

GMB hails 'massive victory' in supreme court for 40,000 Asda workers on equal pay



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GMB, the union for Asda workers has hailed a 'massive victory' as the Supreme Court ruled in favour of 40,000 workers today.



The ruling means shop floor staff at Asda can be compared to workers in the distribution centre for the purposes of their equal pay claim.

GMB has now called on Asda bosses to meet with them and discuss the next stage of the shop workers' compensation claim, which could run to £500 million.

Today is the fourth time Asda has lost a court battle on this issue.

In **January 2019**, the Court of Appeal ruled that GMB members could compare themselves in this way—upholding the rulings made by an employment tribunal in 2016 and the Employment Appeal Tribunal in 2017.

GMB has enlisted law firm Leigh Day to work the case on behalf of GMB members. There are almost 40,000 claimants involved.



Susan Harris, GMB Legal Director, said:

“This is amazing news and a massive victory for Asda’s predominantly women shop floor workforce.

“We are proud to have supported our members in this litigation and helped them in their fight for pay justice.

“Asda has wasted money on lawyers’ bills chasing a lost cause, losing appeal after appeal, while tens of thousands of retail workers remain out of pocket.

“We now call on Asda to sit down with us to reach agreement on the back pay owed to our members – which could run to hundreds of millions of pounds.”



Wendy Arundale, who worked for Asda for 32 years, said:

“I’m delighted that shop floor workers are one step closer to achieving equal pay.

“I loved my job, but knowing that male colleagues working in distribution centres were being paid more left a bitter taste in my mouth.

“It’s not much to ask to be paid an equal wage for work of equal value, and I’m glad that the supreme court reached the same conclusion as all the other courts.”

Lauren Loughheed, a partner in the employment team at Leigh Day, said:



"We are delighted that our clients have cleared such a big hurdle in their fight for equal pay.

"Already an employment tribunal, the Employment Appeal Tribunal and the Court of Appeal ruled that these roles can be compared, and now the supreme court has come to the same conclusion.

"It's our hope that Asda will now stop dragging its heels and pay their staff what they are worth."

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