Women in Elected Office | Wisconsin 2021

VILLAGE BOARDS

2021 was a Year of Record Growth* for Women Serving on Village Boards. Women hold 27% of seats (+130) in 2021, up from 22% in 2015.


Number and Percentage of Women Village Board Trustees, by Year

| Village Boards (Trustees & Presidents) | 2021 | 672 women | 27% |
| Village Boards Presidents | 2015 | 72 | 17% |
| 2015 | 46 | 11% |
| 2010 | 44 | 11% |
| 2005 | 38 | 9% |

Wisconsin Villages with three or more women Trustees.

| 93 (22%) |

One woman on a board is a token, two is a presence, three is a voice.¹

Statewide, the number of seats on a Village Board ranges from 3 to 9. Overall, the median number is 7; the median number of seats held by women is 1.

HERSTORY: Wisconsin’s First Women Village Trustees

Amherst • Cora Turner
Camp Douglas • Lillian Eberhart
Camp Douglas • Inez Singleton
Curtiss • Lucie Peterman
Eagle • Miss Frances Fitzmorris
Eagle River • Ruby Radcliffe
Oakfield • Ruby Edwards
Pound • Nellie Dwyer
Trempealeau • Mary Moore
Weyauwega • Mrs. Geo. Haire
Wyocena • Mrs. S.C. Cushman
Turtle Lake • Mrs. R. Prosser

The 1921 Wisconsin Equal Rights Act affirmed women’s new right to hold any public office. In 1924, the UW Extension Municipal Information Bureau surveyed municipalities, identifying over 400 women in elected and appointed office—including 312 female Village Trustees.²

17% of Villages have a Woman President

72 (17%) of Wisconsin’s Village Presidents are women, up from 46 (11%) in 2015. In 2019, the Village of Brown Deer elected Wisconsin’s first, and to-date only, black female Village President.

58 Villages have Gender Parity

Villages where women account for half or more of the Trustees more than doubled from 2015—58 Villages compared to 24 in 2015. Two Villages—Rockdale and Wilson—have all-female Boards.

84 Villages have No Women Trustees

84 Wisconsin Villages (20%) have no women Trustees, down from 100 (25%) in 2015.

Nationally

Women hold 30.5% of municipal offices (city and village combined).³

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
FOOTNOTES

DATA DISCLAIMER
https://womenscouncil.wi.gov/Pages/Disclaimer.aspx

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

The Wisconsin Women’s Council is the state’s statutory commission on the status of women and girls. Founded in 1983, the 15-member Board is appointed by the Governor and legislative leadership.

Since 2005, the Women’s Council has tracked and published statistics on women elected officials in state and local government in Wisconsin.

Patty Cadorin  Christine Lidbury
Chair  Executive Director
womenscouncil@wi.gov
www.womenscouncil.wi.gov
Facebook & Twitter @WIWomen

For over 20 years UW-Extension’s Local Government Education has been helping local government officials build their capacity to govern. We teach, learn, lead and serve, connecting local governments with the University of Wisconsin, and engaging with them in transforming lives and communities.

Daniel Foth
Interim Program Manager
lgc@uwex.edu
localgovernment.extension.wisc.edu
Facebook @uwexlgc

Founded in 1970, the Research Center for Women and Girls (RCWG) generates and applies research, develops curricula, prepares evaluation tools, facilitates programming and conversations, and conducts outreach for the purpose of supporting and inspiring community initiatives to improve the lives of women and girls locally and nationally.

Lindsey Harness, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Research.Center@alverno.edu
www.alverno.edu/Research
Facebook & Instagram: @AlvernoRCWG

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.

Madelyn Adler, Research Assistant