

Economic Rights of Women

Economic Rights

1. Women must enjoy the right to work and the freedom to choose their employment.

To work and to have the choice in employment should be the right for every individual in society, the right of every man and woman. Any rules and provisions contrary to this right must be abolished. All statutory restrictions with regards to involvement of women in various fields and arenas must be removed. Employment of women must not be subject to having permission from husband, father or brother.

Women must be able to participate in the productive life of society and to enjoy economic independence. The government is required to facilitate employment of women in society and to consider special measures in order to remove social and cultural restrictions.

2. Gender discrimination in employment is strictly forbidden.

Practice of all gender discrimination and inequality in employment and capping promotion in employment posts must be banned. Job allocation and its provision according to gender must be abrogated. Men and women should enjoy equal opportunities for employment in various positions.

3. When job seeking women must benefit from equal opportunities and privileges to men.

In order to remove discrimination against men and women in the arena of occupation and work, the backward attitudes imposed on women by the social circumstances must be compensated. The level of education, skills and professional expertise of women must be promoted and advanced. The necessary social and cultural conditions must be provided so that any division of jobs into jobs for women and men are removed. To this end, firstly there must be provision of literacy, educational and specialised classes and courses for women; secondly, educational and media organisations should promote and encourage men and women to enter into the arena of jobs and professions which until now has been solely restricted to men.

4. All posts should be assessed and classified on the basis of objective and uniform criteria.

Often jobs and fields in which women form the majority of the work force, the level of pay seems to be lower than that of a similar field. Therefore, in order to remove this inequality, the basic level of pay and job benefits in all fields must be on the basis of objective and uniform criteria appropriated on hardship of work, intensity of work, experience, specialisation of staff and totally independent of gender of staff.

5. Equal pay in return for equal work

Women largely are paid less than men under equal work conditions. This discrimination must be scrapped completely. In order to achieve this in reality and practice, equal pay in return for equal work must mean that basic pay and all job benefits for every man and woman employed must be calculated equally. Other payments such as housing and child benefit, etc must be awarded to man and women equally.

6. Men and women should enjoy equal social benefits

Every individual in society must be eligible for unemployment benefits, pensions and disability allowance. Every individual over 18 years of age, who is able to work, whether man or woman, but is unable to find work, should receive unemployment benefits. Men and women over the age of 55 should receive pension payments. Those individuals under 55 who are unable to work due to disability should receive disability allowance. This should be awarded to women, independent of their jobs and spouse's level of benefits.

7. There must be special provisions in place when women have to work night shifts.

Night shift work must be banned for both men and women, unless when essential in duties responsible for social welfare or technical provisions. The government and employers are required to provide necessary facilities such as transport for women at night, under no circumstances, parents of children under 3 years of age, must be employed to work night shifts.

8. Women workers are entitled to 2 days leave every month.

Women are entitled to have 2 days off every month in order to rest during their monthly cycle without losing any pay or benefits.

9. Assigning harmful jobs to pregnant women or any work identified by medical authorities to be harmful to the health of the mother or the foetus is prohibited.

The employer is duty bound to assign appropriate work to women who are primarily employed to these posts without deducting any pay from them. If this is not possible, the women employed in this field must enjoy leave from work with full pay and benefits, during their pregnancy.

10. Dismissal of pregnant women from work is prohibited.

Many employers for profit making and relinquishing their duty in observing the rights of pregnant women dismiss them under unreasonable excuses and as a result dismissal of pregnant women must be prohibited.

11. Women should be entitled to sufficient time for maternity leave.

Women are entitled to 16-week maternity leave, 8 weeks prior to birth and 8 weeks after birth. The period of maternity leave may be extended at the discretion of the doctor. During

maternity leave full pay and benefits must be paid to women. Maternity leave counts as work experience period. Upon her return to work, the employer does not have the right to reduce her position.

12. Parents must have sufficient leave in order to look after their infant.

In addition to mother's maternity leave, until such time that the infant can go to nursery, mother or father of a new born should be entitled to 18 weeks leave, without deduction of pay, in order to look after their new born. Parents of the new born can agree to divide this time between the two of them, or that one of them should be entitled to the whole leave. Until such time when the child can go to nursery, the duty of caring for the child is with either parent and the pay should be provided from the budget of the employer or from the welfare benefits. In addition in order to facilitate the father to perform his duties at the time of birth, he is entitled to 2 weeks paternal leave with pay. Parents' leave should count as their work experience and their position must not be reduced upon their return to work.

13. Mother employers who breast feed their infants should be entitled to 2 half hour slots during the day. The working day of mothers who breast feed their infants should not exceed 6 hours.

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