

The Economic Status of Texas Women in Bexar, Dallas and Harris Counties

Women make up 50.3 percent of the Texas population, over 14 million in all. They are working, going to school and caring for families. When the women of Texas are financially secure, families and communities are strong and stable. When women are healthy and well-educated, the entire state benefits. Texas women have made great strides over the last several decades by increasing their education and taking more leadership roles in the business world. But even with significant educational and economic gains, there are still gaps. This report

highlights indicators around poverty, education, employment and earnings. How do Bexar, Dallas and Harris Counties compare with Texas overall and with the United States? How are the lives of women of color different? This data is just the first step, but helps set a foundation for programs and projects that will have the greatest impact to build stronger communities. Texas Women’s Foundation looks forward to exploring these issues further with partners from around Texas to build a better Texas.

TABLE 1
Women’s Employment & Earnings
Bexar, Dallas and Harris Counties, Texas and the United States, 2017

	Bexar County	Dallas County	Harris County	Texas	United States
Women’s Median Annual Earnings for Full-Time, Year-Round Workers	\$36,197	\$38,782	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000
Ratio of Women’s to Men’s Earnings, Full-Time, Year-Round Workers	87.5%	94.9%	83.3%	81.6%	80.0%
Women’s Labor Force Participation Rate	58.8%	61.4%	59.1%	57.7%	58.2%
Percent of All Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations	39.3%	38.3%	39.8%	41.2%	42.4%

Notes: Includes those aged 16 and older. Full-time, year-round employment is defined as working at least 35 hours per week for at least 50 weeks. County data are calculated using three years (2015–2017). Texas and the United States are 2017 data. Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 8.0).

- Women in Texas aged 16 and older who work full-time, year-round have median annual earnings of \$40,000, which is 81.6 cents on the dollar compared with similarly employed men. Women’s median earnings in Harris County are the same as the state median, while women in Dallas trail slightly behind (\$38,782). Women in Bexar county earn nearly ten percent less than the state (\$36,197).
- Although women in Harris County earn the most in absolute dollars, their pay compared to similarly employed men is the lowest of the three Counties. The gender wage gap is largest in Harris County, where women earn only 83.3 cents on the dollar compared with men. The gap is much narrower in Bexar County at 87.5 percent, and Dallas County at 94.9 percent.
- Nearly 58 percent of women in Texas aged 16 and older are in the labor force. The labor force participation rate in all three counties—Bexar (58.8 percent), Dallas (61.4 percent), and Harris (59.1 percent)—is higher than in the state overall.
- A growing share of employed women in Texas are in managerial or professional occupations. About 41 percent of women in Texas hold these positions, which tend to require a four-year degree and often have higher wages and employment benefits. The share of employed women in managerial or professional occupations varies by county, from a low of 38.3 percent in Dallas County to a high of 39.8 percent in Harris County, but all three counties are below the state rate (41.2 percent).

Special thanks to Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR) for providing the data for this report. IWPR conducts rigorous research and disseminates its findings to address the needs of women, promote public dialogue, and strengthen families, communities, and societies. IWPR is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization that also works in affiliation with the women’s studies and public policy and public administration programs at The George Washington University.

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Texas Women’s Foundation

STRONG WOMEN. BETTER WORLD.

THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF TEXAS WOMEN

BEXAR, DALLAS AND HARRIS COUNTIES

Texas Women’s Foundation (formerly Dallas Women’s Foundation) is a trusted leader in advocating for and advancing social and economic change for women and girls in Texas. We believe that economic security means having all of the resources, human, social, and financial capital, that provide safeguards against crisis, and a foundation on which to build strong futures and families. We also recognize that women are more likely than men to be dramatically underrepresented in management and leadership positions. Texas Women’s Foundation is advancing the economic security for women, girls and their families across the state by ensuring they have access to critical life and work supports that are essential to their economic security while building a culture where women and girls are full participants by strengthening the pipeline of female leaders – from the classroom to the first job, the executive suite, the boardroom and the political arena.

This research is part of the Texas Women’s Foundation Gender Matters® research portfolio.

For more information, visit:
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TABLE 2
Employment & Earnings Among Women of Color
Bexar, Dallas and Harris Counties, 2017

	White	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Native American	Other Race or Two or More Races
Bexar County						
Women's Median Annual Earnings	\$48,001	\$31,026	\$36,000	\$48,000	N/A	\$43,916
Ratio of Women's to White Men's Earnings	82.9%	53.6%	62.2%	82.9%	N/A	75.8%
Women's Labor Force Participation Rate	58.1%	58.8%	61.8%	57.6%	N/A	58.9%
Percent of Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations	52.3%	31.6%	40.8%	51.1%	N/A	N/A
Dallas County						
Women's Median Annual Earnings	\$53,000	\$26,000	\$36,767	\$46,000	N/A	\$41,367
Ratio of Women's to White Men's Earnings	78.8%	38.7%	54.7%	68.4%	N/A	61.5%
Women's Labor Force Participation Rate	60.3%	58.7%	66.8%	57.8%	58.6%	72.0%
Percent of Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations	54.9%	19.4%	36.6%	51.6%	N/A	44.1%
Harris County						
Women's Median Annual Earnings	\$54,129	\$26,165	\$36,767	\$49,641	N/A	\$50,000
Ratio of Women's to White Men's Earnings	69.4%	33.5%	47.1%	63.6%	N/A	64.1%
Women's Labor Force Participation Rate	57.6%	56.8%	66.2%	57.2%	49.9%	65.1%
Percent of Employed Women in Managerial or Professional Occupations	55.2%	24.3%	38.9%	50.5%	N/A	41.2%

Notes: N/A= data not available. Calculated using three years of data (2015-2017). Includes those aged 16 and older. Earnings are for those employed full-time, year-round. Racial groups are non-Hispanic. Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 8.0).

- White women in Harris County have the highest earnings, at \$54,129 annually, and Hispanic women in Dallas County have the lowest earnings, at \$26,000.
- Hispanic women in Dallas and Harris counties who work full-time, year-round earn less than half of White men's earnings; in Harris County, Hispanic women earn just 33.5 cents for every dollar earned by White men in the county.
- Among women, Black women have the highest labor force participation rate in each of the three counties.
- Hispanic women in Bexar, Dallas and Harris counties are the racial/ethnic group of women least likely to be employed in managerial or professional occupations.



TABLE 3
Women's Poverty & Opportunity
Bexar, Dallas and Harris Counties, Texas,
and the United States, 2017

	Bexar County	Dallas County	Harris County	Texas	United States
Percent of Women Aged 18-64 with Health Insurance	81.6%	75.1%	75.5%	77.6%	89.2%
Percent of Women Aged 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	28.1%	30.4%	30.4%	30.1%	32.6%
Women-Owned Businesses, 2012	37.2%	37.1%	39.2%	36.8%	35.8%
Percent of Women Aged 18 and Older in Poverty	15.3%	15.2%	15.8%	14.5%	13.4%

Sources: Data on women-owned businesses are from the U.S. Department of Commerce's 2012 Survey of Business Owners accessed through American Fact Finder. Remaining indicators are IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 8.0); data for the three counties are calculated using three years of data (2015-2017). Data for Texas and the United States are 2017 data.

- If working women in Texas were paid the same as comparable men, their average annual earnings increase would be \$7,300 and their poverty rate would be reduced by 51%.**
- Nearly 78 percent of Texas's women aged 18 to 64 have health insurance coverage, which is below the national rate for women (89.2 percent). Three in four women in Dallas and Harris Counties have health insurance (75.1 percent and 75.5 percent, respectively), while 81.6 percent of women in Bexar County have coverage.
 - Thirty percent of women aged 25 and older in Texas have a bachelor's degree or higher. Dallas and Harris Counties closely match the state-wide rate, while Bexar County has a lower level of degree attainment (28.1 percent).
 - In Harris County, over 39 percent of businesses are owned by women. Bexar and Dallas Counties have lower rates of women-owned businesses, at 37 percent. However, all three counties are slightly above the Texas and national averages (36.8 percent and 35.8 percent, respectively).
 - 14.5 percent of Texas women aged 18 and older live in poverty; slightly larger shares of women in Bexar, Dallas and Harris counties are poor (15.3, 15.2, and 15.8 percent, respectively). All of these rates exceed the national average (13.4 percent).

TABLE 4
Poverty & Opportunity Among Women of Color
Bexar, Dallas and Harris Counties, 2017

	White	Hispanic	Black	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Native American	Other Race or Two or More Races
Bexar County						
Percent of Women Aged 18-64 with Health Insurance	89.3%	77.0%	85.8%	87.7%	N/A	85.9%
Percent of Women Aged 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	43.2%	18.0%	31.0%	45.9%	N/A	34.7%
Percent of Women Aged 18 and Older in Poverty	10.2%	18.3%	16.8%	10.8%	N/A	9.3%
Dallas County						
Percent of Women Aged 18-64 with Health Insurance	88.4%	58.1%	80.8%	83.6%	N/A	84.1%
Percent of Women Aged 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	47.4%	10.8%	23.4%	53.4%	N/A	40.6%
Percent of Women Aged 18 and Older in Poverty	8.6%	19.0%	20.2%	12.0%	23.6%	13.6%
Harris County						
Percent of Women Aged 18-64 with Health Insurance	90.2%	60.0%	80.3%	83.4%	N/A	84.2%
Percent of Women Aged 25 and Older with a Bachelor's Degree or Higher	45.5%	13.8%	26.2%	48.1%	N/A	38.1%
Percent of Women Aged 18 and Older in Poverty	7.9%	21.3%	19.9%	12.2%	32.8%	16.5%

Notes: N/A= data not available. Calculated using three years of data (2015-2017). Racial groups are non-Hispanic. Source: IWPR analysis of American Community Survey microdata (Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Version 8.0).

- In all three counties, Hispanic women are the least likely to have health insurance.
- Educational attainment among women varies widely by race and ethnicity. The greatest range is seen in Dallas County, where less than 11 percent of Hispanic women have a bachelor's or advanced degree, while over 53 percent of Asian/ Pacific Islander women have that level of education.
- Poverty also varies widely by race and ethnicity. Comparing women in the three counties, White women in Harris County have the lowest poverty rate at 7.9 percent, and Native American women in Harris County have the highest poverty rate at 32.8 percent.

If current trends continue, women in Texas will not receive equal pay until 2049.