

# Why do we fight for Equal Pay?

Pay discrimination is a real and persistent problem in America that continues to shortchange women and our families.

On average, women who work full-time year round earn about 79 cents for every dollar earned by men in those jobs. A woman working full time loses more than \$400,000 over the course of her career because of the wage gap.

## The gender wage gap is impacted by many other factors.

We also have a significant racial wage gap in the United States, and women of color face a double hit to their paychecks.



*"In real estate, your income depends on the prices of houses you're selling. I'm repeatedly pigeonholed to the African American neighborhoods and clients, where prices are lower – along with my potential income."*  
 –Jada



African American women earn only 61 cents, Native American women only 59 cents and Latinas just 55 cents to every dollar earned by white men, the highest earners.

Race is not the only factor. Mothers, people with disabilities, and people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer earn less over the course of their lives.

## On average, women earn less than men in nearly every occupation, at every education level, and at every age.

If you compare *across* industries, you'll find that fields that predominantly employ women are not valued the same as fields dominated by men, even when they require similar levels of education and skill.



Image from Equal Payback Project



*"We pay people more to take of our cars than we will pay them to take care of our children or elderly parents."*  
 –Harriet, in-home caregiver

Nine out of the ten lowest-paying jobs are dominated by women – and especially women of color. These jobs are also less likely to provide wage protections and family-friendly policies for their workers.

If you compare *within* the same occupation, you'll find that in 99% of them, women earn less than men.



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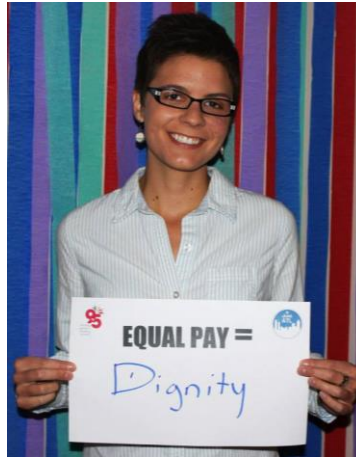
## Discrimination takes many forms.

There's blatant illegal discrimination, like sexual harassment, or not hiring or promoting women.

There's more subtle discrimination, like stereotypes about women's work and the old-boys-club mentality that leads to more mentoring and career development opportunities for men.

And then there are workplace policies that simply have not kept up with America's families. Two out of three women are the sole or equal breadwinners in their families. And yet:

- Only 12% of private sector workers have paid family leave. Because women do the vast majority of unpaid caregiving, taking time to care for children, elders, or sick family members hits women's paychecks hardest.
- The United States is one of only three countries in the entire world that doesn't guarantee paid maternity leave.
- Unpredictable, unreliable scheduling practices are especially common in low-wage, women-dominated industries like retail and food service. An unpredictable schedule can make it impossible to get your kids to childcare, to finish school, or to count on a steady paycheck.
- Pregnant workers are not guaranteed even basic accommodations to help keep them and their pregnancies healthy. A cashier whose doctor says she shouldn't stand for too many hours can legally be denied the right to sit on a stool at work.



*The numbers show that mothers are offered fewer jobs, and offered lower starting salaries than women without kids. On the other hand, fathers are offered higher starting salaries than men without kids.*



*"Single moms like me face a devastating and unfair wage gap."  
--Kiki*

## So what's the solution?



**It's going to take every one of us to win equal pay and create the changes we need in the workplace. Together we're building a movement to guarantee that we properly value women's work, raise wages, end discrimination and ensure that everyone has access to family-friendly workplace policies.**

**Join us! Go to [9to5.org/equalpay](https://9to5.org/equalpay) for your toolkit.**



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