



FACT SHEET

The State of Women in Illinois

Despite the advancements made by women over the past few decades, it is still difficult for women to get ahead and not just get by. There remain challenges on economic security, leadership, and health issues that make it harder for women to have a fair shot at success. While an increasing number of women are either the sole breadwinner for their family or share the role with their partners, women nationwide are still paid only 77 cents for every dollar a man makes.¹ And while 2012 was a watershed year for women in terms of getting elected to public office, women comprise only 18.1 percent of Congress despite making up more than half of the U.S. population.² And on the health front, 2012 saw continued efforts by conservatives to erode women's ability to make their own decisions about their reproductive health and well-being.

A deeper examination shows that women in some states face higher barriers to success than others. Illinois, however, stands out as one of the states that are among the best in the nation for women. Across 36 factors of economic security, leadership, and health, Illinois ranks 13th in the nation for how women are faring. On many issues important to women, Illinois should provide an example for the rest of the country and demonstrate how women can get a fair shot at achieving economic security, reaching success, and living a healthy life.

Overall grade

B+

National ranking

13

Illinois facts

Economic security

Illinois received a “B” on the economic factors examined in the report. Overall, Illinois ranks 16th in the nation based on the economic factors analyzed.

- **Women in Illinois make 79 cents for every dollar a man makes.** Illinois has the 17th-smallest wage gap in the nation for women overall. However, women of color are not faring as well: Hispanic women in Illinois make only 47 cents for every dollar a white male makes.
- **Almost 16 percent of women in Illinois live in poverty.** This places Illinois with the 24th-lowest poverty rate for women in the nation. Women of color, however, are not doing as well: 33.3 percent of African American women in Illinois live in poverty.

- **Illinois doesn't not have a policy providing for paid family, medical, or temporary disability leave.** This leaves women—and men—without the security of knowing their job will be there if they need to take time off to care for family or medical issues.

Leadership

Illinois received an “A” on the leadership factors examined in the report. Overall, Illinois ranks third in the nation based on the leadership factors analyzed.

- **Half of Illinois' statewide elected executive offices are held by women.** Illinois ranks fourth in the nation on female elected officials in statewide elected executive offices.
- **However, more than 61 percent of the managerial jobs in Illinois are held by men.** Women hold only 38.2 percent of the managerial jobs in Illinois, despite making up 52 percent of the state's population.

Health

Illinois received a “B-” on the health factors examined in the report. Overall, Illinois ranks 19th in the nation based on the health factors analyzed.

- **More than 13 percent of nonelderly women in Illinois are uninsured.** Despite the relatively low number of uninsured, Illinois stands out as a state that is expanding Medicaid, which could provide insurance for 219,000 more women.
- **Illinois has the 13th-lowest maternal mortality rate in the nation,** with 7.8 deaths for every 100,000 live births.

Endnotes

1 National Women's Law Center, “The Wage Gap By State for Women Overall,” April 2, 2013, available at <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/wage-gap-state-women-overall>.

2 Jane Farrell, “Infographic: Where Are U.S. Women in 2013?,” Center for American Progress, March 8, 2013, available at <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/labor/news/2013/03/08/55678/infographic-where-are-u-s-women-in-2013/>.