

EMPLOYMENT

FACT SHEET

The Importance of Fair Pay for Delaware Women

June 2013

In 1963 – the year the Equal Pay Act was signed into law – women working full time, year round were typically paid just 59 cents for every dollar paid to their male counterparts.¹ Enforcement of the Equal Pay Act and related civil rights laws has helped narrow the wage gap, but significant pay disparities between men and women remain that must be addressed. Wages overall are stagnating² and the wage gap has barely budged over the last ten years.³ Women working full time, year round typically make 77 cents for every dollar paid to their male counterparts. For African-American women this figure is only 64 cents, and for Hispanic women it is only 55 cents compared to their white, non-Hispanic male counterparts.⁴

Women's lower wages hurt women and families who rely on women's earnings for all or part of their income. Leadership from Congress is crucial to closing the wage gap and making fair pay a reality for America's women and their families.

The Gender Wage Gap Persists in Delaware

Although the gap between men's and women's wages has narrowed over the past five decades, women continue to be paid substantially less than men across the country and in Delaware.

- In 2011, women in Delaware working full time, year round were typically paid only 80 cents for every dollar paid to their male counterparts⁵ – 3 cents above the nationwide figure of 77 cents.⁶
- The wage gap is even more substantial for African-American and Hispanic women. White, non-Hispanic women working full time, year round in Delaware were typically paid only 81 cents to every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men working full time, year round. However, African-American women working full time, year round in Delaware were typically paid only 69 cents and Hispanic women only 51 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men who worked full time, year round.⁷
- The wage gap persists at all levels of education. In 2011, women in Delaware with a high school diploma were typically paid only 66 cents for every dollar paid to men with a high school diploma. Comparing women and men in Delaware with a bachelor's degree, the figure was 68 cents. In fact, the typical Delaware woman who receives a bachelor's degree is paid only \$1,300 more annually than the typical Delaware man who only graduated from high school.⁸
- The wage gap exists across occupations. For example, Delaware women working full time, year round in 2011 in management, business, and financial occupations were typically paid only 73 cents for every dollar paid to men in the same occupations, and Delaware women working full time, year round in sales and related occupations were typically paid only 53 cents to every dollar paid to men in the same occupations.⁹



STOP DISCOUNTING WOMEN
I AM NOT WORTHLESS™
NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER nwl.org/fairpay

Fair Pay Is Important to Delaware Women and Their Families

In the aftermath of the Great Recession, many people are still facing financial problems, stagnant wages, and unemployment. Women in Delaware already have higher rates of economic insecurity than men in Delaware: in 2011, women working full time, year round typically had lower earnings than men (\$40,500 compared to \$50,411)¹⁰ and were more likely to live in poverty (12.4 percent of Delaware women compared to 7.8 percent of men).¹¹ As a result, women are particularly vulnerable to economic hardship in today's struggling economy, when every dollar counts.

For example:

- High unemployment rates for women and men have fallen since the end of the recession, but four years into the recovery, unemployment remains high.¹² The unemployment rate for women in Delaware in 2012 was 6.6 percent, a 3.1 percentage point increase since the recession began in December 2007.¹³ Women's lower earnings contribute to the fact that women frequently have less savings to fall back on if they lose their jobs.¹⁴
- The economic crisis has affected all Americans, but has been particularly hard for women – who are already in a more precarious economic position than men because of lower earnings and higher poverty rates. Women are more likely to rely on public

benefits like Medicaid, food stamps (SNAP), and housing assistance,¹⁵ services which many states have cut in recent years.¹⁶ About 17 percent of non-elderly adult Delaware women and 38 percent of Delaware children relied on Medicaid in 2011.¹⁷ In March 2013, the most recent month for which data are available, Delaware provided food stamp benefits to more than 152,000 children and adults, an increase of over 3,300 from the previous year.¹⁸ For many low-wage workers, these programs provide crucial support to meet basic needs when wages aren't enough. In 2011, 42 percent of poor people 16 and older in Delaware were workers.¹⁹

- In 2012, women made up nearly two-thirds of all workers that were paid minimum wage or less in Delaware.²⁰ In Delaware, the minimum wage was \$7.25 per hour, equivalent to only about \$14,500 a year for those working full time year round²¹ – less than the poverty line for a family of three.²² Moreover, the minimum cash wage for tipped employees in Delaware was just \$2.23 per hour, equivalent to an annual base pay of only about \$4,460 for those working full time, year round.²³ Nationally, women make up almost two-thirds of workers in tipped occupations.²⁴ Raising the minimum wage would help close the wage gap for Delaware women.²⁵

Fair pay would help close the wage gap and increase economic security for Delaware's women and families.

- 1 National Women's Law Center (NWLC), The Wage Gap Over Time (June 2013) *available at* http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/wage_gap_over_time_overall.pdf.
- 2 Heidi Shierholz and Lawrence Mishel, Economic Policy Institute, "The sad but true story of wages in America" (March 15, 2011), *available at* http://www.epi.org/publication/the_sad_but_true_story_of_wages_in_america/.
- 3 NWLC, The Wage Gap Over Time, *supra* note 1.
- 4 NWLC, Closing the Wage Gap is Crucial for Women of Color and Their Families (April 2013) *available at* <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/closing-wage-gap-crucial-women-color-and-their-families>. All figures are for full-time, year-round workers.
- 5 NWLC calculations from U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey [hereinafter NWLC calculations from 2011 ACS], Table R2001: Median Earnings for Male Full-Time, Year-Round Workers and Table R2002: Median Earnings for Female Full-Time, Year-Round Workers, *available at* <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/> (last visited June 13, 2013).
- 6 Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage, Table A-4: Number and Real Median Earnings of Total Workers and Full-Time, Year-Round Workers by Sex and Female to Male Earnings Ratio: 1960 to 2011 (2012) *available at* <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/income.html> (last visited June 13, 2013).
- 7 NWLC calculations from U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2011 American Community Survey three-year estimates, Tables B20017B, H, I: Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) by Sex by Work Experience in the Past 12 Months for the Population 16 Years and Over with Earnings in the Past 12 Months, *available at* <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/> (last visited June 13, 2013).
- 8 NWLC calculation from 2011 ACS, Table B20004: Median Earnings by Sex by Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years and Over, *available at* <http://www.census.gov/acs/www> (last visited June 13, 2013). These data include all workers 25 and over and is not broken down by work experience.
- 9 NWLC calculations from 2011 ACS, Table B24022: Sex by Occupation and Median Earnings for the Full-Time, Year-Round Civilian Population 16 Years and Over, *available at* <http://www.census.gov/acs/www> (last visited June 13, 2013).
- 10 *Supra* note 5.
- 11 NWLC calculations from 2011 ACS, Table C17001: Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Sex by Age, *available at* <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/> (last visited Sept. June 13, 2013).
- 12 See NWLC's "Stronger Recovery Reaching Women" (June 7, 2013) *available at* <http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/junerecoveryfactsheet.pdf>

- 13 U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by sex, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and detailed age, 2012 annual averages (2013), *available at* <http://bls.gov/lau/ptable14full2012.pdf> (last visited June 13, 2013) and U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Table 14: Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by sex, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, marital status, and detailed age, 2007 annual averages (2008), *available at* <http://www.bls.gov/lau/table14full07.pdf> (last visited June 13, 2013). For individuals 16 and older.
- 14 David C. John, Retirement Security Project, "Disparities for Women and Minorities in Retirement Saving" (Sept. 1, 2010), *available at* http://www.brookings.edu/testimony/2010/0901_retirement_saving_john.aspx.
- 15 See NWLC's "Cutting Programs for Low-Income People Especially Hurts Women and Their Families" (March 14, 2013) *available at* <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/cutting-programs-low-income-people-especially-hurts-women-and-their-families>.
- 16 See Nicholas Johnson, Phil Oliff and Erica Williams, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "An Update on State Budget Cuts: At Least 46 States Have Imposed Cuts That Hurt Vulnerable Residents and the Economy" (revised February 9, 2011), *available at* <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=1214> and Erica Williams Michael Leachman, and Nicholas Johnson, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, "State Budget Cuts in the New Fiscal Year Are Unnecessarily Harmful: Cuts Are Hitting Hard at Education, Health Care, and State Economies" (updated July 28, 2011), *available at* <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=3550>.
- 17 NWLC calculations from 2011 ACS, Table C27007: Medicaid/Means-Tested Public Coverage by Sex by Age, *available at* <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/> (last visited June 13, 2013).
- 18 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Current Participation (Persons), data as of June 7, 2013, *available at* <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/29SNAPcurrPPhtm> (last visited June 13, 2013). Data for March are preliminary.
- 19 NWLC calculations from 2011 ACS, Table C17004: Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months of Individuals by Work Experience, *available at* <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/> (last visited June 13, 2013).
- 20 NWLC, Women and the Minimum Wage, State by State (June 2013), *available at* <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/women-and-minimum-wage-state-state>.
- 21 NWLC calculations from U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, "Minimum Wage Laws in the States – January 1, 2013," *available at* <http://www.dol.gov/whd/minwage/america.htm> (last visited June 13, 2013). Annual wage figures calculated assuming 40 hour work weeks for 50 weeks a year.
- 22 U.S. Census Bureau, Poverty Thresholds for 2012 <https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/index.html> (last visited Mar. 1, 2013)
- 23 NWLC calculations from U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, "Minimum Wages for Tipped Employees" *available at* <http://www.dol.gov/whd/state/tipped.htm> (last visited June 13, 2013). Annual wage figures calculated assuming 40 hour work weeks for 50 weeks a year.
- 24 NWLC calculations from U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, Table 11: Employed persons by detailed occupation, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2012 annual averages, *available at* <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.pdf>. Includes the following occupations: waiters and waitresses; bartenders; counter attendants, cafeteria, food, and coffee shop; dining room and cafeteria attendants and bartender helpers; food servers, nonrestaurant; taxi drivers and chauffeurs; parking lot attendants; hairdressers, hairstylists, and cosmetologists; barbers; miscellaneous personal appearance workers; baggage porters, bellhops, and concierges; and gaming services workers.
- 25 NWLC, Closing the Wage Gap: How Raising the Minimum Wage Promotes Fair Pay for Women (June 2013) *available at* <http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/minimumwageandwagegap.pdf>.