

## Employers lagging on plans for pay equity

### 'Time is up,' commissioner warns as companies face Dec. 31 deadline to comply

BY KEVIN DOUGHERTY, THE GAZETTE    OCTOBER 2, 2010

Fourteen years after Quebec adopted a payequity law, about 20,000 employers in the province still have not formulated a payequity

plan as required by the law.

Starting in January, the province's pay-equity commission can impose a payequity plan on recalcitrant employers, retroactive to 2001, plus an indemnity equal

to eight per cent of the total salary adjustment.

An employee or a union can file a complaint, setting the process in motion.

Louise Marchand, Quebec's pay-equity commissioner, issued a reminder yesterday that employers have until Dec. 31 to come up with a plan to offer underpaid women employees equal compensation for work of equal value.

"Pay equity is a nonnegotiable

right," Marchand said, noting that the 1996 payequity law was adopted unanimously by the National Assembly, as was a 2009 law setting the new Dec. 31 deadline.

Pay equity could mean a receptionist would get the same salary as a truck driver, Marchand explained.

"Employers have to realize that time is up," she said.

Marchand said employers in the province with 600,000

employees on their payrolls already have pay equity. She estimated there are another 400,000 employees at companies without pay equity. The law applies to all employers with 10 employees or more.

She said she is optimistic that employers will use the three remaining months to deal with the issue, avoiding the eight-per-cent penalty.

They can to go to the payequity commission website to

download tools that will walk them through the process, she said, estimating it would take about 30 hours for an employer to work out a pay equity plan with employees.

"It is doable," Marchand said.

Commission de l'equite salariale:

[www.ces.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.ces.gouv.qc.ca)

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