



WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY COMMUNITY WATCH CHECKLIST

At YWCA we know that policies and practices that disadvantage women and perpetuate gender inequity are deeply embedded in workplace culture, organizational processes, and entire sectors of the workforce. We also know that policy change at the systemic level provides a critical leverage point for leveling the playing field and generating greater equity and economic security for women.

This **Women's Economic Security Community Watch Checklist** translates research and best practices for women's successful workforce participation and economic security into a tool for everyday citizens and community organizations that want to take action to empower women in their community. If you are concerned about women's economic security in your community (city, county, or state), this tool can help you identify the presence or absence of policies, patterns, and practices that have been identified as helpful or harmful to the economic security and advancement of women.

By seeking and documenting answers to these questions, you can raise awareness about the issues in your community, organize your community to change public policy, make recommendations to local decisionmakers, and ultimately transform your community.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC SECURITY COMMUNITY WATCH CHECKLIST

RACE/GENDER PAY EQUITY

- ✓ Does your community promote equal pay for equal work?
- ✓ What is the gender and race wage gap in your area? Is it worse for specific women of color than for White women?
- ✓ Is this gap growing or getting smaller for women of color?
- ✓ Is a woman more likely to earn a larger salary if she is working in a field that is traditionally “male”?
- ✓ Given the wage gap in your community, how much money does a woman of color lose over a lifetime of working?

LOW-INCOME EARNERS

- ✓ Do women/women of color make up a disproportionate share of low wage workers in your community? Do they hold a disproportionate share of jobs/occupations that are stereotypically considered to be “women’s work”?
 - Tipped workers
 - Restaurant and hospitality workers
 - Domestic workers
 - Home health aides, certified nurses’ aides
 - Child care providers
 - Retail workers

MINIMUM WAGE WORKERS

- ✓ What is the current minimum wage in your community?
- ✓ What proportion of those earning minimum wage are women/women of color?
- ✓ When was the last time the minimum wage increased?
- ✓ Can a single person working full-time at minimum wage earn enough to raise a family?
- ✓ Are there any campaigns to raise the minimum wage? If so, to what amount?
- ✓ Who would benefit most from an increase in the minimum wage?

ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE

- ✓ Has your state expanded Medicaid coverage?
- ✓ What is the maternal and infant mortality rate for women/women of color in your community?
 - Are these rates trending up or down?
 - How do the rates in your community compare to the national rates?
- ✓ What is the rate of unplanned teenage pregnancy in your community?
 - Is this rate trending up or down?
- ✓ Do women/women of color have easy access to the full spectrum of quality, affordable, and women-centered reproductive health services?
 - How many medical providers in your community specialize in comprehensive women’s health care?
 - In your community, how far would a woman have to travel to find such services?
 - In your community, are these services accessible via public transportation?
 - Do women have free or low-cost access to the following:
 - Reversible contraceptives
 - Plan B
 - Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)
 - Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PeP)
 - Are there laws that reduce women’s access to legal abortion care?
- ✓ Does your state place any restriction on the use of Title X funds for family planning and related preventive health services?
 - How many women and girls are served annually via Title X funded providers?
 - Is the Title X funding level in your state keeping pace with the need for Title X related services?

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FAIR SCHEDULING

- ✓ Do low-wage and part-time workers in your community face erratic work schedules or have little control over when they work and for how long?
- ✓ What proportion of low-wage and part-time workers in your community work a nonstandard schedule (outside of the traditional 9-to-5 workweek)?

PAID SICK DAYS

- ✓ How many working women in your community do not have access to paid sick days?
- ✓ Has your state, county, or city passed a paid leave bill?

PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

- ✓ What percent of low-wage workers and part-time employees in your community have access to paid family leave through their employers?
- ✓ What percent of working women/women of color have responsibility to care for other family members (children, elderly, disabled, etc.)?
 - Do these women have any guaranteed job protection when they must care for loved ones?
 - If so, does the protection require them to take “unpaid leave”?
 - What percent of employers in your area offer paid maternity leave?
- ✓ What are the top three reasons workers in your community utilize unpaid leave via the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)?

WOMEN'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

- ✓ Do the governing bodies in your city, county, and state reflect the racial and gender diversity of your community?

QUALITY, AFFORDABLE CHILD CARE

- ✓ What is the average cost of child care in your community?
 - Can a single woman working a full-time job at minimum wage easily afford high-quality, safe child care?
- ✓ What financial assistance is available to help low-income families pay child care costs in your community?
- ✓ Is there a waiting list for child care subsidies in your community? How many working families are currently on it?
- ✓ What percent of employers in your community provide assistance with child care to their employees?
- ✓ In your community, what is the average wait time to get a child into a child care facility?
- ✓ In your community, what is the number of child care facilities that can be utilized by those who work outside of the traditional 9-to-5 work schedule?

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

- ✓ What percent of women in your community have experienced sexual violence in their lifetimes? What percent have experienced noncontact sexual harassment?
- ✓ What percent of women in your community have experienced intimate partner violence, which can include physical violence, sexual violence, or stalking by an intimate partner?
- ✓ Is there a human rights commission in your community that investigates claims of discrimination or harassment? Do they conduct community education forums or training events for businesses on workplace fairness guidelines?
- ✓ How many workplace harassment lawsuits have been filed in your community?
 - Is the number trending up or down?
 - What percent of lawsuits involve women as the survivor of violence/harassment?