# PAY EQUITY

# MYTHS AND REALITIES


YOU'VE COME 64% OF THE WAY, BABY!

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# PAY EQUITY

## Myths and Realities

Pay equity, or comparable worth, once called the employment issue of the 80s, has grown in importance throughout the decade. As more women have entered the workforce, the wage gap between men and women and its causes have attracted increasing attention. The news media are writing about the issue, its implications and potential impact, and pay equity court cases and settlements are proliferating around the country. Public and private employers are beginning to develop solutions to phase in more equitable compensation for workers in female-dominated jobs. So, what is pay equity and how does it affect employees and employers in today's workplace? The following answers are designed to address the most frequently-asked questions about pay equity.

## I. WHAT IS PAY EQUITY?

**Q. WHAT IS PAY EQUITY?**
**A.** Pay equity is fair pay. Used interchangeably with the term "comparable worth," pay equity encompasses the concept of equal pay for work of comparable value. Pay equity is most commonly defined as calling for the determination of an employee's salary on the basis of the employee's skill, effort, responsibilities and other work-related criteria, and not on the basis of the employee's sex or race. The goal of pay equity is to eliminate sex and race discrimination from the wage-setting process. Pay equity advocates recognize that most women and most minorities still work in a number of underpaid occupations such as secretarial work, nursing or service work. These occupations have historically been undervalued and underpaid because they have been held primarily by women or minorities. Pay equity requires an employer to use sex and race-neutral criteria in setting wages.

**Q. IS PAY EQUITY THE SAME AS EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK?**

**A. NO.** Pay equity includes equal pay for equal work, but it is broader. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 requires an employer to pay the same salary to employees performing the same work. For example, female electricians must be paid the same as male electricians who work for the same employer; if they are performing similar work. Pay equity takes equal pay for equal work one step further. Pay equity means that an employer cannot discriminate on the basis of sex or race when it sets and pays wages whether the occupations are similar or different. Evidence of a discriminatory wage practice may include an employer paying jobs held predominantly by women less than comparable jobs held predominantly by men.

**Q. IS IT POSSIBLE TO COMPARE ENTIRELY DIFFERENT JOBS?**

**A. YES.** Employers have used job evaluations to set pay and employee rank in different occupations within their organizations for nearly a century. Today, two-thirds of all employees work in firms where some form of job evaluation system exists.[1] The Federal government, the nation's largest employer, has a 37-year old evaluation system that covers half a million employees. Pay equity requires employers to review their job evaluation systems and to elminate all race and sex-based biases. For those employers who do not have job evaluation systems, a bias-free method of compensation should be developed. A person should be paid what his or her job is worth to the employer based on an unbiased evaluation of the education and experience required, and the effort, responsibilities, and working conditions involved in each job.

**Q. IS PAY EQUITY THE LAW?**

**A. YES.** Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits wage discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion or national origin. In 1981, the Supreme Court made it clear that Title VII prohibits wage discrimination even when the jobs are not identical.[2] What has not yet been settled in the courts is the type of evidence necessary to prove discrimination in a sex-based or race-based wage discrimination case. Numerous pay equity cases are pending in courts all around the country, and the final decisions in these cases will ultimately provide an answer to this question.

## II. WHY DO WE NEED PAY EQUITY?

**Q. HAVE PAY INEQUITIES ALWAYS EXISTED?**
**A.** Unequal pay has been experienced by working women ever since women began to earn wages. However, in America, it was the Industrial Revolution that precipitated a major influx of women into the workforce and contributed significantly to the segregation of women into certain low-paying jobs. In working outside the home, women were hired to do jobs similar to those they did as homemakers, such as weaving, sewing and other textile trades, laundry and food preparation. All of these jobs were poorly-paid occupations. In 1833, a wage survey conducted in Philadelphia showed the majority of women workers received less for their 78-hour work week than male workers were getting for one 10-hour day.[3]

**Q. WHAT DO WOMEN EARN TODAY? AREN'T WOMEN GETTING PAID EQUALLY TO MEN IN THE 1980's?**
**A. NO.** For full-time, year-round employment women are paid only 64¢ for every dollar earned by men.[4] For women of color, the wage gap is worse. Black women are paid 57¢ and Hispanic women are paid 52¢ for every dollar earned by white men.[5] The wage gap has persisted in spite of the passage of the Equal Pay Act and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act in the mid 1960s. In fact, statistics show that, on the whole, the wage gap has remained virtually stable since the 1950's for all women and white women as a subgroup. For black women there has been some improvement but they are still earning slightly less than white women and little more than half of white men.

Although women seem to be achieving earnings parity in some newer occupations like computer science, they are still concentrated in lower-paying jobs in most other occupations. Even young workers (average age 21 or 22) entering the job market experience the wage gap. A 1984 U.S. Census Bureau study found that the average wages for young white women entering the job market for full-time employment in 1980 were 83% of the wages for young white men in the same category.[6]

## TABLE 1: MEDIAN INCOME OF YEAR-ROUND, FULL-TIME WORKERS BY SEX AND RACE; 1955-1985

| | | PERCENTAGE OF INCOME OF WHITE MEN | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| YEAR | MEDIAN INCOME OF WHITE MEN | ALL WOMEN | WHITE WOMEN | BLACK WOMEN | BLACK MEN |
| 1985 | $25,062 | 62.3 | 63.0 | 57.1 | 69.7 |
| 1980 | 19,720 | 58.8 | 59.3 | 55.3 | 70.4 |
| 1975-1979 | 15,451 | 58.3 | 58.7 | 54.9 | 72.8 |
| 1970-1974 | 10,893 | 56.7 | 57.1 | 49.3 | 68.3 |
| 1965-1969 | 7,697 | 56.3 | 57.8 | N/A | N/A |
| 1960-1964 | 6,017 | 57.7 | 59.5 | N/A | N/A |
| 1955-1959 | 4,874 | 61.1 | 63.2 | N/A | N/A |

Source: Current Population Reports, Series P-60, U.S. Census Bureau

**Q. CERTAINLY IF A MAN AND WOMAN HAVE THE SAME LEVEL OF EDUCATION, THEY ARE PAID THE SAME, AREN'T THEY?**

**A. NO.** Women high school graduates working full-time earn less on the average than fully-employed men who have not finished elementary school. Men who have completed 8th grade earn an average of $2,000 a year more than women with one to three years of college. Truck drivers with 9 years of schooling earn more, on the average, than nurses with an average of 14.2 years of schooling. Even women with higher degrees feel the wage gap. A 1980 study of 1972 graduates of Harvard's schools of law, dentistry, design, divinity, education, public health and arts and sciences revealed that women graduates had consistently lower salaries than men in comparable positions regardless of marital or family status. For example, the average salaries of graduates from the Harvard School of Public Health were $37,800 a year for men and $21,300 for women.[7]

**Q. WHY IS THERE A WAGE GAP?**

**A.** The wage gap exists because most women still work in a small number of low-paid occupations. Today more than 50% of all women workers are employed in the clerical and service fields. Studies show the more an occupation is dominated by women workers, the less salary the occupation commands.[8] In other words, the jobs traditionally held by women, where 70% or more of the people holding the jobs are women, are undervalued and underpaid simply because employers have placed a lower value on "women's work" than on work traditionally done by men.

**Q. BUT ISN'T THE WAGE GAP ALSO A RESULT OF CHOICES MADE BY WOMEN?**

**A.** In 1980, a committee of the National Academy of Sciences reviewed studies of wage differences between men and women. It found that only a small part of the difference in earnings between men and women can be accounted for by differences in education, length of work experience, commitment to work, or any other factor viewed by economists as contributing to the productivity of a worker. Most of the wage gap is attributable to sex discrimination.[9] In other words, women's jobs pay less because they are held by women. This conclusion is supported by a 1979 U.S. Census Bureau study that showed that "although women are three times more likely than men to leave the workforce for an extended period of time, the job interruptions explain only a small proportion of the wage gap between men and women . . . The study estimates that the difference in earnings would be reduced by only 12 percent if women were assumed to have the same levels of experience and work interruptions as men . . ."[10] According to the U.S. Census Bureau, this data tend to disprove the commonly held belief that women earn less than men because they have less attachment to the workplace.[11]

**Q. WOMEN "CHOOSE" THE JOBS THEY HAVE DON'T THEY?**

**A. YES and NO.** On the surface it appears that the answer is "Yes," because women apply for work in jobs like secretary, clerk, teacher, or nurse. However, the answer is "No" when one consideres that the occupational sex segregation that exists in the workplace has largely come about by the channeling of workers into "men's" and "women's" jobs. Because of discriminatory employer policies, traditional educational practices, social conditioning of children, and stereotypes that exist as to what jobs are "appropriate" for women and men, the "choice" is not as free as it may seem. Also, job opportunities are often insufficiently advertised and women are often not part of networks that allow them to find out about or have access to career opportunities.

Paraphasing a 1984 article by Ray and Beth Paulin on pay equity: Women have adjusted to patterns of institutional and societal discrimination because it takes more power than most individuals have to change the system. This does not mean that society is not damaged by discrimination against women, it merely means that, as individuals, women have limited power to change the system. Further, although women might "choose" traditional occupations, they do not choose to be paid lower wages than men for work of equal value to the employer. Also, it is no answer to say that those women who already are in predominantly female jobs can solve their pay problems by applying for men's jobs. It is not practical for women who are already established in their careers to seek and obtain training required to enter "predominantly male" occupations. More women will enter nontraditional jobs. However, this job migration will not end pay discrimination against women who already have made career choices or want to be in "traditional" women's jobs.[12] Furthermore, the "traditional" women's jobs are essential to our economy, and in many of these fields (e.g., nursing, teaching) we are currently experiencing a serious shortage of workers to fill the available jobs.

**Q. DOESN'T THE CHANGING JOB MARKET GUARANTEE A BETTER FUTURE FOR WOMEN WORKERS?**

**A.** For some women, YES; for the majority NO. There will be more women entering nontraditional jobs and newly created jobs not traditionally associated with either sex. Yet, despite the fact that "the absolute number of women breaking into nontraditonal, male-dominated occupations is on the rise, the occupational distribution of workers has changed very little since 1900 . . . (Moreover) according to a 1983 study, the patterns of occupational segregation are likely to persist as the new generation of women workers follows closely in the occupational mode, despite the convergence of education and labor force participation of men and women."[13] Experts predict, in fact, that patterns of occupational segregation will persist in new areas of employment, such as the computer field and the expanding service sector, so that women will be segregated into the lower-status, lower-paying jobs in those fields as well.

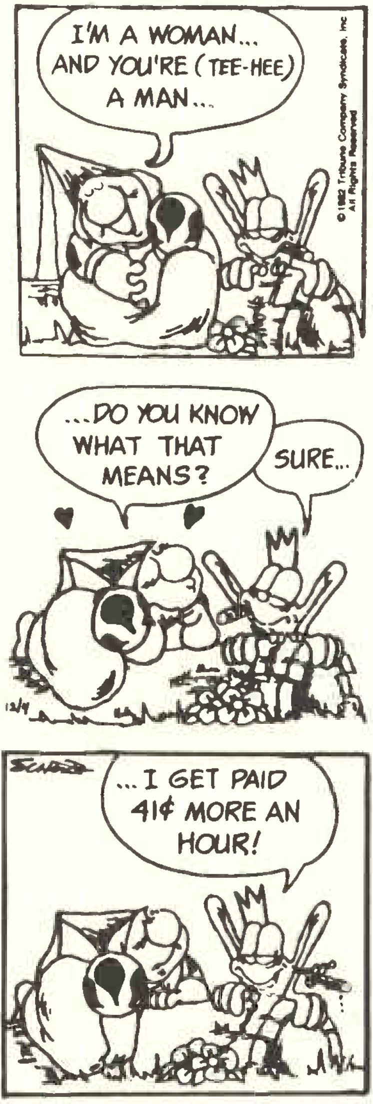
**Q. SO WOMEN REALLY NEED PAY EQUITY?**

**A. YES.** More women work today than ever before. They are fast approaching 50% of the work force. And, like men, most women work because of economic need. Among women workers, 26% have never married; 19% are either widowed, divorced, or separated; and 29% have husbands who earn $15,000 or less. Thus, women are either the sole wage earners in their households or significant contributors to the household earning in two-income families.

Women's wages are even more important when women are the sole support for their families. The number of single women who maintain families has risen 70% in the last decade. Fourty-four percenty of black families and 23% of Hispanic families are maintained by women. Single women of color who maintain families and work in traditional low-paying occupations, such as household worker, experience the highest rates of poverty.[14]

The economic consequences of discriminatory pay follow women into old age. Twice as many women as men over the age of 65 live in poverty. Since pensions and social security benefits are based on prior earnings, low salaries mean less benefits and a greater need for public assistance. Female-headed households and older women living alone comprise over 50% of all households receiving food stamps.[15]

One study has estimated that almost half the families living in poverty would not be poor if wives and female heads of households earned the same wage as similarly qualified men.[16]



# III. WHAT WILL BE THE EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING PAY EQUITY

**Q. WILL PAY EQUITY REQUIRE A NATIONAL WAGE-SETTING SYSTEM?**

**A. NO.** Pay equity refers to how each employer pays his or her employees. Pay equity does not mandate across-the-board salaries for any occupation nor does it require that the government establish rates for the entire labor market or for any geographical region of the market. It merely means that when an employer sets pay scales, the pay should be based on the job itself. Race, sex, or ethnicity may not be factors in determining wages.

**Q. WILL MEN'S WAGES BE REDUCED BECAUSE OF PAY EQUITY?**

**A. NO.** Where public and private employers have begun to implement pay equity the salaries of workers in male-dominated jobs have not been lowered. Furthermore, male workers in female-oriented jobs directly benefit when underpayment of those jobs is remedied, and the same is true for both men and women holding minority-dominated jobs when race-based wage discrimination is remedied. (New York, New Jersey and Wisconsin are among the employers who have investigated the impact of race as well as sex in their job evaluation studies.)

The Equal Pay Act specifically prohibits reducing an employee's pay in order to remedy wage discrimination, and this approach has been followed in pay equity cases generally. After all, the purpose of pay equity is to remedy discrimination, and this is achieved by raising salaries that have been depressed by discrimination, not by lowering salaries that have been unaffected by discrimination. The most frequently used method of remedying the wage gap has been to give larger increases to persons in female-dominated jobs than to those in male-dominated jobs. For example, a 5% raise may be proposed for male-dominated jobs and a 10% raise for female-dominated jobs. Over several years of such increases, the wage gap can be greatly reduced.

**Q. WILL PAY EQUITY INTERFERE WITH THE FREE MARKET SYSTEM OF SETTING WAGES?**

**A.** Fallacies about how the market operates have led to erroneous conclusions concerning the impact of pay equity on the economy. Pay equity does not require that wages be determined outside of a market economy, but that bias be removed from all components of wage setting, including the market. There is latitude in how employers set wages, and this is too often exercised to the disadvantage of women and minorities. Pay equity is an attempt to bring wages for female and minority-dominated jobs up to the going market wage rates for similar work that is not female or minority-dominated. Wages for female and minority-dominated jobs have been artificially depressed by discrimination. Thus, it is not pay equity that interferes with a free market, but discrimination. As Eleanor Holmes Norton so eloquently explains, ". . . comparable worth is not about changing market pricing or the laws of supply and demand. This is a market economy and no concept that requires tossing out the root principles of our economy can succeed. Comparable worth makes a more modest point: that wages may incorporate any and all factors no matter how fickle — but not discrimination based on race and sex — because that is barred by the law, by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Comparable worth seeks to eliminate the discrimination factor, *and only the discrimination factor,* from wage setting."[17]

**Q. WILL PAY EQUITY DISRUPT THE ECONOMY?**

**A. NO.** This same objection was raised when the Equal Pay Act, minimum wage and child labor laws were proposed. The predicted economic chaos never came to pass.

A recent survey of private employers revealed that most businesses support the elimination of wage discrimination between different jobs as "good business" and not inconsistent with remaining competitive in the marketplace.[18]

In addition, raising women's wages will increase their purchasing power and thereby help to stengthen the economy.

**Q. PAY EQUITY SOUNDS LIKE A GOOD IDEA, BUT WON'T THE COST TO EMPLOYERS BE TOO HIGH?**

**A. NO.** First, it is illegal under Title VII to continue a discriminatory practice because some cost is involved to correct the situation. Such an objection is obviously unacceptable to justify paying blacks less than whites.

Second, voluntary implementation of pay equity can be achieved with minimal disruption of an employer's budget. In Minnesota, where pay equity legislation required increases for 30,000 state employees, the total cost was less than 4% of the state payroll budget.

Court-ordered pay equity adjustments, however, arising from law suits brought against the employer, may lead to greater costs to the employer. If the employer does not act voluntarily to remedy pay inequities and is brought to court to answer charges of pay discrimination between predominantly-male and predominantly-female jobs, losing the case can result in the payment of legal fees and back pay, as well as making adjustments for future wages.

## IV. WHAT CAN AND HAS BEEN DONE TO IMPLEMENT PAY EQUITY?

**Q. WHAT FEDERAL LAWS AFFECT SEX DISCRIMINATION IN THE SETTING OF WAGES?**

**A.** There are two major Federal laws affecting discrimination in salaries on the basis of sex. The Equal Pay Act (EPA), an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1933, was passed in 1963 to alleviate wage discrimination by prohibiting an employer from paying a woman less than a man if she is doing equal work. The Act has been interpreted narrowly, however, with very few jobs being considered sufficiently similar by the courts to require equalizing pay.

The most comprehensive Federal law prohibiting employment discrimination was passed in 1964. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 forbids all discriminatory practices regarding any phase of employment, including wages. In contrast to the Equal Pay Act, Title VII was created to provide relief in the area of employment discrimination. Pay equity cases are usually brought under both the Equal Pay Act and Title VII.

**Q. WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT OF LITIGATION FOR PAY EQUITY?**

**A.** Litigation based on Federal and State laws has been actively pursued by pay equity proponents in recent years with varying results. Perhaps the most important case on the issue of pay equity so far was the June 1981 decision of the United States Supreme Court in *County of Washington v. Gunther,* which cleared the way for suits under Title VII to remedy sex-based wage discrimination. In this case, four female jail matrons brought suit, claiming that the county had violated Title VII by underpaying them in relation to the male jail guards. The county had conducted a wage survey which determined that female matrons should be paid 95% of what male guards earned. However, the county was paying them only 70% of the male guards' salaries, and the matrons contended that the county was therefore practicing intentional sex discrimination by failing to pay them the full evaluated worth of their jobs. Ruling in favor of the matrons, The Supreme Court held that the matrons could bring suit under Title VII to correct wage discrimination where the Equal Pay Act standard of "substantially equal work" cannot be established.

Important questions still remain regarding the effectiveness of litigation as a means of achieving pay equity. It is still not clear, for example, what type of evidence will be sufficient to convince a court that pay inequities are a result of discrimination, and what the extent of court-ordered remedies will be. Part of the reason these questions are still unanswered is that cases progress very slowly through the courts, and many are settled before a final decision. For example, *AFSCME v. State of Washington*, a case which many people thought would reach the Supreme Court and provide definitive answers to these questions, began with charges filed in 1981. After a trial, the court found in favor of the plaintiffs in 1983. This decision was reversed in 1985. While further appeals were pending, the plaintiffs agreed to a settlement providing for payment by the state of $97.2 million to be distributed over a seven year period to 34,000 employees working in jobs that are female-dominated and undervalued.

Many cases are currently progressing through the courts, and eventually litigation may prove to be the ultimate weapon for achieving pay equity. In the meantime, however, major progress has been achieved through legislation, collective bargaining, and other approaches.

**Q. WHAT OTHER APPROACHES CAN BE USED TO ACHIEVE PAY EQUITY IN THE WORKPLACE?**

**A.** Public education plays a crucial role in achieving the goal of pay equity for women. Women's advocacy groups, as well as labor, government, and educational organizations have undertaken efforts to raise public awareness of the issue. Through conferences, publications, news articles, speeches, and extensive use of the media, these groups have begun to familiarize the public with the concept of pay equity. These coalitions have brought their concerns to governmental officials at all levels.

Unions have been instrumental in implementing pay equity in the workplace where it now exists. Their efforts have included litigation, public awareness campaigns, collective bargaining, striking, legislative advocacy, policy resolutions and coalition building.

Pay equity studies are another approach being undertaken frequently by employers, especially public employers. A review of activities by states show that:

* At least 36 states have established a pay equity task force or commission specifically to examine the issue of pay equity for state government employees.
* At least 28 states have conducted or are conducting job evaluation studies of their classification systems to determine if sex (or in some cases race) is a factor in wage setting.
* Twenty states have actually made pay equity adjustments, that is, they have appropriated money to begin eliminating wage discrimination based on sex and/or race. Minnesota has the distinction of being the first state to complete implementation of its entire pay equity plan.[19]

**Q. YOU HAVE MENTIONED JOB EVALUATION SYSTEMS AS A WAY TO IMPLEMENT PAY EQUITY. HOW CAN PAY EQUITY BE INTEGRATED INTO ALREADY-EXISTING JOB EVALUATION SYSTEMS?**

**A.** As previously stated, for nearly a century employers have used job evaluations to set pay and employee rank for different occupations within their organizations. However, most of those job evalution systems undervalue the jobs that have traditionally been held primarily by women; and most systems have not been changed substantially since they were instituted even though the labor force has changed dramatically. Where a job evaluation system already exists, it needs to be reviewed and redone so that it is free of bias and stereotyping.

Diane Rock, Director of the Women's Rights Program for AFSCME, stated "By and large, most employers use the same job classification system they used 20 years ago, but everything about women in the workplace has changed in that period . . . A lot of people really were unaware how systematically the old job evaluation systems have stereotyped women's work. As a result of (the) . . . new generation of studies many employers have quietly started to make some changes."[20]

**Q. HOW CAN NEW JOB EVALUATION SYSTEMS ACHIEVE PAY EQUITY?**

**A.** A "job evaluation" describes a formal system used to rank the value or worth of a job in order to set pay rates. Creating a job evaluation system where one did not exist can be a major step towards bringing order and equity to a wage setting process that is likely to be haphazard or arbitrary. Most job evaluation systems which have been in existence for a while are vulnerable to problems of bias and subjectivity. Yet, the possibility exists to improve them. A heightened awareness of the ways in which bias is perpetuated, coupled with an understanding of the concept of pay equity, greatly enhance the possibility of creating bias-free wage setting systems.

**Q. WHAT IS BEING DONE IN MARYLAND?**

**A.** Maryland is one of the states which authorized a pay equity study of the State employee system. That study concluded that in Maryland state employment, sex is one of the predictors of salary level - that women's jobs pay significantly less than men's jobs of equal skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions.

In March 1986, The Governor's Commission on Compensation and Personnel Policies, which oversaw the study, forwarded it to the Governor with four recommendations:

(1) Adopt a dual goal for compensation of state employees - competitiveness and internal equity.
(2) Adopt a point factor evaluation system as a guide to compensation.
(3) Use the Annual Salary Review (ASR) Process to achieve the dual goals.
(4) Take steps to eliminate sex segregation in job classifications.

The Governor directed the Secretary of Personnel to implement the recommendations. Before an acceptable plan was submitted, a new administration took office in January 1987.

Legislation on pay equity has been introduced in several successive sessions. It has called for implementation of a point factor evaluation system to determine pay levels, establishment of a committee to review that system, review proposed ASR's, and report annually to the Governor; and phased-in pay increases over the next five years to achieve pay equity. Thus far none of this legislation has been successful.

The current administration is taking the position that the entire classification system must be revised, and that it is inappropriate to impose a new compensation system upon the current classification system. A subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee has assumed an over-sight role over the Department of Personnel proposals. The twin objectives of competitiveness and internal equity are still cited by both the Department and the subcommittee, however the extent to which these objectives will be achieved is still undetermined.

# V. WHAT CAN AN INDIVIDUAL DO ABOUT PAY EQUITY?

**Q. HOW CAN I CHECK FOR PAY EQUITY ON MY JOB?**
**A.** List the responsibilities and duties of your position. Note the skills, experience and education requirements for your position. What are your major responsibilities? What are your working conditions? Hazards? Use the words which fully describe the significance of the functions you perform. Give particular emphasis to knowledge, planning, and supervision duties. Then do the same for jobs in your workplace held primarily by men. Compare the salaries of comparable jobs.

**Q. THERE ARE FEW PEOPLE IN MY WORKPLACE, WHAT CAN I DO?**
**A.** In a small workplace, both employee and employer can sit down and discuss pay equity. Show your employer the results of your research. If there are relatively few employees and job classifications where you work, your employer may be willing to make the necessary adjustments to upgrade the pay and classifications of jobs held primarily by women.

**Q. IN A LARGE WORKPLACE, WHAT CAN I DO?**
**A.** You, or your union, can request the following information from your employer and do an informal pay equity study:

* The number of male and female employees in each classification and the wage rate for each classification.
* The number of men and women hired in each classification during the previous 12 months.
* The number of promotional examinations taken and the number of examinations passed during the past 12 months broken down by sex and the number of men and women that were actually promoted.
* Copies of any job evaluation studies done in the last five years.
* A copy of the employer's affirmative action plan and most recent EEO-4 reports.

You, or your union, can then analyze the data. A pay equity problem exists if:

* A pattern of sex-segregated jobs and/or departments is found;
* Average pay is lower for women than men;
* ''Women's jobs'' are paid lower than ''men's jobs''; and
* Salaries for ''women's jobs'' which require qualifications similar to ''men's jobs'' are lower than the salaries for the ''men's jobs.''

An employer who wants to check for pay inequities should untertake a bias-free job evaluation study to determine if any sex discrimination exists in the employer's pay practices. If discrepancies are found, the employer should move toward pay equity by raising salaries in the necessary classifications.[21]

**Q. IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I CAN DO?**
**A.** One of the most important things any individual can do is understand the issue and help others to understand it. Although it may seem complex, it is, in fact, a simple issue of fairness; equal pay for work of comparable value to the employer. A person should be paid according to the value of the job to the company. Pay equity is not a revolutionary idea that will destroy our system. Instead, it is simply a way to determine where sex and race-based wage discrimination exists in employment, and then to eliminate it. It's being paid a decent wage for a decent day's work. That's pay equity.

# FOOTNOTES

[1] Steinberg and Haignere, "Separate But Equivalent, Equal Pay For Work of Comparable Worth," *Gender at Work,* Women's Research and Education Institute, Washington, D.C., 1984.

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[5] Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Commerce, *Current Population Reports,* Consumer Income, Series p-60, no. 154 (annual earnings, 1985).

[6] Marshall and Paulin. "The Employment and Earnings of Women: The Comparable Worth Debate," in *Comparable Worth: Issue for the 80's,* U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Washington, D.C., Volume 1, pp. 200.

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[8] Treiman and Hartman, eds, *Women, Work and Wages: Equal Pay For Work of Equal Value,* Report of the Commission of Occupational Classification and Analysis, National Academy of Science, Washington, D.C., 1981, see footnote 13.

[9] Treiman and Hartman.

[10] *AFSCME Women's Letter,* pp. 7.

[11] *AFSCME Women's Letter,* pp. 7.

[12] Marshall and Paulin, pp. 206.

[13] "The Male/Female Wage Gap Lingers On," *The Washington Post,* January 27, 1985, pp. C4.

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[15] Coalition of Women and the Budget, *Inequality of Sacrifice: The Impact of the Budget on Women,* National Women's Law Center, Washington, D.C., March 1984.

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[18] National Committee on Pay Equity, *The Cost of Pay Equity in Public and Private Employment,* Ford Research Project, January 1985.

[19] National Committee on Pay Equity, *State Update,* August 1987.

[20] "Controversial Idea of Comparable Worth Forces New Look at Pay Scales," *The Baltimore Sun,* March 3, 1985, pp. 4F.

[21] "You've Come a Long Way - Maybe: A Working Woman's Guide to Pay Equity," a booklet published by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO.

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**MARYLAND COMMISSION FOR WOMEN**
311 West Saratoga Street, Room 239
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
(301) 333-0054
TTY 333-0017

*Jeanette R. Wolman, Honorary Chairwoman*

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Phyllis B. Trickett ................... Garrett County
Jo Anne P. Welsh ............. Prince George's County

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E. Dolores Street, *Assistant Director*
Sondra L. Weinstein, *Administrative Specialist*
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