

Wisconsin's Gender Wage Gap by Race & Ethnicity

Full-time, Year-round Workers

Women earned

80¢

for every \$1.00 earned by men

In 2017 (the most recent year for which U.S. Census Bureau data are available), **women in Wisconsin working full-time, year-round, earned 80 cents for every dollar earned by men**,¹ compared to 78 cents in 2016 and 81 cents for women nationally. The gap, while significant, is smaller than in 2009 when women earned 75 cents for every dollar.

Wisconsin ranks 3rd highest in the nation for the share of women in the labor force—66% of adult women work—behind only Minnesota and the District of Columbia.² Women make up

nearly half of Wisconsin's workforce. In 2017, Wisconsin women working full-time, year-round had median annual earnings of \$41,000 compared to \$51,400 for men—**over \$10,000 less per year** (on average).

Women belonging to minority groups

65¢

for every \$1.00 earned by men

Looking at the wage gap for individual racial and ethnic groups shows a different picture. Women belonging to all minority racial and ethnic groups, working full-time, year-round, earn much less than men—and white women. Wage gaps range from \$0.56 cents for Hispanic women earnings to \$0.73 cents for Asian American women, and 81 cents for white women, compared to every \$1.00 earned by a man.

The statewide average of 80 cents for *all Wisconsin women* is skewed toward the state's majority population and, as a result, overshadows the even large wage gaps experienced for women in other groups.

Women face substantial economic barriers to equality. Nearly one-third of all households in Wisconsin are headed by a woman and, nationally, more than half of American women are the primary breadwinners in their households.³ The gender wage gap suggests that families that increasingly rely on women's earnings will have lower incomes. Women's employment and their contributions to family budgets are important economic issues affecting our state and the long-term prosperity of all our families and communities.

Gender Wage Gap and Women's Median Wage by race & ethnicity for full-time, year-round workers

Wisconsin, 2013-2017 (5-Year Average)

	Women's earnings for every \$1.00 earned by men (gap in earnings)	Median Annual Wage	
		Women	Men
White (not Hispanic)	\$ 0.81 (19¢)	\$ 41,000	\$ 52,000
Asian American	\$ 0.72 (28¢)	\$ 36,600	\$ 50,100
Native American	\$ 0.66 (34¢)	\$ 33,400	\$ 39,800
Black/African American	\$ 0.62 (38¢)	\$ 31,300	\$ 35,300
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	\$ 0.56 (44¢)	\$ 28,400	\$ 31,700

*Gender wage gaps for these populations should be thought of as a range, due to higher margins of error (see Footnotes): African American, 61 to 63 cents; Native American, 63 to 69 cents; Asian American, 71 to 74 cents; and Hispanic or Latino (any race), 54 to 58 cents. Source: Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, B20017 (series by race/ethnicity); median earnings in the past 12 months (in 2017 inflation-adjusted dollars) by sex by work experience in the past 12 months for the population 16 years and over with earnings in the past 12 months.

About the Women's Council

Wisconsin Women's Council promotes initiatives to empower women, conducts research on the status of women, and engages in unique partnerships to address barriers and inequalities affecting Wisconsin women. The Council is comprised of 15 members appointed by the Governor and Legislative leaders.

Mary Jo Baas, Chair

Christine Lidbury Executive Director
 Tayler Palkowski Research Assistant



Women earned

68¢

for every \$1.00 earned by men

Women belonging to minority groups averaged

54¢

for every \$1.00 earned by men

The **gender wage gap widens when looking at all workers** with earnings—including part-time and seasonal workers. This is because, in part, women are more likely than men to work less than full-time, year-round. In 2017, about 45% of all women in the labor force (with earnings) fell into this category, compared to about 30% of men. This share is generally consistent across racial and ethnic groups, ranging from 45% for white (not Hispanic) and Native American women, to 48% for African American and Hispanic women.

Where Women Work & the Wage Gap

Office & Administrative Support, with median annual earnings of \$36,500 (full-time workers),⁴ is **the most common occupation for Wisconsin women**, employing about 280,000 (1 out of 5) women in the workforce. It is also the **most common occupational category for women across racial and ethnic groups**. See table.

The roots of the varied wage gaps between racial and ethnic minority groups can be found in the top occupations occupied by

women. Regardless of racial or ethnic group, the majority of women cluster in only a few occupational categories. In fact, over 40% of all women in the labor force typically can be grouped into three occupational categories. It is the occupational mix that varies by racial and ethnic group. See table.

For example, Food Preparation and Serving occupations (such as, cooks, food preparers, waiters/waitresses and other food and beverage servers) and Personal Care workers (including child care) have the lowest median wages for full-time workers, among the 24 occupations reported by the Census Bureau.⁵ Both fall in the #2 or #3 position as a most common occupation for African American, Native American and Hispanic women. For men, there is a similar clustering by race and ethnicity into a narrow group of job categories. The most common occupations for men in Wisconsin include manufacturing, management, sales and construction (comparatively higher wage fields).

Addressing occupational segregation and the reasons women choose, or end up in, specific categories of occupations is an important step toward addressing the gender wage gap.⁶



Where Wisconsin Women Work, 2017 -- Top 3 Occupations
Regardless of Racial/Ethnic Group, Three Occupations Account for about 40% of All Female Workers, with median salary and gender wage gap

Occupation	White (not Hispanic)	Black or African	Native American	Asian American	Hispanic or Latino (any race)
Office and Administrative support	#1	#1	#1	#1	#1
Production				#2	#2
Personal Care & Service		#2			
Sales & related	#2				
Food Preparation & Serving			#2		#3
Education, training & library	#3				
Health Care Support		#3			
Health Diagnosing & Treating Practitioners				#3	
Management			#3		

FOOTNOTES

NOTE: Data are drawn from the US Census Bureau's American FactFinder. These data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. Caution should be used in interpreting the data. The degree of uncertainty for an estimate arising from sampling variability is represented by a *margin of error*. The value shown here is the 90 percent margin of error. The margin of error can be interpreted roughly as providing a 90 percent probability that the interval defined by the estimate minus the margin of error and the estimate plus the margin of error contains the true value.

¹US Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, S2412: Occupation by sex and median earnings in the past 12 months (in 2017 inflation-adjusted dollars) for the full-time, year-round civilian employed population 16 years and over; ²Women's Council unpublished calculations based on 2018 Current Population Survey, Adult Civilian Persons; ³Stych, Anne, "More than half of women are primary breadwinners," BIZWOMEN, The Business Journals, 12/17/18 (<https://www.bizjournals.com/bizwomen/news/latest-news/2018/12/more-than-half-of-women-worry-about-financial.html?page=all>); ⁴US Census Bureau: 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, S2412: Occupation by sex and median earnings in the past 12 months (in 2017 inflation-adjusted dollars) for the full-time, year-round civilian employed population 16 years and over. (see also footnote 5); ⁵US Census Bureau's public database provides state-level data on "sex by occupation and median income" only for full-time, year-round workers and only for the aggregate "all women." Data are not available disaggregated by racial/ethnic group. ⁶For more information, see Institute for Women's Policy Research, "The Gender Wage Gap by Occupation 2018," <https://iwpr.org/publications/gender-wage-gap-occupation-2018/>

U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, B24010 (series by race and ethnicity): Occupation by sex for the civilian employed population 16 years and over.