



What is Equal Pay Day?

Every year in April, Business and Professional Women's Foundation along with hundreds of other women's, civil rights, labor, and community organizations team up with the National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE) for a national day of action promoting fair pay known as **Equal Pay Day**. Equal Pay Day is celebrated in April because April symbolizes the month when women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous year.

On Equal Pay Day, BPW Foundation members and working women advocates around the country mobilize their communities by holding press conferences, hosting UnHappy Hours, and meeting with policymakers to push for stronger state and federal equal pay laws.

Gender Wage Disparity Continues

In 2007, the gap between men's and women's earnings was 22 cents. The gender wage gap changed by less than one percent from 2006 to 2007 narrowing slightly from 76.9 to 77.8 percent.¹ (Data for 2008 are not available at this time.) Median earnings for women of color are generally even lower. In 2007, the earnings for African American women were 68.7 percent of men's earnings; Asian American women's earnings were 89.5 percent of men's earnings, and Latinas earnings were 59 percent of men's.

Over a lifetime of work this loss adds up. On average, the families of working women lose out on \$9,575 per year because of the earnings gap. Women may lose \$434,000 in income, on average, due to the career wage gap.

Wage disparity persists **across all educational levels and in all states.** Women with the most education lose the most in earnings. Women with a college degree or higher lose \$713,000 over a 40-year period versus a \$270,000 loss for women who did not finish high school.²

Forty-six years after President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act women working full time earn on average 22% less than their male counterparts. This is a marked improvement over the 41 cent gap in 1963, but it is far from true economic and social equality.

What Next?

In 2009, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was passed ensuring that victims of discrimination have fair access to the courts, but additional legislation is needed to close the persistent gap between men's and women's wages. **The Paycheck Fairness Act (HR 12/S 182)** will strengthen the Equal Pay Act in ways necessary to guarantee that women workers are not shortchanged solely because of their gender. This bill would strengthen the Equal Pay Act closing loopholes and improving the laws effectiveness.

For more information, contact BPW Foundation at policy@bpwfoundation.org.

¹ <http://www.census.gov/prod/2008pubs/acs-09.pdf>

² http://www.americanprogressaction.org/issues/2008/pdf/equal_pay.pdf



Business and
Professional
Women's
Foundation

Sample Equal Pay Day 2010 Press Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: local spokesperson
Phone: 555-555-5555

Working Women of City/State Commemorate Equal Pay Day Business and Professional Women Calls for Passage of Paycheck Fairness Act

City, State, Date – Business and Professional Women (BPW) in City/State will mobilize on Tuesday, April 20, 2010 to call attention to the persistent and sizable gap between men's and women's wages. According to US Census Bureau on average, full-time working women earned 78 cents to every dollar earned by men. The gap is even worse for women of color. Over a lifetime of work this loss adds up. On average, women lose out on \$9,575 per year and \$434,000 in a lifetime due to the wage gap.

April 20 symbolizes the day when women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous year. Every year in April, Business and Professional Women's Foundation along with hundreds of other women's, civil rights, labor, and community organizations team up with the National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE) for a national day of action promoting fair pay known as **Equal Pay Day**.

"The bottom line for women and businesses is that pay discrimination happens and steps need to be taken to remedy it. This persistent wage gap not only impacts the economic security of women and their families today; it also directly affects women's retirement security down the road." said Roslyn Ridgeway, Chair of BPW Foundation.

Describe your local Equal Pay Day activity.

"Women and their families can no longer afford to be shortchanged. BPW/State/Local is committed to working to eliminate the wage gap," said State or Local BPW President or PR Chair. "We encourage businesses to pay women fairly, push for laws that will enforce current equal pay legislation and educate women on how to negotiate for higher salaries."

About Business and Professional Women's Foundation

Business and Professional Women's Foundation is creating successful workplaces by focusing on issues that impact women, families and employers. Successful Workplaces are those that embrace and practice diversity, equity and work life balance. BPW Foundation supports workforce development programs and workplace policies that recognize the diverse needs of working women, communities and businesses. BPW Foundation is a 501 (c) (3) research and education organization.

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Sample Equal Pay Day 2010 Op Ed

Today, *Tuesday, April 20*, is the national observance of Equal Pay Day - the point in the year when a woman's wages catch up to a man's wages in the previous year. According to US Census Bureau statistics women who work full-time earned, on average, 78 cents to every dollar earned by men. That is right – working women earn 22% less than their male counterparts.

Median earnings for women of color are generally even lower. In 2007, the earnings for African American women were 68.7 percent of men's earnings and Latina earnings were 59 percent of men's.

(If your state does better than the national average) Here in *(your state)*, workingwomen do a little better than the national average. We are paid about *(your state figure which you can get from the Institute for Women's Policy Research at www.iwpr.org)* on the dollar compared to men. That's hardly a cause for celebration, over a lifetime of work these lost wages adds up. On average, women lose out on \$9,575 per year and \$434,000 in a lifetime due to the wage gap.

(If your state does worse than the national average.) It's shameful, but here in *(your state)* women's pay doesn't even measure up to the national average. We are paid just *(your state percentage)* of men's pay. Women and our families are being shortchanged thousands of dollars a year and hundreds of thousands of dollars over the course of a lifetime.

There were 68 million women in the workforce in 2008, a significant increase from 18.4 million in 1950. Women are projected to be 50 percent of the labor force in 2010.¹ With more women in the workforce, and more families reliant upon women's paychecks for their livelihood, the U.S must address the wage gap for the sake of American families and their financial stability.

Legislation is needed to close the persistent gap between men's and women's wages. The Paycheck Fairness Act (HR 12/S 182) will strengthen the Equal Pay Act closing loopholes and strengthening penalties to guarantee that women workers are not shortchanged solely because of their gender.

The provisions in the Paycheck Fairness Act are the result of forty-six years of experience working to eliminate wage discrimination. The Act would strengthen current laws against wage discrimination and require the federal government to be more proactive in its prevention. The measured approach in the Act would create stronger incentives for employers to follow the law as well as increase penalties for violations, strengthen federal outreach education and enforcement efforts and prohibit retaliation against workers who ask about employers' wage practices.

Businesses of all sizes and in all industries have found that it makes good business sense to pay men and women equally to attract and retain the best talent. Those businesses who continue to pay unequal wages are mired in out of date thinking about the "cost" of employing women and a woman's capacity. Why should those discriminatory employers be allowed to use their out of date thinking as a defense for discrimination? We should not give an unfair advantage in the marketplace to those who are discriminating at the expense of the many businesses who are doing right by their employees.

Pay inequity hurts families, especially during this economic downturn, as more and more families rely on the income of a female wage earner. Legislation that strengthens pay equity laws is needed now more than ever.

(Your name) is the *(title, organization name, or occupation)*.

¹ <http://www.dol.gov/wb/factsheets/Qf-laborforce-08.htm>



Sample Equal Pay Day 2010 Letter to the Editor

Writing an Effective Letter to the Editor

Each paper has specific rules, so remember to check before you submit. In general, follow these basic guidelines.

- **Make it relevant.** Connect to a recent article, op-ed, or editorial.
- **Keep it short.** There is a rough limit of 250 words for letters.

Dear Editor:

According to US Census statistics on average, full-time working women earned 78 cents to every dollar earned by men. That is right - women working earn 22% less than their male counterparts.

Over a lifetime of work this loss adds up. On average, women lose out on \$9,575 per year and \$434,000 in a lifetime due to the wage gap. As a workingwoman, I am extremely concerned about pay inequity not only for myself, but for my family.

On Tuesday, April 20 [*Name BPW Local Organization*] will celebrate **Equal Pay Day** – the point in the year when a woman's wages catch up to a man's wages in the previous year.

Legislation is needed to close the persistent gap between men's and women's wages. **The Paycheck Fairness Act (HR 12/S 182)** will strengthen the Equal Pay Act closing loopholes and strengthening penalties to guarantee that women workers are not shortchanged solely because of their gender.

Here in [*name of your City/County*] we will join hundreds of working women advocates across the country to educate women and men about pay inequity and demand passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act.

Eliminating the wage gap is good for families and for business.

Sincerely,

Name
BPW Local
Address
Phone Number

[NOTE: This is a sample letter. Please feel free to edit. Your personal stories are the most powerful.]

Sample Equal Pay Day Proclamation

WHEREAS, forty six years after the passage of the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, women and people of color continue to suffer the consequences of inequitable pay differentials; and

WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, year-round, full-time working women in 2007 earned only 78% of the earnings of year-round, full-time working men, indicating little change or progress in pay equity; and

WHEREAS, according to a January 2002 report released by the General Accounting Office (the investigative arm of Congress), women managers in 7 of 10 industries surveyed, actually lost ground in closing the wage gap between 1995 and 2000; and

WHEREAS, according to an analysis of data in over 300 classifications provided by the U.S. Department of Labor Statistics in 2001, women earn less in every occupational classification for which enough data is available, including occupations dominated by women (e.g., cashiers, retail sales, registered nurses and teachers); and

WHEREAS, higher education is not free from wage discrimination according to a U.S. Department of Education analysis, reporting that, after controlling for rank, age, credentials, field of study and other factors, full-time female faculty members earn nearly 9% less than their male counterparts; and

WHEREAS, the *(insert a state/local report here...perhaps from an Equal Pay Commission Study or a report from your Commission on the Status of Women)*; and

WHEREAS, over a working lifetime, this wage disparity costs the average American woman and her family an estimated \$700,000 to \$2 million in lost wages, impacting Social Security benefits and pensions; and

WHEREAS, fair pay equity policies can be implemented simply and without undue costs or hardship in both the public and private sectors; and

WHEREAS, fair pay strengthens the security of families today and eases future retirement costs, while enhancing the American economy; and

WHEREAS, Tuesday, April 20 symbolizes the time in the new year in which the wages paid to American women catch up to the wages paid to men from the previous year,

NOW, THEREFORE, I, *(insert name of Mayor/Commissioner/etc)*, do hereby proclaim Tuesday, April 20, 2010:

EQUAL PAY DAY

in *(insert name of City/County/State)* and urge the citizens of *(insert name of City/County/State)* to recognize the full value of women's skills and significant contributions to the labor force, and further encourages businesses to conduct an internal pay evaluation to ensure women are being paid fairly.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the official seal of *(insert name of City/County/State)* to be affixed.

Signature

Date



Employer Pay Equity Self-Audit

In a time when women make up nearly half the workforce, many think that the issue of equal pay no longer exists. However according to 2008 US Census Bureau statistics women working, full-time, year round make, on average, 78 cents for every dollar a male earns. For minority women this statistic worsens as African American women make 69 cents and Latinas make 59 cents. Given the current rate of change, it will be another 50 years before women achieve equal pay.

Business and Professional Women's Foundation is creating successful workplaces by focusing on issues that impact women, families and employers. *Successful Workplaces* are those that embrace and practice diversity, equity and work life balance. Through its groundbreaking research and unique role as a neutral convener of employers and employees, BPW Foundation strives to redefine today's workplace. The work of BPW Foundation supports workforce development programs and workplace policies that recognize the diverse needs of working women, communities and businesses.

Gender discrimination is not only a women's issue but a business issue. Employers play a major role in helping to end the wage gap and to treat women fairly in the workplace. Employers will suffer from pay discrimination because of expensive law suits and women having less money to spend and invest.

BPW Foundation believes in the three pronged approach to addressing the issue of pay equity. We believe that legislation should be passed to enact tougher laws; businesses should be held accountable for their unfair pay practices and mindful of what they pay their employees; and women should be given the knowledge and tools to empower themselves to achieve pay equity at work.

To help employers be more mindful about their pay scales, BPW Foundation encourages employers to recognize and reward the skills and contributions of working women. The Employer Pay Equity Self-Audit was developed to assist employers in analyzing their own wage-setting policies and establishing consistent and fair pay practices for all. BPW Foundation encourages employers to answer all of the questions in the audit and examine how they are doing regarding paying and promoting their female employees fairly.

For more information about BPW Foundation please go to www.bpwfoundation.org.

Employer Pay Equity Self-Audit

1. Recruitment

- Does your hiring process seek diversity in the qualified applicant pool for positions?



2. Evaluate Your Compensation System for Internal Equity

- Do you have a method to determine salaries and benefits?
- Do you write position descriptions, seek employee input and develop consensus for position descriptions? In unionized workplaces, do you involve union leaders?
- Do you have a consistent job evaluation system? Are jobs scored or assigned grades? Are positions where women and minorities work scored or graded according to the same standards as jobs where men or non-minorities work?
- Could a method be used for ensuring consistent pay for people with substantially similar levels or experience and education who hold jobs calling for substantially similar degrees of skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions, even though job titles may be different?

3. Evaluate Your Compensation System for Industry Competitiveness

- Do you have a method to determine the market rate for any given job? Do you ensure that market rates are applied consistently? (i.e.—Can you be confident that men are not being compensated *at or above* market rates while women are compensated *at or below* market rates? Can you be confident that non-minority workers are not compensated *at or above* market rates while minority workers' compensation is *at or below* the market rates?)
- Would your company benefit from a fresh approach that updates position descriptions; assesses skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions of various jobs; assigns grades or scores; and ensures consistent application of market rates and external competitiveness?

4. Conduct a New Job Evaluation System if Needed

- Do you have up-to-date position descriptions for all occupations?
- Do you establish criteria for assigning values to skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions of jobs? Do you challenge basic assumptions about the value of skills before assigning points or grades? (i.e.—Do you consider how caring for sick people, small muscle dexterity in typing, and other such skills may have been undervalued in jobs that have been traditionally held by women?)
- Do you ensure agreement among worker representatives and management on criteria to evaluate jobs?
- Do you assign scores or grades to jobs and allow worker input?
- Do you compare your system with market rates and other external competitiveness factors? Do you consider whether the market has undercompensated certain occupations or professions before making adjustments?
- Do you assign consistent compensation to jobs within similar grades or scores, and do you use market rates and other external competitiveness factors consistently?



5. Examine Your Compensation System and Compare Job Grades/Scores

- How does pay compare for positions with similar grades or scores within your company? On average, are women and minorities paid similarly to men and non-minorities within the same grade or job score? Are there legitimate reasons for any disparities in pay between jobs with similar grades or scores? Can corrections be made to ensure consistency in assigning grades or scores?
- How long do men, women and minorities stay within job grades or scores before moving up? Do men or non-minority workers move up faster? What are the reasons that some workers move up faster? Can you take action to ensure that all workers have equal opportunity for advancement?

6. Review Data for Personnel Entering Your Company

- At what grades or positions do men, women and minorities typically enter your company? Within those grades and positions, are salaries consistent, or do men, women and minorities enter at different pay levels?
- How does negotiation affect entry-level salaries? Are men able to negotiate higher starting salaries than women or minorities?
- How do new hires compare in salary to those already working in the company in the same grades or positions? Do men, women and minorities entering the company get paid higher or lower than those who already hold the same positions or grades? Are there differences by gender or race?
- Are changes needed to ensure that new hires are treated consistently and incorporated into existing compensation systems on a compatible basis?

7. Assess Opportunity for Employees to Win Commissions and Bonuses

- Are men, women and minorities assigned projects or clients with high commission potential on a consistent basis?
- Are men, women and minorities with similar levels of performance awarded bonuses on a consistent basis? Do they receive bonuses of similar monetary values?

8. Assess How Raises are Awarded

- Is there a consistent method of evaluating performance for all workers? Do men, women and minorities receive consistent raises based on similar performance standards? (i.e.—Are all workers with outstanding evaluations awarded the same percentage increases? If not, what are the reasons for the difference?)



- Are men, women and minorities with similar levels of performance awarded bonuses on a consistent basis? Do they receive bonuses of similar monetary values?

9. Evaluate Employee Training, Development and Promotion Opportunities

- How are workers selected for participation in training opportunities or special projects that lead to advancement? Are there differences by race or gender? If so, what can be done to widen the pool to reflect equal opportunity?

10. Implement Changes Where Needed, Maintain Equity and Share Your Success

- Have you made changes to ensure consistency in evaluation of jobs, assignment of grades or scores, advancement within the system, performance evaluation, compensation levels, raises, bonuses, commissions and training? Have you evaluated your compensation system periodically to ensure that it meets equal employment opportunity goals?
- Do you maintain openness about compensation with your workforce? Do you regularly post job openings and salary ranges within the workplace? Do you allow employees to discuss compensation issues on their own time?
- Are you reaping the rewards of a productive, loyal workforce, and using your success as a competitive tool to attract the best and brightest workers?

Information for this employer self-audit was derived from a 1996 document created by the U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau.