NATIONAL WOMEN'S LAW CENTER

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Equal Pay for Native Women

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When comparing all men and women who work full time, year round in the United States, women typically are paid just 82 cents for every dollar paid to men.[1] This well-documented wage gap is even larger for Native[2] women who work full time, year round when compared to their white, non-Hispanic male counterparts. Native women are typically paid only 58 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.[3] This gap in pay, which typically amounts to a loss of $24,443 each year, means that Native women have to work more than 21 months – until the end of September – to make as much as white, non-Hispanic white men in the previous calendar year.[4]

Native women working full time, year round typically are paid only 58 cents for every dollar paid to their white, non-Hispanic male counterparts, leading to a lifetime loss of $977,720.

Some communities of Native women experience substantially wider wage gaps.[5]

- Certain Native women experience a larger wage gap than is reflected in the number for Native women overall.
  - Tohono O'odham women experience the largest wage gap and typically make less than half – 46.5 percent – of what white, non-Hispanic men make. Lumbee, Navajo, Pueblo, Sioux, and Yaqui women typically make slightly more than half of what white, non-Hispanic men make; about 52 percent.
  - Additionally, Blackfoot, Iroquois, and Puget Sound Salish women all are typically paid less than 60 percent of what white, non-Hispanic men make. No Native women community typically makes more than 69 cents for every dollar made by white, non-Hispanic men.

NATIVE WOMEN'S WAGE EQUALITY BY TRIBE

Tribe	Native women's earnings	Native women's earnings/White, non-Hispanic men's earnings	Native women's earnings/Native men's earnings (within tribes)
Apache	$37,000	63.8%	100.0%
Blackfoot	$32,000	55.2%	80.0%
Cherokee	$36,000	62.1%	83.7%
Chippewa	$40,000	68.9%	90.9%
Choctaw	$36,000	62.1%	78.3%
Creek	$34,100	58.8%	85.3%
Eskimo	$40,000	68.9%	83.3%
Iroquois	$31,000	53.4%	77.5%
Lumbee	$30,000	51.7%	78.9%
Navajo	$30,000	51.7%	85.7%
Pueblo	$30,000	51.7%	96.2%
Puget Sound Salish	$32,000	55.2%	94.1%
Sioux	$30,000	51.7%	80.6%
Tohono O'odham	$27,000	46.5%	90.0%
Yaqui	$30,000	51.7%	78.9%

Native women's and men's earnings are based on 2017 American Community Survey 1-year sample using IPUMS-USA available at https://usa.ipums.org/usa/. White, non-Hispanic men's earnings are 2017 American Community Survey 1-year sample, Table B20017H, available at https://factfinder.census.gov/. The typical white, non-Hispanic man made $58,014 in 2017. Figures are based on women's and men's median earnings for full time, year round workers. Figures are not adjusted for inflation. Earnings are in 2017 dollars.

Native women's wage gap is substantially wider in certain states; Native women in Delaware and California face the largest wage gap.[6]

- While Native women nationally are paid just 58 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men, they can face even steeper wage gaps depending where they live. In Delaware and California, the worst states for Native women's wage equality, Native women typically are paid 50 cents or less for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.
- In New Mexico and Texas – states with some of the largest Native populations – Native women also experience large wage gaps. In Texas, Native women are typically paid just 52 cents and in New Mexico, just 53 cents, for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.

TEN WORST STATES FOR NATIVE WOMEN'S WAGE EQUALITY

Rank	State	Native women's earnings	White, non-Hispanic Men's Earnings	What Native Women Are Paid for Every Dollar Paid to White, non-Hispanic Men	Wage Gap
	United States	*$33,571*	*$58,014*	*$0.58*	*$0.42*
10	New Jersey	$42,460	$76,180	$0.56	$0.44
9	Illinois	$34,538	$62,028	$0.56	$0.44
8	Colorado	$33,486	$60,629	$0.55	$0.45
7	Connecticut	$39,774	$72,356	$0.55	$0.45
6	Utah	$30,596	$56,726	$0.54	$0.46
5	Louisiana	$30,692	$56,979	$0.54	$0.46
4	New Mexico	$29,663	$56,358	$0.53	$0.47
3	Texas	$32,602	$62,775	$0.52	$0.48
2	California	$36,846	$74,055	$0.50	$0.50
1	Delaware	$26,213	$56,486	$0.46	$0.54

NWLC calculations are based on 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year sample using IPUMS-USA, available at https://usa.ipums.org/usa/. "What Native women are paid for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men" is the ratio of women's and men's median earnings for full time, year round workers. The "wage gap" is the additional money a woman would have to make for every dollar made by a man in order to have equal annual earnings. Figures are not adjusted for inflation. Earnings are in 2017 dollars. Ranks based on unrounded data. The national wage gap for Native women calculated by NWLC is based on 2017 American Community Survey 1-year estimates, tables B20017C and B20017H. Women's and men's median earnings are for full time, year round workers. Earnings are in 2017 dollars.

In many states Native women stand to lose more than one million dollars over the course of a 40 year career.[7]

- Over the course of a 40-year career, if the current wage gap does not close, the typical Native woman will lose a staggering $977,720 to the wage gap compared to her white, non-Hispanic male counterpart. Assuming they both begin work at age 20, this huge wage gap means a typical Native woman would have to work until she is nearly 90 years old to catch up to what a white, non-Hispanic man will be paid by age 60.[8]
- In the ten worst states for lifetime losses, Native women stand to lose more than one million dollars over a 40-year career compared to white, non-Hispanic men. Native women would have to work decades past retirement age – and in some cases to age 100 and beyond – in order to make up these lifetime losses.

TEN WORST STATES FOR NATIVE WOMEN'S LIFETIME LOSSES DUE TO WAGE GAP

Rank	State	Native women's earnings	White, non-Hispanic Men's Earnings	Lifetime Losses Due to Wage Gap	Age at Which a Native Woman's Career Earnings Catch Up to White, non-Hispanic Men's Career Earnings at Age 60
	United States	*$33,571*	*$58,014*	*$977,720*	*89*
10	New Jersey	$42,460	$76,180	$1,348,800	92
9	Illinois	$34,538	$62,028	$1,099,600	92
8	Colorado	$33,486	$60,629	$1,085,720	92
7	Connecticut	$39,774	$72,356	$1,303,280	93
6	Utah	$30,596	$56,726	$1,045,200	94
5	Louisiana	$30,692	$56,979	$1,051,480	94
4	New Mexico	$29,663	$56,358	$1,067,800	96
3	Texas	$32,602	$62,775	$1,206,920	97
2	California	$36,846	$74,055	$1,488,360	100
1	Delaware	$26,213	$56,486	$1,210,920	106

NWLC calculations are based on 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year average using IPUMS-USA available at https://usa.ipums.org/usa/. "Lifetime Losses Due to Wage Gap" is what a Native woman would lose, based on today's wage gap, over a 40-year career. "Age at which a Native woman's career earnings catch up to white, non-Hispanic men's career earnings at age 60" assumes all workers begin work at age 20. Assuming white, non-Hispanic men have a 40-year career this is the age at which Native women are able to retire with the same lifetime earnings as their male counterparts. Figures are calculated using women's and men's median earnings for full time, year-round workers. Figures are not adjusted for inflation. Earnings are in 2017 dollars. Ranks based on unrounded data. The national wage gap for Native women is calculated by NWLC is based on 2017 American Community Survey 1-year estimates, tables B20017C and B20017H. Women's and men's median earnings are for full time, year round workers. Earnings are in 2017 dollars.

Native women experience a wage gap at every education level – and those with Bachelor's degrees, Master's degrees, and professional degrees face larger gaps than those with high school diplomas.[9]

- Native women without a high school diploma typically make 62 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men without a high school diploma.
- Native women who have a high school diploma are typically paid only 64 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men with the same diploma.
- Native women with Bachelor's degrees and graduate degrees face even larger wage gaps than those with high school diplomas.
- Native women with Bachelor's degrees are typically paid about $44,000 – only about two thousand dollars a year more than what white, non-Hispanic men with only a high school diploma are typically paid ($42,088).

- Native women typically have to earn a Master's degree before they are paid more than white, non-Hispanic men with just an Associate's degree are paid ($56,000 and $53,842, respectively).
- Native women with a professional degree are typically paid 57 cents and Native women with a doctoral degree are typically paid 63 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men with the same level of education.

NATIVE WOMEN'S WAGE EQUALITY BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Educational Attainment	Native Women's Earnings	White, non-Hispanic Men's Earnings	What Native Women Are Paid for Every Dollar Paid to White, non-Hispanic Men	Wage Gap
No high school degree	$22,469	$36,240	$0.62	$0.38
High school degree	$27,000	$42,088	$0.64	$0.36
Some college, no degree	$31,062	$50,000	$0.62	$0.38
Associate's degree	$35,000	$53,842	$0.65	$0.35
Bachelor's degree	$43,916	$74,550	$0.59	$0.41
Master's degree	$56,000	$93,077	$0.60	$0.40
Professional degree	$77,000	$134,604	$0.57	$0.43
Doctoral degree	$68,394	$108,719	$0.63	$0.37

NWLC calculations are based on 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-year sample using IPUMS-USA available at https://usa.ipums.org/usa/. Figures are based on women's and men's median earnings for full time, year round workers. Figures are not adjusted for inflation. Earnings are in 2017 dollars. Workers without a high school diploma exclude those who have not completed at least 9th grade.

The wage gap exists for Native women of all ages and is widest for working women nearing retirement.[10]

- Among young people ages 15 to 24, working full time, year round, Native women typically make 77 cents for every dollar white, non-Hispanic men make. But the older Native women get, the worse they fare.
- Among people working full time, year round in their prime working years—ages 25 to 44—Native women are typically paid just 60 cents for every dollar white, non-Hispanic men are paid.
- Among older workers, ages 45 to 64, Native women are typically paid just 59 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men. These larger gaps mean that Native women are falling behind at the very time they need additional resources to invest in their families and save for a secure retirement.

Native women living in cities experience a significantly larger wage gap than rural Native women.[10]

- Native women living in rural areas are typically paid 69 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men living in rural areas.
- By contrast, Native women who live in cities suffer a much larger wage gap and are typically paid less than half – 47 cents – of what white, non-Hispanic men living in cities are paid. Native women living in suburban areas are typically paid 54 cents for every dollar paid to suburban white, non-Hispanic men are paid.

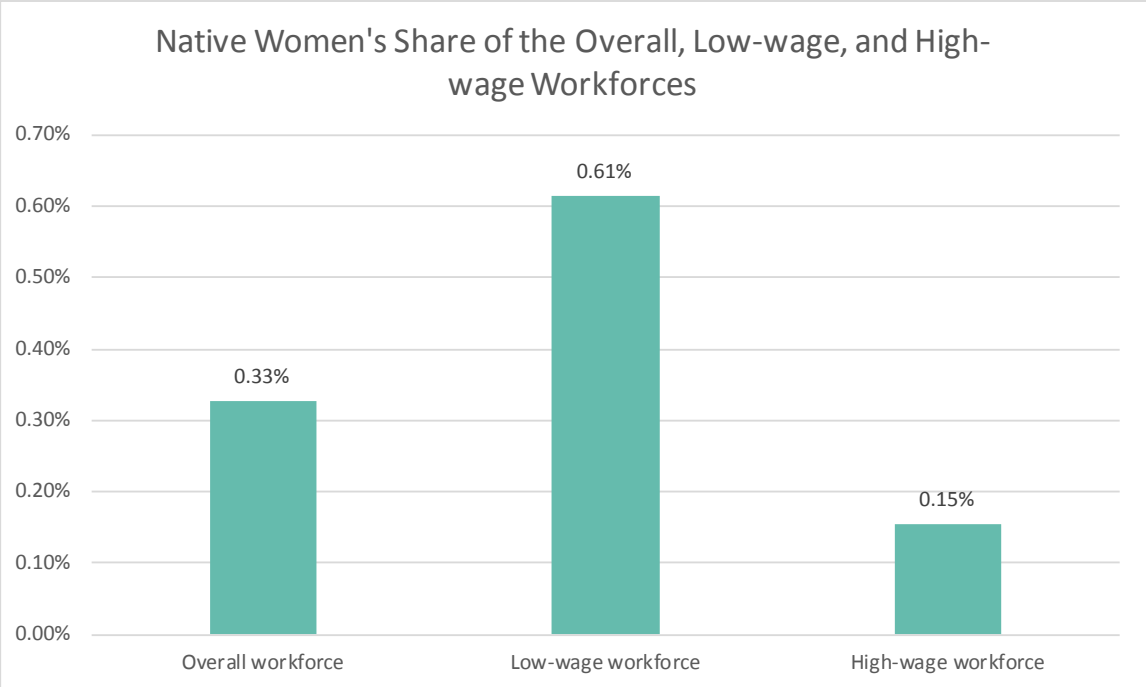
NATIVE WOMEN'S WAGE EQUALITY BY METROPOLITAN STATUS

	Native Women's Earnings	White, non-Hispanic Men's Earnings	What Native Women Are Paid for Every Dollar Paid to White, non-Hispanic Men	Wage Gap
Rural	$31,000	$45,000	$0.69	$0.31
City	$32,000	$68,000	$0.47	$0.53
Suburban Areas	$35,400	$65,000	$0.54	$0.46

NWLC calculations are based on 2017 American Community Survey 1-year sample using IPUMS-USA available at https://usa.ipums.org/usa/. Figures are in 2017 dollars. Median earnings are for full time, year round workers. "Rural" is defined as households located outside of a metro area. "City" is defined as households located inside a metro area and in a central/principal city. "Suburban areas" are defined households located inside a metro area, but outside of a central/principal city.

Native women are overrepresented in low-wage jobs and underrepresented in high-wage jobs, and experience a wage gap in both.[12]

- Native women make up 0.61 percent of the low-wage workforce (defined as the 40 lowest-paying jobs) while they make up just 0.33 percent of the overall workforce.[13]
- Native women's share of the high-wage workforce — defined as the 40 highest-paying jobs – is only 0.15 percent.[14]
- Among workers in low-wage jobs, Native women typically make just 73 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men.[15] Native women who work full time, year-round in these occupations are typically paid about $22,000 annually, compared to the $30,000 typically paid to white, non-Hispanic men in the same occupations. This gap translates to a loss of $8,000 each year to the wage gap — enough to pay for eight months of rent or eleven months of childcare costs.[16]
- Among workers in high-wage occupations—such as lawyers, engineers, and physicians or surgeons—Native women are typically paid 59 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men in the same occupations. Native women who work full time, year-round in these occupations are typically paid about $62,000, compared to the $105,000 typically paid to white, non-Hispanic men in these same jobs. This amounts to a staggering annual loss of about $43,000 each year, or more than $1.7 million dollars over a 40-year career.[17]



NWLC calculations based on 2017 American Community Survey using IPUMS-USA available at https://usa.ipums.org/usa/. Figures are for employed workers in 2017. The low-wage and high-wage workforces can be defined in a variety of ways. Here, low-wage workforce is defined as the 40 occupations that have the lowest median hourly wages based on BLS, Occupational Employment Statistics. The high-wage workforce is defined as the 40 occupations that have the highest median hourly wages.

Native women experience a wage gap across occupations, even in those occupations where they are overrepresented.[18]

- More than two in five Native women (41.3 percent) are employed in one of ten occupations. In every one of those occupations, Native women are typically paid less than white, non-Hispanic men.
- Among the ten most common occupations for Native women, four of those occupations –janitors, building cleaners, maids and housekeepers, childcare workers, waiters and waitresses, and cooks – typically pay Native women less than $10 per hour while they typically pay white, non-Hispanic men much more.[19]
- Even in better paying jobs, such as teachers or registered nurses, Native women are typically paid less than their white, non-Hispanic male counterparts.

COMMON OCCUPATIONS FOR NATIVE WOMEN

	Occupation	Percent of Native Women Employed in Occupation	Median Hourly Wage for Native Women in Occupation	Median Hourly Wage for White, non-Hispanic Men in Occupation	What a Native Woman Makes for Every Dollar a White, non-Hispanic Man Makes
1	Secretaries, administrative assistants, office clerks, receptionists, and information clerks	7.6%	$15.63	$19.23	$0.81
2	Cashiers and retail salespeople	7.2%	$12.02	$19.23	$0.63
3	Nursing, psychiatric, home health, and personal care aides	6.3%	$10.82	$12.98	$0.83
4	Janitors, building cleaners, maids, and housekeepers	5.1%	$9.62	$16.83	$0.57
5	Pre-K, K-12, and special education teachers	4.3%	$20.19	$26.44	$0.76
6	Registered nurses	2.4%	$31.25	$33.65	$0.93
7	Waiters and waitresses	2.4%	$9.62	$12.02	$0.80
8	Customer service representatives	2.2%	$17.31	$19.23	$0.90
9	Cooks	2.0%	$9.62	$10.67	$0.90
10	Childcare workers	1.8%	$7.21	$11.54	$0.63

NWLC calculations are based on 2017 American Community Survey 1-year sample using IPUMS-USA available at https://usa.ipums.org/usa/. Figures are in 2017 dollars. Median hourly wages are for full time, year round workers. Hourly wages are derived by dividing median annual earnings by 2,080 hours, which assumes a 40 hour work week for 52 weeks.

1 National Women's Law Center (NWLC) calculations are based on U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2019 Annual Social and Economic Supplement [hereinafter CPS, 2019 ASEC], Table PINC-05, available at https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-05.html.

2 Native women self-identified themselves in the U.S. Census Bureau 2017 American Community Survey as American Indian or Native Alaskan.

3 NWLC calculations based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey [hereinafter 2017 ACS], tables B20017C and B20017H. Figures are for full time, year round workers. Men and women self-identify their sex and race/ethnicity in the ACS. Native women self-identified themselves as Native American or Native Alaskan. White, non-Hispanic men self-identified as white and specified that they were not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. This fact sheet only addresses the wage gap for Native women, but the wage gaps for other groups of women compared to white, non-Hispanic men are also substantial. Among full time, year-round workers, Black women made 61 cents, Latina women made 53 cents, Asian women made 85 cents, and white, non-Hispanic women made 77 cents for every dollar white, non-Hispanic men made. Wage gap figures are calculated by taking the median earnings of women and men working full time. year round. Median earnings describe the earnings of a worker at the 50th percentile – right in the middle.

4 *Id.*

5 NWLC calculations based on 2017 ACS 1-year sample using Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas, and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 9.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2019, available at https://ipums.org/.

6 NWLC calculations based on American Community Survey 2013-2017 5-year sample using Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas, and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 9.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2019, available at https://ipums.org/.

7 NWLC calculations based on American Community Survey 2013-2017 5-year sample using Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas, and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 9.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2019, available at https://ipums.org/. Five states (Hawaii, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont and West Virginia) and the District of Columbia have insufficient data, due to small sample sizes, to calculate state wage gap for Native women.

8 Figure assumes a wage gap of $24,443—the gap in median earnings between full time, year round working Native women ($33,571) and white, non-Hispanic men ($58,014) in 2017—each year for 40 years. Figures are not adjusted for inflation.

9 *Id.*

10 NWLC calculations based on ACS 2017 1-year sample using using Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas, and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 9.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2019, available at https://ipums.org/.

11 NWLC calculations based on 2017 ACS 1-year sample using IPUMS. The American Community Survey collects data from respondents about the location of their household. Rural is defined as those whose households were located outside of a metro area. City is defined as those whose households were located inside a metro area and in a central/principal city. Suburban areas are defined as those whose households were located inside a metro area, but outside of a central/principal city.

12 NWLC calculations based on American Community Survey 2017 1-year average using Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas and Matthew Sobek, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 9.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2019, available at https://usa.ipums.org/usa/. Figures are for employed workers in 2017. The low-wage and high-wage workforces can be defined in a variety of ways. Here, the low-wage workforce is defined as the 40 detailed occupations that have the lowest median hourly wages based on U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2018 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm. All 40 low-wage jobs have median hourly wages of $11.82 or less. The high-wage workforce is defined as the 40 detailed occupations that have the highest median hourly wages. All high-wage jobs have median hourly wages of $51.46 or more.

13 *Id.*

14 *Id.*

15 *Id.*

16 *Id.* Median housing costs for renters was $991 per month in 2017. U.S. Census Bureau, American Housing Survey: 2017, using American Housing Survey Table Creator, available at https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ahs/data/interactive/ahstablecreator.html. Average costs for child care in a center in Michigan for a four-year-old ($8,678 annually in 2017 or $723 per month). Michigan's cost for this type of child care falls at the median of all state averages (including the District of Columbia). Estimates come from Child Care Aware of America, Parents and the High Cost of Child Care: 2018 Report, Appendix I, available at https://usa.childcareaware.org/advocacy-public-policy/resources/research/costofcare/.

17 *Id.* Figure assumes a wage gap of $43,000—the gap in median earnings between full time, year round working Native women ($62,000) and white, non-Hispanic men ($105,000) in high-wage occupations —each year for 40 years. Figures are not adjusted for inflation.

18 NWLC calculations based on ACS 2017 1-year sample using using Steven Ruggles, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas, and Matthew Sobek. IPUMS USA: Version 9.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2019, available at https://ipums.org/.

19 *Id.* Figures are in 2017 dollars. Median hourly wages are for full time, year round workers. Hourly wages are derived by dividing median annual earnings by 2,080 hours, which assumes a 40-hour work week for 52 weeks.