



Equal Pay Today 2025-2026 Policy Agenda March 2025

Campaign Platform

The Equal Pay Today Campaign brings together state, national, and tribal organizations and supporters across the country to close race and gender wage gaps by addressing all key contributors, including pay inequity and secrecy, workplace harassment, lack of paid leave and caregiver protections, occupational segregation, and poverty wages. Equal Pay Today accelerates fair pay progress state by state to drive federal momentum and defend federal protections. Galvanizing millions in communities across the country, Equal Pay Today leads policy reform, public education and awareness campaigns, and enforcement of fair pay laws. Building economic progress through an equity lens, the campaign also supports worker organizing and best employment practices by employer allies. Now more than ever, as the country faces systematic attacks against civil and constitutional rights, we must speak collectively about the necessity of fair pay, better jobs, and workplace protections for all.

Wage injustice continues to be a problem, despite ongoing and important advances in the over 60 years since the passage of the Equal Pay Act in 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Unfortunately, the overall pay gap for women persists and is even wider for women of color. Equal Pay Today prioritizes workers and communities most impacted by pay inequity and wage injustice, now exacerbated by the Trump Administration's wholesale attacks on the livelihoods of the most marginalized communities. At the state level, we must organize around new more expansive legislative opportunities, while, at the federal level, we must oppose attempts to re-segregate our workforce, rollback protections, and eliminate civil rights enforcement.

Every year, women overall lose millions of dollars because of the gender and race pay gaps, harming their ability to pay for basic necessities and build wealth. Black, Latina, Native American, Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander women are overrepresented in industries that are underpaid and often lack basic workplace protections. Farmworkers, domestic workers, immigrant, migrant, seasonal, and part-time workers continue to be left out of critical employment protections. For women who are immigrants, their citizenship status often makes them more vulnerable to wage theft and sexual harassment. In particular, women

of color are experiencing economic instability as their jobs, their benefits, and the agencies and the laws that would protect them, are under attack.

There are many forms of discrimination in employment that impact women's pay throughout their careers, limiting their economic security. In Equal Pay Today's pursuit of wage justice, we work to address all the key contributors to the pay gap, including:

- ❖ lack of equal pay for the same or similar work, reliance on salary history, and the lack of pay transparency in the workplace, including the failure to enforce protections;
- ❖ failure to provide robust workplace harassment and other discrimination protections and enforcement;
- ❖ segregation of women into underpaid work and poverty-level minimum wage jobs, rampant wage theft, and a subminimum wage that impoverishes tipped and other workers;
- ❖ lack of paid family leave, paid sick and safe days, and caregiver protections, particularly in low paid work.

Equal Pay Today's policy platform identifies key pieces of affirmative state and federal legislation, as well as defensive work to stem the current Administration's attempts to rollback protections and enforcement. The campaign has a track record of success in the 11 years since its creation. Equal Pay Today has supported successful pay equity legislation in 44 states and led advocacy in support of several successful federal executive actions. As a result of these efforts, employers are posting salary ranges and ending reliance on prior salary to set wages. The federal government no longer can use salary history in the setting of wages in the federal civilian workforce. States are raising the minimum wage and eliminating the subminimum wage. Equal Pay Today is not only guiding groundbreaking policy reform, it is at the leading edge of a cultural zeitgeist of changed expectations about raising wages, pay transparency, and the future of work. Job applicants are seeing more jobs posted with salary ranges and less use of prior salary to set wages. More employers are out in front to meet these changes in law and worker expectations around fair and equitable pay practices. State by state, Equal Pay Today is making the case for federal legislative change so that our right to be paid fairly does not depend on our zip code or winning an employer lottery.

With this backdrop, Equal Pay Today sets out a bold course for progress in our 2025-2026 Policy Agenda. Our campaign will be focusing on these federal and state affirmative and defensive policy goals in the next year and beyond. We also commit to seize opportunities to create new policy proposals and build power behind emerging pieces of legislation in other states that can help close gender, race, and LGBTQIA+ wage gaps once and for all, as well as defend the progress we have made.

2025-2026 Equal Pay Today Policy Agenda

Equal Pay Today urges the passage, implementation, and/or defense of the following policy proposals:

Pay Equity and Employment Discrimination Enforcement

- **Paycheck Fairness Act:** This federal bill would modernize and strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to better combat pay discrimination and close the wage gap, including by protecting workers from retaliation for discussing pay, banning the use of prior salary history, and codifying pay data collection.
- **Fair Pay Act:** This federal bill would require employers to provide equal pay to employees for comparable or equivalent work helping to address wage differentials due to occupational segregation.
- **The Salary Transparency Act:** This federal bill would help reduce the pay gap by requiring employers to provide the salary range for jobs.
- **Codify the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Program's (OFCCP) Executive Order 11246:** President Trump rescinded this decades-old executive order, which prohibits discrimination in federal contracting. We propose and support codifying these former protections into federal legislation.
- **Protect the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and U.S. Census Bureau Data Collections:** Both the EEOC and Census Bureau engage in critical data collection around our workforce. We continue to support the data collections necessary to help enforce our nation's employment laws and to have information necessary to identify pay and other disparities.
- **Defend Independent Civil Rights Enforcement Agencies:** President Trump took unprecedented actions to fire officials at independent agencies – agencies which enforce employment and other civil rights protections – including at the EEOC and the National Labor Relations Board. Some agency leadership announced an abdication to enforce federal law protecting all workers, in particular on the basis of gender identity. Other agencies are rolling back diversity, equity, and inclusion programs that support the advancement and economic security of women and workers of color in the workplace. We oppose the gutting of our nation's civil rights enforcement agencies and other critical programs and will work to restore these critical missions.
- **State Bills:** Across the country, dozens of bills have been introduced to advance pay equity, including the following, which are a particular focus for Equal Pay Today. We will also oppose selected bills.
 - **California:** SB 642 will strengthen the California Fair Pay Act by revising outdated gender binary language, clarifying what constitutes “wages,” extending the statute of limitations, allowing workers to recover lost wages for all discriminatory paychecks, and providing limits on how wide pay ranges may be in public job postings required under existing law.
 - **Maine:** HP 18 will require employers with 10 or more employees to include a statement in all job postings that lists the prospective salary ranges for positions and will require

any employer to disclose to an employee, upon request, the range of pay for the position the employee holds.

- **New York:** Assembly Bill A5906 will require employers to include the job description, compensation or a range of compensation, and description of benefits and other compensation for any job, promotion, or transfer opportunity.
- **Oregon:** HB 2746 will require employers to disclose in any internal or external job posting for employment, promotion or transfer opportunity, the wage or wage range, a general description of the employment benefits, and any other compensation associated with the employment, promotion or transfer opportunity.
- **Virginia:** SB 1132 will prohibit a prospective employer from seeking or relying on the wage or salary history of a prospective employee; and will require employers to disclose in all public and internal postings for a job, promotion, transfer, or other employment opportunity the wage, salary, or wage or salary range.
- **Mississippi:** In 2022, despite Mississippians' strong pushback, the Mississippi Legislature passed a so-called equal pay bill that provides Mississippians with far weaker equal pay protections than under federal law. We urge the passage of a true equal pay bill in Mississippi, the only state without a law that affirmatively ensures equal pay for equal work.
- **Washington:** SB 5408 would undermine Washington's pay range transparency law by requiring that job applicants give employers written notice that a job posting is non-compliant, along with a 10-day grace period, before they are entitled to relief – improperly shifting responsibility for ensuring compliance from employers to job applicants. We oppose this bill.

[Harassment and Other Workplace Protections Promoting Income Security](#)

- **BE HEARD in the Workplace Act:** This federal bill would strengthen the law to better address and prevent workplace discrimination and harassment, including by covering all workers, regardless of employer size, and eliminating the tipped minimum wage, which places tipped workers at greater risk of harassment by customers.
- **Sunlight in Workplace Harassment Act:** This federal bill would require public companies to publicly disclose the total number and aggregate dollar amount of disputes settled by the company related to sexual abuse or harassment or discrimination; the average length of time it takes to resolve harassment complaints, as well as additional information on their efforts to prevent harassment, discrimination, and abuse by their employees.
- **State bills:** Since #MeToo went viral in 2017, states have introduced and passed dozens of bills addressing harassment at work. Equal Pay Today urges states to continue the momentum and address workplace discrimination and harassment, and includes a particular focus on the following:
 - **Georgia:** HB 306 would establish a cause of action for workers facing discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation in the workplace.
 - **Virginia:** HB 2561 would extend the deadline for filing a claim of discrimination, including harassment, with the VA Office of Civil Rights of the Attorney General from 300 days to 2 years.

- **Virginia:** SB 1052 would expand coverage of the Virginia Human Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on certain protected categories.

Higher Wages

- **Raise the Wage Act:** This federal bill would gradually increase the federal minimum wage to \$17/hour and eliminate the subminimum wage for tipped workers, workers with disabilities, and young workers, which contributes to wage theft and harassment, and exacerbates wage gaps. It remains critical to end the subminimum wage in any future introductions.
- **State bills:** Many states have introduced bills to increase the state minimum wage and to end minimum wage carve-outs, including:
 - **Illinois:** HB 2982, the Illinois One Fair Wage With Tips on Top Act will phase out the subminimum wage by July 1, 2027, guaranteeing that all workers receive at least the full minimum wage, with tips serving as additional income—not a substitute for fair pay.
 - **Minnesota:** SF 671 would gradually increase the minimum wage, starting at \$15 an hour, reaching \$20 per hour by August 1, 2029.
 - **Missouri:** After voters passed Proposition A which increased the state minimum wage and provided paid sick leave for workers, the legislature has introduced four bills to undermine the vote of nearly 1.7 million Missouri voters who supported these new protections. We oppose all attempts to undermine increases in the minimum wage through delays, exemptions or other rollbacks.

Paid Leave & Family Caregiver Protections

- **Healthy Families Act:** This federal bill would set a national standard for paid sick days to allow workers in businesses with 15 or more employees to earn up to seven job-protected paid sick and safe days each year.
- **FAMILY Act:** This federal bill would provide workers with up to 12 weeks of partial income when they take time off work for their own serious health condition; the serious health condition of a family member; the birth or adoption of a child; to address the effects of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; and for certain reasons related to military deployment.
- **Job Protection Act:** This federal bill would make family and medical leave requirements applicable to all employers (currently, the requirements apply to employers with 50 or more employees) and reduce from 12 months to 90 days the employment period required for employees (including federal employees) to become eligible for family and medical leave.
- **Caring for All Families Act:** This federal bill would recognize a more inclusive definition of family by enabling workers to take job-protected time off work to care for chosen and extended family members with a serious illness.
- **State bills:** Many states have sought to expand these paid leave protections, including through the following bills, which are a particular focus for Equal Pay Today:
 - **California:** SB 590 would give workers the right to receive paid family leave wage replacement benefits when on unpaid leave from work to care for members of their chosen or extended family.

- **New Mexico:** HB 11 would provide 12 weeks of leave for new parents, and six weeks of paid leave for people with serious health conditions or acting as family caregivers.
- **Pennsylvania:** HB 200 would provide Pennsylvania workers up to 20 weeks of paid leave to care for a new child, a sick family member, or tend to their own health issues.
- **Illinois:** SB 2413/HB 3279 would create a Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Program and the Division of Paid Family and Medical Leave within the Illinois Department of Labor to establish and administer a paid family and medical leave insurance program providing benefits to employees.
- **Missouri:** After voters passed Proposition A which boosts the state minimum wage and provides paid sick leave for workers, the legislature has introduced four bills to undermine nearly 1.7 million Missouri voters who supported the new law. We oppose all attempts to undermine, repeal or delay paid leave protections.

Equal Pay Today Roundtable Members

9to5, A Better Balance, American Association of University Women, American Civil Liberties Union, Atlanta Women for Equality, Black Women's Roundtable/National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, California Women's Law Center, Center for American Progress, Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women, Connecticut Women's Education and Legal Fund, Equal Rights Advocates, ERA Coalition, Esperanza United, Family Values @ Work, Futures Without Violence, Gender Equality Law Center, Gender Justice, Human Rights Campaign, Institute for Women's Policy Research, Justice for Migrant Women, KWH Law Center for Social Justice and Change, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, Legal Aid at Work, Legal Momentum, Legal Voice, Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, Mississippi Black Women's Roundtable, MomsRising, National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum, National Black Worker Center, National Center for Law and Economic Justice, National Council of Jewish Women, National Employment Law Project, National Network to End Domestic Violence, National Organization for Women, National Partnership for Women & Families, National Urban League, National Women's Law Center, Not Our Native Daughters, One Fair Wage, PowHer New York, Restaurant Opportunities Centers (ROC) United, Return to the Heart Foundation, Sexual Violence Law Center, Shriver Center on Poverty Law, South Carolina Women's Rights and Empowerment Network, Southwest Women's Law Center, Texas Council on Family Violence, The Women's Economic Institute, UnidosUS, Women Employed, Women's Law Project

Contact

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