

## Northwestern Law Professor Alleges Age Discrimination in Salary Dispute



A longstanding Northwestern law professor, Philip Postlewaite, has recently filed a lawsuit against the university, accusing them of age discrimination in salary disparities. The legal action was initiated in a Chicago federal court on Tuesday, shedding light on Postlewaite's claim that his salary is notably lower than that of his faculty colleagues with considerably less teaching experience.

### Background

Philip Postlewaite, 78, commenced teaching tax law at Northwestern University Pritzker School of Law in 1981. Notably, he played a pivotal role in establishing the Tax LL.M. program in 2002, of which he currently serves as the director, as outlined in his complaint.

### Allegations and Salary Disparities

Postlewaite contends that since rejecting a buyout offer in 2013, he has consistently received "substantially" lower increases to his base pay compared to colleagues with fewer years of teaching experience. In his complaint, he states that his base salary for the current year falls \$7,000 below the law school's median of \$289,224 and a significant \$55,000 below the top 25% of salaries, which is \$337,256. These figures were reportedly obtained from Northwestern University.

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### Experience Disparity

The assertion that faculty members earning higher salaries have considerably fewer years of teaching experience than Postlewaite adds a unique dimension to this case. With 49 years of teaching law, 42 of which have been at Northwestern, he argues that his extensive experience has not been adequately reflected in his compensation.

### University Response and Silence

In response to the legal proceedings, a Northwestern University spokesperson has conveyed that the university refrains from commenting on pending litigation. Postlewaite has not provided immediate comments in response to requests for his perspective on the matter.

### Legal Action and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) Complaint

Before filing the lawsuit, Postlewaite submitted a complaint to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Illinois Department of Human Rights in February. The EEOC complaint alleges that Postlewaite raised his concerns about salary discrepancies with law dean Hari Osofsky in March 2022. However, the complaint notes that Osofsky "did not see a basis for adjustment" to Postlewaite's salary after a review.

In his EEOC complaint, Postlewaite expressed his belief that the law school tends to allocate resources towards recruiting and retaining younger professors, rather than compensating long-term, older faculty members who remain productive and dedicated.

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This legal action highlights ongoing challenges and discussions surrounding age discrimination within academic institutions and the efforts to address salary disparities based on experience.

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