

FACTS on WOMEN WORKERS

Western University

16 AUG 1961



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Arthur J. Goldberg, Secretary
WOMEN'S BUREAU
Esther Peterson, Director
July 1961

GAINS FOR WOMEN WORKERS UNDER AMENDED FLSA

Women stand to benefit greatly by changes in the Fair Labor Standards Act which will become effective September 3, 1961. Of the 3.6 million employees to be brought under this Federal Act, about 1 million are women.

An estimated 700,000 of the newly covered workers are now being paid less than \$1 an hour. They include more than 500,000 retail trade employees, many of whom are women. This September the newly covered workers will receive a minimum rate of \$1 an hour; overtime compensation of time and a half after 44 hours a week will be paid beginning September 1963. In September 1964, the minimum rate will increase to \$1.15 an hour with overtime after 42 hours a week, and in September 1965 to \$1.25 an hour with overtime after 40 hours.

Among the workers already covered by the minimum wage provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, many women receive wages at or just over the legal minimum of \$1 an hour. The minimum rate for these workers will rise to \$1.15 an hour in September 1961 and to \$1.25 an hour in September 1963. Previously covered employees receive overtime pay after 40 hours of work a week. (For further details about the Act, see enclosed flyer.)

While these FLSA amendments represent an important advance for many low-paid workers, several million women workers will continue to receive less than \$1 an hour; many of these are employed in local industry or business (including small retail stores) or private household services not subject to Federal legislation.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 1961 STATE MINIMUM WAGE ENACTMENTS

The extension of Federal FLSA coverage for the first time to workers in certain retail and service establishments has directed increased attention to State minimum wage activities. No State enacted a new minimum wage law, but the following action was taken:

Conn. and Wash. increased their statutory minimum rates: Wash. to \$1.15 an hour effective June 30, 1961 and \$1.25 an hour, Jan. 1, 1962; Conn. to \$1.15 an hour, effective Oct. 1, 1961, and to \$1.25 an hour effective two years later.

Calif. and Maine provided for stronger enforcement procedures and collection of unpaid wages. Maine also strengthened coverage.

Hawaii required employers to furnish each employee at each pay period a written record showing hours worked, compensation, deductions, etc.

Mass. exempted additional occupations from the statutory overtime but strengthened provisions relating to computation of both regular and overtime pay.

New York exempted camp counselors from the statutory rate.

North Carolina extended coverage to employers of 4 or more (previously 6 or more) and exempted taxicab drivers and operators from coverage.

Oregon provided for payment of a specified per diem to members of wage conferences.

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE WOMAN WORK FORCE

Women in the civilian work force, which includes both the employed and unemployed, numbered 25.1 million in June 1961. This is about two-thirds million higher than June of last year and continues the long-term trend of increasing numbers of women workers. The gain represents almost one-half of the total employment increase during the year.

The number of women actually employed was also higher than a year ago, equaling 22.9 million in June 1961. For white women workers, the employment increase was primarily in clerical work, with some gain in service work. However, among non-white women, the greatest gain was in the service occupations.

Unemployment among women workers rose markedly in June, reaching 2,277,000. This is about 500,000 above the recent peak of 1,818,000 in February, and 550,000 more than the number a year ago. As a result, women's unemployment rate increased to 7.6 percent—from 5.8 percent in June 1960. Some of the increase is accounted for by the larger number of teenagers entering the labor force.

The importance of work experience and seniority is shown clearly by declining unemployment rates in successively older age groups of women. Teen-age women workers had the highest unemployment rate (24.8 percent) in June. For nonwhite women workers, the unemployment rate was 13.3 percent—2.7 percentage points higher than in June 1960 and for white women workers 8.4 percent—1.9 percentage points higher.

Experienced women workers most affected by unemployment were operatives and other semi-skilled and unskilled workers.



NUMBER OF MARRIED WOMEN WORKERS CONTINUES TO INCREASE

That married women workers are becoming increasingly important in the work force can be seen from the fact that the number of working wives has increased by about 725,000 during the past 3 years.

Working wives in 1959 contributed on the average of 20 percent of family income. When working full time the year round, their contribution averaged as much as 38 percent.



WORKING MOTHERS

While 1 of every 3 married women is in the work force, only 1 out of 6 mothers with children under 3 years of age works, compared with 2 out of 5 mothers with children 6 to 17 years. These figures confirm what everyone knows—that women with very young children prefer to stay at home rather than go out to work, although there are, nonetheless, about 3 million working mothers with children under 6 years old. These are the facts behind the growing interest in good day-care facilities for children of working mothers. (A Women's Bureau leaflet "Who Are The Working Mothers?" with more information is now in press.)



WOMEN WORKERS' INCOME THREE-FIFTHS THAT OF MEN

Women who worked full time the year round in 1960 received an average income of \$3,296, while men averaged \$5,435. These figures reflect primarily the well-known concentration of women in lower paid occupations, as well as differences in overtime and seniority, inequitable pay practices, and other factors.

Negro women received even smaller incomes, their \$2,289 average showing their disadvantaged position in the work force. The best paid women, not surprisingly, were those in professional and technical occupations (\$4,358), followed by clerical workers, (\$3,575) and managerial workers (\$3,514). At the other end of the scale were private household workers (\$1,156) and other service workers (\$2,340).



AFL-CIO INDUSTRIAL UNION DEPARTMENT HOLDS FIRST WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Representatives of about 25 trade unions from many parts of the country met June 12-14 in Washington, D. C. for a Conference called to consider Problems of Working Women.

Staff members of the Women's Bureau participated in discussion groups devoted to problems of job opportunities, protective legislation, living standards, and the working mother.

Recommendations accepted by the full Conference included: Federal legislation to end job discrimination, expansion of minimum wage coverage, equal pay for equal work, more responsible roles for women in the labor movement, and improvement of day-care centers for children of working mothers.



AREA CONFERENCES PLANNED

In cooperation with State agencies in California and Michigan and a number of voluntary organizations, trade union groups, and educational institutions, the Women's Bureau is planning the first two of a series of conferences on the problems of employed women:

September 8-9—University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California

September 30—Kellogg Center, East Lansing, Michigan

Details concerning agenda, etc., may be obtained from the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C.



STATUS OF EQUAL PAY LEGISLATION

Nine equal-pay proposals, sponsored by members of both major political parties, are pending in the House of Representatives.

The enthusiastic support of equal-pay legislation by many women's and civic organizations, trade unions, and management representatives suggests an early scheduling of hearings and possible enactment of a law. At present there is no Federal legislation applicable to interstate industry which requires employers to pay men and women the same wage rate for comparable jobs, although bills have been introduced in every Congress since 1945.

In contrast to this, State equal-pay laws represent the most rapidly spreading labor legislation for women. The first two State laws were enacted in

1919. Twenty States have such legislation today. Most of these laws apply only to private industry. The Colorado and Montana laws, however, apply to public employment as well. Illinois and Michigan limit coverage just to manufacturing. Other States with equal pay laws are Alaska, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Washington, and Wyoming.



ILO CONFERENCE, JUNE 1961

In Geneva, the 45th Session of the International Labor Conference took the following actions on subjects of especial interest to women:

Recognized women as an integral part of the labor force—in technical assistance programs for developing countries.

Accepted a report on vocational training which revises previous recommendations on training and points to future adoption of a Recommendation.

Adopted a Recommendation on Workers' Housing to promote adequate and decent housing for all workers and their families.

Placed on the agenda for a second discussion at the next Session, the principle of equal treatment of nationals and non-nationals under social security laws and regulations of ratifying Nations.



AID TO NEEDY CHILDREN

Needy children of unemployed parents are eligible for Federal assistance under a new amendment to the Social Security Act. Formerly, only children whose fathers were dead, incapacitated, or absent from home could receive such aid. To obtain the additional Federal grants, available from May 1, 1961 to June 30, 1962, each State must satisfy Federal requirements, including matching State funds. At the beginning of July, 7 States (Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Utah) were participating in the expanded program and 6 more States (Connecticut, Hawaii, Maryland, Oregon, Washington, and West Virginia) were in the process of securing the necessary legislation.

NEW WOMEN'S BUREAU PUBLICATIONS

Just Out (Single copies available from the WB)

Employment Outlook preprints from the 1961 *Occupational Outlook Handbook* for the following:

Beauty operators; Dental hygienists; Dietitians, Home economists; Librarians, Medical record librarians; Medical technologists; Occupational therapists; Practical nurses; Physical therapists; Registered professional nurses; Secretaries, stenographers, and typists; Social workers; and X-ray technicians.

Supplement No. 3 (January 2, 1960-January 1, 1961) to Part II of Bull. 267—State Minimum-Wage Laws and Orders.

Women of the 87th Congress.

Just Out—Continued

State Minimum-Wage Law and Order Provisions Affecting Working Conditions. Bull. 280.

Life Insurance Selling—Careers for Women as Life Underwriters. Bull. 279. (Leaflet 36, same title, is in press.)

Job Futures for Girls in Biology. Leaflet 35.

In Press

Careers for Women in the Biological Sciences. Bull. 278.

State Hour Laws for Women. Bull. 277.

Who Are the Working Mothers? Leaflet 37.



TO OUR READERS

This fact sheet was prepared in response to requests from a number of organizations for information on current developments affecting women workers. Will you tell us—

.....What you think of this type of publication?

.....Whether you would like to see it appear regularly?

.....What else you would like us to report?

We are eager to know your interest and your opinions. Do let us hear from you.