



Equal Pay Today 2026-2027 Policy Agenda March 2026

Campaign Platform

As our country faces systematic attacks against civil and worker rights, we must speak collectively about the necessity of fair pay, better jobs, affordability, and workplace protections for all. The Equal Pay Today Campaign brings together state, national, and Tribal organizations and supporters across the country to address these issues and combat the ongoing and egregious race and gender wage gaps. 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.

We address all the key contributors impacting the economic security of women and workers of color, including pay inequity and secrecy, workplace harassment, lack of paid leave and caregiver protections, occupational segregation, and poverty-level wages. Equal Pay Today accelerates fair pay progress state by state to drive federal momentum and defend federal protections. Galvanizing 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.

Equal Pay Today prioritizes workers and communities most impacted by pay inequity and wage injustice. Economic insecurity is now severely exacerbated by the Trump Administration's wholesale attacks on the livelihoods of the most marginalized communities and the agencies that were intended to protect them. At the federal level, we must oppose attempts to re-segregate our workforce, rollback protections, and eliminate data and civil rights enforcement, while at the same time, at the state level, we must organize around new and more expansive legislative opportunities.

Despite ongoing and important advances in the over 60 years since the passage of employment protections, like the Equal Pay Act in 1963 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the overall pay gap for women persists and is even wider for women of color and women with disabilities. Every year, on average, women lose billions of dollars because of gender and race pay gaps, contributing to the affordability crisis by 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. Farmworkers, domestic workers, immigrant, migrant, and part-time workers, continue to be left out of critical employment protections. For women who are immigrants, it is a frightening time. Their citizenship status, or even their perceived citizenship status, often make them more vulnerable to wage theft and workplace harassment or worse. 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 pay gaps, including:

- lack of equal pay for the same or similar work, reliance on salary history, lack of pay transparency in the workplace, and ongoing attacks on enforcement agencies that should enforce protections;
- failure to provide robust workplace harassment protections and enforcement;
- segregation of women into poverty-level minimum and subminimum wage work and rampant wage theft
- lack of paid family leave, paid sick and safe days, and caregiver protections, particularly in low paid work.

Equal Pay Today's campaign platform identifies key pieces of affirmative state and federal legislation, as well as necessary defensive work to stem the current Administration's attempts to rollback protections and enforcement. The campaign has a track record of success in the 13 years since its creation. Equal Pay Today has supported successful pay equity legislation in 44 states and helped lead advocacy in support of several successful federal actions. As a result of these efforts, employers are posting salary ranges and ending reliance on prior salary to set wages. States are raising the minimum wage and eliminating the subminimum wage. 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 2026-2027 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 be a bulwark against an Administration that is diminishing our economic security and to seize opportunities to build power behind emerging pieces of legislation in states that can help close gender, race, and LGBTQIA+ wage gaps once and for all.

2026-2027 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 demographic and 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.
- **Expand and 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 updating, expanding, and 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, including the EEO-1, ACS, and CPS data. We 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 Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The EEOC, with a Trump-appointed majority intends to, and has begun to, dismantle employment protections for vulnerable workers. They are attacking DEI programs, failing to protect workers based on gender identity or national origin, and rescinding important guidance, regulations, and data collections. Other agencies are rolling back DEI, 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 stop the rollbacks and 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.

- **Illinois:** SB 3975/HB 5147 would require employers operating in Illinois with over \$100 million in annual revenue and more than 100 employees to publicly disclose detailed annual reports on their workforce policies, practices, and performance. These reports must include comprehensive data on workforce demographics, stability, diversity, skills, health and safety, accessibility, compensation, recruiting, and engagement.
- **Illinois:** SB 3777/HB 5386 would amend the Illinois Human Rights Act (IHRA) to codify the legal theory of disparate impact to safeguard civil rights protections for Illinoisans where discrimination laws apply.
- **New York:** A5906B/S5990 would require employers, employment agencies, and their agents to disclose detailed information about compensation ranges, bonuses, stock options, bonds, equity, ownership interests, and a general description of benefits such as health insurance, paid time off, disability insurance, and family leave when advertising job, promotion, or transfer opportunities; would also require employers to provide current employees with annual updates on compensation ranges and disclose minimum and maximum wages upon request during the hiring process.
- **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.
- **Virginia:** SB 215/HB 636 would prohibit employers from requesting, relying on, or using a prospective employee's wage or salary history during the hiring process, and would require employers to disclose wage or salary ranges in job postings and to establish these ranges in good faith.

Harassment and Other Workplace Protections Promoting Economic 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.
- **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:
 - **Arizona:** HB 2217/SB 1753 would enhance civil rights protections in employment, housing, and public accommodations prohibiting discrimination based on various

protected categories, including race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, national origin, and disability, including by explicitly protecting against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, and expanding the definition of "employer" to include those with five or more employees.

- **California:** AB 2155 would protect survivors' and other workers' access to the courts by ensuring workers cannot be forced into arbitration when federal law already recognizes their right to seek justice in court. It does so by aligning California law with federal protections, incorporating key exemptions from the Federal Arbitration Act into the California Arbitration Act, including claims for sexual harassment or sexual assault and claims involving seamen, railroad employees, and other workers engaged in foreign or interstate commerce.
- **Georgia:** HB 670, the Georgia Civil Rights Act of 2025, would enhance civil rights protections against discrimination in various sectors, including housing, public accommodations, employment, and public employment to address discrimination based on characteristics such as race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, familial status, and national origin, thereby promoting equality and fair treatment for all citizens.
- **Maryland:** HB 925 would extend the statute of limitations for filing a complaint of employment discrimination with the state Office of Civil Rights and broaden the options for individuals seeking legal recourse.

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:** SB 3821/HB 5367 would establish a structured schedule of minimum wage increases for employees across all industries, including corrections, juvenile justice, retail, hospitality, and seasonal employment and mandates that wages paid to persons in correctional or juvenile programs must not be less than the minimum wage.
 - **Maryland:** HB 1229/SB 886 is a proposed constitutional amendment aimed for the 2026 ballot that would raise the minimum wage to \$25 an hour by 2032 and eliminate tip credits.

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:
 - **Illinois:** SB 2413/HB 3483 would establish a Family and Medical Leave Program that provides covered individuals with the right to job-protected paid family and medical leave, for various reasons, including the birth or adoption of a child, caring for a family member with a serious health condition, or their own serious health condition.
 - **Pennsylvania:** HB 200 would establish a comprehensive Family and Medical Leave Program, providing paid leave benefits to eligible employees for reasons including caring for a new child, a family member with a serious health condition, their own serious medical condition, or being a victim of a qualifying act of violence.
 - **Virginia:** SB 2/HB 1207 would establish a Paid Family & Medical Leave program providing eligible individuals with paid leave benefits when caring for a new child, a family member with a serious health condition, or their own serious health condition, as well as related to leave for active duty of a family member.
 - **Virginia:** HB 5 would enable employees to accrue paid sick and safe leave to use for personal or family health issues, including mental health, injuries, preventive care, and circumstances involving domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Equal Pay Today Roundtable Organizational Members

9to5 • 9to5 Georgia • A Better Balance • American Association of University Women (AAUW) • American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) • Atlanta Women for Equality • Black Women's Roundtable/National Coalition on Black Civic Participation • California Women's Law Center • Center for American Progress • Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) • 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 • 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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