



CEVEP...coalition for equal value equal pay

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What next for equal pay?

CEVEP policy points, August 2016

- The government must take active steps to ensure that New Zealand women are not undervalued and underpaid for their skills, responsibilities, service, effort and conditions of work as required by the Equal Pay Act 1972, and by international conventions.
- The government must now adopt the Principles for Implementing Pay Equity, together with the Process Chart, as recommended by the government's Joint Working Group.
- The Principles and Process can be attached to the Equal Pay Act, as Principles issued by the Employment Court under s.9 would be. The Act has been shown to be 'fit for purpose' and does not need amendment at this time.
- The government must allocate increases in funding to meet equal pay for work of equal value settlements for residential and home care-givers.
- Future government budgets must anticipate the need for settlement of claims for other undervalued predominantly female occupations, whether funded directly by government or via contract with private providers.
- Pay equity claims under the Equal Pay Act may be made by any employee or her union at any time. However, claims may be more efficiently resolved as part of collective wage bargaining than as an individual grievance.
- Expert support and resources can ensure claims are resolved quickly at the most appropriate level. We suggest a unit with pay equity expertise be located in the Labour Inspectorate, alongside the Mediation Service.
- Pay transparency is fundamental to equal pay. The Equal Pay Act requires employees to be given all information relevant to equal pay on request; this should be extended to their union. The onus must be on employers to prove gender neutrality and justify rates paid.
- At the next amendment of the Employment Relations act, confidentiality clauses in employment agreements should be made invalid.
- The courts ruled that males whose pay rates may also be distorted in female-dominated workplaces or sectors are not appropriate comparators. Job comparisons should therefore be between the female job or job class and at least two named comparators in different male jobs in two or more different male dominated sectors or industries.
- Any future Labour/Green government should commit to the process now begun and to the implementation of equal pay for work of equal value for New Zealand women.