

WISCONSIN'S GENDER WAGE GAP



Wisconsin Women Earn 77.8 cents for Every Dollar a Man Makes

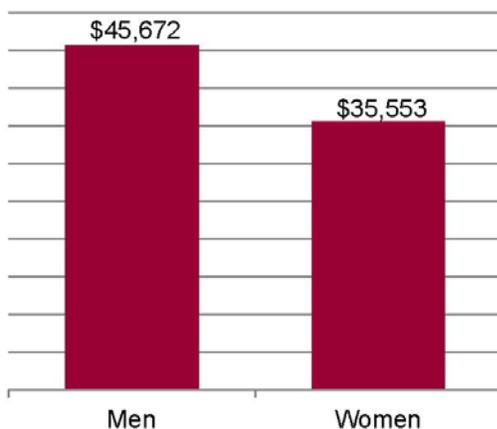
Wisconsin's persistent gender wage gap is evident irrespective of age, race, level of education, or occupation. In 2010 (the most recent year for which U.S. Census Bureau data are available), women in Wisconsin working full-time, year-round, earned 77.8 cents on the dollar compared to men. The Wisconsin gap, while significant, is slightly smaller than in 2009 when women earned just 75 cents for each dollar earned by men. Nationally, the Institute for Women's Policy Research has reported that the small narrowing of the wage gap is mostly due to falling wages for men.¹

While women increasingly serve as family breadwinners and co-breadwinners, pay equity continues to elude—irrespective of age, race, level of education, or occupation.

The persistence of the wage gap is distressing, especially given the increasing importance of women's earnings to family income. Nearly 4 in 10 mothers are primary breadwinners—meaning that they bring home the majority of a family's income. Of the remaining working mothers, nearly two-thirds bring home at least a quarter of family earnings. Moreover, women are increasingly likely to head families on their own.²

In Wisconsin, nearly one-third of all households are headed by women. Women in Wisconsin working full-time, year-round earn about \$10,000 less annually, on average, than their male counterparts. The gender gap widens considerably for women from racial and ethnic minority groups.

Wisconsin's Gender Wage Gap:
Median Annual Earnings, Full-Time/Year-Round
Civilian Workers, 16 years and older, 2010



US Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey (ACS), Table B24022. 2010 is the most recent year for which data are available

The gap persists, in part, because women are concentrated in lower paying jobs. Indeed, addressing and better understanding the reasons behind occupational segregation are important factors in addressing the gender wage gap. But it is also true, and more distressing, that women earn less than men even in the same occupational categories. In Wisconsin, women earn less in each of the 24 occupations reported by the Census bureau for full-time, year-round civilian workers (see table). For example, these occupational gender wage gaps range from 46 cents on the dollar compared to men in the legal and healthcare diagnosing/treating occupations, to 92 cents on the dollar in architecture and engineering occupations.

Nationally, it is reported that women have lower median earnings than men in nearly all occupations. This is true "whether they work in occupations predominantly done by women, occupations predominantly done by men, or occupations with a more even mix of men and women."³

Past reports from the Wisconsin Women's Council and the Center on Wisconsin Strategy have shown that regardless of age or education, women earn less. For example, women with a high school diploma earned 75 cents on the dollar compared to men with the same education. This improved to 80 cents on the dollar for women with a Bachelor's degree and to 89 cents on the dollar for women with more than a four-year degree, compared to similarly educated men.⁴ Moreover, we found that the gender wage gap is not a thing of the past. Younger women (ages 25–35) also face a gender wage gap—earning less, on average, compared to their male counterparts.⁵

In the nearly half century since Congress passed the Equal Pay Act of 1963, women have made enormous strides in educational achievement, access to the workforce, and success in occupational fields once the domain of men. Nonetheless, pay equity continues to elude Wisconsin's women regardless of age, race, level of education, or occupation.

Notes: ¹Hegewisch, Arianne, Claudia Williams, and Amber Henderson, *The Gender Wage Gap: 2011*, Institute for Women's Policy Research, March 2012 (www.iwpr.org). ²The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything, *The New Breadwinners, A Study* by Maria Shriver and the Center for American Progress, 2009 (www.theshriverreport.com). ³The Gender Wage Gap by Occupation, Institute for Women's Policy Research, April 2012 (www.iwpr.org). ⁴Women, Poverty, and Economic Insecurity in Wisconsin and the Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis MSA, IWPR with the Wisconsin Women's Council, April 2011, Table 5 (2010 data not yet available from the U.S. Census Bureau). ⁵Mind the Gap! Women, Wages and the Pay Gap in Wisconsin, Center on Wisconsin Strategy and the Wisconsin Women's Council (2008).

Center on Wisconsin Strategy

The Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) is a policy center & field laboratory for high road economic development—a competitive market economy with shared prosperity, environmental sustainability, and capable democratic government. Housed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, COWS has been supporting progressive policy innovation since 1991. For more information, see: www.cows.org.

Wisconsin Women's Council,

The Wisconsin Women's Council is the state's statutory commission on the social and economic status of women and girls in Wisconsin. For more information, see: www.womenscouncil.wi.gov.

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Women in the Workforce and the Gender Wage Gap by Occupation, Wisconsin, 2010 (full-time, year-round civilian workers)

| | Percent of workers in each occupation that are women | Cents on the dollar earned by women compared to men |
|--|--|---|
| Management, business, & financial occupations: | | |
| ◇ Management | 36.4% | \$ 0.73 |
| ◇ Business & financial operations* | 56.0% | \$ 0.71 |
| Computer, engineering, & science occupations: | | |
| ◇ Computer & mathematical | 31.0% | \$ 0.85 |
| ◇ Architecture & engineering | 14.9% | \$ 0.92 |
| ◇ Life, physical, & social science | 45.1% | \$ 0.78 |
| Education, legal, community service, arts, & media occupations: | | |
| ◇ Community & social service* | 63.5% | \$ 0.93 |
| ◇ Legal | 47.8% | \$ 0.46 |
| ◇ Education, training, & library* | 70.4% | \$ 0.80 |
| ◇ Arts, design, entertainment, sports, & media | 43.8% | \$ 0.78 |
| Healthcare practitioners & technical occupations: | | |
| ◇ Health diagnosing & treating practitioners & other technical* | 71.0% | \$ 0.46 |
| ◇ Health technologists & technicians* | 77.0% | \$ 0.88 |
| Service occupations: | | |
| ◇ Healthcare support* | 90.4% | \$ 0.87 |
| ◇ Protective service | 20.2% | \$ 0.92 |
| ◇ Food preparation & serving related* | 56.0% | \$ 0.98 |
| ◇ Building & grounds cleaning & maintenance | 31.8% | \$ 0.71 |
| ◇ Personal care & service* | 80.3% | \$ 0.80 |
| Sales & office occupations: | | |
| ◇ Sales & related | 38.9% | \$ 0.65 |
| ◇ Office & administrative support | 75.1% | \$ 0.87 |
| Natural resources, construction, & maintenance occupations: | | |
| ◇ Farming, fishing, & forestry | 14.1% | \$ 0.83 |
| ◇ Construction & extraction | 2.7% | \$ 0.98 |
| ◇ Installation, maintenance & repair | 2.9% | \$ 0.94 |
| Production, transportation, & material moving occupations: | | |
| ◇ Production | 26.7% | \$ 0.74 |
| ◇ Transportation | 8.0% | \$ 0.78 |
| ◇ Material moving | 23.1% | \$ 0.83 |

*Occupational categories where women make up half or more of all workers. Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 American Community Survey (ACS), Table C24020: Sex by occupation for the full-time, year-round civilian employed population 16 years & over.