

**First Regular Session
Seventy-second General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

PREAMENDED

*This Unofficial Version Includes Committee
Amendments Not Yet Adopted on Second Reading*

LLS NO. 19-0430.01 Kristen Forrestal x4217

SENATE BILL 19-085

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Senate Committees

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A BILL FOR AN ACT

101 **CONCERNING THE CREATION OF THE "EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK**
102 **ACT" IN ORDER TO IMPLEMENT MEASURES TO PREVENT PAY**
103 **DISPARITIES.**

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at <http://leg.colorado.gov>.)

The bill removes the authority of the director of the division of labor standards and statistics in the department of labor and employment (director) to enforce wage discrimination complaints based on an employee's sex and instead permits an aggrieved person to bring a civil action in district court to pursue remedies specified in the bill.

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

The bill allows exceptions to the prohibition against a wage differential based on sex if the employer demonstrates that a wage differential is based upon one or more factors, including:

- ! A seniority system;
- ! A merit system; or
- ! A system that measures earnings by quantity or quality of production.

The bill prohibits an employer from:

- ! Seeking the wage rate history of a prospective employee;
- ! Relying on a prior wage rate to determine a wage rate;
- ! Discriminating or retaliating against a prospective employee for failing to disclose the employee's wage rate history; and
- ! Discharging or retaliating against an employee for actions by an employee asserting the rights established by the bill against an employer.

The bill requires an employer to announce to all employees employment advancement opportunities and job openings and the pay range for the openings. The director is authorized to enforce actions against an employer concerning transparency in pay and employment opportunities, including fines of between \$500 and \$10,000 per violation.

1 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:*

2 **SECTION 1. Short title.** The short title of this act is the "Equal
3 Pay for Equal Work Act".

4 **SECTION 2. Legislative declaration.** (1) The general assembly
5 hereby finds and declares that:

6 (a) In 1944, the first equal pay bill was introduced in Congress,
7 but it was not until the federal "Equal Pay Act of 1963", 29 U.S.C. sec.
8 206, became law that pay discrimination based on sex was outlawed;

9 (b) Despite policies outlawing pay discrimination and creating
10 avenues for women to bring a civil action for lost wages, women still earn
11 significantly less than their male counterparts for the same work;

12 (c) According to a report released in March 2018 by the Institute
13 for Women's Policy Research and The Women's Foundation of Colorado:

1 (I) Women in this state earn just 86 cents for every dollar men
2 earn;

3 (II) Latinas earn 53.5 cents and black women earn 63.1 cents for
4 every dollar earned by white men; and

5 (III) If the wage gap were eliminated, a working woman in
6 Colorado would earn, on average, \$7,000 more per year, which would pay
7 for 1.9 years of community college tuition or approximately 6 months of
8 child care costs;

9 (d) The effects of pay disparity compound over a woman's
10 lifetime, with women losing between \$400,000 and \$1 million over the
11 course of a lifetime due to the wage gap; and

12 (e) Equal pay would cut the poverty rate for working women in
13 half and reduce the poverty rate for employed single mothers by more
14 than 40 percent.

15 (2) It is the intent of the general assembly to pass legislation that
16 helps to close the pay gap in Colorado and ensure that employees with
17 similar job duties are paid the same wage rate regardless of sex, or sex
18 plus another protected status.

19 **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, 8-5-101, **amend** the
20 introductory portion, (4), and (5); **repeal** (3) and (6); and **add** (7), (8), (9),
21 and (10) as follows:

22 **8-5-101. Definitions.** As used in this ~~article~~ ARTICLE 5, unless the
23 context otherwise requires:

24 (3) ~~"Division" means the division of labor standards and statistics~~
25 ~~in the department of labor and employment.~~

26 (4) ~~"Employee" means any individual in the employment of any~~
27 ~~A PERSON EMPLOYED BY AN employer.~~

1 (5) "Employer" means the state ~~and every county, city, town, and~~
2 ~~body corporate and politic therein and every person, corporation,~~
3 ~~partnership, and association, including those operating in a representative~~
4 ~~capacity~~ OR ANY POLITICAL SUBDIVISION, COMMISSION, DEPARTMENT,
5 INSTITUTION, OR SCHOOL DISTRICT THEREOF, AND EVERY OTHER PERSON
6 EMPLOYING A PERSON IN THE STATE.

7 (6) "~~Employment~~" ~~means any trade, occupation, job, or position~~
8 ~~in which any person may be engaged in the service of another for wages~~
9 ~~or salary, except household and domestic servants and farm and ranch~~
10 ~~laborers.~~

11 (7) "LIQUIDATED DAMAGES" MEANS DAMAGES TO COMPENSATE AN
12 EMPLOYEE FOR THE DELAY IN RECEIVING AMOUNTS DUE AS A RESULT OF
13 AN EMPLOYER'S VIOLATION OF THIS ARTICLE 5. "LIQUIDATED DAMAGES"
14 DOES NOT CONSTITUTE A PENALTY TO THE EMPLOYER.

15 (8) "SEX" MEANS AN EMPLOYEE'S GENDER IDENTITY.

16 ==

17 (9) "WAGE RATE" MEANS:

18 (a) FOR AN EMPLOYEE PAID ON AN HOURLY BASIS, THE HOURLY
19 COMPENSATION PAID TO THE EMPLOYEE PLUS THE VALUE PER HOUR OF ALL
20 OTHER COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS RECEIVED BY THE EMPLOYEE FROM
21 THE EMPLOYER; AND

22 (b) FOR AN EMPLOYEE PAID ON A SALARY BASIS, THE TOTAL OF ALL
23 COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS RECEIVED BY THE EMPLOYEE FROM THE
24 EMPLOYER.

25 **SECTION 4.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 8-5-102 as
26 follows:

27 **8-5-102. Wage discrimination prohibited.** ~~No employer shall~~

1 ~~make any discrimination in the amount or rate of wages or salary paid or~~
2 ~~to be paid his employees in any employment in this state solely on~~
3 ~~account of the sex thereof.~~ (1) AN EMPLOYER SHALL NOT DISCRIMINATE
4 BETWEEN EMPLOYEES ON THE BASIS OF SEX, OR ON THE BASIS OF SEX IN
5 COMBINATION WITH ANOTHER PROTECTED STATUS AS DESCRIBED IN
6 SECTION 24-34-402 (1)(a), BY PAYING AN EMPLOYEE OF ONE SEX A WAGE
7 RATE LESS THAN THE RATE PAID TO AN EMPLOYEE OF A DIFFERENT SEX FOR
8 SUBSTANTIALLY SIMILAR WORK, REGARDLESS OF JOB TITLE, BASED ON A
9 COMPOSITE OF SKILL; EFFORT, WHICH MAY INCLUDE CONSIDERATION OF
10 SHIFT WORK; AND RESPONSIBILITY, EXCEPT WHERE THE EMPLOYER
11 DEMONSTRATES EACH OF THE FOLLOWING:

- 12 (a) THAT THE WAGE RATE DIFFERENTIAL IS BASED ON:
- 13 (I) A SENIORITY SYSTEM;
- 14 (II) A MERIT SYSTEM;
- 15 (III) A SYSTEM THAT MEASURES EARNINGS BY QUANTITY OR
16 QUALITY OF PRODUCTION;
- 17 (IV) THE GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION WHERE THE WORK IS
18 PERFORMED;
- 19 (V) EDUCATION, TRAINING, OR EXPERIENCE TO THE EXTENT THAT
20 THEY ARE REASONABLY RELATED TO THE WORK IN QUESTION; OR
- 21 (VI) TRAVEL, IF THE TRAVEL IS A REGULAR AND NECESSARY
22 CONDITION OF THE WORK PERFORMED;
- 23 (b) THAT EACH FACTOR RELIED ON IN SUBSECTION (1)(a) OF THIS
24 SECTION IS APPLIED REASONABLY;
- 25 (c) THAT EACH FACTOR RELIED ON IN SUBSECTION (1)(a) OF THIS
26 SECTION ACCOUNTS FOR THE ENTIRE WAGE RATE DIFFERENTIAL; AND
- 27 (d) THAT PRIOR WAGE RATE HISTORY WAS NOT RELIED ON TO

1 JUSTIFY A DISPARITY IN CURRENT WAGE RATES.

2 (2) AN EMPLOYER SHALL NOT:

3 (a) SEEK THE WAGE RATE HISTORY OF A PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE
4 OR RELY ON THE WAGE RATE HISTORY OF A PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE TO
5 DETERMINE A WAGE RATE;

6 (b) DISCRIMINATE OR RETALIATE AGAINST A PROSPECTIVE
7 EMPLOYEE FOR FAILING TO DISCLOSE THE PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYEE'S WAGE
8 RATE HISTORY;

9 (c) DISCHARGE, OR IN ANY MANNER DISCRIMINATE OR RETALIATE
10 AGAINST, AN EMPLOYEE FOR INVOKING THIS SECTION ON BEHALF OF
11 ANYONE OR ASSISTING IN THE ENFORCEMENT OF THIS SUBSECTION (2);

12 (d) DISCHARGE, DISCIPLINE, DISCRIMINATE AGAINST, COERCE,
13 INTIMIDATE, THREATEN, OR INTERFERE WITH AN EMPLOYEE OR OTHER
14 PERSON BECAUSE THE EMPLOYEE OR PERSON INQUIRED ABOUT, DISCLOSED,
15 COMPARED, OR OTHERWISE DISCUSSED THE EMPLOYEE'S WAGE RATE;

16 (e) PROHIBIT, AS A CONDITION OF EMPLOYMENT, AN EMPLOYEE
17 FROM DISCLOSING THE EMPLOYEE'S WAGE RATE; OR

18 (f) REQUIRE AN EMPLOYEE TO SIGN A WAIVER OR OTHER
19 DOCUMENT THAT:

20 (I) PROHIBITS THE EMPLOYEE FROM DISCLOSING WAGE RATE
21 INFORMATION; OR

22 (II) PURPORTS TO DENY THE EMPLOYEE THE RIGHT TO DISCLOSE
23 THE EMPLOYEE'S WAGE RATE INFORMATION.

24 **SECTION 5.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 8-5-103 as
25 follows:

26 **8-5-103. Enforcement - rules and regulations - complaints.**

27 (1) ~~The director has the power to administer, carry out, and enforce all~~

1 of the provisions of this article and may promulgate rules and regulations
2 for that purpose. Copies of the rules and regulations shall be furnished by
3 the division to all employees and employers upon written request A
4 PERSON AGGRIEVED BY A VIOLATION OF SECTION 8-5-102 MAY COMMENCE
5 A CIVIL ACTION IN DISTRICT COURT NO LATER THAN TWO YEARS AFTER THE
6 VIOLATION OCCURS. A VIOLATION OF SECTION 8-5-102 (1) OCCURS ON
7 EACH OCCASION THAT A PERSON IS AFFECTED BY WAGE DISCRIMINATION,
8 INCLUDING EACH OCCASION THAT A DISCRIMINATORY WAGE RATE IS PAID.

9 (2) A PERSON AGGRIEVED BY A VIOLATION OF SECTION 8-5-102
10 MAY OBTAIN RELIEF FOR BACK PAY FOR THE ENTIRE TIME THE VIOLATION
11 CONTINUES, NOT TO EXCEED THREE YEARS.

12 (3) IF A CIVIL ACTION IS COMMENCED UNDER THIS SECTION, ANY
13 PARTY TO THE CIVIL ACTION MAY DEMAND A TRIAL BY JURY.

14 ~~(2) Upon written complaint, duly executed and verified, by any~~
15 ~~employee that any employer has, within one year from the date of such~~
16 ~~complaint, violated the provisions of section 8-5-102, the director or any~~
17 ~~referee of the division may proceed to hear and determine such complaint,~~
18 ~~and the director may make an award upon said complaint. Judicial review~~
19 ~~may be had of any award of the director under this article pursuant to~~
20 ~~section 24-4-106, C.R.S.~~

21 (4) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION PREVENTS AN AGGRIEVED PERSON
22 FROM FILING A CHARGE WITH THE COLORADO CIVIL RIGHTS DIVISION
23 PURSUANT TO SECTION 24-34-306.

24 **SECTION 6.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 8-5-104 as
25 follows:

26 **8-5-104. Employer liability - awards - suits.** (1) An employer
27 who violates ~~the provisions of section 8-5-102~~ SECTION 8-5-102 (1) is

1 liable FOR ECONOMIC DAMAGES in an amount equal to the difference
2 between the amount ~~which he~~ THAT THE EMPLOYER paid to the
3 complaining employee and the amount ~~which~~ THAT the employee would
4 have received had there been no discrimination; and, if the director finds
5 that such discrimination was willful, the director may impose a penalty
6 upon the employer in addition thereto of not more than the amount of
7 such difference. The amount of such liability so determined by the
8 director shall constitute the award of the director. Such award shall be the
9 property of the employee but may be recovered for the employee in a suit
10 brought by the director in his name in any court in the county of the
11 residence of the employer within this state having jurisdiction of the
12 amount of the demand in the suit. The director may join in one suit all of
13 his awards against any one employer under this article VIOLATION PLUS
14 LIQUIDATED DAMAGES IN AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO THE EMPLOYEE'S
15 ECONOMIC DAMAGES. IF THE EMPLOYER DEMONSTRATES THAT THE ACT OR
16 OMISSION GIVING RISE TO THE VIOLATION WAS IN GOOD FAITH AND THAT
17 THE EMPLOYER HAS REASONABLE GROUNDS FOR BELIEVING THAT THE
18 EMPLOYER DID NOT VIOLATE SECTION 8-5-102 (1), THE COURT SHALL NOT
19 AWARD LIQUIDATED DAMAGES.

20 (2) AN EMPLOYER WHO VIOLATES ANY PROVISION OF SECTION
21 8-5-102 IS LIABLE FOR:

22 (a) LEGAL AND EQUITABLE RELIEF, WHICH MAY INCLUDE
23 EMPLOYMENT, REINSTATEMENT, PROMOTION, PAY INCREASE, PAYMENT OF
24 LOST WAGE RATES, AND LIQUIDATED DAMAGES; AND

25 (b) THE EMPLOYEE'S REASONABLE COSTS, INCLUDING ATTORNEY
26 FEES.

27 (3) NOTHING IN THIS SECTION PRECLUDES AN EMPLOYEE FROM

1 ASSERTING ANY OTHER AVAILABLE STATUTORY OR COMMON-LAW CLAIMS.

2 **SECTION 7.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **repeal** 8-5-105 as
3 follows:

4 **8-5-105. Records open to inspection.** ~~When complaint is made~~
5 ~~to the division by any employee against any employer for a violation of~~
6 ~~this article, all books, records, and payrolls of such employer, material~~
7 ~~and pertinent to such complaint, shall be open for inspection by the~~
8 ~~division or any of its agents duly appointed for that purpose.~~

9 **SECTION 8.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **add** part 2 to article
10 5 of title 8 as follows:

11 PART 2

12 TRANSPARENCY IN PAY AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR
13 PROMOTION AND ADVANCEMENT

14 **8-5-201. Employment opportunities - opportunities for**
15 **promotion or advancement - pay rates in job listings.** (1) AN
16 EMPLOYER SHALL MAKE REASONABLE EFFORTS TO ANNOUNCE, POST, OR
17 OTHERWISE MAKE KNOWN ALL OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION TO ALL
18 CURRENT EMPLOYEES ON THE SAME CALENDAR DAY AND PRIOR TO
19 MAKING A PROMOTION DECISION.

20 (2) AN EMPLOYER SHALL DISCLOSE AN HOURLY WAGE RATE OR
21 WAGE RATE RANGE IN EACH POSTING FOR A JOB OPENING. THE POSTING
22 DOES NOT NEED TO INCLUDE STANDARD BENEFITS THAT ARE EQUAL FOR
23 ALL EMPLOYEES.

24 **8-5-202. Record keeping.** AN EMPLOYER SHALL KEEP RECORDS
25 OF JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND WAGE RATE HISTORY FOR EACH EMPLOYEE
26 FOR THE DURATION OF THE EMPLOYMENT PLUS TWO YEARS AFTER THE END
27 OF EMPLOYMENT IN ORDER TO DETERMINE IF THERE IS A PATTERN OF WAGE

1 DISCREPANCY.

2 **8-5-203. Enforcement - rules.** (1) THE DIRECTOR HAS THE
3 POWER TO ADMINISTER, CARRY OUT, AND ENFORCE ALL OF THE
4 PROVISIONS OF THIS PART 2 AND MAY PROMULGATE RULES FOR THAT
5 PURPOSE. THE DIRECTOR SHALL PROVIDE WRITTEN COPIES OF RULES
6 PROMULGATED PURSUANT TO THIS SECTION TO ALL EMPLOYEES AND
7 EMPLOYERS UPON WRITTEN REQUEST.

8 (2) (a) A PERSON WHO CLAIMS TO BE AGGRIEVED BY A VIOLATION
9 OF SECTION 8-5-201 OR 8-5-202 MAY FILE A WRITTEN COMPLAINT WITH
10 THE DIRECTOR WITHIN ONE YEAR AFTER THE DATE THAT THE PERSON
11 LEARNED OF THE VIOLATION. THE WRITTEN COMPLAINT MUST STATE THE
12 NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE EMPLOYER AND A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE
13 ALLEGED VIOLATION.

14 (b) AN EMPLOYER'S FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH SECTION 8-5-201 (1)
15 FOR ONE PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITY IS CONSIDERED ONE VIOLATION.

16 (c) AN EMPLOYER'S FAILURE TO COMPLY WITH SECTION 8-5-201 (2)
17 FOR ONE JOB OPENING IS CONSIDERED ONE VIOLATION REGARDLESS OF THE
18 NUMBER OF POSTINGS THAT LIST THE JOB OPENING.

19 (3) THE DIRECTOR SHALL INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS OF
20 VIOLATIONS OF THIS PART 2 AND SHALL PROMULGATE RULES NECESSARY
21 TO GOVERN THE INVESTIGATIONS.

22 (4) UPON FINDING THAT AN EMPLOYER HAS VIOLATED THIS PART
23 2, THE DIRECTOR MAY ORDER THE EMPLOYER TO PAY A FINE OF NO LESS
24 THAN FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS AND NO MORE THAN TEN THOUSAND
25 DOLLARS PER VIOLATION.

26 (5) IF AN EMPLOYEE BRINGING SUIT FOR A VIOLATION OF SECTION
27 8-5-102 DEMONSTRATES A VIOLATION OF THIS PART 2, AND THE COURT

1 FINDS A VIOLATION OF THIS PART 2, THE COURT MAY ORDER APPROPRIATE
2 RELIEF, INCLUDING A PRESUMPTION THAT RECORDS NOT KEPT BY THE
3 EMPLOYER IN VIOLATION OF SECTION 8-5-202 CONTAINED INFORMATION
4 FAVORABLE TO THE EMPLOYEE'S CLAIM AND AN INSTRUCTION TO THE JURY
5 THAT FAILURE TO KEEP RECORDS CAN BE CONSIDERED EVIDENCE THAT THE
6 VIOLATION WAS NOT MADE IN GOOD FAITH.

7 **SECTION 9. Act subject to petition - effective date -**
8 **applicability.** (1) This act takes effect January 1, 2021; except that, if a
9 referendum petition is filed pursuant to section 1 (3) of article V of the
10 state constitution against this act or an item, section, or part of this act
11 within the ninety-day period after final adjournment of the general
12 assembly, then the act, item, section, or part will not take effect unless
13 approved by the people at the general election to be held in November
14 2020 and, in such case, will take effect January 1, 2021, or on the date of
15 the official declaration of the vote thereon by the governor, whichever is
16 later.

17 (2) This act applies to violations that occur on or after the
18 applicable effective date of this act.