**People’s Select Committee on Pay Equity: Scope and submission guidance for the website**

The [People’ Select Committee on Pay Equity](https://www.payequity.org.nz/) was established on 26 May to take submissions on and examine the recent [Equal Pay Amendment Act 2025](https://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2025/0021/latest/LMS1436393.html) that was passed under urgency on 7 May 2025. The Committee is an extra-parliamentary committee made up of 10 former MPs from across the political spectrum in response to the absence of a select committee process on significant changes to the Equal Pay Act 1972, including the discontinuation of all existing pay equity claims.

The Committee is calling for submissions from the public so that experts, organisations and affected employers and workers can give *the evidence that should have been before Parliament ahead of the legislation being voted on*. If these changes had been proposed publicly during a policy consultation period and a first reading the Committee wants to provide the opportunity for the public to see what submissions would have been made on the proposed changes via the Select Committee process.

The Government statement announcing the changes notes:

*“Claims have been able to progress without strong evidence of undervaluation and there have been very broad claims where it is difficult to tell whether differences in pay are dues to sex-based discrimination or other factors”*

The Committee is interested to see the specific evidence behind this rationale for changing the legislation and discontinuing claims that were in progress. Where there were delays or difficulties during a claims process, the Committee is particularly interested in understanding whether those issues were a result of the legislation itself, the resourcing made available to claims parties, issues relating to political decisions around funding, and/or the approach of different funding or employer agencies to the process.

The Government has also stated that:

*“These changes will mean the pay equity claims process is workable and sustainable”*

The Committee is looking to understand the views on this statement of people directly and indirectly affected by these changes, including any impacts of these changes on gender and ethnic pay gaps.

The Committee is also keen to receive views on the impact of the specific changes made to the Equal Pay Act 1972, including:

* Raising the threshold of “predominantly performed by female employees” from 60 percent to 70 percent and requiring that this has been the case for at least 10 consecutive years.
* Raising the threshold for entry to a claim process from a light-touch assessment of arguable undervaluation to having to prove the claim has merit at the start of an investigation, with the onus on employees/claimants to provide fulsome evidence of historical and current undervaluation.
* Restriction on the male-dominated comparators able to be used to establish undervaluation to those within the same sector as the female-dominated occupation.
* Employers being able to meet their pay equity obligations in a way that is sustainable for their business – for example through phasing of settlements.
* New claims can be raised under the amended Act if they meet the new, stricter requirements.
* Review clauses in existing settlements will become unenforceable.
* Settled claims can be re-raised 10 years after settlement, if the claim meets the new requirements.

The Committee will deliver a report at the end of this process that will provide a summary of the key themes and conclusions of the submissions. This report will be provided to Parliament and available to the public by the end of the year.