

Closing the Wage Gap for All Women Workers

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Women who worked full time, year-round in 2020 were paid just 83 cents for every dollar that was paid to a man working full time, year-round. This full-time wage gap, as large as it is, has always left out millions of workers¹ – disproportionately women of color – who work part-time or for only part of a year, including seasonal farmworkers, people working part-time to manage caregiving, and those who want to work more hours but whose employers deny them full-time status and benefits. The pandemic’s unprecedented health and caregiving demands, employment losses and cutbacks in work hours pushed even more women out of full time, year-round work, with the most acute drops among Latina, Black and Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women. As a result, in 2020 more than 33 million women workers are not counted in the full-time wage gap.²

Table 1. Number of Women Excluded from the Full-Time Wage Gap

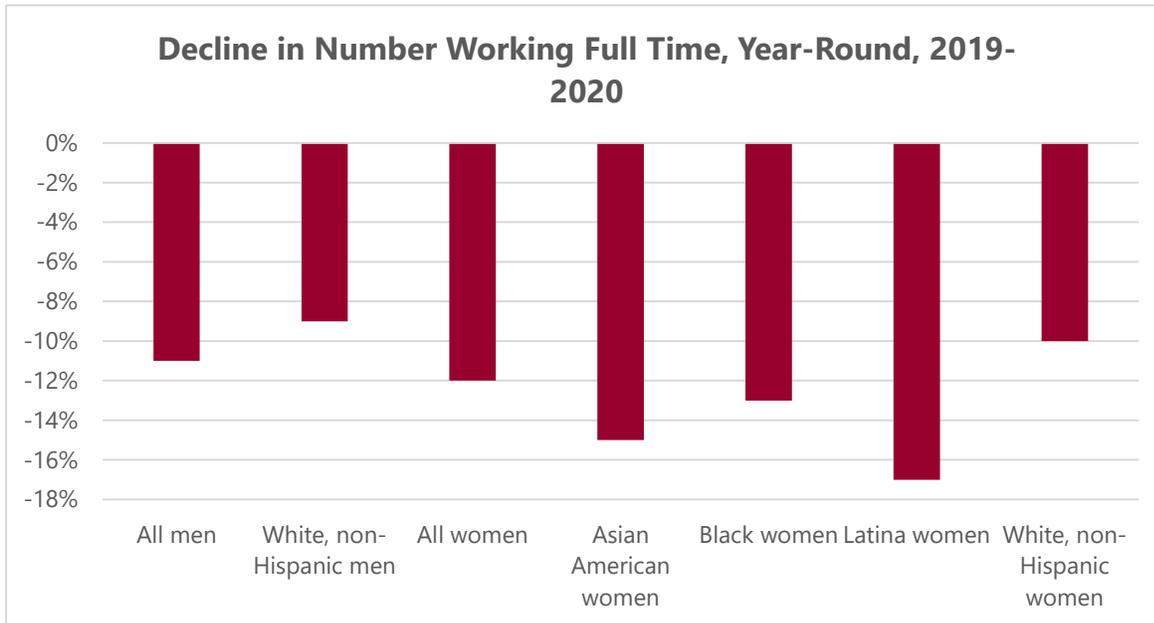
	Women Who Worked Full Time, Year-Round	All Women with Earnings	Not Counted in Full-Time Wage Gap
2019	52,035,000	80,779,000	28,744,000
2020	45,859,000	79,248,000	33,389,000

Source: Current Population Survey.

Women of color in the United States experience the nation’s persistent and pervasive gender wage gap most severely: across all workers in 2020, including those working part-time or part of the year, women were paid just 73 cents for every dollar paid to a man, while Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women were paid 75 cents, white, non-Hispanic women are paid 73 cents, Black women are paid 58 cents, Native American women 50 cents and Latina women just 49 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.³

The gaps represent the tangible consequences of sexism and white supremacy in the United States and how our country systematically devalues women of color and their labor. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau reveal the size of that gap among women who hold full-time, year-round jobs by race/ethnicity. The cents-on-the-dollar difference adds up, resulting in lost wages that mean women have less money to support themselves and their families.

Chart 1. Decline in Full Time, Year-Round Employment by Gender and Race/Ethnicity



Source: Current Population Survey

The Wage Gap Is Costly for Women and their Families

Across all racial and ethnic groups, women in the United States are typically paid 73 cents for every dollar paid to men. The median annual pay for women is \$35,838 while the median annual pay for men is \$49,389 – a difference of \$13,551 per year.⁴ On average, women lose a combined total of nearly \$1.6 trillion every year due to the overall wage gap.⁵

If the annual wage gap were eliminated, a typical woman working in the United States would have enough money to pay for approximately:

- More than 17 additional months of child care;⁶
- More than a full additional year of tuition and fees for a four-year public university, or the full cost of tuition and fees for a two-year college;⁷
- Nearly two years of food;⁸
- Nearly nine additional months of premiums for employer-based health insurance;⁹
- More than eight months of mortgage and utilities payments,¹⁰ or more than one year of rent;¹¹
- Over 11 additional years of birth control;¹²
- Or enough money to pay off student loan debt in under three years.¹³

¹ 28.7 million women in 2019. U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05: Work Experience in 2019 – People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2019, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, Sex, and Disability Status*. Retrieved 11 March 2022 from <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-05.html> (Unpublished calculation based on the number of women with earnings working full time, 50 or more weeks per year and the number of women with any earnings.)

² U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05: Work Experience in 2020 – People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2020, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, Sex, and Disability Status*. Retrieved 11 March 2022 from <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-05.html> (Unpublished calculation based on the number of women with earnings working full time, 50 or more weeks per year and the number of women with any earnings.)

³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2021). *Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05: Work Experience in 2020 – People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2020, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, Sex, and Disability Status*. Retrieved 11 March 2022 from <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-05.html> (Unpublished calculation based on the median annual pay for all women and men with earnings in 2020; and for white, non-Hispanic men, white, non-Hispanic women, Black women (alone), and Hispanic women (any race)); National Asian Pacific American Women’s Forum (NAPAWF) analysis of median earnings for full and part-time workers by Asian American, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander and Native American subpopulation based on 2020 American Community Survey 1-year estimates, available at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/experimental-data/2020-1-year-pums.html>. Figures are based on women and men’s median earnings for both full and part-time workers. White, non-Hispanic men made \$50,000 annually in 2020. Indian women represent those who self-selected “Asian Indian” as their race.

⁴ See note 3.

⁵ See note 3. (Unpublished calculation based on the mean annual pay for all women and men who worked full time, year-round in 2020, multiplied by the total number of women working full time, year-round in 2020.)

⁶ Child Care Aware of America. (2020). *Picking Up the Pieces: Building a Better Child Care System Post COVID-19*. Retrieved 20 October 2021, from <https://www.childcareaware.org/picking-up-the-pieces/>. The authors note that the price of child care varies significantly across the United States, but estimate that the average price is between \$9,200 and \$9,600. This analysis uses the midpoint of that range, \$9,400, as the average price for child care.

⁷ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2020, January). *Digest of Education Statistics: 2020* (Table 330.10, Average undergraduate tuition and fees and room and board rates charged for full-time students in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by level and control of institution: 1963-64 through 2019-20), Chapter 3. Retrieved 20 October 2021, from https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_330.10.asp (The average total annual cost of undergraduate tuition and required fees is \$9,349 for a four-year public college or university or \$3,377 for a two-year college.)

⁸ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2021, September). *Consumer Expenditures - 2020*. Retrieved 11 March 2022, from <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cesan.pdf> (Calculation uses overall average “food” cost.)

⁹ Kaiser Family Foundation. (n.d.) *Average Annual Single Premium per Enrolled Employee For Employer-Based Health Insurance, 2020*. Retrieved 11 March 2022, from <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/single-coverage/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Employee%20Contribution%22,%22sort%22:%22desc%22%7D>

¹⁰ U.S. Census Bureau. (2020). *American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2019, Table DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics*. Retrieved 11 March 2022, from <https://data.census.gov/> (Calculation uses median monthly owner costs, housing units with a mortgage)

¹¹ *Ibid.* (Calculation uses median gross rent, occupied units paying rent)

¹² Center for American Progress. (2012, February 15). *The High Costs of Birth Control: It’s Not As Affordable As You Think*. Retrieved 11 March 2022, from https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2012/02/pdf/BC_costs.pdf (Calculated from a survey of retail costs of oral contraceptives for the uninsured and average copays, combined with the average cost of doctor visits to obtain the prescription. While the Affordable Care Act greatly advanced access to birth control by requiring coverage of contraceptives without cost sharing, many women still must pay out of pocket because they lack insurance, because their plan is grandfathered and does not cover contraceptives without a copay, or because their plan only covers generics.)

¹³ U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal Student Aid. (n.d.) *Federal Student Loan Portfolio: Federal Student Aid Portfolio Summary*. National Student Loan Data System Publication. Retrieved 11 March 2022. (Average dollars outstanding for recipients of direct loans as of Q2 2021, \$37,143.)