Women in Elected Office | Wisconsin 2021

STATE & TRIBAL

2021 was a Record-Setting Year for Women in the Wisconsin State Legislature.

Women hold 41 of the 132 seats (31%), up from 36 seats (27%) in 2019. Seats held in 2021 breaks a 30-year stretch when the percentage of seats held by women hovered around 25%, with highest being 29% decades ago, in 1993 and 2003.

Nationally

Wisconsin caught up with the nation. Women make up 30.6% of all state legislators nationwide, versus 31.1% in WI.

Timeline of Firsts for Women in the WI State Legislature

- 1921 Wisconsin Equal Rights Act affirms women’s right to hold public office.
- 1925 Elected to the Assembly
  Mildred Barber
  Helen Brooks
  Helen Thompson
  fast forward 50 years
- 1975 Elected to the Senate
  Kathryn Morrison
- 1977 African American Woman
  Marcia Coggs
  fast forward another 25 years
- 2003 Senate Majority Leader
  Mary Panzer
- 2011 Latina Woman
  JoCasta Zamarippa
- 2014 Assembly Majority Leader
  Pat Strachota
- 2015 Senate President
  Mary Lazich
- 2020 Asian American Woman
  Francesca Hong

There has never been a Native American woman serving in the WI Legislature.

Wisconsin’s Tribal Councils & Legislatures

Wisconsin is home to 11 federally recognized Native Nations. Each Nation is led by a Tribal Council or Legislature.

In 2021, women hold 32 (36%) of seats, down from 38 (42%) in 2015, and continue to outpace representation by women in the state legislature (31%).

One woman currently serves as Tribal chair or president, Shannon Halsey, President, Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians; four serve as a Vice Chair/President.

More factsheets in this series are available at:
https://womenscouncil.wi.gov/publications
What women need to know about running for office at:
https://localgovernment.extension. wisc.edu/elections/
Wisconsin Women in Public Life Report
https://www.alverno.edu/Research
WHO REPRESENTS YOU?

Visit the official websites of state and local governments in your area to find your elected officials.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank the following organizations for their ongoing assistance and support with compiling data on women in local elected office:

Wisconsin Association of School Boards; Wisconsin Clerks of Circuit Courts Association; Wisconsin Counties Association; Wisconsin County Clerks Association; Wisconsin County Treasurers Association; Wisconsin League of Municipalities; Wisconsin Register of Deeds Association; Wisconsin Sheriffs & Deputy Sheriffs Association; and Wisconsin Towns Association.

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