Association of University Women (AAUW), women working full time earn, on average, around 83% of what their male counterparts make, with the gap being even wider for women of color. At this rate, it will take over 200 years to close the gender pay gap. Pay equity is an urgent issue, representing a glaring injustice towards women and condemning millions to poverty. Unequal pay is a global challenge with slow progress, making days like Equal Pay Day crucial for advocating for equal pay and combating workplace sexism.

Barriers to pay equity, such as the “glass ceiling” and “sticky floor” concepts, highlight how stereotypes and biases limit women’s career advancement. Another barrier is that women-dominated fields often pay less, and women are more likely to shoulder unpaid domestic work, leaving them overworked and underpaid. The “motherhood penalty” further exacerbates the issue,

with women with children earning less than those without. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, earnings reduce by approximately 15% for each child under five. These barriers are just a few examples of the obstacles women face in the workplace. Identifying and addressing these obstacles is essential to reducing the pay gap.

In 2018, Governor Phil Murphy signed the Diane B. Allen Equal Pay Act (New Jersey Equal Pay Act) into law. This act aims to end pay discrimination and close the gap for all minorities and protected groups, specifically targeting gender discrimination. It mandates that equal work deserves equal pay and prohibits discrimination based on protected characteristics in terms of work or pay. The law also includes anti-retaliation protections for employees who speak out against unequal pay or take legal action. This act exemplifies New Jersey's progressive steps towards a more equal future. It addresses long-standing issues of pay discrimination and reflects the state's ongoing commitment to equality.

This Equal Pay Day, take a moment to consider the unseen barriers you or the women around you may have overlooked. In honor of Women's History Month, advocate for yourself and the women in your life to combat gender discrimination and work towards closing the gender pay gap.