

Gov. Cuomo Signs Pay Equity Legislation at U.S. Women's Soccer Team Parade

July 12, 2019 • Legal Updates & Insights

As New Yorkers lined the streets for Wednesday's ticker-tape parade honoring the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team's World Cup win, Gov. Andrew Cuomo announced significant changes to New York's equal pay laws. Gov. Cuomo [approved two bills](#) that dramatically increase protections for female workers in New York to receive equal pay.

The new legislation strengthens New York's existing pay equity law by prohibiting employers who do business in New York from paying women less than male employees who perform "substantially similar work, when viewed as a composite of skill, effort, and responsibility." This law also broadens the scope of existing equal pay law by banning pay discrimination on the basis of a host of other protected classes, including race, age, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and more. Legislators in New York are hopeful that this new law will help close the [gender pay gap](#) in New York and send a strong message to employers that there will be strong penalties for paying employees differently based on membership of any protected class.

Importantly, the new legislation also prohibits employers from asking about past wage or salary history. This change should help reduce pay inequality that historically prevented female workers from receiving offers of employment at the same rate as their male peers. Notably, the law also prohibits employers from contacting workers' current or past employers to seek compensation history information.

This new legislation shows a commitment to protecting workers' rights. Such advancement puts New York ahead of the curve when compared to other states, and hopefully jumpstarts a future wave of new legislation.

If you've experienced pay discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected category, call [\(212\) 257-6800](#) to speak to an employment attorney at Wigdor LLP who can advise you of your rights.

[Jeanne M. Christensen](#)

Partner

WIGDOR LLP

85 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003

T: [\(212\) 257-6800](#) | F: [\(212\) 257-6845](#)

jchristensen@wigdorlaw.com

www.wigdorlaw.com