

The Status of Women in NC: POVERTY AND OPPORTUNITY

North Carolina received a



grade on the Poverty & Opportunity Composite Index, according to the Institute for Women's Policy Research.

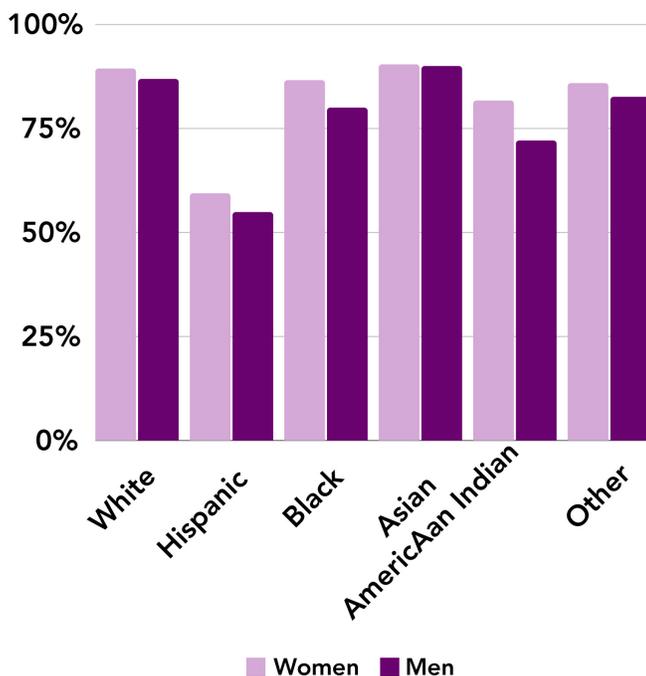
Challenges:

- North Carolina has the **10th highest** uninsured rate in the nation.
- In North Carolina, Hispanic, American Indian, and Black women are living in poverty at almost twice the rates of White and Asian women. North Carolina has more women living in poverty compared to the national average.
- The share of women in North Carolina with at least a bachelor's degree varies greatly by county from a high of **61 percent in Orange County** to a low of only **10 percent in Hyde County**.

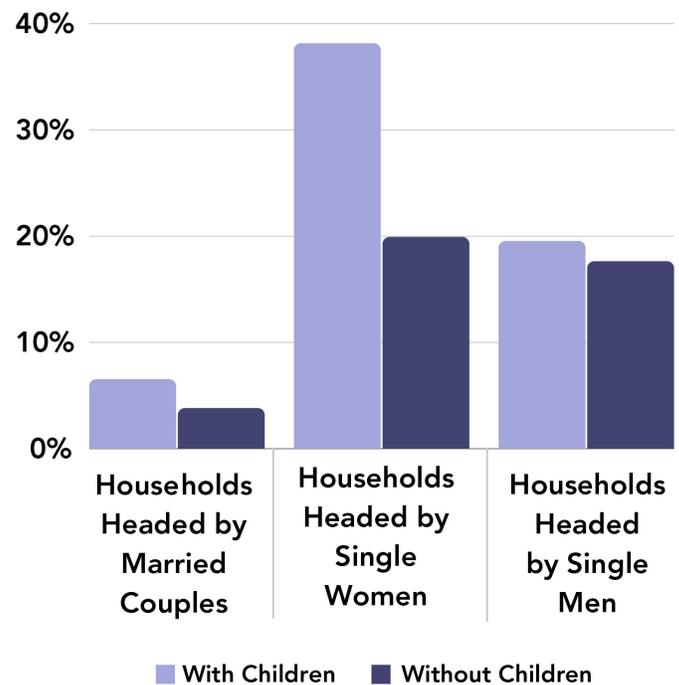
Successes:

- Nearly 2/5 of North Carolina businesses are owned by women. North Carolina is ranked 10th in the nation for women's business ownership.

Health Insurance Coverage Rates among North Carolina Women and Men ages 18-64 by Race/Ethnicity, 2019



Share of North Carolina Households Living in Poverty by Household Type, 2019



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Policy Recommendations

Expand Access to Affordable Health Care:

- Expanding Medicaid would make access to health care coverage available for around **414,000** North Carolinians. This would drastically increase access to healthcare, especially for low-income Black and Latina women who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19.
- North Carolina is one of only 12 states that has not yet expanded Medicaid.



Build and Invest in the Care Economy

- In more than half of North Carolina families, women are the breadwinners. Approximately 4 out of 5 Black mothers are breadwinners of their families.
- Lack of affordable child care has led to an unprecedented number of women leaving the workforce.



Increase the Minimum Wage and Tackle the Gender Wage Gap:

- Higher income levels correspond directly to better overall health outcomes.
- If working women in North Carolina were paid the same as men, the poverty rate among all working women would fall by nearly 40 percent.
- An increased minimum wage would be particularly beneficial to Black and Latina women.



Address Disparities in Educational Attainment:

- Attaining higher levels of education are associated with higher earnings and increased job opportunities.
- Prior to the pandemic, less than 60 percent of North Carolina households had adequate internet access for online learning.



Expand Support for Women-Owned Businesses:

- Over half of North Carolina's small businesses are women- or minority-owned.

