

Fact Sheet

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The Status of Women in West Virginia, 2002: Highlights

West Virginia reflects both the advances and limited progress achieved by women in the United States. Women in West Virginia and the United States as a whole are seeing important changes in their lives and in their access to political, economic, and social rights. However, they by no means enjoy equality with men, and they still lack many of the legal guarantees that would allow them to achieve that equality. Women in West Virginia and the nation would benefit from stronger enforcement of equal opportunity laws, better political representation, adequate and affordable child care, and other policies that would help improve their status.

The rankings and grades for each of the composite indices in the chart below were calculated by combining data on several indicators of women's status in each of five areas. These data were used to compare women in West Virginia with women in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. In addition, they were used to evaluate women's status in West Virginia in comparison with women's ideal status, as reflected in the state's grades.

Chart I: How West Virginia Ranks on Key Indicators

Indicators	National Rank*	Regional Rank*	Grade
Composite Political Participation Index	46	8	D-
Women's Voter Registration, 1998 and 2000 (64.4%)	35	6	
Women's Voter Turnout, 1998 and 2000 (44.4%)	43	6	
Women in Elected Office Composite Index, 2002	39	6	
Women's Institutional Resources, 2002	20	7	
Composite Employment and Earnings Index	51	9	F
Women's Median Annual Earnings, 1999 (\$22,176)	45	9	
Ratio of Women's to Men's Earnings, 1999 (70.0%)	38	8	
Women's Labor Force Participation, 2000 (51.3%)	51	9	
Women in Managerial and Professional Occupations, 1999 (27.8%)	47	9	
Composite Social and Economic Autonomy Index	48	9	F
Percent with Health Insurance Among Nonelderly Women, 2000 (81.3%)	42	8	
Educational Attainment: Percent of Women with Four or More Years of College, 1990 (10.9%)	51	9	
Percent of Businesses that are Women-Owned, 1997 (27.1%)	12	4	
Percent of Women Above the Poverty Level, 1999 (83.2%)	47	8	
Composite Reproductive Rights Index	21	6	B-
Composite Health and Well-Being Index	48	8	D-

See Appendix II in *The Status of Women in West Virginia* for a detailed description of the methodology and sources used for the indices presented here.

* The national rankings are of a possible 51, referring to the 50 states and the District of Columbia, except for the Political Participation indicators, which do not include the District of Columbia. The regional rankings are of a maximum of nine (except for the Political Participation indicators, which do not include the District of Columbia) and refer to the states in the South Atlantic region (DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, and WV).

Calculated by the Institute for Women's Policy Research.

