


Equal pay for similar work

INFORMATION SHEET

The *Alberta Human Rights Act* (the *Act*) prohibits discrimination based on the ground of gender.

Section 6(1) of the *Act* states: “Where employees of both sexes perform the same or substantially similar work for an employer in an establishment the employer shall pay the employees at the same rate of pay.” An employer may pay employees differently, even when they perform the same or similar work, but that difference in pay must not be based on their gender. Employers are entitled to pay employees different rates of pay based on factors such as experience, education and merit. These factors should be assessed objectively and applied consistently regardless of gender.

Job descriptions or classifications should reflect the total expectations of a position. In Alberta, different job descriptions for two similar positions do not legally justify a pay differential because one job is held by a man and the other by a woman. Section 6(2) of the *Act* specifies that an employer should not reduce an employee’s rate of pay to equalize pay rates between women and men.

In Alberta, it is the employer who is responsible for ensuring non-discriminatory employment practices. The employer must ensure that employees are hired, promoted, paid or dismissed according to objective guidelines, applied equally to both sexes. 

Contact us

The Alberta Human Rights Commission is an independent commission of the Government of Alberta. Our mandate is to foster equality and reduce discrimination. We provide public information and education programs, and help Albertans resolve human rights complaints.

**Hours of operation: 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday to Friday (holidays excluded)**

Northern Regional Office (Edmonton)
800 – 10405 Jasper Avenue NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4R7
780-427-7661 Confidential Inquiry Line
780-427-6013 Fax

Southern Regional Office (Calgary)
200 J.J. Bowlen Building
620 – 7 Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta T2P 0Y8
403-297-6571 Confidential Inquiry Line
403-297-6567 Fax

To call toll-free within Alberta, dial 310-0000 and then enter the area code and phone number.

TTY service for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing
1-800-232-7215 Toll-free within Alberta

Email: humanrights@gov.ab.ca
Website: albertahumanrights.ab.ca

Please note: The Commission must receive your completed complaint form or letter within one year after the alleged contravention of the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. The one-year period starts the day after the date on which the alleged contravention of the *Act* occurred. For help calculating the one-year period, contact the Commission.

The Commission will make this publication available in accessible formats upon request for people with disabilities who do not read conventional print.