Wisconsin ·

WOMENSCOUNCIL.WI.GOV

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WISCONSIN'S GENDER WAGE GAP NARROWS BUT STILL LEAVES WISCONSIN WOMEN BEHIND THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

Women of color are disproportionally affected, earning up to 40 cents less for every dollar earned by men.

Madison, WI (March 24, 2021) – National Pay Equity Day signifies the point into the current year that a woman, working full-time, year-round, must continue to work to earn what a man made in the previous year. Even greater disparities exist for women of color who must work longer into the year to catch up with men. This year, **National Pay Equity Day is Wednesday, March 24, 2021.**

82 cents • Nationally, women working full-time, year-round, earn 82 cents, on average, for every dollar earned by men, on average. However, once this gap is broken down by race and gender, greater disparities appear, where white women earn 90 cents, Black women earn 71 cents, Native women earn 69 cents, and Latinas earn 61 cents for every dollar earned by men, on average, while Asian American and Pacific Islander women experience near parity at the national level. Notably, wage gap disparities are also found between women of different racial and ethnic groups. Nationally, for example, there is a within-gender gap of nearly 30 cents for every dollar earned by white women (90 cents) versus Latinas (61 cents).*

81 cents • Wisconsin women working full-time, year-round, earn 81 cents, on average, for every dollar earned by men, on average. Breaking the data down by racial and ethnic group, white women earn 85 cent, Asian American and Pacific Islander women earn 80 cents, Black women earn 66 cents, Native women earn 68 cents, and Latinas earn 65 cents, for every dollar earned by men, on average. The even wider gaps and greater disparities that exist for women of color means they who must work even longer into the year to catch up with men.

"It is important to recognize that women of color, who experience a wage gap that exists at the intersection of multiple demographic factors, have long been disproportionately affected; and ... to recognize that workers may experience pay disparities based on sexual orientation or gender identity—which, in many cases, are not adequately protected by anti-discrimination laws— and transgender women are particularly impacted." Gov. Evers' Equal Pay Day Proclamation

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In 2019, Wisconsin women made up 48 percent of the state's labor force. Nevertheless, pay equity in the workplace continues to elude today's women in both Wisconsin and the nation.

"Until the pandemic hit, we had record numbers of Wisconsin women in the workplace, more than almost all other states. In many homes, they are the breadwinners. It's time to recognize these facts and give women the respect and salaries they earned." State Representative Christine Sinicki

WOMEN'S WORK CONCENTRATED IN LOWER WAGE JOBS

The past decade has seen research and articles on "the new breadwinners", featuring the growing role of women's earnings in family budgets. However, families relying largely or solely on women's earnings tend to face greater economic hardship, and too many women continue to struggle in low wage jobs.

"Women's presence alone in the labor market does not even the wage scales," said Christine Lidbury, Executive Director, Women's Council. "There is little to celebrate until we close the long-standing gap in women's earning power for all Wisconsin women."

Women's work is concentrated in lower-paid occupations in retail, services, education, non-profits, and healthcare (such as nursing and home-health aides). They disproportionately work in occupations that lack employer benefits such as health insurance and sick leave. More women than men work in jobs earning minimum wage, leaving them and their families below the poverty-level.

In Wisconsin, a woman working full-time, year-round, would earn about \$42,400 per year, on average, compared to more than \$52,400 per year for men—a difference of over \$10,000 in earnings annually.* It remains unknown what effect the pandemic and disproportionate job losses by women will have on the wage gap and labor force participation in the years to come.

GENDER WAGE GAP REMAINS PERSISTENT AND SUBSTANTIAL

For the past decade, Wisconsin's gender wage gap has closely tracked the national gap. For the years 2010 to 2014, Wisconsin caught up and even performed better (smaller wage gap) than the US as a whole. In 2015, however, Wisconsin's gender wage gap widened, falling behind the national gap, where it remains. Nonetheless, Wisconsin's long-term trend follows the US picture of steady, if slow, progress.

