

Women's Equality in Utah:

Why Utah Is Ranked as the Worst State, and What Can Be Done



UTAH WOMEN & LEADERSHIP
Project

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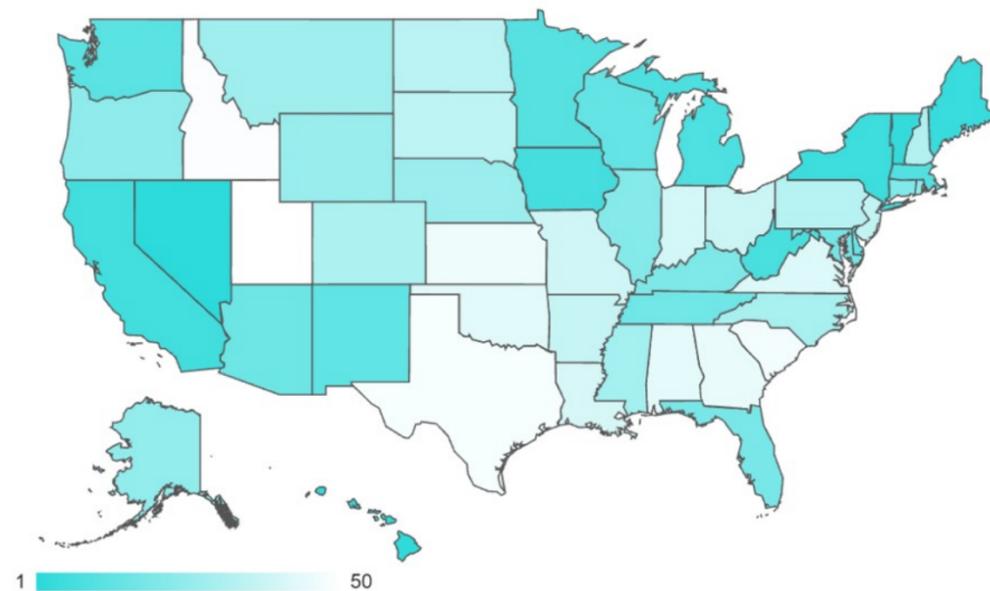
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Best & Worst States for Women's Equality

Adam McCann, Financial Writer • Aug 23, 2021



Main Findings



Best States for Women's Rights

Overall Rank ↕	State	Total Score ↕	Workplace Environment ↕	Education & Health ↕	Political Empowerment ↕
1	Nevada	77.55	3	9	1
2	Hawaii	69.36	1	3	28
3	Vermont	68.67	2	5	22
4	Maine	67.72	12	27	2
5	New York	67.20	20	12	7
6	California	67.01	6	26	8
7	Iowa	65.99	15	11	12
8	West Virginia	65.88	9	1	26
9	Michigan	65.29	29	19	3
10	Massachusetts	64.66	32	14	9

40	Indiana	49.27	47	37	25
41	Louisiana	48.89	49	6	50
42	Virginia	48.04	34	40	40
43	Oklahoma	47.70	38	43	36
44	Alabama	47.01	48	20	48
45	Georgia	46.93	43	38	37
46	Kansas	46.77	27	47	32
47	South Carolina	43.77	46	42	45
48	Texas	41.95	25	48	42
49	Idaho	37.37	41	49	34
50	Utah	29.85	44	50	49

Introduction

- Ranks impact perceptions
- Women's lived experiences
- Desire to make progress
- Allies are critical
- Public/private leadership and partnerships
- Investment is directly tied to sustaining Utah's growing economy

Women's Equality

Business Case



This is one framework to consider in our work together to strengthen the impact of Utah girls, women, and families.



Research Methods

- WalletHub compared the 50 states across 3 categories and 17 key indicators (different weights) of women's equality, comparing the difference between men and women.
- They determined each state's weighted average across all metrics to calculate its overall score to rank-order their sample (100-point total).
- We studied their research and went back to original/new datasets to do our own deep analysis.
- Although WalletHub did not provide their proprietary algorithm, they did provide us with some additional data and sources.

See full report for more details on research methods.



17 Key Indicators

All are impacted by
higher education!

WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT (40 Points)

1. Income Disparity
2. Higher Income Disparity
3. Disparity in Share of Executive Positions
4. Disparity in Share of Minimum-Wage Workers
5. Unemployment Rate Disparity
6. Entrepreneurship Rate Disparity
7. Disparity in Average Number of Work Hours
8. Job Security Disparity
9. Economic Security Disparity
10. Disparity in Poverty Rate



17 Key Indicators

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EDUCATION & HEALTH (40 Points)

- 11. Disparity in Advanced Educational Attainment
- 12. Disparity in Math Test Scores
- 13. Disparity in Doctor Visit Affordability



POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT (20 Points)

- 14. Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in U.S. Senate
- 15. Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in U.S. House of Representatives
- 16. Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in State Legislature
- 17. Disparity in Share of State-Elected Executives

40 Points

I. Workplace Environment

Utah: 44th



1. Income Disparity (~12.63 Points)

- “Income” refers to median weekly earnings.
- “Measure” indicates the % that women earn compared to men.

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-25.50%	45	1.52
Best State	Maryland	-10.90%	1	12.63
Worst State	Wyoming	-27.50%	50	0.00

Utah women working full time on average earn \$39,784 per year (34th among the states), while Utah men earn an average of \$57,117 per year (16th).



6. Entrepreneurship Rate Disparity (~4.21 Points)

Compares the number of women-owned businesses with the number of men-owned businesses.

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-44.68%	39	0.69
Best State	Alaska	-29.30%	1	4.21
Worst State	Mass.	-47.70%	50	0.00

In 2017, Utah men owned 60.3% of Utah businesses, while women owned 15.6% (44.68% difference). Some were co-owned by men and women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Add 1,000 women-owned businesses in Utah (+ 0.5).

Support and expand centers, initiatives, and programs with specific efforts for women (e.g., WBC, SBDCs, BRCs, chambers, colleges/universities, established networks).

10. Disparity in Poverty Rate (~2.11 Points)

Utah ranks 3rd in the disparity in poverty, while another source ranks us 11th.

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	1.60%	3	1.82
Best State	Alaska	1.20%	1	2.11
Worst State	Mississippi	4.10%	50	0.00

- 10.6% of Utah's non-elderly women live at or below the poverty line (men: 8.3%).
- 8.9% of female seniors live below the poverty line (men: 4.4%).
- **37.5%** of single mothers with children under 18 and **46.9%** with children under 5 live in poverty.

RECOMMENDATION

Reduce the disparity in the unemployment differential between men and women by 4/10s of a percent (+ 0.3).

40 Points

II. Education & Health

Utah: 50th



11. Disparity in Advanced Educational Attainment (~13.33)

- Refers to the share of the population aged 25 and older with degrees higher than a bachelor's degree.
- In most states, and in the U.S. in general, women are earning the majority of college degrees.
- In the United States, 13.5% of women earn graduate degrees.

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-4.90%	50	0.00
Best State	Kentucky	2.76%	1	13.33
Worst State	Utah	-4.90%	50	0.00

In Utah, 9.2% of women and 13.5% of men earn graduate degrees—a 4.3% difference, which is much wider than that of any other state.

In fact, there are only seven other states in which men's graduate degree attainment exceeds women's.

12. Disparity in Math Test Scores (~13.33 Points)

Utah 8th grade girls score two points lower on the math assessment exam than do Utah 8th grade boys.

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-2.0	43	6.67
Best State	Kentucky	4.0	1	13.33
Worst State	Idaho	-4.0	50	0.00



RECOMMENDATION
Shrink the disparity in math scores by one point (+ 2.67).

13. Disparity in Doctor Visit Affordability (~13.33 Points)

This CDC metric measures the share of adults who felt or perceived they could not afford a doctor's visit due to costs.

In Utah, 16.2% of women and 12.5% of men indicated that at some time in 2019 they did not go to a needed doctor visit because of cost, putting women at a 3.7% disadvantage.

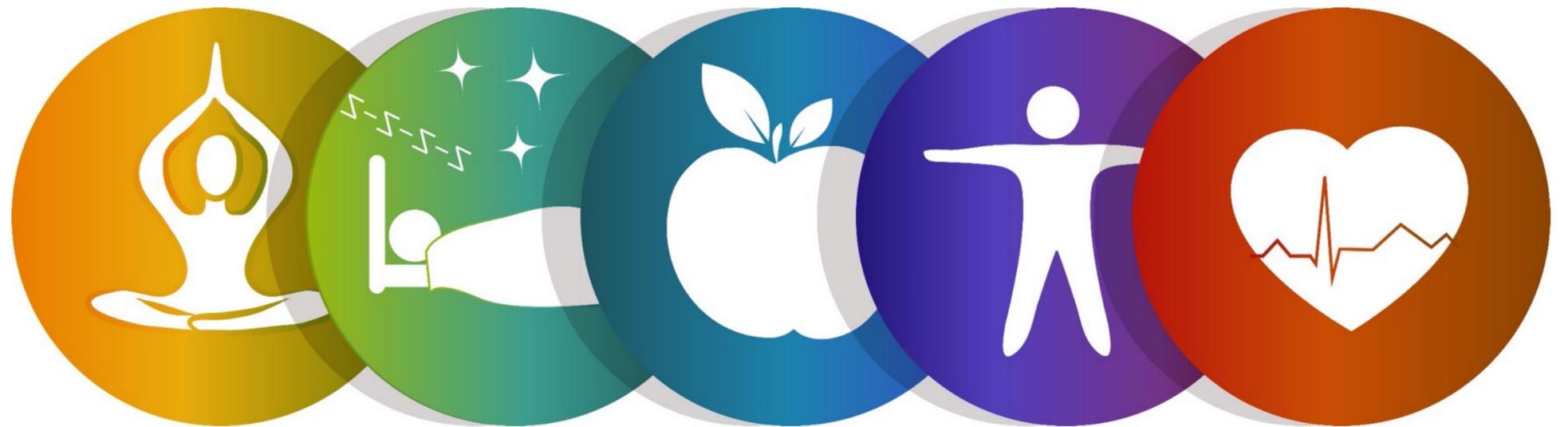
Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	3.70%	41	7.46
Best State	Vermont	-1.20%	1	13.33
Worst State	Texas	8.40%	50	0.00

RECOMMENDATIONS

Reduce this disparity in half (+ 2.93).
Implement programs and policies that help qualifying individuals and families cover doctor visits.

EDUCATION & HEALTH RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Increase the percentage of Utah women completing graduate degree programs. (+ 0.1-13.33)
2. Shrink the disparity in math scores by one percentage point. (+ 2.67)
3. Reduce the disparity related to Utah women's perceptions of the affordability of doctor visits by 1.83%. (+ 2.93)



III.
Political
Empowerment

POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Elect a woman for 1 of the 2 seats in the U.S. Senate. (+ 5.00)
2. Elect women for 2 of 4 seats in the U.S. House. (+ 5.00)
3. Elect 7 additional women to the Utah House and Senate. (+ 0.88)
4. Elect 1 additional woman to a statewide executive office. (+ 2.00)



TOP 10 RECOMMENDATIONS

VISUAL
DASHBOARD
COMING

1. Elect a woman for one of the two seats in the U.S. Senate. (+ 5.00)
2. Elect women for two of four seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. (+5.00)
3. Reduce the disparity related to Utah women's perceptions of the affordability of doctor's visits by 1%. (+ 2.93)
4. Shrink the disparity in math scores by one percentage point. (+ 2.67)
5. Elect one additional woman to a statewide executive office. (+ 2.00)
6. Add 780 women to executive positions within the state. (+ 1.80)
7. Elect 7 additional women to the Utah House and Senate. (+ 0.88)
8. Add 1,000 additional women-owned business in Utah. (+ 0.50)
- 9. Narrow the gender pay gap. (+ 0.10-12.63)**
- 10. Increase the % of Utah women completing graduate degrees. (+ 0.10-13.33)**

Final Thoughts

- Even though we may not agree with all the metrics, it does support the fact that there are gender equity issues in the state.
- We know that families, organizations, and communities will be strengthened when there is more equity and equality for all Utahns.
- Yet, our path forward may or may not be to try to move all these metrics forward.
- Shifting the ranking is just a proxy for making meaningful changes in the state so that all women—and Utahns as a whole—can experience equitable access to opportunities that will help them better thrive.

CRITICAL QUESTIONS: Can Utah create a unique path forward that will improve gender equity and equality, while also respecting the circumstance and choices of women and family? What might that distinctive path forward look like?





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