Pay Equity

Latina Equal Pay Day

WNY WOMEN'S FOUNDATION

Latina Equal Pay Day marks how far into the current year Latinas must work to be paid what White, non-Hispanic men were paid in the previous year. This year, that date falls on October 8, meaning more than 9 additional months. This highlights the intersection of gender, racial, and ethnic biases and discrimination, as well as the broader economic inequalities Latinas face in the workforce.

In 2025, Latinas in the U.S. working full-time, year-round were paid **60 cents** for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic men. This marks the first narrowing of the wage gap in three years, after Latinas were paid just 58 cents in 2022, 2023, and 2024. The 40-cent wage gap translates to an **annual loss of nearly $32,800.** When part-time and part-year workers are included, the gap widens to 47 cents *(U.S. Census Bureau, 2026)*.



The pay disparity between Latinas and White, non-Hispanic men varies by geography. In 2024, the most recent year with local data, Latinas working full-time, year-round experienced a 39-cent gap in New York State, while the gap was narrower in Erie County at 32 cents. In Buffalo, the gap was even smaller at 30 cents, though this still translates to an **annual loss of nearly $18,800** *(U.S. Census Bureau, 2025)*.

If the wage gap for Latinas working full-time, year-round in the City of Buffalo were eliminated for one year, women could pay for:

- 36 months of groceries OR
- 17 months of housing OR
- 13 months of child care for 1 infant

(NYS DOL, Self-Sufficiency Estimator)

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Lifetime Wage Gap

For Latinas, the long-term economic consequences of the wage gap are staggering. Over the course of a 40-year career, Latinas in NYS working full-time, year-round more than **$1.3 million** *(U.S. Census Bureau, 2025)*.

While the causes of the wage gap are complex, several factors contribute to the disparity Latina workers experience, including historical structural barriers such as discrimination, immigration status, perceived language barriers, and unequal access to educational opportunities. In addition, intensified immigration enforcement in Latino communities has generated widespread fear and instability, which likely limits the job opportunities available to Latinas *(IWPR, 2026)*.

Occupational segregation is a significant driver of the wage gap. **Latinas are overrepresented in the lowest-paying occupations and underrepresented in the highest-paying ones.** But even within the same occupational categories, Latinas earn less than White, non-Hispanic men, suggesting that occupation alone does not fully explain the wage gap.

Service occupations, which include health care support, personal care, food service, and cleaning and maintenance, are among the lowest paid. In 2024, full-time Latina workers were nearly three times as likely as White, non-Hispanic men to be employed in these jobs (25% vs. 8.7%) *(IWPR, 2025)*. Yet even **among those working in service occupations, Latinas' median weekly earnings were $685, compared to $947 for White, non-Hispanic men** *(IWPR, 2025)*. Lower-paying jobs are often part-time, frequently lack benefits such as paid sick leave, parental leave, health insurance, or retirement plans, and may offer limited opportunities for advancement.

Management, business, and financial operations occupations are among the highest paid, but only 13.8% of full-time Latina workers held these jobs, compared to 22.6% of White, non-Hispanic men *(IWPR, 2025)*. Here too, Latinas were paid less within these occupations, with **median weekly earnings of $1,254 compared to $1,960 for White, non-Hispanic men** *(IWPR, 2025)*.



In 2023, being segregated into lower-paying jobs resulted in lost potential earnings of approximately **$53.3 billion** for Latinas in the U.S. *(U.S. DOL, 2024)*.

Motherhood widens the wage gap further. Among parents working full-time, year-round, **Latina mothers are paid just 52 cents for every dollar paid to White, non-Hispanic fathers** *(NWLC, 2026)*. In 2023, 45% of Latina mothers were their family's primary source of income *(CAP, 2025)*, making the wage gap especially detrimental to the economic stability of Latinas and their families.

If progress continues at the same rate as the past 20 years, Latinas working full-time, year-round won't reach pay parity with White, non-Hispanic men until

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(IWPR, 2026)

Latina Equal Pay Day, falling in October, is a reminder that eliminating the wage gap requires action from employers, policymakers, and society. Latinas face one of the widest wage gaps of any group and are disproportionately concentrated in low-paying jobs. For them, closing this gap is not just a matter of equity, but of economic necessity. Expanding access to affordable child care and paid family leave, enforcing equal pay laws, protecting workers regardless of immigration status, and ensuring fair compensation will strengthen families, communities, and the economy. The path may be challenging, but pay equity for all women is within reach.

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