



More Than Just a Game: U.S. Women's Soccer's Equal Pay Quest Takes World Stage

Insights

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As the newly crowned world champion U.S. Women's National Soccer Team members received their winners' medals Sunday, chants of "equal pay!" reverberated through the stadium. Those in attendance were well aware that the men's 2018 World Cup prize was \$400 million, while the female players will receive \$30 million this year. Support for the athletes in their fight for pay equal to that received by their male counterparts also appeared to be behind fans booing FIFA president Gianni Infantino. Recognition of the issue was evident on social media, with Twitter reporting that there were five times more tweets about "pay" after the win, according to the BBC.

The issue for the U.S. women's team initially found the limelight on March 8 – International Women's Day – when all 28 members of the team filed a federal gender discrimination class action lawsuit against the U.S. Soccer Federation. *Morgan v. U.S. Soccer Fed'n, Inc.* (C.D. Calif.). The federation employs both the men's national and the women's national teams. The lawsuit claims the federation discriminates by paying the women less than their male counterparts and "by denying them at least equal playing, training, and travel conditions; equal promotion of their games; equal support and development for their games; and other terms and conditions of employment equal to the [Men's National Team]."

While equal pay issues generally don't garner worldwide attention, increasing attention is being paid to these issues across the country. Federal law has long prohibited discrimination in pay based on sex, and claims are on the rise. As readers of our website know, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission will start collecting pay data from employers this September.

Meanwhile, state and local governments are also getting into the act. Pay equity laws now exist in dozens of states, and some do not limit pay inequality prohibitions to differences based on sex. Moreover, many states and local governments have adopted laws prohibiting employers from inquiring about and/or using salary history to set wages.

Don't wait to be booed, literally or legally. See our firm's interactive map for a comprehensive list of states' and local governments' individual pay equity laws to determine which apply to your operations. Take steps to keep your organization in compliance, such as eliminating pay history questions from your hiring process, training managers, conducting an internal pay audit to uncover any disparities, and addressing any disparities found.

Related People



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