

As a Washington employer, you are required to comply with the Equal Pay and Opportunities Act (EPOA). The act ([RCW 49.58](#)) prohibits gender pay discrimination and promotes fairness among workers by addressing business practices that contribute to income disparities between genders. Both employees and job applicants have rights under this law.

Employers are encouraged to request a voluntary consultation with the [Washington State Department of Labor & Industries](#) (L&I) to increase their understanding of the law.

### **Purpose of a consultation**

An EPOA consultation will provide an educational opportunity and an informed assessment of possible risks specific to you as an employer, as well as proposing resolutions to assist with future compliance with the law.

You can request a comprehensive review of your employer policies and practices to assess potential risks, or you can request information about a specific concern.

### **Consultation benefits**

- No penalties or fines will be issued if potential violations are identified (as long as there are no active EPOA complaints filed against your organization during the course of the consultation).
- You will receive guidance and recommendations to comply with EPOA requirements and to prevent gender pay discrimination, including best practices for promoting equal pay, career advancement opportunities, and fair hiring practices.
- You will learn how to add clarity and transparency to your policies and practices regarding EPOA protections.
- You can reduce potential risks of employees filing EPOA complaints.

### **What L&I will do during a consultation**

- Review your employee handbook, policies, job applications, offer letters, nondisclosure agreements, and other similar documents
- Identify potential risks

### **Request a consultation**

To request a free voluntary EPOA consultation, send an email to [esgeneral@lni.wa.gov](mailto:esgeneral@lni.wa.gov) with “Equal Pay Consultation” in the subject line. In your email, please provide us with your name, your organization’s name, Unified Business Identifier, phone number, and preferred email address.



To request a consultation online, go to <https://lni.wa.gov/workers-rights/wages/equal-pay-opportunities-act/consultation-request>.

You can also contact EPOA staff by calling the Employment Standards Program at 360-902-5316 or toll free 1-800-219-7321.

- Explain EPOA requirements and protections
- Recommend revisions to policies and practices

If potential risks or violations are found, possible resolutions for you to consider may include revising employer policies and practices; training managers, supervisors, payroll, and human resources employees; correcting hiring practices; or adjusting pay rates.

EPOA consultations are educational and do not replace legal advice from an attorney. Guidance provided in an EPOA consultation is based on information presented by the employer, and does not guarantee a business will not be found in violation of EPOA requirements if circumstances change or additional facts are presented in an investigation.