

MEDIA RELEASE

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Doing the bare minimum for gender equality doesn't add up on Equal Pay Day

Today is [Equal Pay Day](#).

In 2024, 19 August marks the 50 days into the new financial year that Australian women must work to earn the same, on average, as men did last year.

For the past 50 days the Workplace Gender Equality Agency's (WGEA) campaign, themed 'It Doesn't Add Up', has motivated Australians to understand the pivotal difference between equal pay and the gender pay gap and supported employers to build their capability to take action to reduce the gap in their own workplace.

Equal pay is paying all people the same for equal or equivalent work. In Australia, this has been the law since 1969.

A gender pay gap occurs when more women are working in lower paid roles and more men are working in higher paid roles.

"Australia's gender pay gap is a limit on women's lifetime earnings and it just doesn't add up or align with the Australian values of equality and a 'fair go' for all," WGEA CEO Mary Wooldridge said.

"An employer that claims they've addressed their gender pay gap because they pay women and men the same for doing the same work are doing the bare minimum. Eliminating unequal pay is just one piece of the puzzle."

WGEA's results show that 2 in 3 employers (62%) have a gender pay gap more than 5% and in favour of men. All employers should be aiming for a gender pay gap within +/-5%.

A range of different factors can drive gender pay gaps, including barriers of bias, discrimination and entrenched gender stereotypes which can devalue women and their work.

To help accelerate change, Federal legislation now requires WGEA to publish individual gender pay gaps for all employers with 100 or more employees every year.

The [first publication of data for more than 5,000 private sector employers](#) was in February this year. In early 2025, gender pay gaps for Commonwealth public sector employers with 100 or more employees will also be published, as will the next results for private sector employers.

"On Equal Pay Day, WGEA is calling on all employers to understand what the gender pay gap is and what causes it so that they can take effective action to end the gap in their workplace," Ms Wooldridge said.

WGEA has a [suite of resources, tools and masterclasses](#) available on our website to equip employers and employees to understand how they can contribute to workplace gender equality and take action.

This includes searching and comparing results for industries and individual employers on the [Data Explorer dashboard](#) and an [Action Planning Tool](#) that delivers employers an immediate, tailored list of actions to investigate in their workplace to address their own gender pay gap.



Background

About the gender pay gap

The gender pay gap is a measure of how we value the contribution of men and women in the workforce. Expressed as a percentage or a dollar figure it shows the difference between the earnings of women and men.

The gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay

How is the gender pay gap different to equal pay?

Equal pay is where all employees are paid the same for performing the same work or different work of equal or comparable value. In Australia, this has been a legal requirement since 1969.

Gender pay gaps are not a comparison of like roles. Instead, they show the difference between the average or median pay of women and men across employers, industries and the workforce as a whole.

[WGEA's website includes an explainer](#) on the difference between the gender pay gap and equal pay.

How is Equal Pay Day calculated?

WGEA uses the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) average weekly earnings trend data to calculate the number of days after the end of financial year that women have to work to be paid the same as the average man. [This is called Equal Pay Day.](#)

The February 2024 ABS reported average weekly earnings for men working full time was \$1,982.80. Women earned \$1,744.80 per week on average. That's a difference \$238 every week and \$12,376 every year. At the average rate of pay for women, this is the equivalent to 50 additional work days.

It's important to note these figures are base salary and full-time employees only. They do not include bonuses, superannuation or overtime – which men are more likely to earn – or the salaries of Australians working part-time.

Media contact

Emma Manser, Media & Communications Manager | E emma.manser@wgea.gov.au | M 0437 225 386

About the Agency

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) is an Australian Government statutory agency charged with promoting and improving gender equality in Australian workplaces. Explore the gender equality data for your industry or employer at www.wgea.gov.au