

## University of Denver May Have Violated Equal Pay Act



**Summary:** *The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has sued the University of Denver for underpaying eight female law professors.*

The University of Denver has been sued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission last Friday for underpaying their female law professors. The EEOC found in August of last year that the private law school violated the Equal Pay Act when it paid at least eight of their female law professors less than their male colleagues.

Then the finding was issued last year, the university planned to mediate a resolution. This has not happened successfully so the lawsuit was filed in the U.S. District Court for Colorado. The attorneys for the affected female law professors claimed the school owed them around \$1.2 million in back wages.

The EEOC district office leader Mary Jo O'Neill said, "The guarantee of equal pay for equal work applies to the professional academic setting of a university just the same as any other workplace." She explained that the office places high priority on enforcing the Equal Pay Act and closing the pay gap.

In 2013, Professor Lucy Marsh at the [University of Denver Sturm College of Law](#) learned from former dean Martin Katz that she was the lowest-paid full-time professor at the school despite being there since 1976. Katz had issued a memo detailing raise allocations in order to keep salaries competitive since female faculty were earning around \$16,000 less than their male colleagues. It was then that Marsh filed her complaint.

Read [Gender Discrimination Suit for \\$100 Million Filed against Chadbourne & Parke](#).

At least five other law professors were found to be paid less but Katz passed it off as "not performing as well as male full professors." In 2013, the average salary for female full-time law professors at the school was \$139,940 while it was \$159,721 for men. No female law professors were earning a salary above the average of the men's salary.

The lawsuit alleges that Marsh has been underpaid since the day she was hired roughly 40 years ago. She was hired as an assistant professor with a salary of \$16,800. A male professor was hired for the same position the same year for \$19,000. By 2013, the same male colleague was earning \$75,000 more than Marsh. The university claims her lower pay is due to a lack of job performance but she was awarded with the Excellence of Teaching award by the school in 2010.

See [Is Denver the Best Place to Get a Law Degree?](#)

The university had their own independent report done that found the link between pay and gender to be too weak to draw any conclusions. The EEOC is seeking to have the university pay back wages, recover punitive damages, and stop underpaying women.

Do you think a trend could be found at many universities of women being paid less than their male colleagues? Tell us if you know of any other schools with this problem in the comments below.

To learn more about other cases of gender pay discrimination, read [Chief Legal Officers Continue to Experience Gender Pay Gap](#).

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