

Asda equal pay demonstrations as 60,000 workers begin sex discrimination case



Asda workers will demonstrate in Manchester and Brighton as their landmark equal pay claim begins.

More than 60,000 Asda workers take their case to the Employment Tribunal today [Monday] in the largest ever private sector equal pay claim.

In Manchester, dozens of Asda workers are set to demonstrate outside the Civil Justice Centre, where the case will begin this morning [Monday].



In Brighton, Asda staff will protest at the TUC congress, where delegates will debate GMB's motion on equal pay for Asda workers.

The case, expected to last three months, centres on the fact the predominantly female retail workforce is paid up to £3.74 per hour less than the predominantly male warehouse workforce.

Claimants will argue retail work is of equal value to the company as warehouse work.

The case is the latest step in a twelve-year fight for equal pay by Asda retail workers. This second and crucial stage will likely establish that retail work is of equal value to warehouse work and therefore needs to be paid equally.

If successful, the bill for Asda could run into billions of pounds

Nadine Houghton, GMB National Officer, said:

"Asda workers are making history. The result of this hearing will call time on the retailers undervaluing their predominantly women shop floor workers.

"The entire retail sector has been built on the structural undervaluing of women's work - but GMB members are changing this.

"When the court finds shop floor work is of equal value to warehouse work it will be time for ASDA's majority owners - TDR Capital - to get round the table and begin settlement talks to resolve the sex discrimination in ASDA's pay structure.

"The new owners have loaded billions of pounds of debt on to ASDA's balance sheet - yet last year they reported a pre-tax profit of 180 million pounds.

"TDR Capital was founded by now billionaire, Manjit Dale - there is enough money to pay these women what they are owed."

Lauren Loughheed, Leigh Day partner, said:

"The equal pay team at Leigh Day is very encouraged by the huge success we experienced just last week on behalf of the many thousands of women we represent who have been fighting for equal pay at Next.

"We hope we will also be successful in the parallel claim we are bringing on behalf of more than 60,000 clients against Asda.

"If we win at this Stage 3 hearing, Asda will then have to prove that there is a genuine reason for the pay difference between store workers and warehouse workers which is not based on sex.



“Next bosses failed to do this and our clients won. We are confident that the same will be true in the Asda claim.”

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