

# PAVING THE WAY TOWARD PAY EQUITY IN BC



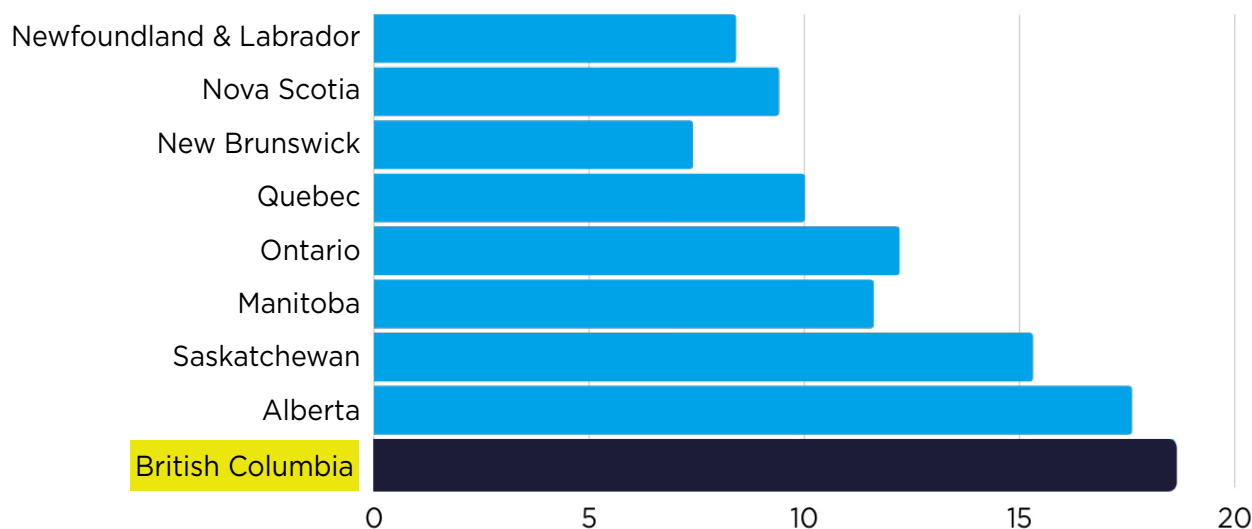
The BC Federation of Labour is focused on economic security for women, two-spirit, non-binary and trans workers as part of our three-pillar plan for women and gender rights. The BC government is in a strong position to make immediate progress by enacting pay equity and pay transparency legislation.

## BACKGROUND

### Unequal pay

#### Percentage Gender Gap in Pay

Source: *The gender wage gap in Canada: 1998 to 2018*



British Columbia has one of the most progressive governments in the country— yet we have the worst gender pay gap of any province, at 18.6 per cent.

And unlike Manitoba, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Ontario and Quebec, BC has no provincial pay equity legislation.

### Unequal value of work

Women in BC tend to be overrepresented in lower-paying sectors such as childcare, sales, education, nursing, caregiving, hospitality and retail.

A recent BC Women's Health Foundation report found four sectors — education, healthcare, retail and food services — make up over half of the jobs women in BC work in. And these sectors lost more jobs than sectors dominated by men during the pandemic, leading to women in BC losing 60 per cent more jobs than men.<sup>1</sup>

A report published last year by West Coast LEAF shows that within these sectors, women are less likely to be found in management or leadership roles, creating a concentration of women in lower-paid positions.<sup>2</sup>

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## THE SOLUTION

**Proactive pay equity legislation:** The BC government can help to address the undervaluing of women's work by requiring companies to examine their job classifications dominated by men and those dominated by women, two-spirit, non-binary and trans workers, and address discrepancies in pay. Ontario, Quebec and four other provinces have done this.

**Pay transparency legislation:** The BC Government can require businesses in BC with 10 or more employees to publicize the pay of all employees. This measure would increase employer accountability both to their workers and to third parties that can call upon employers to conform to the BC Human Rights Code in their pay practices.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enact pay transparency legislation for employers with 10 or more employees.
2. Enact proactive pay equity legislation, paying special attention to legislation that has been implemented in other jurisdictions across Canada and internationally.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

For more on the gender pay gap and how to implement changes that will make a difference for women, two-spirit, non-binary and trans workers, please read *Mind the Pay Gap: A Legislative Approach to Ending Pay Discrimination in BC* published by West Coast LEAF in April 2020.

1. <https://www.unmaskgenderinequity.ca/financial-fallout>
2. <http://www.westcoastleaf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Mind-the-Pay-Gap-Final-Report.pdf>