

Washington Women and the Wage Gap

APRIL 2014

In Washington, a woman who holds a full-time job is paid, on average, \$41,062 per year while a man who holds a full-time job is paid \$52,529 per year. **This means that women in Washington are paid 78 cents for every dollar paid to men, amounting to a yearly wage gap of \$11,467 between men and women who work full time in the state.**¹

Nationally, women who hold jobs full time, year round are paid, on average, just 77 cents for every dollar paid to men.² For women of color, the wage gap is larger. On average, African American women are paid 64 cents and Latinas are paid just 54 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.³

What Does the Wage Gap Mean for Washington Women?

On average, Washington women who are employed full time lose a combined total of approximately \$10,191,456,788 every year due to the wage gap.⁴ Families, businesses and the economy suffer as a result. These lost wages mean families have less money to spend on goods and services that help drive economic growth.

For example, if the wage gap were eliminated, on average, a working woman in Washington would have enough money for approximately:

- ▶ 82 more weeks of food for her family (1.6 years' worth);⁵
- ▶ Nearly seven more months of mortgage and utilities payments;⁶
- ▶ 12 more months of rent;⁷ or
- ▶ 3,265 additional gallons of gas.⁸

Washington Women and Families Cannot Afford Discrimination and Lower Wages

Washington women are responsible for the economic security of their families.

- ▶ In the United States today, mothers are primary or sole breadwinners in nearly 40 percent of families,⁹ and married mothers are the primary or co-breadwinners in nearly two-thirds of families.¹⁰ That means women's wages are key to their families' ability to make ends meet and get ahead.
- ▶ 270,032 family households in Washington are headed by women.¹¹ About 29 percent of those families, or 78,039 family households, have incomes that fall below the poverty

level.¹² Eliminating the wage gap would provide much-needed income to women whose wages sustain their households.

The Wage Gap Cannot Be Explained By Personal Choices

- ▶ **The wage gap persists regardless of industry.** In the civilian industries that employ the most full-time employees – health care and social assistance, manufacturing, retail trade, and educational services – women are consistently paid less than men. In the health care and social assistance industry, women are paid just 71 cents for every dollar paid to men. In manufacturing, just 73 cents. In retail trade, 76 cents. And in educational services, women are paid 86 cents for every dollar paid to men. Across all industries, women are paid lower salaries than men.¹³
- ▶ **The wage gap is present within occupations.** Among the occupations with the most people working full time, year round nationally – sales, production, management, and office and administrative support – women are paid less than men. In sales, women are paid just 64 cents for every dollar paid to men. In production, just 67 cents. In management, 77 cents. And in office and administrative support occupations, women are paid just 86 cents for every dollar paid to men.¹⁴
- ▶ **The wage gap exists regardless of education level.** Educational attainment alone will not eliminate the wage gap. Nationally, women with master’s degrees working full time, year round are paid just 70 cents for every dollar paid to men with master’s degrees. Further, among full-time, year-round workers, women with doctoral degrees are paid less than men with master’s degrees, and women with master’s degrees are paid less than men with bachelor’s degrees.¹⁵
- ▶ **Experts warn that the wage gap will not close in most women’s lifetimes.** If change continues at the same slow pace as it has during the last 50 years, it will take nearly 50 more years – until 2058 – for women and men to finally reach pay parity.¹⁶

The Public Overwhelmingly Supports Fair Pay Policies

- ▶ **Nearly half of likely voters in the United States (49 percent) believe that the wage gap has a major impact on the U.S. economy as a whole.**¹⁷
- ▶ **More than two-thirds of U.S. voters (68 percent) favor policies that would address gender discrimination, including paying women less than men for the same work.** Less than one-quarter of voters oppose such a proposal. Both women (72 percent) and men (64 percent) say they are supportive.¹⁸
- ▶ **Nearly two-thirds of voters support the Paycheck Fairness Act.** In a 2014 nationwide survey, 62 percent of likely voters said they supported the Paycheck Fairness Act, a federal proposal that would help combat wage discrimination. Support crosses demographic and ideological lines, with 83 percent of Democrats, 58 percent of independents and 44 percent of Republican voters saying they support the Paycheck Fairness Act.¹⁹

- 1 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2012, Geographies: All States within United States and Puerto Rico, Table B20017: Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months by Sex by Work Experience in the Past 12 Months for the Population 16 Years and Over with Earnings in the Past 12 Months*. Retrieved 27 February 2014, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_1YR_B20017&prodType=table
- 2 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05: Work Experience in 2012 – People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2012, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex*. Retrieved 27 February 2014, from http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032013/perinc/pinc05_000.htm
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 See note 1 and U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2012, Geographies: All States within United States and Puerto Rico, Table B20005: Sex by Work Experience in the Past 12 Months by Earnings in the Past 12 Months for the Population 16 Years and Over*. Retrieved 27 February 2014, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_1YR_B20005&prodType=table
- 5 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013, September). *Consumer Expenditure Survey, Table 1800. Region of Residence: Annual expenditure means, shares, standard errors, and coefficient of variation, 2012*. Retrieved 27 February 2014, from <http://www.bls.gov/cex/2012/combined/region.pdf> (Calculation uses overall average “food” cost for region.)
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2012, Table GCT2511: Median Monthly Housing Costs for Owner-Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage - United States -- States; and Puerto Rico*. Retrieved 27 February 2014, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_1YR_GCT2511.US01PR&prodType=table
- 7 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2012, Table GCT2514: Median Monthly Housing Costs for Renter-Occupied Housing Units (Dollars): - United States -- States; and Puerto Rico*. Retrieved 27 February 2014, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_1YR_GCT2514.US01PR&prodType=table (Calculation uses median gross rent for state.)
- 8 AAA. (2014). *AAA's Daily Fuel Gauge Report: Current State Averages*. Retrieved 6 March 2014, from <http://fuelgagereport.opisnet.com/sbsavg.html> (Calculation uses average cost of regular quality gasoline on March 6, 2014.)
- 9 Wang, W., Parker, K., & Taylor, P. (2013, May 29). *Breadwinner Moms*. Pew Research Center Publication. Retrieved 22 March 2014, from <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/05/29/breadwinner-moms/>
- 10 Glynn, S. J. (2012, April). *The New Breadwinners: 2010 Update*. Center for American Progress Publication. Retrieved 22 March 2014, from <http://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2012/04/pdf/breadwinners.pdf>
- 11 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2012, Geographies: All States within United States and Puerto Rico, Table DP02: Selected Social Characteristics in the United States*. Retrieved 27 February 2014, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_1YR_DP02&prodType=table (Calculation uses family households headed by females living in a household with family and no husband. A family household includes a householder, one or more people living in the same household who are related to the householder, and anyone else living in the same household.)
- 12 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2012, Geographies: All States within United States and Puerto Rico, Table DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics*. Retrieved 27 February 2014, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_1YR_DP03&prodType=table (To determine whether a household falls below the poverty level, the U.S. Census Bureau considers the income of the householder, size of family, number of related children, and, for 1- and 2-person families, age of householder. The poverty threshold in 2012 was \$18,498 for a single householder and two children under 18.)
- 13 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2012, Table S2404: Industry by Sex and Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months for the Full-Time, Year-Round Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over*. Retrieved 19 March 2014, from http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_12_1YR_S2404&prodType=table
- 14 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-06: Occupation of Longest Job in 2012--People 15 Years and Over, by Total Money Income in 2012, Work Experience in 2012, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex*. Retrieved 20 March 2014, from http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032013/perinc/pinc06_000.htm
- 15 U.S. Census Bureau. (2013). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-01: Selected Characteristics of People 15 Years and Over, by Total Money Income in 2012, Work Experience in 2012, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex*. Retrieved 20 March 2014, from http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032013/perinc/pinc01_000.htm
- 16 Hayes, J. (2013, September). *Gender Wage Gap Projected to Close in Year 2058: Most Women Working Today Will Not See Equal Pay during their Working Lives*. Institute for Women's Policy Research Publication. Retrieved 19 March 2014, from <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/gender-wage-gap-projected-to-close-in-year-2058-most-women-working-today-will-not-see-equal-pay-during-their-working-lives>
- 17 Anzalone Liszt Grove Research and The Feldman Group, Inc. conducted a national survey among N=1000 likely 2014 voters. Interviews were conducted Jan. 24-29, 2014. The margin of error for the sample as a whole is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence. The margin of error for subgroups varies and is higher. Interviews for the oversample were conducted in both English and Spanish. Retrieved on 18 March 2013, from <http://www.americanwomen.org/research/document/PUBLIC-RELEASE-AW-FEB-5-RELEASE.pdf>
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Ibid.

The National Partnership for Women & Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy group dedicated to promoting fairness in the workplace, access to quality health care and policies that help women and men meet the dual demands of work and family. More information is available at www.NationalPartnership.org.

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