



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

To The Senate

By

The Hon. Senator Lauren Bell

Junior Minister of Economy & Labour

Pay Transparency Policy: *Public Consultation*

20 May 2026

Madam President,

Today, I rise to remind this Honourable Senate and the listening audience of the public consultation which is currently underway for the Government's proposed **Pay Transparency Policy**. The proposal has been developed as part of the Government's broader commitment to strengthening labour protections and advancing fairness within Bermuda's labour market.

This Government believes that fair pay is fundamental to building a modern, inclusive, and competitive labour market. The policy proposal recognises that longstanding wage disparities linked to race, gender, ethnicity, and immigration status continue to affect income and employment outcomes in Bermuda.

Madam President,

The policy is grounded on the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

The proposal is informed by international best practices and guidance from the International Labour Organization (ILO), which identifies pay transparency as an important mechanism for reducing unjustified pay disparities and promoting equitable workplaces.

The aim of the proposed policy is to promote fairness, accountability, and openness in how compensation decisions are made. It would move Bermuda from a largely reactive complaints-based system, under the **Human Rights Act 1981**, toward a more proactive framework that prevents unfair pay practices before they arise.

At present, Bermuda's legal framework largely relies on individuals to bring forward complaints **after** unfair treatment has already occurred. In many cases, this can be difficult, time-consuming, and challenging to prove, especially where pay practices lack transparency.

Madam President,

The proposed framework outlines six key features of the pay transparency policy.

1. Mandatory pay transparency and equity policies

Every employer in Bermuda would be required to develop and maintain a simple written policy on pay transparency and equity. This policy would affirm the employer's commitment to fair, non-discriminatory pay practices.

2. Clear, objective salary-setting criteria

Employers would be required to explain how pay is determined, using objective factors such as:

- the nature and responsibilities of the role,
- an employee's qualifications, and
- relevant skills and experience

3. Employee access to pay information

Employees would have the right to request information about the salary range for their role, promoting openness and reducing uncertainty around pay.

4. Restrictions on salary history inquiries

Employers would no longer be permitted to ask job applicants about their past or current salary during the recruitment process.

5. Salary ranges in job advertisements

All job advertisements would be required to include a salary range, ensuring that applicants understand expected pay before applying.

6. Enforcement

The enforcement model would follow a framework similar to that already used under Bermuda's minimum wage legislation which is supported by Labour Inspectors.

Madam President,

Recognising the importance of broad public engagement, the Government has launched a consultation process to ensure that the proposed legislation is practical, balanced, and reflective of Bermuda's unique labour market.

The consultation framework is intended to encourage meaningful participation from employers, employees, trade unions, industry groups, advocacy organisations, and members of the public. The consultation has been structured to gather practical feedback on how the proposed measures can be implemented effectively within Bermuda's labour market while balancing fairness, accountability, and operational realities for employers.

As part of this process, the Government has published the proposed Pay Transparency Policy for public review and feedback through the Government's online consultation platform at www.forum.gov.bm. The deadline for feedback is 30 June 2026.

The consultation process is intended to be collaborative and constructive. Feedback received will assist the Government in refining the proposed legislative framework to ensure that it promotes fairness while remaining practical and proportionate for employers.

Madam President,

This initiative is not about creating unnecessary burdens. It is about strengthening confidence in Bermuda's labour market, promoting good employment governance, and ensuring that compensation practices are fair, transparent, and based on objective criteria.

Pay transparency is increasingly recognised internationally as an important component of equitable labour standards and modern workplace practices. Bermuda must continue to evolve its labour framework to ensure that our economy remains fair, competitive, and inclusive.

I encourage all stakeholders to participate fully in the consultation process and to share their views on the proposed policy.

Thank you, **Madam President.**