

California signs equal pay pledge

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Building on previous actions to ensure gender and pay equity, Governor Gavin Newsom, First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom and the California Department of Human Resources recently announced the state of California has signed the California Equal Pay Pledge, an initiative the first partner launched to close the gender pay gap.

Newsom also announced the creation of a new chief equity officer position to lead efforts to improve state hiring and other procedures with an equity focus, including efforts to achieve pay parity among the state government workforce.

“I’m proud to announce that California has signed the Equal Pay Pledge to advance pay equity in our workforce,” said Newsom. “Signing the pledge and establishing a chief equity officer position are just the latest examples of our continued commitment to ensuring our state government workforce practices reflect the highest standards of economic, gender and racial equity.”

The announcement follows the unveiling of the governor’s California Blueprint, which includes a proposed \$1.4 million package to improve awareness of state pay equity rights and inform enforcement efforts against those that violate equal pay laws.

“We can’t reach full gender equity or close persistent gender and racial wealth gaps without reaching pay equity,” said California First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom, whose California for ALL Women campaign

promotes initiatives that build women's economic equity, support equal representation, and advance a family-first agenda. "As the state's largest employer, California is leading by example. I call on other employers to join us as we work to create a California where all women are valued, respected, and paid equitably."

Over 60 major California employers, including Airbnb, Apple, Gap Inc., Intel and Twitter, have signed the pledge, which the First Partner leads in collaboration with the California Commission on the Status of Women and Girls and the California Labor Commissioner's Office. By signing the Equal Pay Pledge, signatories agree to conduct an annual, company-wide gender pay analysis, review hiring and promotion procedures to reduce unconscious bias and structural barriers, and promote best practices to close the pay gap.

California regularly releases summarized annual pay data for state employees through CalHR's Women's Earnings Report, Annual Census and Total Compensation Reports. The latest Women's Earnings Report, which includes state employee pay data from 2020, indicates that the state worker gender pay gap has trended downward since 2010. In 2010, the civil service gender pay gap was 21.3 percent and decreased to 14.3 percent in 2020. For the first time, the Women's Earnings Report incorporates additional data sets to provide a better understanding of how state employees are compensated in each bargaining unit.