

Women Earn Less than Men Whether They Work in the Same or Different Occupations

The Gender Wage Gap by Occupation, Race, and Ethnicity 2024

Key Findings

- Women were paid less than men for full-time work in all of the 20 largest occupations for women and in all of the 20 largest occupations for men.** The gap in earnings in women's largest occupations ranged from 32.8 cents less on the dollar paid to men financial managers to 9.9 cents less on the dollar paid to men cashiers.
- Only 2 of the 131 occupations with enough women and men to estimate earnings had higher median earnings for women than men; in 115 occupations, women's earnings were at least 5 percent lower than men's.** The two occupations where women earned more were producers and directors (a gender earnings ratio of 128.0 percent) and educational, guidance, and career counselors (a gender earnings ratio of 105.9 percent). The two occupations in which women were paid least compared to men were credit counselors and loan officers (a gender earnings ratio of 53.9 percent) and securities, commodities, and financial services sales agents (a gender earnings ratio of 53.1 percent).
- Black and Latina¹ women full-time workers are more likely to work in service occupations than others and, when they do, are paid less than men.** One in four (25.0 percent) Latina and more than one in five (21.5 percent) Black women worked full-time in service occupations, which have the lowest average earnings of all intermediate occupations, but fewer than one in ten (8.7 percent) White men did so. Latinas' earnings in service occupations were 72.3 percent and Black women's 74.2 percent of White men's.
- Black and Latina women full-time workers are less likely to work in the highest-paying managerial occupations and, when they do, are paid less than men.** In these occupations, Latinas' earnings were 79.4 percent of Latinos and 64.0 percent of White men's, and Black women's were 85.5 percent of Black men's and 68.8 percent of White men's.
- Whether women's earnings are measured for full-time year-round work, full-time weekly work, or all work (part-time or full-time), the typical woman is paid less than the typical man.** In 2024, the weekly earnings of women full-time workers were just 82.7 cents on the dollar paid to men full-time workers and just 77.8 cents on the dollar when including both full-time and part-time workers with earnings. Women who worked full-time year-round in 2023 made just 82.7 cents on the dollar paid to men.²

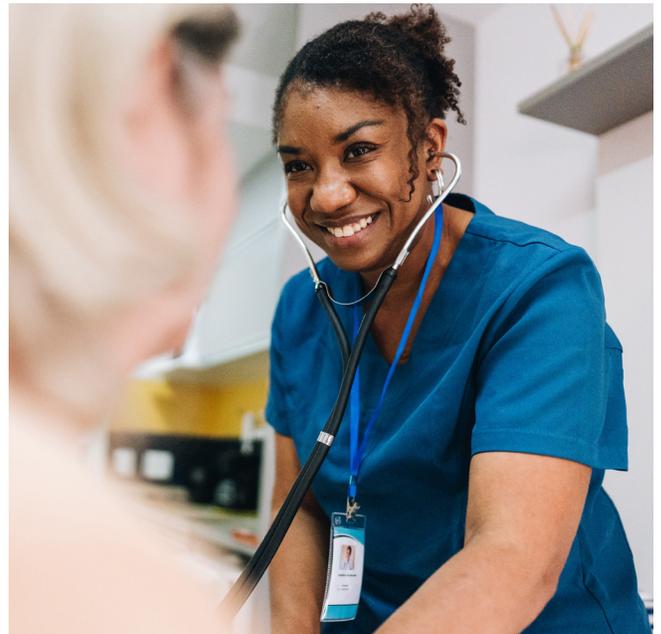


Women Earn Less than Men in Nearly All Occupations

Women's median earnings³ for a week of full-time work are lower than men's in nearly all occupations, irrespective of whether these occupations are mainly held by women, mainly held by men, or whether the gender division is more equal. In 2024, there were just two occupations where women's weekly earnings were higher than men's—producers and directors (128.0 percent of men's)⁴ and educational, guidance, and career counselors and advisors (105.9 percent of men's).⁵ There were only three occupations—pharmacy technicians (100.5 percent), private detectives and investigators (99.8 percent), and social workers (99.2 percent) where women's weekly earnings were nearly equal to men's.⁶ In all other occupations, women earned less than men, including 115 with a gap of at least 5 percent (an earnings ratio of less than 95 percent). In the worst two occupations, women were paid less than 55 cents on the dollar paid to men: credit counselors and loan officers (women's weekly earnings were 53.9 percent of men's) and securities, commodities, and financial services sales agents (women's weekly earnings were 53.3 percent of men's).⁷

Women Earn Less than Men in the 20 Largest Occupations for Women

Women earned less than men in all of the 20 largest detailed occupations for women. The gender earnings ratio for a week of full-time work in these occupations ranges from 90.1 percent for cashiers (with median weekly earnings of \$616 for women and \$684 for men) to 67.2 percent for financial managers (with median weekly earnings of \$1,560 for women and \$2,320 for men; see Table 1). Cashier is the lowest-paying occupation among the top 20, while financial manager is among the highest-paying ones. Earnings differences are often smaller in the lowest-paying jobs because employment conditions are bad for all workers. Financial occupations often have particularly high gender wage gaps because of discrimination and inequality in access to clients and assignments with the highest pay-offs.



Women Earn Less than Men in the 20 Largest Occupations for Men

Women's median weekly earnings were lower than men's in each of the largest occupations for men with sufficient numbers of women to calculate their earnings. The gender earnings ratio in these occupations ranged from 98.0 percent for stockers and order fillers (a gender wage gap of 3.0 percent, with median weekly earnings of \$704 for women and \$726 for men; women were 34.0 percent of full-time workers), to 72.6 percent in the largest occupation for men in 2024, driver/sales workers and truck drivers (a wage gap of 27.4 percent, with median weekly earnings of \$771 for women and \$1,062 for men; women were 6.3 percent of full-time workers; see Table 2). A recent sex discrimination class action lawsuit points to the difficulties women face when trying to enter high-paying trucking jobs.⁸

Table 1. Median Weekly Earnings for Women and Men in the 20 Most Common Occupations for Women, 2024

Full-Time Weekly and Salaried Workers Only

Occupations	Women's median weekly earnings	Women's earnings as a percent of men's	Men's median weekly earnings	Share of female workers in occupation (%)
All full-time workers	\$1,043	82.7%	\$1,261	45.1%
Elementary and middle school teachers	\$1,226	88.6%	\$1,384	77.0%
Registered nurses	\$1,476	83.8%	\$1,761	85.1%
Managers, all other	\$1,563	78.5%	\$1,990	41.6%
Customer service representatives	\$836	89.3%	\$936	66.3%
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive	\$918	84.2%	\$1,090	89.9%
First-line supervisors of retail sales workers	\$903	78.4%	\$1,152	43.9%
Accountants and auditors	\$1,517	81.9%	\$1,853	57.9%
Nursing assistants	\$743	87.4%	\$850	87.4%
Personal care aides	\$707	95.7%	\$739	76.3%
Teaching assistants	\$716	81.4%	\$880	83.3%
Financial managers	\$1,560	67.2%	\$2,320	54.6%
Cashiers	\$616	90.1%	\$684	69.4%
Receptionists and information clerks	\$756	84.0%	\$900	87.8%
Office clerks, general	\$847	84.4%	\$1,003	79.2%
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers	\$1,089	80.2%	\$1,358	65.1%
Human resources workers	\$1,424	93.7%	\$1,520	75.5%
Maids and housekeeping cleaners	\$674	94.9%	\$710	86.6%
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks	\$936	81.1%	\$1,154	82.3%
Retail salespersons	\$765	77.4%	\$988	39.7%
Education and child care administrators	\$1,558	83.9%	\$1,857	66.3%

Source: IWPR analysis of data from the US Department of Labor, "Table 39. Median Weekly Earnings of Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Detailed Occupation and Sex," Household Data Annual Averages (Washington, DC: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025). Available at <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat39.htm>.

Notes: Workers ages 16 or older. Full-time is defined as working 35 hours or more per week. Earnings data for detailed occupations are not released by gender and race/ethnicity. Earnings data are published only for occupations/groups with an estimated minimum of 35,000 workers.

Table 2. Median Weekly Earnings for Women and Men in the 20 Most Common Occupations for Men, 2024

Full-Time Weekly and Salaried Workers Only

Occupations	Women's median weekly earnings	Women's earnings as a percent of men's	Men's median weekly earnings	Share of female workers in occupation (%)
All full-time workers	\$1,043	82.7%	\$1,261	45.1%
Driver/sales workers and truck drivers	\$771	72.6%	1,062	6.3%
Managers, all other	\$1,563	78.5%	1,990	41.6%
Software developers	\$2,238	89.7%	2,495	20.9%
Construction laborers	n/a	n/a	902	2.9%
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	\$706	86.0%	821	21.4%
First-line supervisors of retail sales workers	\$903	78.4%	1,152	43.9%
Janitors and building cleaners	\$651	83.6%	779	30.8%
Retail salespersons	\$765	77.4%	988	39.7%
Other production workers	\$763	82.8%	921	24.6%
Electricians	n/a	n/a	1,218	2.3%
General and operations managers	\$1,362	74.6%	1,826	33.9%
Computer occupations, all other	\$1,362	78.1%	1,745	23.4%
Carpenters	n/a	n/a	941	2.5%
Chief executives	\$2,711	87.0%	3,115	34.8%
Sales representatives, wholesale and manufacturing	\$1,201	72.7%	1,652	22.4%
Elementary and middle school teachers	\$1,226	88.6%	1,384	77.0%
Landscaping and groundskeeping workers	n/a	n/a	718	4.9%
Cooks	\$617	88.9%	694	40.0%
Stockers and order fillers	\$704	97.0%	726	33.8%
Automotive service technicians and mechanics	n/a	n/a	1,031	2.9%

Source: IWPR analysis of data from the US Department of Labor, "Table 39. Median Weekly Earnings of Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Detailed Occupation and Sex," Household Data Annual Averages (Washington, DC: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025). Available at <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat39.htm>.

Notes: Workers ages 16 or older. Full-time is defined as working 35 hours or more per week. Earnings data for detailed occupations are not released by gender and race/ethnicity. Earnings data are published only for occupations/groups with an estimated minimum of 35,000 workers.

Eight of the largest occupations for women are nontraditional for men—that is, men are fewer than three-in-four workers in the occupation.⁹ Ten of the largest occupations for men are nontraditional for women, and in five of these—construction laborers, carpenters, electricians, landscaping and groundskeeping workers, and automotive service technicians and mechanics—there were too few women workers to estimate their median weekly earnings (Table 2). Two recently settled hiring discrimination cases filed by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, one with an auto glass firm and one with a construction industry staffing agency, highlight the barriers that women wanting to work in these industries face.¹⁰

Only four of the largest occupations for women are also the largest occupations for men—elementary and middle school teachers, first-line supervisors of retail sales workers, retail sales workers, and managers, all others. Teaching is still a highly female-dominated profession: More than three-quarters of workers were women in 2024 (Table 1), although in recent years, the number of men joining the profession has increased substantially. The workforce of the other three occupations had more equal numbers of women and men, yet each includes many different subsectors, with women more likely to work in the segments with lower earnings. For example, retail sales workers' pay often includes sales commissions; selling cars (fewer women) leads to higher commissions than selling T-shirts (more women). The problems faced by women trying to break into the higher-paying fields are illustrated by a recent lawsuit against a car dealership in Georgia.¹¹

Black and Latina Women Earn Less than Men in Each Broad Occupational Group and Are Overrepresented in the Lowest-Paying Occupations

Service Occupations

In addition to segregation by gender, there also is substantial segregation by race and ethnicity. The lowest-paying intermediate occupations are service occupations, which include jobs in health care supports, personal care, food preparation and serving, building and ground cleaning and maintenance, and protective services; the median earnings for full-time work in these jobs were \$713 for women and \$834 for men. Black and Latina women are substantially more likely than others to work in these occupations. One in four Latina women full-time workers (25.0 percent, with median weekly earnings of just \$685) and one in five Black women (21.5 percent, with median weekly earnings of \$703) worked in these occupations in 2024 (Table 3). White and Asian women also had low earnings in service occupations (\$738 and \$748, respectively) but proportionately fewer work in these jobs (10.6 and 13.6 percent, respectively; see Table 3).

Black and Latina women's higher likelihood of working in these occupations contributes to their overall lower earnings and, thus, the overall wage gap. However, irrespective of their race or ethnicity, the earnings of women in service occupations are lower than the earnings of men. For example, Latinas' earnings were 92.0 percent of Latinos' and 72.3 percent of White men's in service occupations (IWPR analysis based on Tables 3 and 4). The median weekly earnings for full-time work for women of each of the largest racial and ethnic groups in service occupations would leave a family of an adult and two children near poverty.¹² Moreover, for workers in service occupations, access to stable full-time work is often elusive, further lowering their earnings.¹³

The COVID-19 pandemic hit low-paid service jobs particularly severely, and as a result, work in service occupations fell as a proportion of all women full-time workers, from 16.5 percent of all women workers pre-pandemic in 2019 to 14.2 percent at the height of the pandemic in 2020, and back up to 15.1 percent in 2024. This 'recovery' of service jobs has been unequal across race/ethnicity; the share of Latinas working in low-paying service occupations was almost as high in 2024 as it was in 2019 (25.5 and 25.0 percent, respectively); Black women's share was still 1.5, White women's 1.6, and Asian women's 1.7 percentage points below what it was in 2019.¹⁴

Management and Business Occupations

The highest-paying intermediate occupations were management, business, and financial operations occupations, with median weekly earnings of \$1,523 for women and \$1,906 for men.¹⁵ More than one in five White and Asian women (24.8 and 22.6 percent, respectively) work in these occupations compared with 17.5 percent of Black women and 13.8 percent of Latina women full-time workers. Yet, women who are working in these higher-paying occupations also face steep gender and racial earnings gaps. For example, Black women earn just 85.5 percent of Black men's earnings and only 68.6 percent of White men's (IWPR analysis based on Tables 3 and 4).

While proportionately fewer women work in service occupations than before the pandemic, the share of women working in management, business, and financial operations occupations was slightly higher in 2024 than before the pandemic in 2019 (21.6 and 18.2 percent, respectively). The share of management and business occupations increased for Black (from 14.1 to 17.5 percent), White (from 20.7 to 24.8 percent), and Latina (from 12.1 to 13.8 percent) but fell slightly for Asian women full-time workers (from 20.4 to 17.5 percent).¹⁶

With Lower Pay Comes Lower Benefits

Working in lower-paying occupations often also means less access to benefits. Only 52 percent of workers in service occupations have access to medical care benefits, and just 67 percent to paid sick time. By contrast, more than 90 percent of workers in management, business, and financial occupations have access to medical care benefits (94 percent) or paid sick time (95 percent).¹⁷

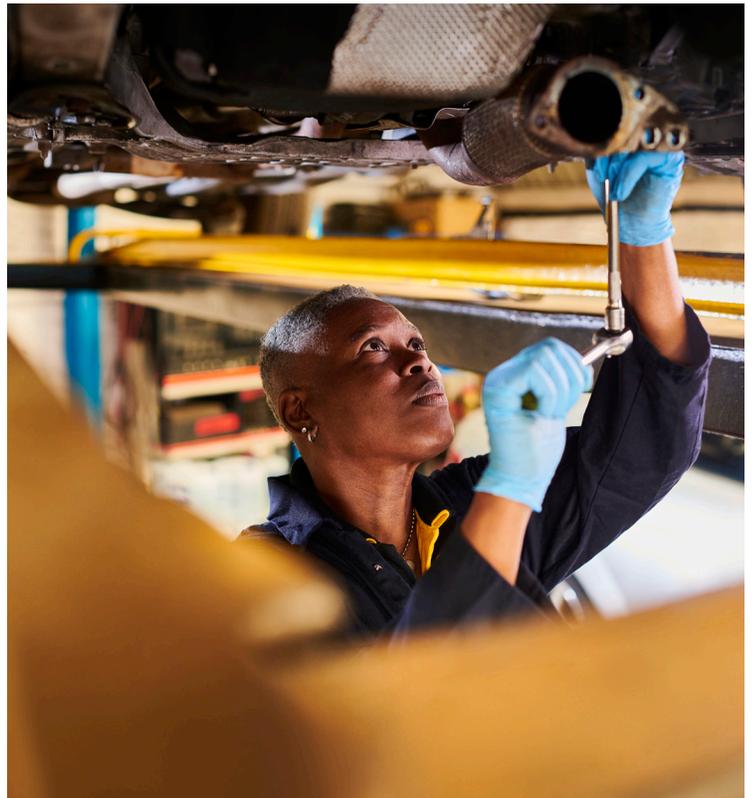


Table 3. Median Weekly Earnings for Women Workers by Race/Ethnicity for Intermediate Occupations, 2024

Full-Time Wage and Salaried Workers Only

Occupations	White women		Black women		Hispanic/Latina women		Asian women	
	Median weekly earnings	White women in occupations as % of all female White workers	Median weekly earnings	Black women in occupations as % of all female Black workers	Median weekly earnings	Hispanic women in occupations as % of all female Hispanic workers	Median weekly earnings	Asian women in occupations as % of all female Asian workers
All occupations (100%)	\$1,139	31,159,000	\$922	8,444,000	\$832	9,670,000	\$1,365	3,944,000
Management, business, and financial operations	\$1,553	24.8%	\$1,345	17.5%	\$1,254	13.8%	\$1,868	22.6%
Professional and related	\$1,347	35.5%	\$1,187	29.3%	\$1,151	21.8%	\$1,721	41.6%
Service	\$738	10.6%	\$703	21.5%	\$685	25.0%	\$748	13.6%
Sales and related	\$938	7.4%	\$738	6.0%	\$790	7.9%	\$988	5.5%
Office and administrative support	\$912	16.1%	\$875	16.8%	\$862	16.6%	\$968	10.4%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	\$971	0.8%	\$736	0.7%	\$694	2.4%	\$720	0.5%
Production, transportation, and material moving	\$820	4.7%	\$720	8.1%	\$701	12.4%	\$762	5.8%

Source: IWPR analysis of data from the US Department of Labor, "Table A-2. Usual Weekly Earnings of Employed Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Intermediate Occupation, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity and Non-Hispanic Ethnicity, Annual Average 2024" (Washington, DC: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished).

Notes: Workers ages 16 or older. Full-time is defined as 35 or more hours per week. Data for White workers is for White alone, non-Hispanic; data for Black and Asian workers may include Hispanics. Asian does not include Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders. Hispanics may be of any race. Annual averages of median weekly earnings.

Table 4. Median Weekly Earnings for Male Workers by Race/Ethnicity for Intermediate Occupations, 2024

Full-Time Wage and Salaried Workers Only

Occupations	White men		Black men		Hispanic/Latino men		Asian men	
	Median weekly earnings	White men in occupations as % of all male White workers	Median weekly earnings	Black Men in occupations as % of all male Black workers	Median weekly earnings	Hispanic men in occupations as % of all male Hispanic workers	Median weekly earnings	Asian men in occupations as % of all male Asian workers
All Occupations (100%)	\$1,423	38,591,000	\$1,002	7,826,000	\$963	13,902,000	\$1,726	4,727,000
Management, business, and financial	\$1,960	22.6%	\$1,573	13.5%	\$1,579	10.9%	\$2,420	19.7%
Professional and related	\$1,845	23.8%	\$1,401	17.4%	\$1,588	10.6%	\$2,191	44.4%
Service	\$947	8.7%	\$761	16.9%	\$745	16.7%	\$894	9.3%
Sales and related	\$1,406	8.9%	\$912	5.9%	\$1,097	5.7%	\$1,183	5.6%
Office and administrative support	\$1,143	5.3%	\$1,001	7.2%	\$907	5.1%	\$963	4.6%
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance	\$1,176	14.8%	\$939	11.0%	\$913	28.2%	\$1,178	4.4%
Production, transportation, and material moving	\$1,027	15.9%	\$863	28.2%	\$862	22.7%	\$908	12.0%

Source: IWPR analysis of data from the US Department of Labor, "Table A-2. Usual Weekly Earnings of Employed Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Intermediate Occupation, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity and Non-Hispanic Ethnicity, Annual Average 2024" (Washington, DC: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, unpublished).

Notes: Workers ages 16 or older. Full-time is defined as 35 or more hours per week. Data for White workers is for White alone, non-Hispanic; data for Black and Asian workers may include Hispanics. Asian does not include Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders. Hispanics may be of any race. Annual averages of median weekly earnings.

Women Earn Less than Men Whether They Work Full-Time or Part-Time

In 2024, women's median weekly earnings for full-time work were \$1,043 and men's \$1,261; this means that for every dollar paid to men, on average, women were only paid 82.7 cents. In 2023, the same ratio was higher, at 83.6 cents on the dollar, meaning that the gap in earnings worsened. While 2024 data for full-time year-round workers are not yet available,¹⁸ in 2023, the gender-earnings ratio for full-time year-round workers was 82.7 percent, significantly lower than in 2022, when it was 84.0 percent.¹⁹

The weekly gender earnings ratio also fell, and the wage gap worsened for women across race/ethnicity. Latina women faced the largest gender racial wage gap, being paid just 58.5 cents on the dollar paid to White men (a gender racial wage gap of 41.5 percent). This is slightly worse than in 2023, when the ratio was 59.2 cents on the dollar (a wage gap of 40.8 percent). Black women's median weekly earnings were just 64.8 cents on the dollar paid to White men (a wage gap of 35.2 percent), a decline from 65.8 percent (a wage gap of 34.2 percent) in 2022. The gender earnings ratio also fell, and the wage gap increased for White women (from 81.7 to 80.0 cents on the dollar, a change in the wage gap from 18.3 to 20.0 percent) and Asian women (from 96.1 to 95.9 cents on the dollar, a change in the wage gap from 3.9 to 4.1 percent; see Table 5).

Women of each of the largest gender and racial group also earned less than men of the same group, ranging from 92.0 cents on the dollar for Black women compared to Black men, 86.4 cents on the dollar for Latinas compared to Latinos, 80.0 cents on the dollar for White women compared to White men, and 79.1 cents on the dollar for Asian women compared to Asian men (Table 5). The gender earnings ratio for Black and Latina women compared to men in the same group was lower and the wage gap smaller than the gender racial wage compared to White men because Black and Latino men face many of the same systemic obstacles in the labor market as women. Gender earnings ratios for Black and Latina women marginally improved because women's real earnings increased more strongly than men's of the same race or ethnicity.

Table 5. Median Weekly Earnings and Gender Earnings Ratio for Full-Time Workers, by Race/Ethnicity, 2024 and 2023

Race/ethnicity	2024				2023 (adjusted to 2024 \$)			
	Women	Men	Female earnings as a % of male earnings of same race/ethnicity	Female earnings as a % of White male earnings	Women	Men	Female earnings as a % of male earnings of same race/ethnicity	Female earnings as a % of White male earnings
All races/ethnicities	\$1,043	\$1,261	82.7%	n/a	\$1,034	\$1,237	83.6%	n/a
Asian	\$1,365	\$1,726	79.1%	95.9%	\$1,337	\$1,682	79.4%	96.1%
Black	\$922	\$1,002	92.0%	64.8%	\$915	\$998	91.6%	65.8%
Hispanic or Latina/o	\$832	\$963	86.4%	58.5%	\$823	\$942	87.4%	59.2%
White	\$1,139	\$1,423	80.0%	80.0%	\$1,137	\$1,391	81.7%	81.7%

Source: IWPR analysis of data from the US Department of Labor, "Table A-2. Usual Weekly Earnings of Employed Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Intermediate Occupation, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity and Non-Hispanic Ethnicity, Annual Average 2024" (Washington, DC: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025, unpublished).

Notes: Full-time is defined as 35 or more hours per week. Data for White workers is for White alone, non-Hispanic; data for Black and Asian workers may include Hispanics. Asian does not include Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders. Hispanics may be of any race. Annual averages of median weekly earnings. Inflation adjustments of 2021 earnings based on US Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index CPI-U (Series ID CUUR0000SA0).

Because women are more likely than men to work part-time—23.1 percent of women compared with 12.3 percent of men worked part-time in 2024²⁰—the gender earnings ratio widens to 77.8 percent, and the wage gap increases to 22.2 percent when all weekly workers (both full-time and part-time) are included in the calculation.²¹

Occupational Segregation Is a Strong Contributor to Gender and Racial Wage Gaps



The COVID-19 pandemic brought to the forefront the extent of occupational segregation in the United States, highlighting the fact that women and men often work in different occupations, and that occupations predominantly held by women pay less and are undervalued compared to those predominantly held by men at the same level of skill or education.²² Care work tends to be particularly undervalued. For example, social work often requires a master's degree, a substantial investment both financially and time-wise. Yet, IWPR research shows that social workers with a master's degree, on average, earn 16.7 cents on the dollar compared to other workers with a master's degree, and Black social workers face an even wider gap of 22.2 cents less per dollar.²³ More than

three in four social workers are women.²⁴ Research suggests that differences in women's and men's employment across occupations and industries account for half of the wage gap.²⁵

IWPR's analysis of change in occupational gender segregation as measured by the Index of Occupational Gender Dissimilarity has found a slight reduction in segregation since the outset of the pandemic between 2020 and 2024. It should be noted that, even after this reduction, the extent of segregation is very high: According to this measure, 46 percent of women or men would have had to change their occupation in 2024 for each occupation to have the same proportion of women and men as in workforce overall.²⁶ The reduction in occupational segregation is due both to the high job loss and lower rate of recovery in low-paid service occupations in leisure and hospitality, retail, and eldercare and the increase in the number of women working in transportation, construction, and utilities—occupations which typically provide higher hourly earnings and more opportunities for full-time work.²⁷

The increasing numbers of women in these higher-paying male-dominated occupations in recent years reflect proactive state and federal efforts to reduce the barriers that have tended to keep women's numbers low; these barriers include lack of information, discrimination and workplace harassment and violence, and the lack of child care services that match work schedules in these industries.²⁸ Efforts to increase women's recruitment and retention in such jobs not only help women's economic security but also help employers by addressing the need for qualified workers in an industry where many skilled workers are close to retirement.

Policies to Tackle Occupational Segregation and the Wage Gap



More than six decades after the Equal Pay Act of 1963, gender and racial inequity in earnings endures. The data reviewed in this fact sheet highlight substantial gaps in earnings whether women work in the same occupation as men or not, and whether the occupation employs mainly women or not. The data also point to the particularly profound gaps in earnings for Latina and Black women. Lower earnings harm women and their families both now and into the future, reducing their capacity to save, build up wealth, and prepare for retirement.

Tackling gender and racial wage gaps requires a variety of policies.²⁹ These include addressing discrimination in all aspects of employment and tackling occupational

segregation and its consequences, both by improving women's access to and retention in well-paid jobs predominantly held by men and by improving earnings and job quality in undervalued jobs predominantly held by women.

Women—and all workers—need access to paid family leave. Without access to quality, affordable child care, eldercare, and care for individuals with disabilities, women are less able to participate in paid work than men, whichever industry they work in. And without substantial investments to raise pay and job quality in care jobs, low pay for women in the care sector will continue to fuel the gender wage gap, and care sector employers will continue to struggle to hire and retain staff.

While much remains to be done, in recent years, progress has been made in increasing women's access to male-dominated fields such as construction, including growing women's numbers in apprenticeships that lead to well-paid jobs.³⁰ Such progress has come with the help of federal and state oversight, technical advice, and investments in outreach in schools and communities to alert women (and their families) to opportunities for women in these careers. The US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has highlighted illegal discrimination in the industry and issued promising practices on preventing harassment, one of the major contributors to driving women out of the industry.³¹

Future progress is now threatened because of President Trump's recent executive order rescinding the decades-old EO11246—an executive order that mandated that federal and private employers receiving federal funds could not discriminate and must take affirmative action to ensure equal access to federally funded jobs for all workers irrespective of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, and gender identity³²— and other regulations supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion.³³ While President Trump has critically undermined the mechanisms for enforcement, employment discrimination continues to be illegal.

When women are paid equally, women, their families, and the economy benefit.

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Endnotes

¹ In this fact sheet, we use the term Latina to refer to Hispanic or Latina women and Latino to refer to Hispanic or Latino men.

² Median annual earnings for full-time year-round work are the most established way of calculating the gender earnings ratio and the gender wage gap and provides the basis for setting the annual equal pay day. Data for 2024 will be released by the Census Bureau in September 2025.

³ The median is the midpoint in the earnings distribution at which about half of all workers earn more and half of all workers earn less.

⁴ Weekly earnings data only include employed workers and do not capture the self-employed or anyone with their own production company (who would be classified as a CEO). Women were 51 percent of workers in this occupation (IWPR analysis of US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table 39. Median Weekly Earnings of Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Detailed Occupation and Sex," Household Data Annual Averages, 2025, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat39.htm>), but they were fewer than a quarter of producers and directors of the top 250 movies (see Martha Lauzen, "The Celluloid Ceiling: Employment of Behind-the-Scenes Women on Top Grossing U.S. Films in 2024," <https://womenintvfilm.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2024-Celluloid-Ceiling-Report.pdf>.)

⁵ IWPR analysis of US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table 39. Median Weekly Earnings of Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Detailed Occupation and Sex," Household Data Annual Averages, 2025, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat39.htm>.

⁶ As above, IWPR analysis of US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat39.htm>.

⁷ As above, IWPR analysis of US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat39.htm>.

⁸ "Women Truck Drivers File Class Action Charging Major Trucking Company with Gender Discrimination in Hiring and Training Practices," TIME'S UP Legal Defense Fund press release. (Washington DC: National Women's Law Center, October 5, 2023), <https://nwlc.org/press-release/women-truck-drivers-file-class-action-charging-major-trucking-company-with-gender-discrimination-in-hiring-and-training-practices/>.

⁹ A nontraditional occupation for women is defined as one where men hold 75 percent or more jobs; and likewise for men as one where women hold more than 75 percent of jobs; these definitions are set in law in both the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V), <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/2353>, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, [govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-11135/uslm/COMPS-11135.xml](https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/COMPS-11135/uslm/COMPS-11135.xml), and authorize targeted training and educational programs for the underrepresented group.

¹⁰ US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, "Safelite Autoglass to Pay \$45,000 to Settle EEOC Sex Discrimination Lawsuit," press release, February 28, 2023, <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/safelite-autoglass-pay-45000-settle-eeoc-sex-discrimination-lawsuit> and "TKO Construction Services to Pay \$300,000 to Settle EEOC Sex, Race and Age Discrimination Lawsuit," press release, January 16, 2025, <https://www.eeoc.gov/newsroom/tko-construction-services-pay-300000-settle-eeoc-sex-race-and-age-discrimination-lawsuit>.

¹¹ Justice at Work News, Barrett & Farahany, "Gender Discrimination Lawsuit against Pars Car Sales Inc.," November 13, 2024, <https://www.justiceatwork.com/gender-discrimination-lawsuit-against-pars-car-sales-inc/>.

¹² The 2024 federal poverty threshold for a family of three (one adult and two children) was \$25,237; see US Census Bureau, *Poverty Thresholds*, 2024, <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html>. Assuming full-time work for 50 weeks a year, this translates into \$505 per week at 100% of federal poverty guidelines, and \$758 at 150% of poverty.

¹³ See, for example, Daniel Schneider and Kristen Harknett, "It's About Time: How Work Schedule Instability Matters for Workers, Families, and Racial Inequality," Research Brief, The Shift Project, 2019, <https://shift.hks.harvard.edu/files/2019/10/Its-About-Time-How-Work-Schedule-Instability-Matters-for-Workers-Families-and-Racial-Inequality.pdf>.

¹⁴ IWPR analysis of US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table A-2. Usual Weekly Earnings of Employed Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Intermediate Occupation, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity and Non-Hispanic Ethnicity, Annual Average, 2024" unpublished.

¹⁵ US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table A-2. Usual Weekly Earnings of Employed Full-Time Wage and Salary Workers by Intermediate Occupation, Sex, Race, and Hispanic or Latino Ethnicity and Non-Hispanic Ethnicity, Annual Average, 2024" (Washington, DC: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025, unpublished).

¹⁶ IWPR analysis of US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Table A-2, various years.

¹⁷ US Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Employee Benefits in the United States—March 2024." National Compensation Survey (Washington DC: BLS, 2024), <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ebs2.pdf>.

¹⁸ The US Census Bureau typically release earnings data for the previous year in September of the following one; 2024 earnings data for full-time year-round workers are expected in September 2025. Full-time year-round data provide the most comprehensive measure of earnings because they include annual commissions and bonus payments, and self-employed as well as employed workers.

¹⁹ For annual earnings data by race/ethnicity and trends in the gender earnings ratio over time, see Ariane Hegewisch, Miranda Petersen, and Nina Besser Doorley, "Gender and Racial Wage Gaps Worsened in 2023 and Pay Equity Still Decades Away," IWPR fact sheet #C527, September 2024, <https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/IWPR-National-Wage-Gap-Fact-Sheet-2024.pdf>.

²⁰ IWPR analysis based on "Table 8. Employed and unemployed full- and part-time workers by age, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2024," US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey Household Annual Averages, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat08.htm>.

²¹ IWPR analysis based on "Table A-5.B Usual weekly earnings of employed wage and salary workers by sex, race, and age, Annual Averages 2024, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey Household Annual Averages, unpublished.

²² See, for example, Leila Gautham, Nancy Folbre, and Kristin Smith, "Earnings inequality and the expansion of care services in the United States, 1985–2019," *Industrial Relations Journal* 140-119 :(2024) 55:2, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/irj.12419>; Ashley Jardina, Peter Q. Blair, Justin Heck, and Papia Debroy, *The Limits of Educational Attainment in Mitigating Occupational Segregation Between Black and White Workers*, NBER working paper w31641, <https://www.nber.org/papers/w31641>; and Ariane Hegewisch and Heidi Hartmann, *Occupational Segregation and the Gender Wage Gap: A Job Half Done*, IWPR report, 2014, <https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/C419.pdf>.

²³ Jennifer Turner, "Unequal Burden Challenges Facing Black Women Social Workers," IWPR research brief #D522, 2024, <https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Black-Women-Social-Workers-research-brief-2024.pdf>.

²⁴ IWPR analysis based on "Table 39. Median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by detailed occupation and sex," US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey Household Annual Averages, 2024, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat39.htm>.

²⁵ Differences in the distribution of women's and men's employment across occupations explained 32.9 percent of the gender wage gap, and differences across industries explained 17.6 percent; see Francine D. Blau and Lawrence Kahn, "The Gender Wage Gap: Extent, Trends, and Explanations," *Journal of Economic Literature* 55, no. 3 (2017): 789-865. See also Thomas B. Foster, Marta Murray-Close, Liana Christin Landivar, and Mark de Wolf, "An Evaluation of the Gender Wage Gap Using Linked Survey and Administrative Data," Center for Economic Studies Working Paper CES 20-34, US Census Bureau, 2022, <https://www2.census.gov/ces/wp/2020/CES-WP-20-34.pdf>.

²⁶ Ariane Hegewisch, Martha Susana James, Melissa Mahoney and Cristy Mendoza, "Women at Work Five Years Since the Start of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Any Progress?" IWPR fact sheet #C531 (Washington DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2025), <https://iwpr.org/women-at-work-five-years-since-the-start-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-any-progress-2/>.

²⁷ Hegewisch et al., Women at Work Five Years Since the Start of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

²⁸ See, for example, Ariane Hegewisch and Eve Mefferd, *A Future Worth Building: What Tradeswomen Say about the Change They Need in the Construction Industry*, IWPR report #C508, 2021, <https://iwpr.org/iwpr-publications/a-future-worth-building-report/>; Rose Khatrar, "Expanding Women's Access to Male-Dominated Jobs," Chapter 8 of *Playbook for the Advancement of Women in the Economy*, Center for American Progress, 2024, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/playbook-for-the-advancement-of-women-in-the-economy/expanding-womens-access-to-male-dominated-jobs/>.

²⁹ To learn more, see IWPR's *Federal Policy Solutions to Advance Gender Equity*, 2025, <https://iwpr.org/federalpolicyagenda/>.

³⁰ Ariane Hegewisch, *As Apprenticeships Expand, Breaking Down Occupational Segregation Is Key to Women's Economic Success*, IWPR report #C522, 2024, <https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/IWPR-Apprenticeship-Report-March-2024.pdf>.

³¹ US Equal Opportunities Commission (EEOC), *Building for the Future: Advancing Equal Employment Opportunity in the Construction Industry*, report of Chair Charlotte Burrows, May 2023, <https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/Building%20for%20the%20Future.pdf> and EEOC, *Promising Practices for Preventing Harassment in the Construction Industry*, 2024, https://www.eeoc.gov/sites/default/files/2024-06/Construction%20Harassment%20Promising%20Practices_508.pdf.

³² Executive Order 11246 was first signed on September 28, 1965 (30 F.R. 12319); in 1967 it was amended by President Johnson to add 'sex' as a protected category, and in 2014 by President Obama to also include 'sexual orientation' and 'gender identity'.

³³ Executive Order 14173 of January 21, 2025, "Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-based Opportunity," *Federal Register* 90 (20): 8633-8636, January 31, 2025, <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2025-01-31/pdf/2025-02097.pdf>.

OUR MISSION

We win economic equity for all women and eliminate barriers to their full participation in society. As a leading national think tank, we build evidence to shape policies that grow women's power and influence, close inequality gaps, and improve the economic well-being of families.

