

# California Women and the Wage Gap

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In California, a woman who holds a full-time job is paid, on average, \$42,486 per year while a man who holds a full-time job is paid \$50,539 per year. **This means that women in California are paid 84 cents for every dollar paid to men, amounting to a yearly wage gap of \$8,053 between men and women who work full time in the state.**<sup>1</sup>

Nationally, women who hold jobs full time, year round are paid, on average, just 79 cents for every dollar paid to men.<sup>2</sup> For women of color, the wage gap is larger. On average, African American women are paid 60 cents and Latinas are paid just 55 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.<sup>3</sup>

## What Does the Wage Gap Mean for California Women?

On average, California women who are employed full time lose a combined total of more than 39 billion dollars every year due to the wage gap.<sup>4</sup> 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 California would have enough money for approximately:

- ▶ 58 more weeks of food for her family (more than one year's worth);<sup>5</sup>
- ▶ Four more months of mortgage and utilities payments;<sup>6</sup>
- ▶ More than six more months of rent;<sup>7</sup> or
- ▶ 2,561 additional gallons of gas.<sup>8</sup>

## California Women and Families Cannot Afford Discrimination and Lower Wages

**California 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,<sup>9</sup> and married mothers are the primary or co-breadwinners in more than half of families.<sup>10</sup> That means women's wages are key to their families' ability to make ends meet and get ahead.
- ▶ Nearly 1,751,000 family households in California are headed by women.<sup>11</sup> About 28 percent of those families, or 490,179 family households, have incomes that fall below

the poverty level.<sup>12</sup> 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 75 cents. In retail trade, 78 cents. And in educational services, women are paid 87 cents for every dollar paid to men. Across all industries, women are paid lower salaries than men.<sup>13</sup>
- ▶ **The wage gap is present within occupations.** Among the occupations with the most people working full time, year round – sales, production, management, and office and administrative support – women are paid less than men. In sales occupations, women are paid just 62 cents for every dollar paid to men. In production, just 66 cents. In management, 80 cents. And in office and administrative support occupations, women are paid just 87 cents for every dollar paid to men.<sup>14</sup>
- ▶ **The wage gap exists regardless of education level.** Educational attainment alone will not eliminate the wage gap. Women with master’s degrees working full time, year round are paid just 72 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.<sup>15</sup>
- ▶ **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 2059 – for women and men to finally reach pay parity.<sup>16</sup>

## 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.**<sup>17</sup>
- ▶ **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.<sup>18</sup>
- ▶ **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.<sup>19</sup>

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- 1 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2014, 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 17 September 2015, from [http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_1YR\\_B20017&prodType=table](http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_B20017&prodType=table)
  - 2 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05: Work Experience in 2014 – People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2014, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex*. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from [http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032015/perinc/pinc05\\_000.htm](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032015/perinc/pinc05_000.htm) (Unpublished calculation based on the median earnings of all men and women who work full-time, year-round in 2014)
  - 3 Ibid.
  - 4 See note 1.
  - 5 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2015, September). *Consumer Expenditure Survey, Table 1800. Region of Residence: Annual expenditure means, shares, standard errors, and coefficient of variation, 2014*. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from <http://www.bls.gov/cex/2014/combined/region.pdf> (Calculation uses overall average “food” cost for United States.)
  - 6 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2014, Table GCT2511: Median Monthly Housing Costs for Owner-Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage - United States – States; and Puerto Rico*. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from [http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_1YR\\_GCT2511.US01PR&prodType=table](http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_GCT2511.US01PR&prodType=table)
  - 7 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2014, Table GCT2514: Median Monthly Housing Costs for Renter-Occupied Housing Units (Dollars): - United States – States; and Puerto Rico*. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from [http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_1YR\\_GCT2514.US01PR&prodType=table](http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_GCT2514.US01PR&prodType=table) (Calculation uses median gross rent for state.)
  - 8 AAA. (2015). *AAA’s Daily Fuel Gauge Report*. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from <http://fuelgauge.aaa.com> (Calculation uses average cost of regular quality gasoline on September 17, 2015.)
  - 9 Wang, W., Parker, K., & Taylor, P. (2013, May 29). *Breadwinner Moms*. Pew Research Center Publication. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/05/29/breadwinner-moms/>
  - 10 Glynn, S.J. (2014). *Breadwinning Mothers, Then and Now*. Center for American Progress Publication. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from <http://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Glynn-Breadwinners-report-FINAL.pdf>
  - 11 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2014, Table DP02: Selected Social Characteristics in the United States*. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from [http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_1YR\\_DP02&prodType=table](http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_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. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2014, Geographies: United States, Table DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics*. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from [http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_1YR\\_DP03&prodType=table](http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_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 one- and two-person families, age of householder. The poverty threshold in 2014 was \$19,073 for a single householder and two children under 18.)
  - 13 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2014, 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 17 September 2015, from [http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS\\_14\\_1YR\\_S2404&prodType=table](http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_14_1YR_S2404&prodType=table)
  - 14 U.S. Census Bureau. (2015). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-06: Occupation of Longest Job in 2014--People 15 Years and Over, by Total Money Earnings in 2014, Work Experience in 2014, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex*. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from [http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032015/perinc/pinc06\\_000.htm](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032015/perinc/pinc06_000.htm)
  - 15 U.S. Census Bureau (2015). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-03. Educational Attainment--People 25 Years Old and Over, by Total Money Earnings in 2014, Work Experience in 2014, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex*. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from [http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032015/perinc/pinc03\\_000.htm](http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032015/perinc/pinc03_000.htm)
  - 16 Institute for Women’s Policy Research. (2015, September). *Women’s Median Earnings as a Percent of Men’s Median Earnings, 1960-2014 (Full-time, Year-round Workers) with Projection for Pay Equity in 2059*. Institute for Women’s Policy Research Publication. Retrieved 17 September 2015, from <http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/equal-pay-projection-2059>
  - 17 Anzalone Liszt Grove Research and The Feldman Group, Inc., conducted a national survey among 1,000 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 18 March 2013, from <http://www.americanwomen.org/research/document/PUBLIC-RELEASE-AW-FEB-5-RELEASE.pdf>
  - 18 Ibid.
  - 19 Ibid.

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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](http://www.NationalPartnership.org).

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