

# Women in the WI Judiciary, 2017

Wisconsin Women's Council  
January 2017



## Did you know ...

Wisconsin has had a female Chief Justice since 1996.

Of the 348 sitting justices across the nation, 125, or 35.9% are females, compared to 71.4% in Wisconsin; 11 state courts of last resort have female majorities; and 21 states have a female Chief Justice.

# 21%

The percentage of women in the WI judiciary\*\* grew from 15% in 2005 to 21% in 2017. Most of this growth is due to the increase in the number of women serving on the Circuit Court. While the higher courts have greater gender diversity, they have a comparatively small number of seats.

# 71% Supreme Court

The Supreme Court is the state's highest court. It is composed of seven justices, five of whom are females—up from three in 2005.

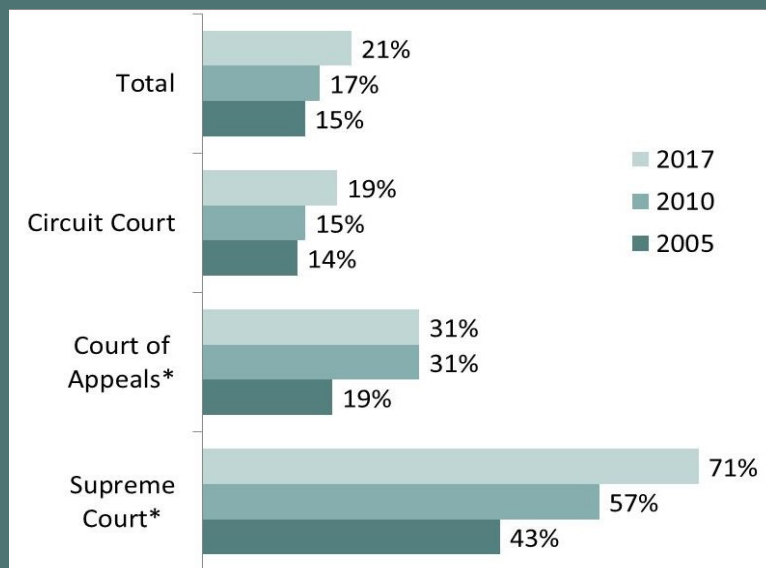
# 31% Court of Appeals

The Court of Appeals is composed of 16 judges from four districts, five of whom are females—up from three.

# 19% Circuit Court

The number of female judges in the Circuit Court grew from 33 in 2005 to 49 in 2017. Of all Circuit Court judges statewide, women hold 1-in-5 seats.

## Women as a Percent of the WI Judiciary, 2005-2017 WI Circuit, Appellate, and Supreme Courts



## Women in Judicial Leadership Positions, by level, 2017

**Supreme Court**  
Chief Justice — 1 of 1 positions

**Court of Appeals**  
Chief/Presiding Judge — 4 of 5

**Circuit Court**  
Chief Judge — 1 of 11

\* With a small number of seats, a small change in the gender balance will appear as a large percent change.

\*\* For purposes of this factsheet, data include the WI Circuit Court, Court of Appeals and Supreme Court.

Since 2005, the Women's Council has tracked and published statistics, factsheets and reports on women in state and local elected offices in Wisconsin.

## RELATED PUBLICATIONS

### Moving Wisconsin Forward, 2015

An analysis of women in elected office in Wisconsin's state and local governments with updated statistics and 10-years trends.

### Wisconsin Women's Political Firsts Timeline, 2015

Timeline of women in elected office in Wisconsin state government, including the first women elected to the Legislature (1925), first female Lieutenant Governor (2001), and first Latina elected to the Legislature (2011). Printed copies available by request (while supplies last).

### Moving Wisconsin Forward, 2010

An analysis of Wisconsin Women in Elected Office, with updated statistics.

### Wisconsin, Women and Elected Office, 2005

Wisconsin's first statewide benchmark report on women holding elected office in state and local government, including elected seats in Wisconsin's counties, cities, towns, villages and school districts.

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National statistics: National Center for State Courts (unpublished data, received 1/10/11). We thank the Wisconsin Office of State Courts for assistance and support in compiling data on women in the judiciary in Wisconsin.

Note on the data: The full report, *Moving Wisconsin Forward, 2015*, includes statistics on judges in the Wisconsin Municipal Courts, for the years 2010 and 2015.

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## About Us

The Wisconsin Women's Council is the state's statutory commission on the status of women and girls. Founded in 1983, the 15-member Women's Council is appointed by the Offices of the Governor, Senate President, Senate Majority Leader and Assembly Speaker.

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