



HRDIGITALPLAYGROUND • JOB ARCHITECTURE 101

Laws and Regulations

The pay and employment rules a job architecture can help a company meet, in the US and beyond.

IN THIS DECK

Law or good practice

Pay transparency

Equal pay

Pay reporting

Overtime

Hiring and AI



September 2026
© 2026 HRDigitalPlayground | Job Architecture

Before You Start

What you will be able to do, the example we use, and the words you will meet.

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO

- ✓ Name the main pay and employment rules that touch job architecture
- ✓ Tell a legal requirement from recommended practice
- ✓ Explain how a documented architecture supports compliance
- ✓ Spot common compliance risks early

MEET THE EXAMPLE



Brightside Bakery

About 350 people making fresh bread and cakes. It grew fast without a plan for its jobs.



Bakery plant



20 shops



Delivery team



Head office

Made-up example

WORDS YOU WILL MEET

Pay transparency

Sharing pay ranges openly

Equal pay

Same pay for equal or similar work

Pay gap reporting

Publishing pay differences between groups

Exempt or non-exempt

Whether a US job earns overtime

Salary history ban

A rule against asking about past pay

The colored tag on each page tells you what it is: an idea, an example, a practice, a warning, or a check.

Why Laws Care About Job Architecture

Regulators keep asking five questions. A consistent job architecture helps answer each one.



IS PAY OPEN?

Pay transparency

Ranges in job ads, and answers when people ask.



IS PAY EQUAL?

Equal pay

Equal pay for equal or similar work.



CAN YOU REPORT IT?

Pay reporting

Pay gaps and pay data by job group.



IS IT CLASSIFIED RIGHT?

Overtime

Overtime depends on duties and pay, not title.



ARE HIRING TOOLS FAIR?

Hiring and AI

Fair questions and fair automated tools.



The common thread: most of these rules assume you can explain which jobs are comparable, how big each one is, and why each is paid what it is.



General education, not legal advice. Reflects rules as of September 2026. Laws change often and vary by place, so check current requirements with counsel.

Many pay and hiring rules ask employers to explain how jobs are grouped, sized, and paid. A documented architecture helps.

Legal Requirement or Good Practice?

Some things a law may require. Others are good practice that makes compliance easier.



WHAT A LAW MAY REQUIRE

Depends on where people work and company size

A good-faith range in job ads, where posting laws apply

Equal pay for equal or substantially similar work

Pay gap or pay data reports above size thresholds

Correct overtime classification, in the US

Notice or bias audits for some automated hiring tools



WHAT GOOD PRACTICE ADDS

Usually not required by name, but it makes the rules easier to meet

A documented job architecture

Written level criteria

A decision log for placements

Regular pay equity reviews

Job descriptions reviewed when work changes



SOURCES European Union: Directive (EU) 2023/970, Article 4, on pay structures and objective, gender-neutral criteria. Other examples appear on the pages that follow, each with its own sources. · Last verified September 26, 2026. General education, not legal advice.

Few laws require a job architecture by name. A documented one makes many legal requirements easier to meet.

Pay Transparency in the US

More than a dozen states plus DC require pay ranges in many job postings, and the list keeps growing.



WHAT THESE LAWS OFTEN REQUIRE

-  A good-faith range in every job ad
-  Sometimes a description of benefits
-  In some states, ranges for current employees who ask

HOW AN ARCHITECTURE HELPS

-  Every posting tied to a job code and grade
-  One range per grade, so every ad for a job matches
-  A clear answer when an employee asks

 **SOURCES** United States, state laws: Colorado Equal Pay for Equal Work Act. California Labor Code 432.3. New York Labor Law 194-b. Washington RCW 49.58.110. Illinois Equal Pay Act, 820 ILCS 112. Other state statutes and labor department guidance. · Last verified September 26, 2026. General education, not legal advice.

Tying every posted range to a job and its grade helps keep ads consistent and explainable.

Pay Transparency Beyond the US

Europe's new directive goes further than any US law. Canada has joined in too.



EUROPEAN UNION

The Pay Transparency Directive



Pay or range shared before the interview



No questions about a candidate's pay history



Workers can ask for average pay, by sex, for the same or equal-value work



Pay structures built on neutral criteria: skills, effort, responsibility, working conditions



Gender pay gap reports from 2027 for larger employers



A joint pay assessment if an unexplained gap of 5 percent or more persists

THE DEADLINE

June 7, 2026

Only a few EU countries met it. Dates and details vary by country.

CANADA

Ranges in job postings

British Columbia since November 2023. Ontario since January 2026, for 25 or more employees.



SOURCES European Union: Directive (EU) 2023/970, Articles 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, and national laws that transpose it. Canada: British Columbia Pay Transparency Act, 2023. Ontario Employment Standards Act, 2000, as amended by the Working for Workers Four Act, 2024. · Last verified September 26, 2026. General education, not legal advice.

These rules ask employers to compare work of equal value. A consistent architecture gives useful evidence for that.

Equal Pay for Equal Work

Equal pay laws compare work on four factors. Many leveling methods use similar ones.

THE FOUR FACTORS USED TO COMPARE WORK



Skill

The experience, training, and ability the job needs.



Effort

The physical and mental effort the job takes.



Responsibility

What the job is accountable for.



Working conditions

The environment and hazards of the work.



US federal law

Equal pay for substantially equal work, and no pay discrimination based on protected traits.



Many states go further

California and New York, for example, cover substantially similar work.



How an architecture helps

A consistent starting point for comparable work. Courts still look at the actual work.



SOURCES United States: Equal Pay Act of 1963, 29 U.S.C. 206(d). Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. California Labor Code 1197.5. New York Labor Law 194. European Union: Directive (EU) 2023/970, Article 4. • Last verified September 26, 2026. General education, not legal advice.

Leveling criteria that reflect skill, effort, responsibility, and conditions make pay differences easier to explain.

Pay Gap and Pay Data Reporting

Larger employers in many places must report pay or workforce data by job group.



United Kingdom

Employers with 250 or more employees publish their gender pay gap every year.



European Union

Gender pay gap reports from 2027 for 150 or more workers. From 2031 for 100 to 149.



US federal

EEO-1 workforce counts by job category for employers with 100 or more employees.



California and Illinois

Pay data reports by job category and pay band, and an equal pay certificate, for 100 or more employees.



Australia

The government publishes gender pay gaps for employers with 100 or more employees.

HOW AN ARCHITECTURE HELPS



Every job mapped once to each reporting category



Consistent groups, so year-on-year trends are real



One source of truth for every filing



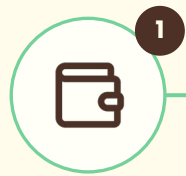
SOURCES United Kingdom: Gender Pay Gap Information Regulations 2017. European Union: Directive (EU) 2023/970, Article 9. United States: EEOC EEO-1 Component 1. California Government Code 12999. Illinois Equal Pay Act, 820 ILCS 112. Australia: Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012. · Last verified September 26, 2026. General education, not legal advice.

Reports are only as good as the job groups behind them. Map every job to its reporting category once, and keep it current.

Overtime and Job Classification

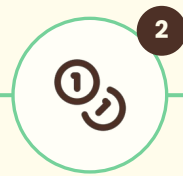
In the US, whether a job earns overtime depends on its duties and its pay, never on its title.

TO BE EXEMPT, A US JOB GENERALLY NEEDS ALL THREE



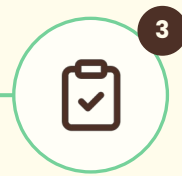
Salary basis

Paid a set salary, not by the hour



Salary level

At or above a minimum amount



Duties test

Main duties fit an exempt category



BRIGHTSIDE EXAMPLE

An Assistant Shop Manager is paid a salary with no overtime, but spends most of the day serving customers. The title says manager. The duties may not.



SOURCES United States: Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. 213(a)(1). 29 CFR Part 541. State rules can be stricter. • Last verified September 26, 2026. General education, not legal advice.

HOW AN ARCHITECTURE HELPS



Real duties on record

The job description shows what the job does



Status on every job

Exempt or non-exempt, stored with the code



Review when duties change

A changed job gets a fresh look



State rules checked

Some states, like California, are stricter

Store overtime status on every job record, base it on real duties, and review it whenever the job changes.

Hiring Rules and AI

Rules about what employers may ask, and how automated tools may screen people, keep spreading.



SALARY HISTORY

Many places ban the question

Many states and cities bar asking what a candidate earns. Base offers on the job's range instead.

Law in many places



AI IN HIRING

Audits, notice, and fairness

NYC requires bias audits of automated hiring tools. Illinois bars discriminatory AI use from 2026. The EU treats hiring AI as high-risk.

Law in some places



FAIR REQUIREMENTS

Only what the job needs

Inflated degree or experience requirements screen out qualified people and raise risk.

Good practice



PRIVACY

Use only the data you need

Position records can hold personal data. Keep names and ratings out of design work.

Law in many places



SOURCES United States: New York City Local Law 144 of 2021. Illinois Human Rights Act as amended by Public Act 103-0804. State and local salary history laws, for example California Labor Code 432.3. European Union: Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 (AI Act), Annex III. • Last verified September 26, 2026. General education, not legal advice.

Fair hiring starts with a well-defined job: real requirements, a real range, and clear criteria any tool must follow.

What the Rules Lean On

Each area of rules leans on specific parts of a job architecture. Dots show where.

	Job descriptions	Families and levels	Neutral leveling criteria	Grades and ranges	Codes and categories	Decision log
Pay transparency						
Equal pay						
Pay reporting						
Overtime						
Hiring and AI						



General education, not legal advice. Reflects rules as of September 2026.

Dots mean the rule leans on that part.

Build these six parts well and many compliance questions become much easier to answer.



Spot the Risk

Four situations at Brightside. Which rule is at risk in each one?

1

A Dispatcher job ad in a posting-law state says only: competitive pay.

Transparency

Equal pay

Overtime

Salary history

2

Two Shift Leads do the same work for very different pay. Nobody can say why.

Transparency

Equal pay

Overtime

Salary history

3

An Assistant Shop Manager gets no overtime but mostly serves customers.

Transparency

Equal pay

Overtime

Salary history

4

A recruiter asks candidates what they earn now, in a state that bans the question.

Transparency

Equal pay

Overtime

Salary history



Decide on your answers before you turn the page. The model answers and the reasons are on the next page.



General education, not legal advice. Reflects rules as of September 2026. Laws change often and vary by place, so check current requirements with counsel.

Most compliance risks start with a job that is unclear, mislabeled, or disconnected from its range.



Spot the Risk: Model Answers

Compare with what you decided. The reason matters more than the label.

1 Dispatcher job ad

Pay transparency

Where posting laws apply, the ad needs a good-faith range.

2 Two Shift Leads

Equal pay

The gap needs a documented, job-related reason, or a fix.

3 Assistant Shop Manager

Overtime

The duties may not support an exemption, whatever the title.

4 Recruiter's question

Salary history

Where banned, base the offer on the job's range instead.



The pattern Each risk traces back to a job that is unclear, mislabeled, or not tied to its range.



General education, not legal advice. Reflects rules as of September 2026. Laws change often and vary by place, so check current requirements with counsel.

Most compliance risks start with a job that is unclear, mislabeled, or disconnected from its range.



Quick Check

Three questions. Answer from memory first, then look back if you need to.

1 QUESTION 1

What do US pay transparency laws most often require?

- A** Pay ranges in job postings
- B** The same pay for every job
- C** Publishing every person's salary

2 QUESTION 2

What decides whether a US job is exempt from overtime?

- A** Its title
- B** Its duties and pay
- C** Its career track

3 QUESTION 3

Which factors does the US Equal Pay Act use to compare work?

- A** Skill, effort, responsibility, working conditions
- B** Title, tenure, location, team size
- C** Education, age, experience, manager

Answers, with the reason behind each one, are on the next page.

Remember

The whole deck in three lines, plus the quiz answers.



THREE THINGS TO KEEP

- 1** Many pay and hiring rules ask you to explain how jobs are grouped, sized, and paid.
- 2** The legal tests for equal work resemble good leveling factors.
- 3** A documented architecture supports compliance. It does not guarantee it.

Not legal advice. Always check current rules.



CHECK YOUR ANSWERS

1A

Ranges in job postings are the most common requirement, often with more rules for current employees.

2B

Salary basis, salary level, and duties decide it. The title never does.

3A

The same four factors appear in the EU's definition of equal value.

A sound job architecture makes many compliance questions easier to answer. Counsel handles the rest.





Job Architecture 101: Laws and Regulations

© 2026 HRDigitalPlayground | Job Architecture. All rights reserved.
Published September 2026 · hrdigitalplayground.com



Keep learning. More plain-language guides at hrdigitalplayground.com.

Brightside Bakery is a fictional company, and every name, number, and example in this deck is illustrative. This material is general education. It is not legal, tax, or financial advice. Laws and practices change, so check current rules before acting.