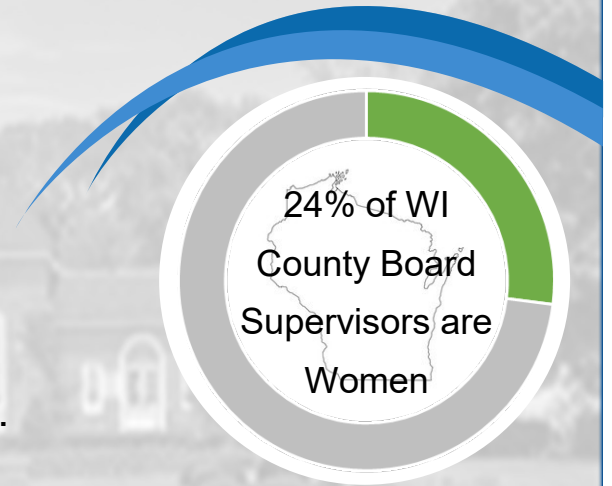


# Women in Elected Office | Wisconsin 2021

## COUNTIES

2021 was a Year of Record Growth\* for Women Serving on County Boards. Women hold 24% of seats (+89) in 2021, up from 19% in 2015, the first increase since 2005.

\*Based on reports issued in 2005, 2010, 2015.



### Making History

For the first time, 4 of Wisconsin's 72 County Sheriffs are women. They are:

Tracy Finch (2018)  
Burnett County

Tammy Sternard (2018)  
Door County

Rebecca Smith (2018)  
Menominee County

Nancy Hove (2006)  
Pierce County

*Less than 2% of America's Sheriffs are women ... Currently, less than 60 women sheriffs are serving across the country. (National Sheriff's Association)*

### Number and Percentage of Women County Board Supervisors, by Year

2021	388 women / 1600 total	24%
2015	299 / 1600	19%
2010	308 / 1680	18%
2005	336 / 1799	19%

### Percentage of Women in Wisconsin's Six Elected County Constitutional Offices by Year

	2021	2015	2010	2005
<b>Historically Female Dominated Offices</b>				
Clerk of Courts	93%	94%	90%	89%
County Clerk	82%	75%	76%	74%
County Treasurers	83%	84%	83%	82%
Register of Deeds	82%	82%	79%	74%
<b>Historically Male Dominated Offices</b>				
District Attorney	26%	11%	11%	14%
Sheriff	6%	1%	1%	3%
<b>11 Counties have an elected County Executive</b>				
<b>Percentage of Women Executives by Year</b>				
County Executive	0%	9%	18%	18%

### 9 Counties

#### have a Woman Chair

Women hold 9 of 72 County Board Chair seats (12.5%), including Milwaukee County, down from 11 in 2015.

### 3 Counties

#### have Gender Parity

Women account for half or more County Supervisors in Dane, Eau Claire, and Menominee Counties, compared to one in 2010 and none in 2015.

### 1 County has

#### No Women Supervisors

Oneida County has no women serving on the County Board; while in 2010 and 2015 every county had at least one female Supervisor.

### 19 Women DAs

While District Attorneys (DA) are still predominantly men, the number of women DAs has more than doubled since 2010.

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>



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## Wisconsin's First Female Sheriff



In 1924, **Hanna C. Saunders**, Burnett County, was elected Wisconsin's first female Sheriff.

Mrs. Saunders replaced the outgoing sheriff, her husband Charles. "Her election assured that someone from her family would continue in the sheriff's position despite limits on successive terms. Her run was based on a common division of labor in sheriff's offices, where wives assisted their husbands with the non-policing aspects of the position."

Source: Dorothy Moses Schultz and Steven M. Houghton, "Married to the Job: Women Sheriffs in Wisconsin," Wisconsin Magazine of History, Vol. 86, No. 3, pg. 23, Spring 2003.

# Who Represents You?

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



Women's Council  
· Wisconsin ·

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 Cadarin    Christine Lidbury  
Chair            Executive Director

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Local  
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women in government

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.

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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.

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Madelyn Adler, Research Assistant

### DATA DISCLAIMER

<https://womenscouncil.wi.gov/Pages/Disclaimer.aspx>

*Statements of fact and opinion are made on the responsibility of the authors alone and do not necessarily represent the views of other listed organizations. No endorsement by such organizations is given or implied.*

Questions? Contact the Women's Council at [womenscouncil@wisconsin.gov](mailto:womenscouncil@wisconsin.gov).