

Asda equal pay ruling leaves women workers on cusp of justice



But thousands more face appeal

Tens of thousands of women Asda workers are on the cusp of equal pay justice after a landmark ruling – but thousand more face taking their case to appeal.

The Employment Tribunal has found in favour of 12 out of 14 ‘lead claimant’ Asda workers in the biggest private sector equal pay claim in history – paving the way for a potential £1.2 billion pound pay out.

The case, brought by GMB and Leigh Day, centres on the fact the predominantly female retail workforce is paid up to £3.74 per hour less than the predominantly male warehouse workforce.



In its ruling, the Employment Tribunal said the following jobs are of equal value to the distribution centre jobs they are comparing themselves to:

Checkout operator, Shop Floor Assistant (Chilled, Bakery, Produce, Process, Home & Leisure, George, Counters, Service Host, Customer Service Desk and Warehouse) and Section Leader.

Two roles were not found to be of equal value – Personal Shopper and Shop Floor Assistant – Edible Grocery – GMB and lawyers are considering all available options including the possibility of an appeal.

The women, who launched their claim 2014, now face just one final hurdle; stage three of the claim, which requires Asda to provide a reason, not related to sex, for the difference in pay.

Nadine Houghton, GMB National Officer, said:

“This is a historic step towards securing equal pay justice for tens of thousands of Asda workers, but it is tainted with bitter disappointment for those who now face and appeal.

“These women have been fighting for what they are owed for more than ten years and are close to ending the era of retailers systematically undervaluing women.

“It’s telling many of the roles judged to be of equal value are the traditional shop floor roles women have held in retail for so long.

“It’s a crushing blow that some roles were not considered of equal value and we will be discussing next steps, including the possibility of an appeal.

“GMB now calls on Asda to stop wasting time and money dragging this case through the courts and get round the table with us to agree a settlement.”

Lauren Loughheed, Partner at Leigh Day, said:

“This is a significant step for the thousands of Asda store workers who have established equal value.

“Our clients have fought for over ten years to achieve recognition of the value of their work and I am so pleased for them.

“We hope that Asda will now focus on resolving their cases quickly, rather than prolonging the process.

“Today’s ruling will of course be bitterly disappointing for our clients who work in the job roles that were not found to be of equal value.

“We believe that a strong case was put forward for these roles, and we will be discussing our next steps with those affected.



“Equal pay is a fundamental right, and this decision takes us one step closer to ensuring that the hardworking colleagues in Asda’s stores are not undervalued and are paid what they are owed.

“Our clients’ demand is clear: they want to be treated fairly. This means being paid the same as their colleagues in other parts of the business, who do work of equal value.”

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