



U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission

Equal Pay/Compensation Discrimination

The Equal Pay Act requires that men and women in the same workplace be given equal pay for equal work. The jobs need not be identical, but they must be substantially equal. Job content (not job titles) determines whether jobs are substantially equal. All forms of pay are covered by this law, including salary, overtime pay, bonuses, stock options, profit sharing and bonus plans, life insurance, vacation and holiday pay, cleaning or gasoline allowances, hotel accommodations, reimbursement for travel expenses, and benefits. If there is an inequality in wages between men and women, employers may not reduce the wages of either sex to equalize their pay.

An individual alleging a violation of the EPA may go directly to court and is not required to file an EEOC charge beforehand. The time limit for filing an EPA charge with the EEOC and the time limit for going to court are the same: within two years of the alleged unlawful compensation practice or, in the case of a willful violation, within three years. The filing of an EEOC charge under the EPA does not extend the time frame for going to court.

Equal Pay/Compensation and Sex Discrimination

Title VII also makes it illegal to discriminate based on sex in pay and benefits. Therefore, someone who has an Equal Pay Act claim may also have a claim under Title VII.

Other Types of Discrimination

Title VII, the ADEA, and the ADA prohibit compensation discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability. Unlike the EPA, there is no requirement under Title VII, the ADEA, or the ADA that the jobs must be substantially equal.

Employer Coverage

15 or more employees under Title VII and ADA

20 or more employees under ADEA

Virtually all employers under EPA

Time Limits for

Under the EPA, people have two years to go directly to court or to the EEOC

180 days to [file a charge](#) under Title VII, ADA and ADEA
(*may be extended by state laws*)

Federal employees have 45 days to [contact an EEO Counselor](#)

For more information, see:

- ▶ [Facts About Equal Pay/Compensation Discrimination](#)
- ▶ [Equal Pay Act](#)
- ▶ [Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964](#)
- ▶ [Age Discrimination in Employment Act](#)
- ▶ [Americans with Disabilities Act](#)
- ▶ [Regulations](#)
- ▶ [Policy & Guidance](#)
- ▶ [Statistics](#)