



PSA

Stand up for
library workers

23 October 2019

Background to our pay equity claim for library assistants

Your union, the PSA, Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi, has set a strategic goal to have settled female dominated occupational claims in every sector of the PSA by 2021. In April 2017, research commissioned by the PSA was released by Catriona McLennan and gives an analysis of the jobs of library assistants and senior library assistants. The findings can be summed up by this quote from an Auckland Library Assistant.

“Two Library Assistants could never fall in love. They could never buy a house. One of them could never have time off to have a child. Library Assistants need to marry people who earn good money.”

In May 2019 the PSA notified the six large urban councils – Auckland, Tauranga, Hamilton, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin that we believe library assistants working in local government suffer from illegal gender-based pay discrimination, and that they have an arguable equal pay claim under the Equal Pay Act 1972. We have asked these six councils to set up a joint working group to resolve our claim using the 2017 Reconvened Joint Working Group Principles of Pay Equity.

While this process only pertains to people doing the job of library assistants, the PSA believes that all local government workers who are working in female dominated occupations are likely to suffer from gender-based pay discrimination. This includes other library workers and administration and clerical workers. Our aim is to use equal pay settlements achieved in one occupation, or in another sector, to achieve equal pay across our membership.

What is happening now?

A bargaining committee has been established with representatives from the nominated councils. This group has met briefly with council representatives and is focused on developing a timeline and agreeing a Terms of Reference. At the culmination of this process our aim is that we have an agreed equal pay rate for library assistants that we will be able to take to each individual council and bargain for its implementation at that council.

Parallel to this work, a campaign will be run to engage library assistants across all councils and to gain widespread and public

Your PSA member number is
{membervnumber}

The PSA Organising Centre is
available Mon-Fri, 8.30am -
5.00pm

Freephone 0508 367 772
enquiries@psa.org.nz

PSA Website:
www.psa.org.nz

PSA on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/nzpsa

PSA on Twitter:
www.twitter.com/nzpsa

 **For a better working life**
New Zealand Public Service Association
Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi

support for our case. This campaign will be launched in the week beginning the 18th November.

Your help is needed

We are asking library assistants across New Zealand, Aotearoa, to support this campaign. One thing that you can do right now is to help us educate the public about all the different tasks, roles and responsibilities that are part of a library assistants work. You can do this by taking a photo of yourself or a work colleague carrying out one of the many jobs of a library assistant i.e. running book clubs, assisting members of the public with IT issues, holiday programmes, afterschool care programmes, book Clubs; chess Clubs; knitting clubs; and craft sessions.

These photos will be used on posters and our webpage to raise awareness around our claim. Please send any photos to our comms team at comms@psa.org.nz subject line Libraries campaign