



FACT SHEET

# The State of Women in North Carolina

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 are still paid only 77 cents for every dollar a man makes.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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. North Carolina stands out as one of the states that are among the worst in the nation for women. Across 36 factors of economic security, leadership, and health, North Carolina ranks 39th in the nation for how women are faring. This illustrates the long path ahead before women in North Carolina can get a fair shot at achieving economic security, reaching success, and living a healthy life.

Overall grade

**D-**

National ranking

**39**

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## North Carolina facts

### Economic security

North Carolina received a “C+” on the economic factors examined in the report. Overall, North Carolina ranks 21st in the nation based on the economic factors analyzed.

- **Women in North Carolina make 82 cents for every dollar a man makes.** This means North Carolina has the 10th-smallest wage gap in the nation. The statistics are worse for women of color: Hispanic women in North Carolina make only 49 cents for every dollar a white male makes.
- **Almost 20 percent of women in North Carolina live in poverty.** This places North Carolina 10th worst in the nation on poverty rates for women. The statistics are even worse for women of color: 30.2 percent of African American women in North Carolina live in poverty.
- **North Carolina does 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

North Carolina received a “C” on the leadership factors examined in the report. Overall, North Carolina ranks 24th in the nation based on the leadership factors analyzed.

- **Only 20 percent of North Carolina’s congressional seats are held by women.** North Carolina is in the middle of the pack nationwide when it comes to female elected officials in Congress.
- **More than 61 percent of the managerial jobs in North Carolina are held by men.** Women hold only 38.5 percent of the managerial jobs in North Carolina, despite making up 53 percent of the state’s population.

## Health

North Carolina received an “F” on the health factors examined in the report. Overall, North Carolina ranks 47th in the nation based on the health factors analyzed.

- **More than 17 percent of nonelderly women in North Carolina are uninsured.** Despite the number of uninsured women in North Carolina, North Carolina refuses to expand Medicaid. Expanding Medicaid could provide insurance for 277,000 women.
- **North Carolina places unconstitutional restrictions/conditions on a woman’s access to reproductive health care.** North Carolina forces women seeking an abortion to undergo a medically unnecessary ultrasound. This law is aimed at intimidating women who are seeking abortions and also opens the doors for some clinics to force women to undergo an even more invasive transvaginal ultrasound.
- **North Carolina has the 20th-highest maternal mortality rate,** with 10.9 deaths per 100,000 live births.

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### 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-2>