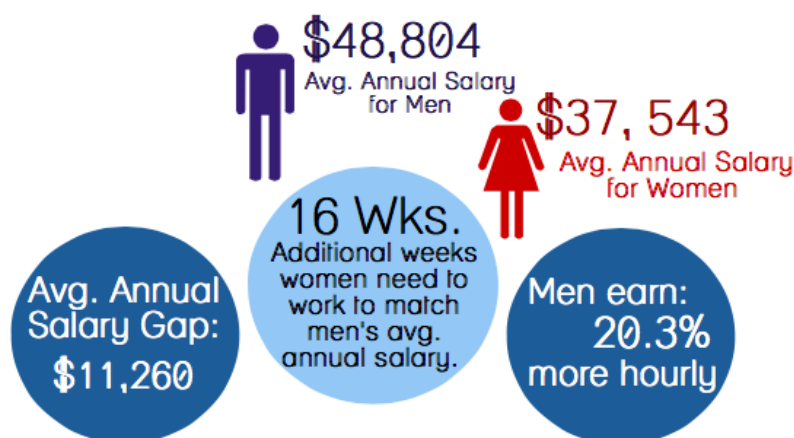


Left Out: Working Women in Florida

By Ali R. Bustamante

Florida's female workforce earned an average annual salary of \$11,260 below their male counterparts in 2013, according to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics¹. Five decades after the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 women continue to earn 23.1% below men's an average annual salary. In 2013, the average annual salary for women in Florida was \$37,543, compared to \$48,804 for men. On average, women need to work an additional 16 weeks to earn the same annual salary of men. That means that women matched the 2013 average salaries of men the week of April 14, 2014.



Unpacking the Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap is explained by numerous factors that affect the way that employers value prospective workers. Employers pay a premium for more productive workers that are often older, more educated, and in specialized occupations. In fact, many believe that the gender pay gap exists only because of the different education and occupation choices made by men and women.

However, when controlling for age, education level, and occupation, Florida's women are paid an average of 18.4% less for each hour or work compared to men. This means that women are paid considerably less than men even when working the same job and using the same level of skills.

¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Current Population Survey 2013.

Additional factors contributing to the gender pay gap in Florida may be a gender difference in the willingness and ability to negotiate salary as well as discrimination. While discrimination is difficult to identify and measure it is likely that many women are discriminated against in workplaces throughout Florida². What's more is that many employers and coworkers—both men and women—may be discriminating against women without being aware of it.

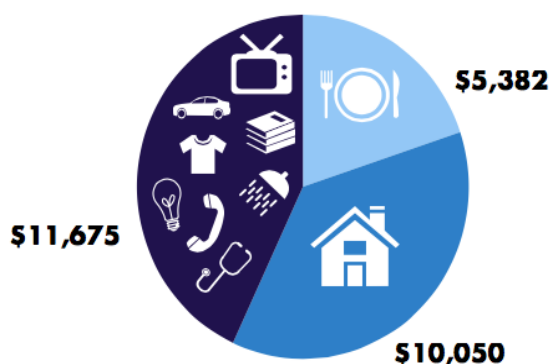
Not Enough to Survive

Women are not unilaterally affected by the gender pay gap because lower earning also affect their families, especially their children. When women earn less pay for the same job performed by men they are left more economically vulnerable than most people. In fact, single women with children are one of the lowest-earning work populations in Florida. Single women with children earn an

average gross annual salary of \$34,021. After paying a payroll tax rate of 20.3% their net pay is \$27,107³.

However, housing and food for one adult and one child absorb 56.9% of the net pay for most single women with children⁴. Ultimately, these women only have \$11,675 to cover all other expenses for themselves and their child.

Annual Expenses of Single Working Mothers



The gender pay gap has been a part of Florida's workplaces for a long time and many have come to accept it as a normal part of working life. In fact, since 1990, the gender pay gap has only declined by 1.8%⁵. It is crucial that employers and the government join women and all workers in closing the gender pay gap. Equal pay laws need to be strengthened and enforced and fairer and more transparent pay systems need to be implemented. Florida's workers have much to gain from closing the gender pay gap because it affects families and communities for lifetimes.

² Lips, Hilary M. 2013. 'Acknowledging Discrimination as a Key to the Gender Pay Gap'. *Sex Roles* 68(3-4):223-230.

³ Payroll taxes include federal withholdings, social security, and Medicare.

⁴ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development: Fair Market Rent Documentation System -average fair market rent for a two-bedroom home in Florida and U.S. Department of Agriculture: Official USDA Food Plans - average monthly moderate cost food plan for an adult female and a child under the age of 12.

⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: Current Population Survey 1990.