



## **No 10 Determining Gender Predominance – What does determining gender predominance mean, why is it important and how is it determined?**

The following summary provides an overview of key provisions of the Pay Equity Act. It is not a legal document and it is not a binding interpretation of the Act. The full text of the [Pay Equity Act](#) is available on the Department of Justice Canada's website.

### **What does determining gender predominance mean?**

Determining the gender predominance of a job class is a process that examines whether a job class is usually done by women (female predominant) or usually done by men (male predominant). Job classes can also be gender neutral. This means that the job class is not usually done by either men or women.

### **Why is determining the gender predominance of a job class important?**

Pay equity compares jobs usually done by women and jobs usually done by men, even if the work is different.

Determining the gender predominance of a job class is an important step in the pay equity process. Job classes that are determined to be either male or female predominant will be analyzed and compared as part of the pay equity plan.

### **How is the gender predominance of a job class determined?**

Employers or pay equity committees must determine whether a job class is predominantly female, predominantly male or neutral by applying three criteria:

- Current incumbency;
- Historical incumbency; and,
- Gender-based occupational stereotype.

All three criteria must be considered during the process of determining the gender predominance of a job class.

### **What does current incumbency mean?**

The current incumbency of a job class is the percentage of female and male employees that hold positions within a job class.

A job class with either 60% male or female incumbents could be considered male or female predominant.



Employers will need **data** on the gender of employees in job positions to determine the current incumbency of a job class.

### What does historical incumbency mean?

The historical incumbency of a job class is the percentage of female and male incumbents that have formerly held positions within a job class.

A job class that shows a pattern of having either 60% male or female incumbents in the past could be considered either male or female predominant.

Employers and pay equity committees may need to access past records or data on the gender of employees in job positions to determine the historical incumbency of a job class. The Act does not provide a specific time frame for how many years workplaces may need to go back in time. The time frame used will vary for each employer, depending on the availability of data.

If an employer opens a new business which is subject to the Act, then the historical incumbency criteria would not apply because data concerning the gender of incumbents that hold job positions would not exist.

### What is a gender-based occupational stereotype?

A gender-based occupational stereotype refers to the labeling of jobs that are commonly held by women and jobs that are commonly held by men.

In satisfying this third criteria, employers or pay equity committees may consider a job class as male or female predominate based on a collective assumption. For example, administrative assistant is traditionally seen as a job performed by women while a truck mechanic is traditionally seen as a job performed by men.

In other cases, an employer or pay equity committee may have to do some research and consult reports or national data on the gender composition of an occupation. A good place to start could be Statistics Canada's Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics webpage: [https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/topics-start/gender\\_diversity\\_and\\_inclusion](https://www.statcan.gc.ca/eng/topics-start/gender_diversity_and_inclusion)

### How to make a final gender determination?

Based on the findings of each of the three criteria above, an employer or pay equity committee must make a final decision on the gender predominance of each job class.

For example, if more than 60% of positions in a job class are held by men, but historically, more than 60% of positions were held by women and there is a female gender-based occupational stereotype associated with the work, the employer or pay equity committee could decide that the job class is predominantly female.

**Example: Assessing gender predominance of job classes**



<b>Job Class</b>	<b>Current incumbency</b>	<b>Historical incumbency</b>	<b>Gender-based occupational stereotype</b>	<b>Gender predominance determination</b>
<b>Administrative assistants</b>	Neutral (53% Female / 47% Male)	Female	Female	Female
<b>Pilots</b>	Male (38% Female / 62% Male)	Male	Male	Male
<b>Service managers</b>	Neutral (44% Female / 56% Male)	Male	--	Neutral
<b>Service agents</b>	Female (62% Female / 38% Male)	Male	---	Neutral

### Want more information?

Visit the Canadian Human Rights Commission Pay Equity webpage for more resources.

### Questions or Comments?

Please send us any questions or comments about this resource. Is there information that is missing or something you think we should add to make this resource better?

Please send your thoughts our way. You can reach us at: [payequity-equitesalariale@chrc-ccdp.gc.ca](mailto:payequity-equitesalariale@chrc-ccdp.gc.ca)