

The State of Women in 2024

Data on Where Women Stand in America

MAJORITY RULE #1:

Our Lives Are Safe

The Realities of Gun Violence

- Women in the United States [are 28 times more likely](#) to be murdered by guns than women in peer nations, and the United States accounts for 92% of all women killed with guns across high-income countries.
- Intimate partner violence is a serious issue for women and our safety. [Women account for 75% of all intimate partner firearm homicide victims](#), and two in five victims of all female gun deaths were killed by a current or former intimate partner.
- Native American and Alaska Native, Black, and Latina women [are at a higher risk of being victims](#) of intimate partner violence with firearms than white women.
 - * Black women are three times more likely to be fatally shot by an intimate partner.
 - * Native American and Alaska Native women are four times as likely to be fatally shot by an intimate partner.
- Women are more likely than men to support common sense gun reform in the United States, and [polling shows that a majority of women \(64%\)](#) favor stricter gun laws.
 - * States with stricter gun laws see less gun violence. Everytown Research predicts that if every state in the country had the same gun laws as the states with the strongest policies, [298,000 lives could be saved over the next decade](#). So far in 2024, [43 states and the District of Columbia](#) have either enacted gun safety laws or have introduced gun safety laws that could become policy if passed by lawmakers.

Sexual Harassment and Assault

- [A recent study](#) found that at least 82% of women in America have experienced sexual harassment or assault in their lifetime. Additionally, data showed that:
 - * 32% of all American women have been sexually harassed or assaulted in the past year.
 - * 56% of women had their first experience of sexual harassment or assault before the age of 18.
 - * 78% of women have faced verbal sexual harassment, making this the most common form.
- * 31% of women have experienced cyber harassment, compared to only 15% of men.
- * Trans, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming people are affected by sexual assault and harassment at a similar rate to women, with 79% of nonbinary and gender non-conforming people having experienced sexual harassment and 87% of trans people having experienced some form of assault or abuse in their lifetime.

Mental Health

- [Around 24% of women](#) in the United States currently live with depression. Women are more likely than men to be diagnosed with depression.
 - * It has been found that Black, Hispanic, and Asian American women, on average, experience more depressive symptoms than any other population subgroup.
- [Women report a higher average level of stress](#) than men and are more likely than men to rate their stress levels between 8 and 10.
- In its 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, [the CDC found](#) that teen girls and teens who were part of the LGBTQIA+ community were more likely than their peers to experience persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, poor mental health, and suicidal thoughts and behaviors.
 - * The percentage of female students who felt persistently sad or hopeless did decrease compared to 2021, [when 3 in 5 teen girls felt persistently sad or hopeless](#)—the highest rate in a decade.
- Women are more likely than men to experience mental health issues from financial stress. [51% of women](#) said money had a negative effect on their mental health, compared to 42% of men.
 - * Another recent report found that women were also more likely than men to [report feeling consumed by money woes](#).
 - * Currently, [inflation and rising prices \(65%\)](#) are the leading cause of economic stress.
- Researchers at John Hopkins University [found that women living in states that banned abortion](#) immediately after the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade* had worse symptoms of anxiety and depression than those who live in states without bans. This was especially true for women aged 18 through 45.

MAJORITY RULE #2:

Our Bodies Are Respected

Reproductive Freedom and Abortion Access

- More than two years after the *Dobbs* decision that overturned the constitutional right to abortion, [41 states have policies in place banning abortion](#) at various stages of pregnancy, with 14 states enacting a total ban on abortion.
 - * Black and Native American and Alaska Native women ages 18–49 [are more likely than other racial groups to live in states with abortion bans and restrictions](#).
- Pregnant people [now have to travel further to access abortion care](#) than they did before the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Researchers found that the average travel time to an abortion facility increased from 28 to 100 minutes, with the amount of women living more than an hour's drive from a facility increasing from 15% to 33%.
 - * The increase in this distance was greatest in Southern states.
- In the year after the *Dobbs* decision, [at least 210 pregnant people faced criminal charges](#) related to pregnancy, birth, or pregnancy loss.
 - * The majority of those facing criminal charges were pregnant people with low incomes.
- Since 2022, [four states have enshrined protections for abortion in their constitutions](#) as a result of ballot initiatives approved by voters. In the November 2024 election, 10 states will give voters the option [to protect reproductive freedom on their ballots](#).
- [The majority of people in America \(63%\) believe that abortion should be legal](#) in all or most cases, and adults under 30 are even more likely to say abortion should be legal (76%).

Attacks on Trans and Gender-nonconforming People

- [In 2024 alone, over 380 new anti-trans bills were introduced](#), and at least 45 bills have been passed. The majority of these bills are focused on the treatment of trans people in educational settings and on access to gender-affirming healthcare.
- Black trans women—who face increased violence due to the intersections of gender identity and race—are more likely to be affected by violence against the trans community. [Since 2013, 62% of victims of fatal violence against trans and gender-nonconforming people identified as Black trans women](#).
- [Polling shows that 67% of people in America](#) support transgender and nonbinary people living in alignment with their gender identity. But it's important to note that less people polled support trans and nonbinary people than they do gay and lesbian people, who held 80% support.

Healthcare Access and Affordability

- Young women are [uninsured at higher rates than older women](#). This gap reflects many factors, one of which is the lack of Medicaid expansion in 10 states, including Texas, where the rate of women of reproductive age and uninsured is as high as 22%.
 - * Medicaid covers 42% of all births in the United States, and it covers two-thirds of births for Black and Native American and Alaska Native people.
- [30% of women ages 19 to 44 are underinsured](#), meaning that while they do have insurance, they have high out-of-pocket costs compared to their yearly income. In this age group, women are underinsured at higher rates than men, which may mean they take on more medical debt and delay health care visits.
- Women who work in the United States are estimated to pay a total of [\\$15 billion more each year in healthcare costs](#) than men.
 - * Men are more likely to wait more than two years between healthcare visits, but when they do visit, they are likely to have fewer services than women. It was also found that women get less value from their insurance premiums than men do, and the average woman pays more out-of-pocket, even when excluding maternity claims.
- [Half of women in the United States](#) skip or delay medical care due to affordability, challenges to access, and past negative experiences. Women are 35% more likely to skip care than men.
- [About 1 in 5 Black women](#) say they have been treated unfairly by a healthcare provider or staff because of their racial or ethnic background, and they are more likely to report this unfair treatment than other subgroups, including other women of color.
 - * Young Black women are more likely than older Black women to say they have been treated unfairly by a healthcare provider due to their race, and women who describe their skin tone as dark are more likely to have these experiences compared to those who describe their skin as light.
 - * These interactions are more positive when Black women have a healthcare provider who shares their racial or ethnic background.

MAJORITY RULE #3:

Our Work Is Valued

The Gender Pay Gap

- Despite women's increased presence in the workforce, the gender wage gap [has hardly changed](#) over two decades. In fact, in 2023, [the wage gap widened](#) for the first time since 2003.
- In 2023, [women were paid an average of 75 cents](#) for every dollar a white, non-Hispanic man makes. This gap is larger for women of color, with:
 - * Black women being paid 64 cents—a decrease from 66 cents in 2022.
 - * Latina women being paid 51 cents.
 - * Native American women being paid 52 cents.
- * Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander women being paid as little as 49 cents (Bangladeshi women), with an overall average of 80 cents. It's important to note that, due to the wide demographics in this category, not all AANHPI women's experiences are clearly represented.
- Women employed in the United States [lost almost \\$1.7 trillion](#) in 2023 due to the wage gap. This gap persists regardless of industry, occupation, and education level, and the gap worsened for full-time, year-round workers.

Women and Unions

- Following the past few years of [women-led efforts to create](#) unions and better work conditions, [public approval for unions](#) in the United States is at 67%—the highest approval rating since 1965. Additionally, nearly half of non-unionized workers have indicated they would join a union if it was possible.
- Though women's union membership has declined since 1983, women currently [make up almost half of all union members](#), and current trends indicate that there could be a future increase in women's union membership.
 - * Black women have [the highest rate \(12%\) of union membership](#) among all racial and ethnic groups for women.
 - * Older women are [more likely than younger women](#) to have union representation. Only 9% of women ages 15–34 belong to a union.
 - * Full-time workers are [twice as likely as part-time workers](#) to have union membership. This disparity has a larger effect on women than men, given that women make up 60% of all part-time workers.
- Unionized women who worked full time were [typically paid 19% more per week](#) than women who are not in a union. They were also more likely to have access to paid sick time, retirement benefits, employee-sponsored health insurance, and predictable work schedules.
 - * Gender wage gaps are lower among workers who are in unions. In 2023, unionized women [were typically paid 88 cents](#) to every dollar unionized men were paid, compared to nonunion women making 83 cents for every dollar non-unionized men were paid.

Labor and the Economy

- Women make up nearly half of America’s workforce, and the share of women ages 25 to 54 who are employed [reached a record high of more than 75% in 2023](#). Women account for [the majority of minimum wage workers](#), and we make up two-thirds of all tipped workers.
 - * Despite high inflation rates, with prices [over 21% more expensive](#) than they were before the COVID-19 pandemic began, the federal minimum wage is still only \$7.25, and the federal minimum wage for tipped workers is still only \$2.13.
- The majority of women [report that they are not financially secure](#), including 79% of women with low incomes and 67% of women who live in rural areas.
- According to [a recent study](#), 60% of people taking on multiple jobs are women, which may be partially because we are overrepresented in low-paying jobs.
 - * This is especially true for Black and Latina women. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, which exacerbated existing inequalities, it was found that [Black and Latina women are two and a half times more likely](#) than white people to have jobs where pay is less than \$15 per hour.
- Women’s economic growth leads to overall economic growth: Women [typically reinvest up to 90% of their earnings](#) into their families and communities, compared to only 30% to 40% among men.
- Supermajority Ed Fund’s latest research found that [young women’s leading concern is economic well-being](#), with 48% of women polled citing cost of living as a top issue.
 - * 76% of young women agree, with 43% strongly agreeing, that they are unlikely to meet the same economic milestones as their parents or grandparents.

MAJORITY RULE #4:

Our Families Are Supported

Paid Family and Medical Leave

- The United States is the only high-income country in the world that does not have nationally mandated paid leave. Currently, [only 27% of people in America have access to paid family leave](#) through an employer, and this number is lower for those in the bottom 10% of earners, [at only 5%](#).
 - * Paid family leave is not only a policy that benefits employees: [It has also been found to result in higher employee retention](#), saving money for businesses. Each year, the economy currently [loses more than \\$22.5 billion in wages](#) due to lack of paid family and medical leave.
 - * [Thirteen states and the District of Columbia](#) have passed paid family and medical leave laws, despite the fact there are no such protections at the federal level.
 - * Unpaid leave under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides important job protections, [but it is available to only around 56% of workers](#)—and many can’t afford to take it.
- Short-term disability insurance is an essential source of pay for workers who are taking medical leave. However, [only about 43% of people in the private sector](#) have access to short-term disability coverage, and only 1 in 10 of the lowest percentage of earners in America have access.
 - * People in America in industries with large numbers of low-income workers—in which women of color are historically overrepresented—are less likely to have short-term disability through their employers.
- [A majority of voters in the United States](#) (85%) support paid family, parental, and medical leave policies, with nearly two thirds of those voters strongly supporting paid leave.
 - * [4 in 5 young women and 9 in 10 Black women](#) said that the creation of a paid family leave program is a motivation to vote.

The Realities of Caregiving

- Though the number of women working has rebounded in the years since the COVID-19 pandemic first began, child care—and its costs—continues to be a leading obstacle for women to remain in and reenter the workforce. The average annual price of child care [increased 23% between 2017 and 2023](#), and the current cost of child care for just one child [averages between 8% and 19% of total family income](#).
 - * [A recent study](#) found that 82% of Gen Z moms considered leaving the workforce last year due to the stress and cost of child care.
- Young people are taking on many forms of caregiving: Of the approximately 48 million caregivers in the U.S., [an estimated 14 million are under the age of 24](#).
 - * Additionally, [72% of Gen Z expect to care for their aging parents](#), and 60% of Gen Z plan to financially support their parents' senior care.
 - * As cost of living continues to increase while pay stays stagnant, [1 in 3 Gen Zers who said they will not help their parents](#) are doing so because they don't anticipate they will have enough money to care for their parents.
- MomsRising and National Women's Law Center (NWLC) [found that two-thirds of voters on both sides of the aisle overwhelmingly support raising taxes on the wealthiest 1%](#) to help invest in caregiving priorities, such as child care, elder and disability care, and paid family and medical leave.

Education Access and Affordability

- Since 2006, [39 states have decreased funding](#) for their K-12 public schools, and this decrease cost schools over \$360 billion between 2016 and 2021.
 - * About 60% of the nation's students that are in these chronically underfunded districts are in just 10 states, and the majority of these states are in the South.
 - * Black students are three times more likely than white students to live in chronically underfunded districts.
- From January to August 2024, there were [414 attempts to censor books and other learning materials in schools and libraries](#) across the country, with 1,128 unique titles being challenged. This is a decrease since last year, when there were 695 attempts to censor materials, but the number reported in 2024 continues to far exceed the numbers before 2020.
- The average cost of college [has more than doubled](#) in the 21st century, even while household incomes have hardly increased.
 - * Students of color are more likely than their white counterparts to struggle to pay for college. Black students specifically face the highest unmet need, with [around a \\$9,000 gap in what they owe versus what they can cover](#) through Pell grants and family resources.
 - * In 2024, [only 4% of Gen Z students](#) said they were fully funded for their school year, and 90% of Gen Z students didn't yet know how they would get the money they needed for school.
- [Nearly two thirds of all student debt](#)—which equates to around \$929 billion—is held by women, and [Black women hold the highest amount](#) of student loan debt of any racial or gender group.
 - * Twelve years after starting college, [Black women owe 13% more than they initially borrowed in student loan debt](#) compared to white men, who have paid off 44% of their debt. This is a result of systemic discrimination and inequalities, including the gender and racial wealth gap.

MAJORITY RULE #5:**Our Government Represents Us****Representation of Women in Politics**

- Women make up 51% of the American population, but only [32% of state legislators](#) and [28% of U.S. Congress members](#) are women.
- [Our current U.S. Congress](#) is the most diverse in history, with the highest number of women, LGBTQIA+ community members, and people of color.
- Supermajority Ed Fund's latest research [shows overwhelming support \(79%\) for more diverse leadership](#) in our government. This is seen as pivotal to addressing many of the issues our country faces today.

Women's Participation in Elections

- Women are [registered to vote and participate in elections](#) at a higher rate than men. In every presidential election since 1980, women have been the majority of voters.
- In the weeks after Vice President Kamala Harris became the presumptive presidential nominee, there was a surge in women, voters of color, and young voters registering, [with women accounting for nearly 55% of all new registrants](#).
 - * Registration for young Black women nearly tripled compared to 2020.
 - * There was a 150% increase in registration of young Latina women.
- Supermajority Ed Fund's latest research [found that a majority of young women \(58%\) strongly agree](#) that we must vote to have a say not only in our futures, but also in our children and younger siblings' futures, so they can grow up in a better world than previous generations have left for us.
- * In most places, [this surge eclipsed](#) the 2022 post-Dobbs increase in registration.

Barriers to the Freedom to Vote

- Because women [participate in elections at a higher rate than men](#), women are more likely to be affected by barriers to voting. These barriers are also more likely to affect women of color, young women, women who are elderly, and women with disabilities.
 - * Since January 2021, [30 states have enacted 78 laws](#) that create barriers to voting—almost double the amount of these laws that were enacted between 2013 and 2020. November 2024 will be the first presidential election with these laws in place.
 - * At the same time, since January 2021, 41 states and the District of Columbia have enacted 168 laws that support the freedom to vote.
- Women make up the largest percentage of college students, which means that laws limiting on-campus and absentee voting (which many students use to vote while in school) are more likely to affect young women voters.
 - * [New laws in 27 states](#) could keep students from voting in the November 2024 election.
 - * In the 2020 election, [nearly half of all young voters voted absentee](#).
- Information gaps can also be a barrier to voting. Though many young Black people are interested in civic engagement, data has shown that [around 1 in 5 Black youth who were unregistered for the 2022 election](#) did not know how to register to vote, had trouble with registering, or missed the deadline.

Barriers to the Freedom to Vote, continued...

* More than 1 in 5 young Black people who did not vote in 2022 reported that it was because they did not have enough information or had a problem with absentee ballots.

◦ Only 24% of Black youth voted by mail, compared to 34% of non-Black youth. These young Black people are more likely to live in states where barriers to mail-in voting exist.

- Mississippi has the largest share of Black voters in the country, at 37%, followed by Georgia, where Black people make up a third of all eligible voters. [Both states have enacted laws that create barriers to voting](#) since the 2020 presidential election, including voter ID laws, gerrymandering laws, and increased sentences for errors in voter registration.

THE SUPER RULE:

The lives and experiences of women—particularly women of color—are front and center in addressing all of our nation’s challenges.

Black Women’s Maternal Health

- Black women are [three times more likely](#) to die from pregnancy-related causes than white women, despite the fact that more than 80% of pregnancy-related deaths in the United States are preventable.

* [Nearly 1 in 4 Black women](#) are likely to report at least one form of mistreatment from health care providers, and they are twice as likely as white women to report that they were ignored or their request for help was refused.

- [A recent study](#), focused on nearly 1 million births across New Jersey, found that doctors are more likely to perform unnecessary C-sections on Black mothers than white mothers, putting Black pregnant people at a higher risk for serious complications.

* These unnecessary procedures were more likely to happen when hospitals had empty operating rooms, which means the decision for these C-sections may be linked to financial incentives to fill the rooms.

- [Midwifery care could avert more than 80% of maternal and infant deaths](#), but only around 12% of births are attended by a midwife—partially because most insurance does not cover midwife care. Black women who have recently given birth [are less likely](#) than white women to have health insurance.

* Currently, [less than 5%](#) of midwives in the United States are people of color.

Gender and Immigration

- Women [account for more than half of all immigrants](#) in America, but due to their gender, they are more likely to face harm while immigrating and creating lives in the United States, especially if they are undocumented.
- Abuse rates among women who are immigrants [are as high as 49.8%](#), which is almost three times the national average in the United States.

* When immigrants who are undocumented experience intimate partner violence, they are less likely to call the police, seek medical care, or reach out to family services when it happens. Though women who experience intimate partner violence can apply for legal immigration status without their abusers’ help, the mean processing time for these cases [increased from 20 months to 31 months following the COVID-19 pandemic](#).

Gender and Immigration, continued...

- As of June 2024, [at least 1.9 million women who are undocumented](#) live in a state that either bans abortion completely or outlaws it by the 18th week of gestation. These bans only exacerbate the fear of criminalization for pregnant immigrant women and can lead to adverse health outcomes.
- Men have historically crossed the United States-Mexico border at higher rates than women. However, due to lack of employment, climate change, and fear of violence in their home country, more women have begun crossing the border. For the first time ever, [data has shown](#) that more women than men died while trying to enter the United States through Mexico.

Women of Color and Care Work

- Women of color are overrepresented in care work roles, which also tend to be lower paid jobs, including:
 - * Direct care, which includes personal care aides, home health aids, and nursing assistants that help older adults and individuals with disabilities. Though women of color only make up around 20% of the entire labor force, [they make up 53% of direct care work](#).
 - [About 44% of women of color who work in direct care](#) live at or below the federal poverty level. Out of the women living below the poverty threshold, around 40% of them are immigrants.
 - * Child care, including home-based, formal child care, and early education environments.
 - Early childhood educators are 97% women, and [nearly 40% are women of color](#).
 - [Around 16% of early childhood educators](#) are Black women, though they only represent 6% of the United States' population, and Latina women make up another 16%, though they only make up 7% of the United States' population.
 - Child care workers [remain near the bottom of all occupations](#) in the United States when ranked by annual pay.
- Funds made available to states during the COVID-19 pandemic [helped more than 220,000 child care providers keep their doors open](#), benefitting as many as 9.6 million children and helping working parents. But all these pandemic-era relief measures expired as of September 2024, risking child care closures and economic strife for child care providers.