
STATEMENT

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Ministry of Finance
Gender Equity Office

Parliamentary Secretary's statement on Gender Equality Week, International Equal Pay Day

VICTORIA – Kelli Paddon, Parliamentary Secretary for Gender Equity, has released the following statement in recognition of national Gender Equality Week and International Equal Pay Day:

"Today marks the start of Gender Equality Week. The theme this year is United for Gender Equality: Stronger Together, which inspires us to continue working together to remove barriers and ensure people of all genders have equal opportunities to live to their full potential.

"We recognize this is particularly important for women, especially Indigenous and Black women, racialized and transgender women who are more likely to be disadvantaged or discriminated against. Non-binary people and youth, as well as those with disabilities and those experiencing poverty also face significant barriers that others do not. For this reason, we continue to use an intersectional approach to better understand the different ways people experience the world and to ensure that our policies, programs and services work for all people.

"On Monday, Sept. 18, 2023, we also recognize International Equal Pay Day because we know women and gender-diverse people continue to be paid significantly less than men. This discrepancy creates barriers for working people. Women in B.C. make 17% less than men and it is unacceptable that B.C. has one of the largest pay gaps in Canada. That is why B.C. introduced new pay transparency legislation, which passed into law on May 11, 2023, to help close the gender pay gap in B.C.

"What this means is that employers are no longer able to ask prospective employees for pay history information or punish employees who disclose their pay to co-workers or potential job applicants – actions known to contribute to the gender pay gap.

"Starting Nov. 1 of this year, all B.C. employers will be required to include wage or salary ranges on publicly advertised jobs. B.C. employers will also gradually be required to publicly post reports on their gender pay gap. This requirement is being introduced in stages – starting with the B.C. government and Crown corporations with more than 1,000 employees – to give employers time to prepare.

"Even while recognizing the progress that we have made, we know that there is much more to do to ensure everyone has access to the advantages and opportunities to help them succeed, which will take all of us working together.

"I express my thanks and my gratitude to the many people and organizations who have been working with us to help address systemic inequalities in our province.

"I invite all British Columbian to join in committing to equity and inclusion and celebrating the

diversity of our province.”

Learn More:

Gender Equality Week: <https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/commemorations-celebrations/gender-equality-week/gender-equality-week-2023.html>

International Equal Pay Day: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/equal-pay-day>

Pay transparency laws in B.C.: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/gender-equity/pay-transparency-laws-in-bc>

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