

THE FORUM OF EXECUTIVE WOMEN

2025 Pay Equity Roundtable

Pay Equity

Report

2025 LEVEL-UP PLAYBOOK

Sponsored By:

The Forum
of Executive
Women



Jefferson

HOME OF SIDNEY KIMMEL MEDICAL COLLEGE

Table of Contents

- 01 Letter from Forum President & CEO
- 02 Letter from Forum Pay Equity Leadership Chair
- 03 Setting the Table: Pay Equity Realities
- 05 Pay Equity Roundtable & Tools

Roundtable Recap in Photos

- 19 Additional Resources
- Acknowledgements
- 21 About The Forum
- 22 Call to Action

2024-2025 Board of Directors

OFFICERS

Donneene Damon

Board Chair

Kate Shields

Vice Chair

Tracey Jasey

Treasurer

Kathy Gaddes

Secretary

Lorina Marshall-Blake

Co-Parliamentarian

Jessica Sharp

Co-Parliamentarian

AT-LARGE DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Erin Allsman	Elizabeth Murphy
Marcine Pickron-Davis	Dena Herrin
Nina Markey	Deana Calvelli
Sarah Brand	Colleen Crowley
Karin Copeland	Lauren Cristella
JoAnn M. Magnatta	Rina Desai
Richonda Pelzer	Honorable Kelley B. Hodge
Jennifer Platzkere Snyder	Jane Scaccetti
Jacquelynn Hugee	Katerina Simonetti Bahk
Jeanine Conley-Daves	Tiffany Spraggins-Payne
Andrea Kirshenbaum	Colleen Vallen
Lara Rhame	

PRESIDENT & CEO

Meghan Pierce

Letter
from
Meghan
Pierce
The Forum
President & CEO



As President and CEO of The Forum of Executive Women, I am honored to present our Pay Equity Report, a crucial step in addressing one of our most persistent workplace challenges.

Six decades after the Equal Pay Act was passed, the gender pay gap remains a stark reality in our region. In Pennsylvania, women are not projected to achieve equal pay until 2068, a timeline that is simply unacceptable.

At its core, pay equity is not merely about numbers. It's about fundamental fairness, dignity, and the full participation of all talents in our economy. Our 2025 Pay Equity report returns to the basics: examining the root causes of pay disparities, documenting their impact on individuals, families, and our broader community, and offering practical solutions that span social, political, and business dimensions.

The Forum of Executive Women has championed this issue since our founding in 1977, when our members—despite holding leadership positions—faced significant pay discrimination. Today, we continue that legacy by bringing together experts from business, legal, policy, and advocacy communities to provide actionable insights for employers and employees across all industries in the Greater Philadelphia region.

This report offers concrete strategies that organizations can implement immediately, policy recommendations for our civic leaders, and tools for individuals navigating compensation conversations.

Together, these approaches form a comprehensive framework for change. Philadelphia has always been a city of firsts and a beacon of progress. Let us add pay equity to our list of achievements by committing ourselves to understanding, accountability, and meaningful action. The economic vitality of our region depends on the full and equal participation of all our citizens.

I invite you to engage deeply with this report, share it widely, and join us in creating a more equitable Philadelphia—not in 2068, but starting today.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Meghan Pierce".

Meghan Pierce

President & CEO,
The Forum of Executive Women

Letter from Jeanine Conley Daves

*The Forum
Pay Equity
Leadership Chair*



In 2023, economist Claudia Goldin made history as the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in Economics solo, recognized for her groundbreaking research on gender disparities in the labor market. Her work reveals a stark reality: despite educational advances and expanding professional opportunities for women, a persistent employment gap remains—only 50% of women currently have paid employment compared to 80% of men.

This disparity isn't simply about individual choices, rather, it reflects complex structural factors—societal expectations around caregiving, workplace systems that penalize career interruptions, and technological transformations that have reshaped industries unevenly.

As Chair of the Pay Equity Leadership Committee at The Forum of Executive Women, I am pleased to present this report synthesizing insights from our recent Pay Equity Roundtable at The Barnes Foundation. Building on Goldin's framework, our distinguished panelists explored how traditional workplace structures disadvantage those with caregiving responsibilities, examined the legal landscape shaping pay equity efforts, and highlighted corporate practices making real impact.

Our discussion went beyond identifying problems to focus on solutions. We examined the crucial intersectionality of gender with other protected categories, established metrics for meaningful accountability, and—most importantly—identified practical actions organizations and individuals can implement immediately.

This report translates complex research and expert insights into actionable strategies. Whether you lead a corporation, manage an HR department, advocate for policy change, or navigate your own career path, you'll find valuable guidance to advance pay equity in your sphere of influence.

The journey toward fair compensation requires commitment from everyone involved. I invite you to use this report as your roadmap for creating meaningful change—not just for women in the workplace today, but for a more equitable future for all.

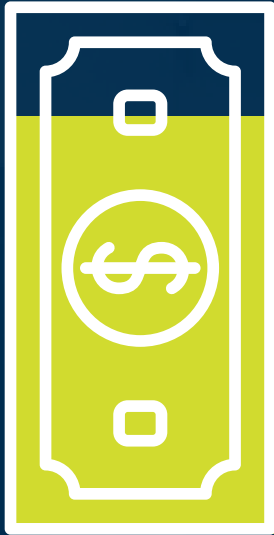
Jeanine Conley Daves

Shareholder, Littler

The Forum Pay Equity Leadership Chair

SETTING THE TABLE:

Pay Inequity Realities in Pennsylvania



White women earn about 78 cents for every dollar white men make.



Black women earn about 60 cents for every dollar.



Hispanic women earn about 56 cents for every dollar.

The intersectionality of gender with race creates even starker disparities. In Pennsylvania, Black women earn just 60 cents and Latina women 56 cents for every dollar earned by white men.*

**Information from the 2025 Pay Equity Roundtable.*

SETTING THE TABLE:

Pay Inequity Realities

The pay gap reflects broader societal factors affecting women's professional paths.
These systemic factors must be addressed alongside direct pay adjustments to create sustainable equity.

Caregiving responsibilities: Without national paid maternity leave, women often become primary caregivers, forcing difficult choices between career advancement and family obligations. Data shows women are typically first to leave the workforce when family demands arise.

Occupational segregation: Gender-based career tracking starts early, with societal messaging steering women toward traditionally lower-paying fields. Attitudes persist that justify pay gaps by assuming certain higher-paying professions are naturally male domains.

**Information from the 2025 Pay Equity Roundtable.*

The Roundtable Experts

Pay Equity Roundtable *2025*

THE KEY TO EMPOWERMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN PENNSYLVANIA IS PAY EQUITY

The Forum of Executive Women's 2025 Pay Equity Roundtable brought together leaders from politics, law, business, and social justice to address Pennsylvania's persistent gender pay gap. This discussion painted a comprehensive picture of this nuanced issue while offering actionable solutions to boost our state's economy through pay equity. The discussion in the pages to follow explores the following questions:

- What nuances are important to understand when thinking about pay equity?
- What legislative initiatives are currently addressing pay equity?
- What are the best pay transparency practices?
- How do we best advocate for pay equity?

The Forum does not provide legal advice on pay equity.



Charity Hughes

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, TALENT MANAGEMENT
SELLERS DORSEY



Margaret M. McDowell

ASSOCIATE, LABOR & EMPLOYMENT PRACTICE
MORGAN LEWIS



Representative Jennifer O'Mara

PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
165TH DISTRICT



Kelly Sheard

CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER
WOMEN'S WAY



We'll start by opening it up: Are there important nuances that you as a panel believe we need to consider when thinking about Pay Equity?

PANELISTS: CHARITY HUGHES (CH),
MARGARET M. MCDOWELL (MM),
REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER O'MARA (JO),
KELLY SHEARD (KS)

MODERATOR JEANINE CONLEY DAVES,
CHAIR, PAY EQUITY LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

KS: I want to highlight the long history of devaluing women's labor, especially through systems of exploitation like slavery, where people themselves were capital. This pattern continues today, particularly in how marginalized genders are treated in the workforce.

KS (cont.): While pay equity conversations often focus on individual actions, like negotiating salary, we also need to address deeper structural barriers like racism, sexism, ableism, and patriarchy. These systems shape what jobs people can access and how their work is valued. Implicit biases show up in our ideas about productivity, rest, and deservedness, influencing how we perceive and reward labor. If we don't critically examine these narratives, we risk repeating harmful patterns.

CH: I want to highlight the intersectionality of the pay gap. It's not just about gender, but also age and race. For younger workers (ages 25–34), the pay gap is around 5%. But after age 35, it jumps significantly, up to 17–20%. This raises questions: why does a woman's value in the workplace drop so sharply with age? And the impact is even greater for Black and Native American women.

CH (cont.): These patterns reveal how age, gender, and race intersect in how we value labor and where inequities deepen.

KEY TAKEAWAY:
TO ADVANCE PAY EQUITY, WE MUST
MOVE BEYOND INDIVIDUAL SOLUTIONS
AND ACTIVELY CHALLENGE THE
STRUCTURAL AND INTERSECTIONAL
BARRIERS—LIKE RACISM, SEXISM,
AGEISM, AND ABLEISM—THAT SHAPE
HOW LABOR IS VALUED AND
COMPENSATED.

What are some of the legislative efforts underway now and some of the challenges to those efforts as it relates to pay equity?

JO: House Bill 630 aims to close pay gaps by prohibiting wage differences based on gender, race, and ethnicity, and banning the use of salary history when setting pay for new hires.

JO (cont.): House Bill 630 also strengthens the Department of Labor's ability to hold employers accountable. I'm working on this with Representatives Melissa Shusterman and Regina Young. Additionally, Representative Mary Isaacson is introducing a bill requiring employers to include pay ranges in job postings. Despite clear data showing persistent pay disparities, especially within specific jobs, some lawmakers continue to deny the problem. Last year, our bill passed the House along party lines but stalled in the Senate without a vote. One opposing argument claimed it might shift disparities to race and ethnicity—ironically ignoring the bill's intent to address all three.

What trends or landmark cases are shaping the future of pay equity in the legal landscape—and how are you seeing these changes play out in practice?

“While federal laws like the Equal Pay Act and Title VII laid the groundwork for pay equity, they set narrow standards, requiring equal pay for equal work within the same workplace. States are now expanding protections with broader definitions like “comparable work” and removing the outdated “same establishment” rule to reflect today’s remote and hybrid work.

Many states also restrict employer defenses, requiring pay differences to be job-related and justified by business need. Prior pay is often no longer allowed as a factor, helping to break cycles of historic wage discrimination. Nearly half of U.S. jurisdictions now ban asking for salary history. Pay transparency laws are also on the rise, beginning with Colorado in 2021. These laws require salary ranges in job postings and often mandate disclosures around benefits and internal job openings, promoting fairness in hiring and advancement.

Altogether, state and local laws are reshaping pay equity standards, driving greater transparency, accountability, and fairness in compensation.”

— MARGARET M. MCDOWELL



What are some of the compensation transparency practices that you've seen be most effective?

CH: When I joined the firm in 2023, one of my first tasks was to implement pay transparency. It's not easy, even when the desire for it is there. The key first step is defining your compensation philosophy: what you believe about pay as an organization.

“The key first step is defining your compensation philosophy—what you believe about pay as an organization.

— CHARITY HUGHES

CH (cont.): Are you aiming to meet, exceed, or fall below market averages? Once that's clear, conduct market analysis to determine what competitors are paying based on your company's size, location, and industry.

After gathering data, you can create compensation ranges and job levels. When launching pay transparency, expect pushback as employees notice disparities. Be ready to explain why certain pay differences exist, such as experience levels. It's important to clearly define how compensation decisions are made so employees understand where they stand within the pay range and why.

The board and executive leadership team must collaborate to define the company's pay philosophy. Since the board controls the budget, they must agree on compensation goals, such as where to position the company in the market. For example, an IT firm may choose to pay technology roles at the 75th percentile but other roles at a lower level based on the company's strategy. The board sets the philosophy, while the executive team informs and executes it, holding accountability for alignment with the board's decisions.

TOOL KIT #1: How to Implement Pay Transparency

1) DEFINE YOUR COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY WITH INPUT FROM BOTH THE BOARD AND EXECUTIVE TEAM.

2) CONDUCT A MARKET ANALYSIS TO SET COMPETITIVE PAY RANGES, COMMUNICATE HOW COMPENSATION DECISIONS ARE MADE, AND BE READY FOR PUSHBACK.

3) ENSURE ALIGNMENT BETWEEN THE BOARD'S STRATEGY AND THE EXECUTIVE TEAM'S EXECUTION TO MAINTAIN FAIRNESS ACROSS ROLES.

How is WOMEN'S WAY driving change for women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and disabled women who face overlapping barriers? What bold steps is the organization taking to tackle these intersecting challenges head-on?

“WOMEN'S WAY supports equity through educational programming and inclusive policies. Their webinars and workshops not only raise awareness but also compensate participants, especially those with lived experience of economic insecurity, to value their time and expertise. Participants can self-identify, and the organization is moving toward compensating all contributors to reinforce the importance of fair labor practices and challenge structural barriers.

As an employer, Women's Way promotes flexibility with hybrid work options that support parents, caregivers, and people with disabilities. Recognizing that flexibility can be the difference between being able to work or not. They also offer wellness pay: dedicated funds employees can use for therapy, acupuncture, massage, physical activity, or other self-defined wellness needs. Additionally, a dependent care flexible spending account helps cover caregiving expenses with pre-tax dollars. These benefits reflect a commitment to well-being, inclusion, and retaining diverse talent.”

— KELLY SHEARD

**WOMEN'S WAY is Philadelphia's leading nonprofit dedicated to the advancement of women, girls, and gender equality and a former Forum Ally.*





Are there other key metrics we should be considering when assessing pay equity in the workplace? What indicators help us see the full picture beyond compensation?

PANELISTS: CHARITY HUGHES (CH),
MARGARET M. MCDOWELL (MM),
REPRESENTATIVE JENNIFER O'MARA (JO),
KELLY SHEARD (KS)

MM: When companies report raw pay gaps (e.g., "women earn X cents per dollar"), this tells an incomplete story. From a legal perspective, proper pay analysis requires multiple regression that accounts for job-related factors, including skills and requirements, job structure and levels, and job families (IT compensation differs from other departments).

MM (cont.): This approach compares similar individuals based on relevant factors to determine if a true pay gap exists. If an unexplained gap remains after this analysis, it presents legal risk.

However, making pay adjustments creates a tension, as these are race/gender-conscious employment decisions. This is why working with legal counsel is crucial when addressing pay equity – both for proper model construction and implementation of any adjustments.

Even when regression models show no pay gap, a raw gap indicates other potential issues:

- Promotion disparities (certain groups not advancing to senior roles)
- Retention problems
- Hiring patterns (over-indexing certain demographics at entry level while under-indexing them for senior external hires)

The data can reveal which employment practices drive these disparities – whether they're related to pay, promotion, retention, or hiring processes.

TOOL KIT #2

Actionable Steps for Addressing Pay Gaps

1) CONDUCT PROPER REGRESSION ANALYSIS: PERFORM MULTIPLE REGRESSION THAT ACCOUNTS FOR JOB-RELATED FACTORS TO IDENTIFY TRUE UNEXPLAINED PAY DISPARITIES VERSUS RAW GAPS.

2) IMPLEMENT LEGALLY SOUND REMEDIATION: WORK WITH LEGAL COUNSEL TO DEVELOP COMPLIANT PAY ADJUSTMENT PLANS THAT ADDRESS INEQUITIES WHILE MINIMIZING LEGAL RISKS.

3) EXPAND ANALYSIS BEYOND PAY: EXAMINE PROMOTION RATES, RETENTION STATISTICS, AND HIRING PATTERNS TO IDENTIFY ROOT CAUSES IN ADVANCEMENT OPPORTUNITIES, RETENTION STRATEGIES, OR RECRUITMENT PRACTICES.

JO: The pay gap really reflects broader societal factors affecting women's professional paths. First, there's the caregiving responsibilities. Without national paid maternity leave, women often become primary caregivers, forcing difficult choices between career advancement and family obligations. The data clearly shows women are typically first to leave the workforce when family demands arise.

“Without national paid maternity leave, women often become primary caregivers, forcing difficult choices between career advancement and family obligations.

— REPRESENTATIVE O'MARA

JO (cont.): Then we have occupational segregation. Gender-based career tracking starts early, with societal messaging steering women toward traditionally lower-paying fields. These attitudes persist that justify pay gaps by assuming certain higher-paying professions, like engineering, are naturally male domains.

What we need are structural solutions. Policies like 12-week paid family leave would allow all workers to manage caregiving responsibilities—whether for children, parents, or personal health—without sacrificing economic security. This particularly benefits women who currently bear a disproportionate burden. We have to address these systemic factors alongside direct pay adjustments if we want to create sustainable equity. It's not just about fixing numbers on a spreadsheet.

KEY TAKEAWAY:
TRUE PAY EQUITY REQUIRES STRUCTURAL SOLUTIONS LIKE PAID FAMILY LEAVE TO ADDRESS THE SOCIETAL FACTORS THAT PUSH WOMEN INTO CAREGIVING ROLES AND LOWER-PAYING PROFESSIONS.

How do we best advocate for pay equity as a company, as an organization, as a voter?

JO: I think it's really important to connect with your elected officials about all kinds of issues, not just what's making headlines. Start locally. Look at what Philly and Lehigh County have already done with their own equal pay rules.



JO (cont.): Meet with your local, state, and federal officials face-to-face. Share your stories and bring some solid data. One big problem we keep running into is people thinking equal pay and paid family leave are just 'women's issues' or 'mom issues.' That's just not true. These policies affect the entire economy that all our families depend on.

Let's be honest, many elected officials mainly care about what helps them keep their job. So make some noise about these issues! Let them know voters care. And do your homework. Look around at what neighboring states are doing. Pennsylvania is surrounded by states that have gone way beyond what we've done here. Bring those examples to your representatives and say, 'Hey, if they can do this next door, why can't we do it here?'

Don't be afraid to get specific about policies that could work in your own town or across Pennsylvania. The more concrete you can be, the harder you are to ignore.

CH: As an executive coach, I approach pay equity through the lens of curiosity. Achieving pay equity starts with building an inclusive environment because without inclusion, pay gaps are symptoms of deeper cultural issues. Inclusion ensures access, fairness, and belonging, which are essential for equitable compensation.

Start with the philosophy:

- What do you believe about pay?
- How do different demographics in your org feel about their compensation?
- What does your retention data tell you?
- Why are people leaving and how do you compare to competitors?

You don't have to jump straight to numbers. Guide leaders to reflect. Ask HR to bring these questions to the CEO and executive team. When they arrive at the insights themselves, they're more likely to take ownership and act.

KEY TAKEAWAY:
ACHIEVING PAY EQUITY REQUIRES CURIOSITY-DRIVEN LEADERSHIP INSIDE ORGANIZATIONS AND BOLD, LOCAL ADVOCACY OUTSIDE—BECAUSE REAL CHANGE STARTS WITH ASKING BETTER QUESTIONS AND PUSHING FOR SMARTER POLICIES.

TOOL KIT #3

How to Advocate for Pay Equity

1) MEET WITH LOCAL AND STATE OFFICIALS TO ADVOCATE FOR EQUAL PAY AND FAMILY LEAVE POLICIES.

2) REFRAME THESE ISSUES AS ECONOMIC AND FAMILY POLICIES—NOT JUST "WOMEN'S ISSUES."

3) LEARN FROM NEIGHBORING STATES AND SHARE POLICY EXAMPLES THAT COULD WORK LOCALLY.

KS: I really appreciate the focus on curiosity—it's such a powerful tool. At WOMEN'S WAY, we use the Gender Wealth Framework, which goes beyond wages to look at wealth through three lenses: material wealth, lived experience, and structural context.

Material wealth includes things like income and economic security. But that alone doesn't tell the whole story. Lived experience asks: How do people actually feel about their financial reality?

“ We need to follow the caregivers and the workers, really listen to what they're telling us they need, and ensure their voices shape both our policy priorities and cultural values.

— KELLY SHEARD

KS (cont.): For example, I hold two master's degrees—on paper, that suggests economic stability. But the anxiety I carry around my student loan debt tells a different story. That emotional reality is just as important as the numbers.

Then there's the structural context: we need to look at how institutions support or hinder wealth-building, especially through a gender lens. That includes understanding caregiving responsibilities, systemic barriers, and harmful cultural narratives about whose labor is valued—especially in care-related industries like elder care, disability support, childcare, and healthcare.

So when we talk about advocacy, my belief is: we need to follow the caregivers and the workers. What are they telling us they need? Are we really listening? Even in spaces like this one, it's important to ask: Who prepared this space? Who's doing the unseen labor? That perspective should guide both our policy priorities and our cultural values.

KEY TAKEAWAY:
WEALTH ISN'T JUST ABOUT INCOME. IT'S ABOUT LIVED EXPERIENCE, STRUCTURAL EQUITY, AND WHETHER WE'RE TRULY LISTENING TO THE NEEDS OF CAREGIVERS AND WORKERS WHO HOLD OUR COMMUNITIES TOGETHER.

TOOL KIT #4 Tips to Create a Workplace that Promotes Equity

1) EDUCATIONAL & ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: PAY FOR PARTICIPATION AND MOVE TOWARD UNIVERSAL COMPENSATION.

2) SUPPORT FLEXIBLE WORK: OFFER HYBRID SCHEDULES AND ACCOMMODATIONS THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, AND EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES.

3) INVEST IN WELL-BEING: PROVIDE WELLNESS FUNDS AND DEPENDENT CARE SUPPORT TO PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH, INCLUSION, AND LONG-TERM RETENTION.

How have the after-effects of the pandemic and the rise of remote and hybrid work impacted pay equity in your experience?

“I see this from two lenses. When I was at Mastery Charter Schools during the pandemic, a major tension emerged as teachers were required to return to classrooms, while administrators pushed to stay remote. This raised important equity—not equality—questions. Teachers needed to be in-person for student learning, but administrative roles often didn’t require it. In contrast, my current role in corporate consulting is mostly remote, so the impact was minimal.

More broadly, there’s a strong link between education and the economy. During the pandemic, thousands of educators left the profession; 30,000 in September 2022 alone. Many never returned, which has deepened the crisis in education, especially in underserved communities. If we don’t address this, we risk worsening pay inequity and long-term economic divides. We need to be mindful of both the narratives we accept and the actions we take in response.”

— CHARITY HUGHES



The Forum
of Executive
Women



There have been recent executive orders that affect diversity, equity, and inclusion—some of which roll back existing DEI efforts. How have you seen these policy changes impact your work?

KS: These executive orders are a form of structural violence. When we talk about rolling back DEI, reducing federal services, or undermining programs like public loan forgiveness, it has a direct and massive impact on workers—especially here in Pennsylvania, where around 90,000 people are federal employees.

But the executive orders targeting gender specifically? These aren't just policy shifts—they're an attempt to erase trans and gender non-conforming people. The message is: you don't exist, so you don't deserve protection or equity. That kind of psychological harm is real and deeply damaging.

KS (cont.): What's more, this insistence on a rigid gender binary doesn't just harm trans folks—it also hurts cisgender women. Because wherever there's a binary, there's a hierarchy. And historically, women never benefit from those hierarchies. Once we define what's "appropriate" for one gender and not another, it affects everything—from workplace roles to dress codes to assumptions about caregiving and who belongs where. We need to see this for what it is—not just a political move, but a threat to everyone's freedom and equity, and we should all be alarmed.

MM: Executive orders are just one part of a broader, ongoing effort. The Harvard/UNC decision signaled where politically motivated legal groups were headed, using legal and public channels to challenge DEI efforts by linking Title VI and Title VII.

“Companies shouldn't retreat... it's a call to pause, assess, and strengthen.

— MARGARET M. MCDOWELL

MM (cont.): This movement is also playing out beyond the courts, on social media, and in campaigns targeting companies' DEI programs. But that doesn't mean companies should retreat. Instead, it's a call to pause, assess, and strengthen what you're doing. Review your DEI programs: Are they clearly articulated? Are employees well-informed about them? Are public-facing statements easy to understand and not open to misinterpretation?

Clarity helps minimize legal risk and allows you to stay focused on your core DEI goals without unnecessary distractions.



How does achieving pay equity not just support workers, but actually drive broader economic growth for Pennsylvania?

“On the Labor Committee, we’ve been focused on rebuilding the workforce post-COVID, especially since data shows women left in higher numbers and haven’t returned at the same rate.

Pay equity is key to bringing women back. Too many women are choosing not to work because wages don’t cover basic costs like childcare or transportation. We also need to raise the minimum wage, which disproportionately affects women, and invest in infrastructure like SEPTA to make work accessible. Ultimately, closing the wealth gap means strengthening worker protections and shifting our economy to support people—not just profits.”

— REPRESENTATIVE O’MARA



If you could advance just one policy or change to move this work forward, what would it be?

KS: When we at WOMEN'S WAY asked our community what would make the biggest impact on their stability and opportunity, two things stood out: guaranteed income and expanding the Child Tax Credit. These policies made a clear and immediate difference in their lives. While I personally care deeply about standing with workers and supporting the care economy, I want to lift up what our community told us matters most: guaranteed income and the Child Tax Credit.

TAKE ACTION:
ADVOCATE FOR GUARANTEED INCOME AND AN EXPANDED CHILD TAX CREDIT TO CREATE IMMEDIATE AND MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC STABILITY FOR OUR COMMUNITIES.

CH: I want to highlight two things: one on the policy side and one on the organizational side. From a policy perspective, pay transparency is critical. Research shows that women are less likely to negotiate, and without knowing the pay range, it's hard to even start. Knowing the top and middle of a pay range empowers better decisions. On the organizational side, it's about having a clear compensation philosophy, communicating it effectively, and holding people accountable to it.

TAKE ACTION:
ADVOCATE FOR PAY TRANSPARENCY AND BUILD A CLEAR, ACCOUNTABLE COMPENSATION PHILOSOPHY THAT EMPOWERS EQUITY.

MM: Pay transparency is crucial, but it's important to ensure clarity. Challenges from agencies like the New York Commission of Human Rights highlight the need for more precise pay disclosures. Companies should revisit their pay philosophy and define clear job levels, roles, and expectations.

Internally, it's essential to analyze workforce data to identify potential issues before they lead to legal problems.

MM (cont.): Companies should avoid making assumptions based on industry headlines and instead focus on understanding their own data to address specific challenges and correct any inequitable practices.

TAKE ACTION:
PRIORITIZE PAY TRANSPARENCY, ANALYZE WORKFORCE DATA, AND AVOID ASSUMPTIONS.

JO: I work on too much policy to pick just one, but I'll add this: if we want real change, we need to change who's making the policies. If legislators won't pass things like paid family leave, minimum wage increases, or pay transparency, then we need to elect new ones.

It's not just about electing more women, it's about electing more working-class people, more people of color, and more folks who've been historically excluded from policy-making spaces. We need decision-makers who understand these issues from lived experience.

TAKE ACTION:
ELECT POLICYMAKERS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE WHO WILL FIGHT FOR EQUITY AND PASS THE POLICIES WE NEED.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

Advancing Pay Equity

Economic Support Systems: Implementing guaranteed income programs and expanding the Child Tax Credit would provide essential financial stability for workers and families.

Transparency and Philosophy: Organizations should establish clear compensation philosophies, commit to pay transparency, and hold leadership accountable for equitable practices.

Data-Driven Solutions: Companies must analyze their workforce data to identify specific issues affecting pay equity and develop targeted interventions to correct problematic behaviors.

Diverse Representation: Increasing diversity among policy-makers is essential to champion and implement legislation that effectively addresses pay inequity.



Additional Resources

BLOOMBERG GEI REPORT

Bloomberg Gender Equity Index

COMPENSATION DATA

52 Gender Pay Gap Statistics In 2024 – Forbes Advisor

EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION

Compensation Packages That Actually Drive Performance - Harvard Business Review

Early CEO Compensation and PvP Disclosure Trends From the 2023 Proxy Season - Harvard Law School Forum

Gender Pay Gap for Executives Grew During Pandemic - SHRM

COMPENSATION FOR FOUNDERS

Survey: Female Founders Are (Finally) Paying Themselves More - Harvard Business Review

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Forum of Executive Women would like to thank everyone who gave their time to create this report. We extend our appreciation to the following contributors — without them, this report would not have been possible:

Project Director:

Sarah Boorboor, Director of Communications

Meghan Pierce, President & CEO

Mary Jacquinto, Program Manager

THE FORUM PAY EQUITY LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE

Jeanine Conley Daves, Chair

AmyLynn Flood, Vice Chair

Wendi Barish

Gina Cline

Diane Corman-Levy

Joslyn Ewart

Nancy Ezold

Beth Finn

Pamela Hunt Gwaltney

Charity Hughes

Tracey Jasey

Aurora Kripa

Ania Mikson

Richonda Pelzer

Marcine Pickron-Davis

Julia Pudlin

Rasmeet Sachdeva

Meredith Sadoulet

A special thank you to Jefferson for sponsoring this report.

Additional Resources (Cont'd)

PAY EQUITY SOURCES

[Gender wage gap persists in 2023: Women are paid roughly 22% less than men on average | Economic Policy Institute](#)

[The Pay Gap for Executive Women Is the Largest It's Been Since 2012 — Here's Why - Chief](#)

GENDER EQUITY REPORTS

[Results Dashboard: WBC Benchmark Survey on Gender Equity in the Staffing Industry - Women Business Collaborative](#)

[The State of Pay Equity 2023-24 - HR.com](#)

[Women in Work 2024 - PwC UK](#)

[Global Gender Gap Report 2023 - World Economic Forum](#)

[Gender pay gap remained stable over past 20 years in US - Pew Research Center](#)

LEGISLATION

[Paycheck Fairness Act: H.R.17 - 118th Congress \(2023-2024\): Paycheck Fairness Act | Congress.gov | Library of Congress](#)

[PA House Bill No 630 - PN0767](#) | [Pay Equity Laws by State](#)

SALARY HISTORY BAN (LOCAL STORIES)

[Philadelphia](#) | [Lehigh County](#)



The Forum of Executive Women

OUR MISSION

The Forum of Executive Women brings together and leverages the influence of professional women to expand the impact and power of women in the workplace and beyond.

OUR VISION

Women will achieve equitable representation in leadership, influence, and power in the workplace and beyond.

OUR STORY

The Forum of Executive Women was founded in 1977, a time when there were only a handful of women in leadership roles in Philadelphia. Forum members boldly gathered to share their experiences navigating barriers to leadership, galvanized by a mutual desire to advance more women into the top roles of the Philadelphia region.

Today, The Forum is a membership organization and a network of over 600 women leaders representing diverse industries, backgrounds, and lived experiences. Forum members are the leaders of Philadelphia's most important institutions and represent all of the sectors that drive our regional economy.

Our Guiding Principles

Inclusion: We are dedicated to retaining and growing our welcoming, diverse, engaging, and caring community that is bound together by our common purpose.

Advancement: We work strategically and collaboratively to connect individuals, resources, opportunities, and networks to advance women's individual, professional, and shared goals.

Equity: We are committed to amplifying the voices of all women, including women who have been historically marginalized and oppressed, and to ensuring that we create equitable opportunities for all women.

Advocacy: We use our collective influence to address the structural barriers that limit women's professional advancement.

For more information
visit foew.com

CALL TO ACTION

Raise awareness to achieve pay equity by sharing this report. Join us in demanding pay transparency, diverse representation, and data-driven solutions to create meaningful change in workplace equity and ensure fair compensation for all. Advocate for these changes as an employer, employee, and voter.



[FOLLOW THE FORUM FOR THE LATEST NEWS.](#)

**The Forum
of Executive
Women**