

Beyond Wages: Effects of the Latina Wage Gap

A persistent gender-based wage gap continues to harm women, their families, and the economy—and is particularly damaging for Latinas.*

Even as Latinas have entered the workforce in record numbers and now number more than 11 million workers, they nonetheless face the largest wage gaps among women. Latinas in the United States are typically paid just 53 cents for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic men.¹ Overall, women employed full time, year-round are typically paid 80 cents for every dollar paid to men employed full time, year-round.²

Latinas face a myriad of obstacles in the labor force, including overrepresentation in low-wage service occupations, limited access to benefits—including paid leave and retirement plan access—and discrimination, among others.³ However, the Latina pay gap extends beyond just low-wage workers, affecting Latinas at every level—including executives and other professional occupations.

The nature of low-wage work and a persistent gender wage gap hurt Latinas and their families, making Latinas—many of whom are single heads of households—especially vulnerable to experiencing poverty. Worryingly, Latinas are the least likely group of women workers to live with

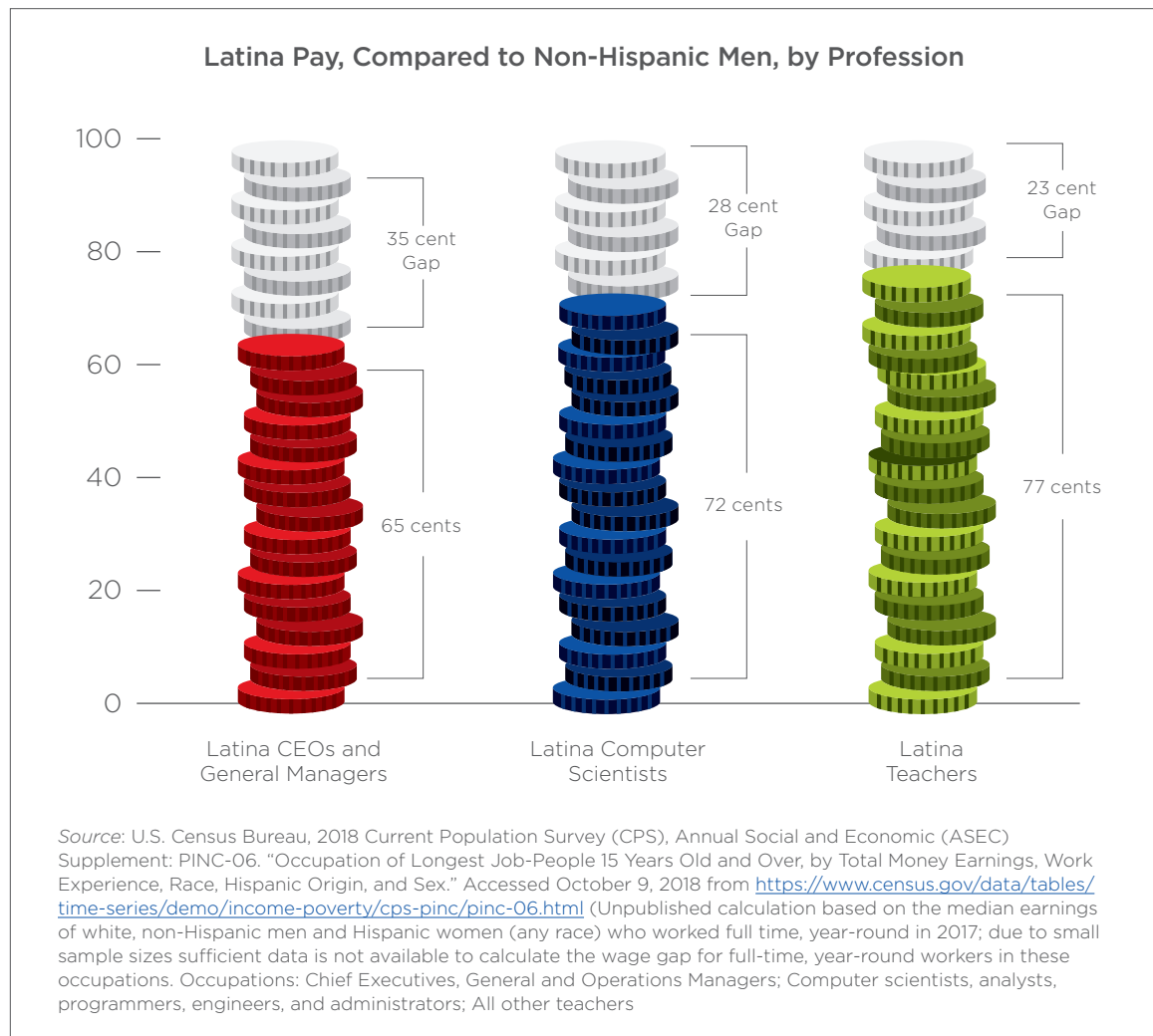
economic security or have access to paid sick time.⁴ Achieving pay parity is the first step to ensuring that working Latinas now and, in the future, can achieve economic security and find an opportunity to build and maintain wealth.

Rampant wage disparities persist across states and occupations, with potentially devastating consequences for Latinas and their families.

- In the 25 states with the largest numbers of Latinas working full time, year-round; pay for Latinas ranges from 42 cents for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic men in New Jersey, to 61 cents in Ohio.⁵ (See Appendix I for a full listing of wage gaps by state).
- In the occupations in which the largest numbers of Latinas are employed; Latinas are paid less than White, non-Hispanic men. Specifically, in sales, Latinas are typically paid just 52 cents for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic men; in service jobs, 61 cents; in management, 60 cents; and in office and administrative support, 72 cents.⁶

* The terms “Hispanic” and “Latino” are used interchangeably by the U.S. Census Bureau and throughout this document to refer to persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central and South American, Dominican, Spanish and other Hispanic descent; they may be of any race.

- The wage gap persists, even within the highest-paid occupations for Latinas. The median pay for Latina chief executives is \$71,361 per year, compared to median pay of \$108,953 for White, non-Hispanic men. Latina computer scientists are typically paid \$61,781 per year, compared to \$86,134 for White, non-Hispanic men.⁷



The wage gap harms Latinas, their families, and the U.S. economy.

The median wage for Latinas in the United States was \$32,002 per year, compared to the median wage of \$60,388 for White, non-Hispanic men—meaning the wage gap costs Latinas \$28,386 each per year.⁸ These lost wages mean Latinas have less money to support themselves and their families, save and invest for the future, and spend on goods and services.

Eliminating the wage gap would provide much-needed income to Latinas, including many heads of households.

- More than half of Latina mothers are key breadwinners for their families, which means their households rely heavily on their wages to make ends meet and get ahead.⁹
- More than three million family households in the United States are headed by Latinas,¹⁰ and 34% of these households live below the poverty level, compared to 12.3% of all U.S. households.¹¹ This means that more than one million Latina-headed family households live in poverty.

If the wage gap were eliminated, on average, a Latina working full time, year-round would have enough money to afford one of the following:



More than three additional years of child care.¹²



Nearly 19 additional months of mortgage payments.¹³



More than two additional years of rent.¹⁴



Almost two years of the maximum retirement contribution to her employer-sponsored 401(k) retirement account.



More than five years of the maximum retirement contribution to her Traditional or Roth IRA account.

Latina workers have significant concerns and overwhelmingly support fair pay and paid leave.

In addition to low wages, Latinas report gender and racial discrimination, sexual harassment and violence in the workplace—factors that, in addition to the lack of family-friendly workplace policies, are major drivers of the wage gap.¹⁵ In a recent survey conducted by the YWCA, more than half of Latinas report having trouble meeting basic needs.¹⁶ The majority of women want to see policies developed that support working family caregivers and that help build family wealth and security in retirement.

- More than half of Latinas (56%) report being very worried about having a medical expense they cannot afford, and nearly half (45%) report being very worried about being able to afford their rent or mortgage.¹⁷
- More than half of Latinas (53%) report being very worried about being able to care for their relatives as they age and 38% report being very worried about having access to paid family and medical leave.¹⁸

- More than eight in 10 Latinas (85%) strongly agree that Congress should strengthen equal pay laws and eight in 10 (80%) strongly agree that Congress should pass paid family and medical leave legislation.¹⁹

Latinas and their families deserve strong policies that support economic security.

Latinas contribute so much to their families, communities and the national economy. Yet, they continue to bear the brunt of unequal pay, limited access to paid sick time and paid family and medical leave, and discrimination. Latinas know what they need, and their voice is clear on the importance of strong policies that would improve their access to high quality jobs, fair and nondiscriminatory treatment, and family-friendly workplaces and supports. These policies would help close the wage gap, benefit families, and ensure retirement security for Latinas. It's time to listen to Latinas and other women, and support policies that reward hard work, expand economic security, and help bolster the national economy.

Appendix I: Latina Wage Gap By State, 2017

Wage Gap for Latinas by State

An analysis of the wage gap in the 25 states with the largest number of Latinas who work full time, year-round, plus Puerto Rico

State	Number of Latinas Working Full Time, Year-Round	Median Wages for Latinas	Median Wages for White, Non-Hispanic Men	Annual Wage Gap	Cents on the Dollar
California	1,598,564	\$30,624	\$71,875	\$41,251	\$0.43
Texas	1,217,007	\$27,085	\$61,496	\$34,411	\$0.44
Florida	661,657	\$30,208	\$50,161	\$19,953	\$0.60
New York	457,532	\$35,191	\$62,558	\$27,367	\$0.56
Puerto Rico	321,342	\$23,290	\$33,968	\$10,678	\$0.69
Illinois	250,300	\$29,566	\$60,904	\$31,338	\$0.49
New Jersey	232,145	\$31,629	\$74,524	\$42,895	\$0.42
Arizona	229,691	\$29,685	\$53,958	\$24,273	\$0.55
Colorado	131,419	\$31,455	\$58,778	\$27,323	\$0.54
New Mexico	119,240	\$30,440	\$54,898	\$24,458	\$0.55
Nevada	97,044	\$30,035	\$54,486	\$24,451	\$0.55
Virginia	96,882	\$32,224	\$61,274	\$29,050	\$0.53
Georgia	93,160	\$25,361	\$52,202	\$26,841	\$0.49
Pennsylvania	85,941	\$30,039	\$52,763	\$22,724	\$0.57
Washington	84,464	\$28,622	\$61,201	\$32,579	\$0.47
Massachusetts	81,275	\$34,785	\$67,267	\$32,482	\$0.52
North Carolina	80,140	\$24,228	\$49,896	\$25,668	\$0.49
Maryland	72,923	\$32,270	\$70,241	\$37,971	\$0.46
Connecticut	63,441	\$33,504	\$70,724	\$37,220	\$0.47
Oregon	46,919	\$26,433	\$52,252	\$25,819	\$0.51
Michigan	45,608	\$30,318	\$52,066	\$21,748	\$0.58
Ohio	43,354	\$31,075	\$50,832	\$19,757	\$0.61
Utah	42,866	\$25,547	\$54,814	\$29,267	\$0.47
Indiana	42,344	\$27,014	\$50,086	\$23,072	\$0.54
Wisconsin	38,389	\$26,941	\$51,064	\$24,123	\$0.53
Oklahoma	37,053	\$23,987	\$49,334	\$25,347	\$0.49

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau. (2017). American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016, Geographies: All States within United States Plus Puerto Rico, Table B20017I: Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in 2016 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 (Hispanic or Latino); Table B20017H: Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in 2016 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 (White Alone, not Hispanic or Latino); and Table B20005I: Sex by Work Experience in the Past 12 Months by Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in 2016 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) for the Population 16 Years and Over (Hispanic or Latino).

Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Census Bureau. 2018 Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: Table PINC-05. "Work Experience in 2017 - People 15 Years Old and Over by Total Money Earnings in 2017, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex." Accessed October 9, 2018. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-05.html> (Unpublished calculation based on the median earnings of white, non-Hispanic men and Hispanic women (any race) who worked full time, year-round in 2017; full-time is defined as 35 hours a week or more).
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey. Table 10. Employed persons by occupation, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex." Accessed October 11, 2018. <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat10.htm>; Michel, Zoe Z., and Liz Ben-Ishai. "Buenos Empleos: Latinos' Limited Access to Quality Jobs." August 2016. Accessed October 9, 2018. <https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/public-resources-and-publications/publication-1/Latinos-and-Job-Quality-FINAL.pdf>.
- 4 Suh, Jooyeoun, Jennifer Clark, and Jeff Hayes. "Basic Economic Security in the United States: How Much Income Do Working Adults Need in Each State?" Institute for Women's Policy Research. October 11, 2018. Accessed October 9, 2018. <https://iwpr.org/publications/best-us-2018/>.
- 5 U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016, Geographies: All States within United States, Tables B20017I and B20017H. "Median Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in 2016 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 (Hispanic or Latino)." Accessed October 9, 2018. http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B20017I&prodType=table (This calculation is based on a comparison of the median earnings of white, non-Hispanic men working full time, year-round with that of Latinas working full time, year-round.); U.S. Census Bureau. American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2012-2016, Geographies: All States within United States, Table B20005I. "Sex by Work Experience in the Past 12 Months by Earnings in the Past 12 Months (in 2016 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) for the Population 16 Years and Over (Hispanic or Latino)." Accessed October 9, 2018. http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_B20005I&prodType=table.
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau. 2018 Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic (ASEC) Supplement: PINC-06. "Occupation of Longest Job-People 15 Years Old and Over, by Total Money Earnings, Work Experience, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex." Accessed October 9, 2018. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/cps-pinc/pinc-06.html> (Unpublished calculation based on the median earnings of white, non-Hispanic men and Hispanic women (any race) who worked full time, year-round in 2017; full-time is defined as 35 hours a week or more).
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 See note 1.
- 9 Anderson, Julie. "Breadwinner Mothers by Race/Ethnicity and State." September 8, 2016. Accessed October 30, 2018. <https://iwpr.org/publications/breadwinner-mothers-by-raceethnicity-and-state/>.
- 10 U.S. Census Bureau. 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2017, Table B11001I. "Household Type (Including Living Alone) (Hispanic or Latino)." Accessed October 9, 2018. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_1YR_B11001I&prodType=table (Calculation uses family households headed by females living in a household with family and no husband. A family household includes a householder, one or more people living in the same household who are related to the householder, and anyone else living in the same household.)
- 11 U.S. Census Bureau. 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2017, Table S0201. "Selected Population Profile in the United States (Hispanic or Latino (of any race)." Accessed October 9, 2018. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_17_1YR_S0201&prodType=table (To determine whether a household falls below the poverty level, the U.S. Census Bureau considers the income of the householder, size of family, number of related children, and, for one- and two-person families, age of householder. The poverty threshold in 2017 was \$19,749 for a single householder and two children under 18.)
- 12 "The US and the High Cost of Child Care: 2018." Accessed October 9, 2018. <http://usa.childcareaware.org/advocacy-public-policy/resources/research/costofcare/>. Unpublished calculation of \$8,670 based on the average cost of center-based child care for a four-year-old. This average is not representative of the mean and is an approximation calculated by weighting state child care cost averages by the number of programs by type reported by each state. It is not to be considered a "national average."
- 13 U.S. Census Bureau. 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2017, Table GCT251I. "Median Monthly Housing Costs for Owner-Occupied Housing Units with a Mortgage (Dollars)." Accessed October 9, 2018. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_17_1YR_GCT251I_US01PR&prodType=table (Calculation uses median monthly housing costs for owner-occupied housing units with a mortgage).
- 14 U.S. Census Bureau. 2018 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates 2017, Table GCT2514. "Median Monthly Housing Costs for Renter-Occupied Housing Units (Dollars)." Retrieved October 9, 2018. https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_17_1YR_GCT2514_US01PR&prodType=table (Calculation uses median gross rent).
- 15 Glynn, Sarah Jane. "Gender Wage Inequality." April 9, 2018. Accessed October 9, 2018. <https://equitablegrowth.org/research-paper/gender-wage-inequality/?longform=true>.
- 16 Lake Research Partners and American Viewpoint conducted a national survey among 1,038 adult women with oversamples of 100 Black women, 100 Latinas, 100 Asian/Pacific Islander women, and 100 Native American women. The survey was conducted from Aug. 27 - Sept. 6, 2018. The margin of error for the sample as a whole is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points but was higher for subgroups. YWCA USA. "What Women Want 2018." September 2018. Accessed October 9, 2018. https://www.ywca.org/wp-content/uploads/WhatWomenWant2018_final.pdf.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Ibid.
- 19 Ibid.