

#LATINAEQUALPAY @MUJERXSRISING

## Latina Equal Pay

THIS YEAR MARKS THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY of the coordinated National Latina Equal Pay Campaign and the related National Day of Action. Addressing the pay gap and winning equal rights for women has been an issue that many women have worked toward for over a century, dating back to the early women's rights activists and trade unionists. For the past decade, there has been a concerted effort to specifically mobilize individuals to learn about, talk about and move to action to address the pay gap confronting working Latinas through joint mobilization. Justice for Migrant Women is observing this decade of collective action and advocacy by honoring movement leaders, reflecting on progress made and highlighting the significant gaps that still affect migrant and rural Latinas.

#### HISTORY SPOTLIGHT

Equal pay day observances began in 1996 as a public awareness event to illustrate the gap between men's and women's wages $^1$ . It was created by the National Committee on Pay Equity and was originally called 'National Pay Inequity Awareness Day' and changed to Equal Pay Day in 1998. $^2$ 

The Equal Pay Today Coalition (EPT)<sup>3</sup> is a U.S. based coalition that was created in 2013 to address the "gender and racial pay gap, promote transparency and support businesses in creating equitable pay structures." It is composed of many women's rights organizations around the United States. Around 2015, EPT made the important decision to observe equal pay days for women across different demographic groups, including Latinas, by hosting targeted and dedicated campaigns to mark these days per different demographics of women, eventually adding days, like Mom's Equal Pay Day and LGBTQIA+ Equal Pay Day. This decision was made in order to provide a more complete picture of how the pay gap impacts women and LGBTQIA+ communities.

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Justice for Migrant Women These dedicated campaigns significantly advanced the grassroots movement of demanding economic security. Among the key achievements of these efforts are:

- 1. Closely examining women's economic reality considering how their experiences are impacted, their race, gender identity, occupation, migration status and geographic location.
- 2. Further disaggregating data to explore the impact of the pay gap within different groups of women of the same racial or ethnic background.
- 3. Demonstrating how the gap impacts women by the length of time it takes them to be paid the same amount that a white male is paid in just 12 months.
- 4. Prioritizing the campaign leadership by women and organizations from, as well as representing, each demographic group. Those who are closest to the community and the work coordinate the campaign days of action.

Together we built, grew and activated a major campaign united around the issue of pay equity for Latinas, as well as all working people.

## THE PAY GAP PERSISTS

On average, in 2024, all Latinas with reported earnings were paid **54 cents** for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men. This includes people working, part-time, seasonally, part-year and in the gig economy.<sup>4</sup> Latinas working full-time, year-round were paid **58 cents** for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>5</sup>

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

In 2022, the campaign began publishing data for all women with reported earnings, rather than just full time working women's wages. This significant change was the result of advocacy efforts by Justice for Migrant Women, the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum and others to expand data inclusivity. This allowed for the inclusion of millions of women and for a better understanding of the impact of the pay gap on women with different employment arrangements.

### **Rural Impact**

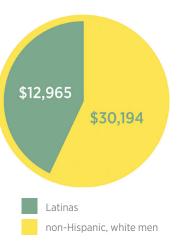
More than 19 million women live in the rural United States. Rural parts of the United States include individuals of many diverse backgrounds, including Latina, Indigenous and Native, Black, and Asian women, as well as women of other races and ethnicities. Many rural and migrant women in the United States live in poverty, face persistent inequality, and lack the services and the protections that they need to thrive. Latinas living in rural communities face greater challenges when it comes to economic security.<sup>6</sup>

A 2018 report demonstrated that women of color in rural United States are paid among the lowest wages in the nation.<sup>8</sup> While in rural communities the cost of living is often lower, the lack of infrastructure, child care and public transportation can impact employment opportunities. The intersection of race, gender and geography is one that should be further expanded upon as we consider closing the pay gap for Latinas.



On average, in 2024, **all Latinas** with reported earnings were paid **54 cents** for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.

**Latinas in rural communities** are paid, on average, **43 cents** for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>7</sup>

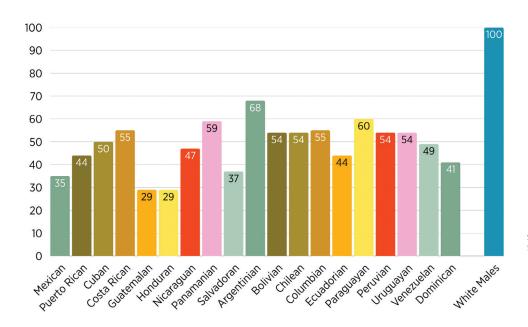


## **Country of Origin and Place of Birth**

Latina women are not a monolith. When considering different Latine identities that comprise the Latine community, it is important to elevate the experiences of different Latinas. For example, what is the experience of a Latina who identifies as Puerto Rican or Cuban? How is that different or similar to the experience of a Latina who identifies as Honduran or Mexican? Is this a different experience between a Mexican and someone who identifies as Mexican-American? The existing data does not allow us to tell this full-story, but we have some good indicators that some differences do exist. It is crucial for us to explore the impact of race and citizenship on the experience of Latinas. Latinas have multiple identities, beyond national origin, including multiple cultural identities.

#### **OVERALL MEAN ANNUAL PAY DISPARITY**

CENTS TO THE DOLLAR | 2019-23



OURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY
URVEY 2019-23 FIVE YEAR SAMPLE



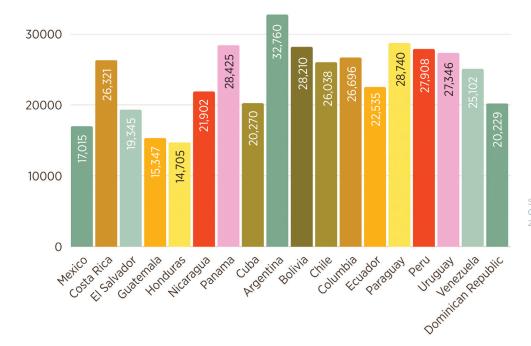
The pay gap for Guatemalan and Honduran Latinas\* is calculated at, on average, 29 cents to the dollar.9

Subpopulation categories do not disaggregate between immigrant and non-immigrant Latinas. Data regarding Latinas living in the United States, born outside
 of the United States is defined in the "Place of Birth" Data.

Immigrant women also face unique challenges due to their immigration status, gender and race.

The pay gap varies when reviewing data for Latinas who were born outside of the United States, while continuing to demonstrate the challenges related to economic security that immigrant Latinas experience. The data regarding country of origin and place of birth demonstrates the need for policy solutions that consider the context of Latinas across subpopulations and migration status. For example, some women from countries in the Northern Triangle — Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador<sup>10</sup> — are fleeing violence and come to the United States seeking safety and economic security. Yet, living with such low wages exacerbates already existing vulnerabilities. Low wages create conditions that expose migrant women to the risk of further physical and mental harms, as well as related trauma.





SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2019-23 FIVE YEAR SAMPLE

#### **Education and Occupation**

People sometimes assert that the pay gap exists due to occupational or educational differences. Data shows that across different occupations and different levels of education, the pay gap persists. In particular, for Latinas, people attribute the pay gap to overrepresentation in low-paying jobs. While it is true that Latinas are over-represented in low-paying jobs, it is also true that Latinas who work across industries and sectors experience the pay gap.

#### **OCCUPATION**

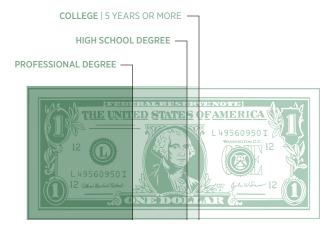
The descriptors of occupations are listed as categorized by the United States Census Bureau and do not directly reflect the terminology used by Justice for Migrant Women.

- Latinas employed as maids, housekeepers and cleaners make, on average, 81 cents for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>13</sup>
- While this wage gap might seem minimal or less than the average gap experienced by Latinas, it is important to note that the impact of the gap is compounded by the fact that wages for these occupations are already suppressed. The mean annual earnings for Latinas in this sector is \$17,936 compared to \$22,201.
- Latinas who are employed as actors, producers and directors make, on average, 70 cents for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>14</sup>
- Latinas employed as waitresses make, on average, 87 cents for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>15</sup>
- The subpopulation data varies greatly within this category. For instance, hospitality workers who are Guatemalan have a pay gap as low as 69 cents.<sup>16</sup>

- Latinas employed as bartenders make, on average, 76 cents for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>17</sup>
- Latinas employed as chief executives officers, legislators, or public officials make, on average, 59 cents for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.
- Latinas who are lawyers, judges, magistrates or another type of judicial worker make, on average, 67 cents for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.

#### **EDUCATION**

- Latinas with a **high school degree** are paid, on average, **54 cents** for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>18</sup>
- Latinas with **5 years or more of college** education make, on average, **58 cents** for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>19</sup>
- on average, Latinas with a **professional degree** make just **39 cents** for every dollar made by white males, with reported earnings of \$48,020 and \$123,300 respectively. <sup>20</sup>



#### **UNION DIFFERENCE**

Unions are critical in closing the pay gap and supporting economic security for all working people. The AFL-CIO highlights that women in unions earn **22% more than women in non unionized jobs**. <sup>21</sup> In addition to better pay, union contracts provide more protections against gender-based violence and harassment, including sexual harassment; work place health and safety agreements; other types of workplace discrimination and longer term financial stability through retirement. These protections significantly enhance the workplace conditions and economic security of working women, including Latinas. Data from 2021 shows that Latinas who are in unions make 40% more than those who are not union members. <sup>22</sup> Despite these advantages, existing federal law does not afford the legal right for all people to unionize, specifically domestic workers and farmworkers, as a result of intentional racist exclusion from legislation. <sup>23</sup>

#### SPOTLIGHT ON LEGISLATIVE WINS FOR THE EQUAL PAY MOVEMENT

- Federal | Passage of Pregnant Workers' Fairness Act
- ► State | Paid family and medical leave laws passed in at least 13 states, plus Washington D.C, and 18 states plus Washington, D.C. require employers to provide paid sick leave
- ► State | Pay transparency laws in California, Colorado, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington<sup>25</sup>
- Local | Local jurisdictions have also passed their own versions of pay transparency laws, including in New York, New Jersey and Ohio.<sup>26</sup>

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

Some states and localities provide **safe leave** for survivors of gender-based violence, including domestic and sexual violence.<sup>24</sup>

#### **MOVEMENT REFLECTIONS**

Justice for Migrant Women has captured oral histories from leaders in the equal pay movement with reflections on the background and the growth of the campaign over time. Here are some snapshots of these reflections of leaders across different areas of the work:

#### **ACTIVISM**

"I became aware of problems related to equal pay when I was around 19 years old because I worked in the fields very briefly one summer picking cucumbers. That was when I first understood that migrant women and children were being paid on their father's (or husband's) paychecks, that the women themselves weren't receiving their own paychecks. To me, this campaign began as more than highlighting the gap and the need to fix it. It draws connections between other issues — how the pay gap impacts gender based violence, housing, criminal justice, sexual harassment, and many other aspects of our lives."

MÓNICA RAMÍREZ | PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, JUSTICE FOR MIGRANT WOMEN

#### **ENTERTAINMENT**

"We are now more aware of how we are being treated, how we're being paid, where the disparities are, and where the issues lie. And, we're fighting back."

 $\textbf{LISA VIDAL} \mid \text{CO-FOUNDER, LATINAS ACTING UP (LAU)}$ 

#### **EQUAL PAY MOVEMENT**

"The narrative change, and how we talk about wage justice, is becoming more intersectional. This isn't just about a stat on what you make during the year. Are you more vulnerable to sexual harassment? Do you have occupational safety issues that impact your

ability to stay in the workplace and earn a living? We created a broader platform of issues that intersect with your salary. The intersection of these issues as they impact pay equity has been a vast, prominent change over the past 10 years."

**NOREEN FARRELL** | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, EQUAL RIGHTS ADVOCATES

#### **LABOR**

"These conversations (about equal pay) have been going on for hundreds of years. It's not a recent phenomena, but I will say that I think the framework of equal pay was a real platform to bring both women and workers together around something, no matter what sector they were in. They could be high-income, lawyers in big law or caregivers in the informal economy ..."

KATIE CORRIGAN | STRATEGIC ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT LIZ SHULER, AFL-CIO

#### **POLICY**

"In the Latina Equal Pay Day [campaign], there was a real focus on the voice of the individual woman, the work that she was doing and the experiences she was having."

**JOI CHANEY** | FOUNDER, J.O.I. STRATEGIES AND FORMER DIRECTOR OF EQUAL PAY TODAY

## Conclusion

What began a decade ago as an attempt to create a coordinated campaign activating people across movements — Latine, women's and worker movements — into a single day of action has grown into a global movement uniting hundreds of organizations, businesses, leaders of all backgrounds and in all fields, and millions of people, cementing Latina Equal Pay Day as a defining fight for economic justice in the United States and the rest of Latin America. This work was derived from, informed by and made possible because of the organizing and leadership of women workers, including Latinas, over more than a century dating back to the women trade unionists in the early 1900's who made "equal pay" part of their platform at the Second Biennial Convention of the National Women's Trade Union League of America.<sup>27</sup>

As was contextualized in Justice for Migrant Women's 2022 Changemakers Report:

"The impacts of a lack of economic security are far reaching and have an impact on the mental and physical health of Latinas. Concerns over feeding one's family, saving for retirement or a lack of generational wealth can contribute to mental health challenges. Physical safety is also not guaranteed without economic security, including in the workplace. The inability to be able to support oneself, particularly for immigrant women, can lead to added vulnerabilities and continuing to live and work in places where violence exists, including sexual violence." 28

These compounding factors underscore the urgency with which we must close the gap. Together, with our partners in the movement, we call for  $^{29}$ :

**Protection and further expansion of data about the pay gap**, including the wage and wealth gap facing transgender and nonbinary community members, Afro-Latinas, and Latinas in Puerto Rico and other noncontiguous locations, Latinas who identify as Indigenous and Latina, as well as Asian and Latina. There are also Latinas, some of whom are immigrants, whose earnings are not reported by their employer and, therefore, would not be included in any data set used to calculate the wage gap.

Strengthening, not weakening, of labor and civil rights enforcement agencies. The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Department of Labor were established for the protection of working people from all backgrounds and they must remain a reliable, trusted source of support for working people in the United States. Similarly, state agencies established to enforce state anti-discrimination and labor protections must continue to be fully funded to allow them to carry out their charge pursuant to existing state legislation.

**Passage of the Paycheck Fairness Act**, which would modernize and strengthen the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to better combat pay discrimination and close the wage gap, including by protecting workers from retaliation for discussing pay, banning the use of prior salary history, and codifying pay data collection.

**Employer Commitment to Pay Equity** by implementing best practices even outside of legislative progress. Examples include conducting internal pay audits, strong paid leave policies, and employee training to identify and aim to eliminate bias.<sup>30</sup>

## **EQUAL PAY**

# Glossary

**Distinction between pay versus wage** | People may be paid a particular "wage" per hour or their "pay" might be an hourly wage, plus tips, bonuses or other pay incentives. The wage is the set rate that a person is paid for their work, while pay encompasses all of the earnings made by a person for their particular job. Via wage rate, a person can get paid at a standard amount per hour for up to 40 hours per week for work, and a different rate for work over 40 hours per week.  $^{31}$ 

**Family and Medical Leave** | The Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) is a federal U.S. law that provides unpaid leave for an individual to take care of specific family and medical health needs. Employees must meet certain eligibility requirements to qualify for this leave.  $^{32}$  Some states have enacted legislation that implements paid family and medical leave programs.  $^{33}$ 

**Full Time Worker** | An individual 16 years of age or older who works at least 35 hours per week, regardless of how many weeks of the year. $^{34}$ 

**Occupational Segregation** | Workers may be kept in certain jobs either by accident or on purpose (for example low wage jobs), which prevents them from getting promoted to other jobs (jobs with higher wages, more responsibility, etc). This segregation may occur not only within a generation, it may occur across generations — hindering wealth accumulation.  $^{35}$ 

**Part Time Worker** | An individual 16 or older who works 1-35 hours per week, regardless of how many weeks.  $^{36}$ 

**Part Year Worker**  $\mid$  An individual 16 or older who works less than 50 weeks per year, regardless of how many hours during the week the individual works. <sup>37</sup>

 $\label{eq:payactof} \begin{tabular}{ll} \textbf{Pay Gap} | The Equal Pay Act of 1963 requires all employers to provide Equal Pay for Equal work — which means that everyone who is doing the same work, should get the same pay. In this report we keep track of that pay gap by comparing what the highest paid workers in the US get paid relative to others (in this case Latinas) — if the percent is less that 100% or the "rate" is less than 1.00 that means that Latinas are getting paid less than the highest paid workers.$ 

**Pay Transparency Laws** | Laws that require employers to disclose information about the salary range to employees and/or the public.  $^{3940}$ 

**Safe Leave** | Safe leave focuses on employers allowing workers to take leave seek safety and recover from domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. 41

**Year Round Worker**  $\mid$  An individual 16 years of age or older who works 50-52 weeks of the year, regardless of how many hours during the week the individual works. 42

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Latina Equal Pay Campaign is co-led by Justice for Migrant Women and the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement on behalf of Equal Pay Today, a project of Equal Rights Advocates, in partnership with hundreds of organizations. In addition to civil society organizations, businesses, governmental organizations, philanthropy and groups from varying industries and sectors, the campaign has been widely recognized thanks to the participation and support of millions of individuals across the United States.

This report was prepared by Mónica Ramírez and Catherine Hinshaw on behalf of Justice for Migrant Women. Justice for Migrant Women expresses our deepest gratitude to:

**Dr. Llewellyn Cornelius** for providing data calculations for this research, as well as for conducting the oral history interviews;

Valerie Downes for graphic design on this report, as well as other campaign assets;

**Funding and media partners** for supporting our work to close the pay gap;

**Union women** for paving the road that we follow and for continuing to fight to improve the conditions of all working people in the U.S. and around the world. This movement would not be a movement if it were not for all of the women, leaders, advocates, and organizations that have been uplifting this issue and pushing for change together;

And last, but certainly not least:

**TO THE MILLIONS OF WOMEN** working across industries and sectors for your vast contributions, your relentless efforts to improve conditions and your critical solidarity as we have built and grown this movement over the past decade. You have changed the way that working people, businesses, and government speak, think and act to address the pay gap experienced by Latinas and working people across demographic groups. Together, with our allies, we have made great strides and we will keep pushing to close this gap once and for all.



For more insights, visit justice4women.org/latina-equal-pay

## **Endnotes**

| 1        | www.pay-equity.org/info-history.html  |
|----------|---|
| 2        | U.S. Census Bureau: Equal Pay Day March 2022  |
| 3        | www.equalpay2day.org/   |
| 4        | Current Population Survey, 2024   |
| 5        | Current Population Survey, 2024   |
| 6        | Rural is defined as a Non MSA. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) Definition — The U.S. Census   |
| Ü        | Bureau references an MSA as an urbanized locality that has at least 50,000 inhabitants. The Office of Management and Budget notes that all counties that are not part of an MSA are considered rural.   |
| 7        | Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Matthew Sobek, Daniel Backman, Grace Cooper, Julia A. Rivera Drew, Stephanie Richards, Renae Rodgers, Jonathan Schroeder, and Kari C.w. Williams. Ipums usa: version 16.0 [2019-2023 5 Year dataset]. Minneapolis, mn: ipums, 2025. https://doi. Org/10.18128/D010.V16.0 |
| 8        | www.americanprogress.org/article/gender-wage-gap-among-rural-workers/   |
| 9        | American Community Survey 2019-2023   |
| 10       | www.cfr.org/backgrounder/central-americas-turbulent-northern-triangle   |
| 11       | https://supportkind.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/SGBV-and-Migration-Fact-Sheet.pdf  |
| 12<br>13 | Changemakers: Latinas Working to Close the Wage Gap, Justice for Migrant Women, 2022 Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Matthew Sobek, Daniel Backman, Grace Cooper, Julia A. Rivera Drew, Stephanie Richards, Renae Rodgers, Jonathan Schroeder, and Kari C.w. Williams. Ipums usa: version                |
|          | 16.0 [2019-2023 5 Year dataset]. Minneapolis, mn: ipums, 2025. https://doi.0rg/10.18128/D010.V16.0  |
| 14       | lbid.   |
| 15       | lbid.   |
| 16       | lbid.   |
| 17       | Ibid.   |
| 18       | lbid.   |
| 19       | Ibid.   |
| 20       | Current Population Survey 2023, Appendix A  |
| 21       | https://aflcio.org/press/releases/afl-cio-president-liz-shuler-equal-pay-day  |
| 22       | https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Union-Factsheet-9.8.21.pdf  |
| 23       | https://nfwm.org/farm-workers/farm-worker-issues/labor-laws/  |
| 24       | www.americanprogress.org/article/the-state-of-safe-leave/   |
| 25       | https://womenemployed.org/salary-transparency/  |
| 26       | www.adp.com/resources/pay-transparency.aspx   |
| 27       | National Women's Trade Union. "Second Biennial Convention of the National Women's Trade   |
| 21       | Union League of America." Feminist Manifestos: A Global Documentary Reader. Edited by   |
|          | Penny A. Weiss with Megan Brueske. New York University Press, 2018, p. 131  |
| 28<br>29 | Changemakers: Latinas Working to Close the Wage Gap, Justice for Migrant Women, 2022 www.equalpay2day.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/EqualPayTodayPolicyA-  |
|          | genda2025-2026-1.pdf  |
| 30       | https://women.ca.gov/californiapayequity/employers-resources/what-can-i-do-to-promote-a-culture-of-pay-equity/  |
| 31       | See U.S. Department Of Labor — \ Fact Sheet #56A: Overview of the Regular Rate of Pay Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/56a-regular-rate   |
| 32       | www.congress.gov/crs-product/R44835# Toc195176463   |
| 33       | See U.S. Department of Labor Family and Medical Leave Act — www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla   |
| 34       | www.census.gov/topics/employment/labor-force/about/faq.html#par_textimage_735773790   |
| 35       | See for example reports from the Urban Institute on this issue — www.urban.org/tags/occupa  |
| 33       | tional-segregation  |
| 7.0      | 5 5   |
| 36       | www.bls.gov/ooh/about/glossary.htm#top  |
| 37       | www.census.gov/topics/employment/labor-force/about/faq.html#par_textimage_735773790   |
| 38       | See U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Equal Pay Act of 1963 www.eeoc.gov/statutes/equal-pay-act-1963   |
| 39       | See U.S. Department of Labor — Equal Pay and Pay Transparency and Map: Equal Pay and Pa   |
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| 40       | https://publications.lawschool.cornell.edu/jlpp/2024/11/07/pay-transparency-laws-the-good-the-bad-and-the-uql/  |

For more insights, visit justice4women.org/latina-equal-pay

See US Office of Personnel Management — Fact Sheet: Time Off for Safe Leave Purposes www.

opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/leave-administration/fact-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-leave/leave-administration/fact-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-for-safe-pay-sheets/time-off-f

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