



Women's Equality in Utah

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

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Introduction

For the fourth year in a row, WalletHub has named Utah as the worst state in the nation for women's equality in their report "2021's Best & Worst States for Women's Equality," released August 23, 2021.¹ To ascertain where women receive the most equal treatment, WalletHub's analysis compared the 50 states across 17 key indicators of women's equality. The indicators ranged from the gap between the number of female and male executives, to the disparity in unemployment rates for women and men, to gender differences in education and health.

WalletHub is not alone in ranking Utah at the bottom of lists that analyze how women fare in the nation. For example, in 2014, 24/7 Wall St. ranked Utah the lowest of "The 10 Worst States for Women" in a report that considered, among other factors, the gender wage gap, poverty rate, percentage of women in the state legislature, and infant mortality rate.² In 2013, the Center for American Progress report "The State of Women in America" ranked Utah 49th of 50 states with an "F" grade;³ this analysis considered 36 factors related to women's economic security, leadership, and health. In addition, economists from the University of Chicago, Northwestern University, and National University of Singapore conducted an in-depth study based on a nationwide questionnaire measuring sexist attitudes—beliefs that isolate or devalue women.⁴ The resulting 2019 publication ranked Utah as the second-most sexist state, and researchers found that Utah women's internalized sexism appeared to play a unique role.

Yet, research continues to show that organizations and entities will increasingly thrive when both men and women hold leadership roles and are provided equitable opportunities and access to resources.⁵ Gender inclusivity benefits not only businesses, but also entities such as churches, state legislatures, city councils, the state government, and society at large. Studies show that there are numerous benefits to attracting, retaining, promoting, and empowering women within organizations and entities. In fact, this topic is central to current discussions around meeting the current and future needs of Utah's thriving economy. And, more generally, the United Nations continues to report that gender equality is "critical to all areas of a healthy society, from reducing poverty to promoting the health, education, protection and the well-being of girls and boys."⁶

When focused specifically on the most recent WalletHub report and rankings, the questions then become:

1. What are the specific metrics that WalletHub uses for their state-by-state rankings?
2. What do these metrics tell us about Utah women?
3. What can Utah decision makers and residents do to improve women's equality in Utah?

¹ McCann, A. (2021, August 23). *Best & worst states for women's equality*. WalletHub. <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-and-worst-states-for-women-equality/5835>

² Frohlich, T. C. (2014, October 16). *The 10 worst states for women*. 24/7 Wall St. <https://247wallst.com/special-report/2014/10/16/the-10-worst-states-for-women-2/4/>

³ Chu, A. & Posner, C. (2013, September 25). *The state of women in America*. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2013/09/25/74836/the-state-of-women-in-america/>

⁴ Ingraham, C. (2018, August 21). *Utah is the second-most sexist state, researchers say—and women's internalized sexism appears to play a unique role here*. The Salt Lake Tribune. <https://www.sltrib.com/news/2018/08/21/researchers-identify-most/>

⁵ Madsen, S. R. (2015, January 12). *Why do we need more women leaders in Utah?* Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/10-why-do-we-need-more-women-leaders.pdf>

⁶ United Nations. (n.d.). *Gender equality: Why it matters*. Sustainable Development Goals. https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/5_Why-It-Matters-2020.pdf

The purpose of this white paper is to provide a deeper analysis of these questions to understand why Utah was ranked last—yet again—in the WalletHub study, and what Utahns can do to shift the following aspects: the negative national rankings of women’s equality in the state, the harmful perceptions that abound related to Utah not being a good place for women, and Utah women’s lived experiences in terms of gender inequality. Frankly, improving this ranking is merely a proxy for addressing critical disparities and inequities in the state. To explore the three questions and gain a deeper understanding of each key indicator, we attempted to locate the original WalletHub data sources to conduct our own analysis. And, in a few cases, we were able to locate more current data.

Zions Bank commissioned the Utah Women & Leadership Project (UWLP) to conduct this research due to the Project’s focus on producing relevant, trustworthy, and applicable research for decision makers and residents at large. This report is also aligned with the overall UWLP mission of strengthening the impact of Utah girls and women.

Context

Several contextual aspects are important to note in setting the stage for this report. First, the WalletHub study is focused solely on the U.S. with a comparison among states, but it is important to note that other countries do much better than the U.S. on women’s equality. Although there has been substantial progress through the years, many U.S. women still struggle with unequal treatment in society. The World Economic Forum publishes a “Global Gender Gap Report” each year, and in 2021, the U.S. ranked 30th of 156 countries on gender equality, up from its 53rd ranking in 2020.⁷ The report is based on a Global Gender Gap Index that measures four key dimensions (economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment). Geographically, according to the report, “the global top 10 continues to be dominated by Nordic countries, with Iceland, Norway, Finland and Sweden in the top five. The top 10 is completed by one country from Asia Pacific (New Zealand, 4th), two Sub-Saharan countries (Namibia, 6th, and Rwanda, 7th), one country from Eastern Europe (the new entrant to the top 10, Lithuania, 8th), and two Western European countries (Ireland, 9th, and Switzerland, 10th, another first-time entrant to the top 10).”⁸

Second, it is important to note the additional challenges women have disproportionately experienced during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.⁹ In the U.S. and around the world, women were initially laid off at a greater rate than men and re-employed more slowly.¹⁰ This is indeed true in Utah where, according to the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute at the University of Utah, from 2019 to 2020 jobs held by women declined at a rate more than double that of men, and unemployment rose more for females than males.¹¹ Even though Utah’s economy rebounded quickly, the short- and long-term impacts of the pandemic still linger and continue to influence women’s careers, decisions, and lives more generally. More details about the impact of COVID-19 on Utah women and work can be found in six UWLP reports: *Changes, Burnout, and Hope*;¹² *Career Advancement Challenges*;¹³ *Childcare and*

⁷ World Economic Forum. (2021, March). *Global gender gap report 2021: Insight report*. https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf

⁸ World Economic Forum. (2021, March). p. 9.

⁹ McKinsey & Company & Lean In. (2021, September). *Women in the workplace 2021*. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/women-in-the-workplace>

¹⁰ Cerullo, M. (2021). *Nearly 3 million U.S. women have dropped out of the labor force in the past year*. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/covid-crisis-3-million-women-labor-force/>

¹¹ Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute. (2021, March). *COVID-19 impacts by gender*. <https://gardner.utah.edu/wp-content/uploads/C19Impacts-FS-Mar2021.pdf>

¹² Hansen, J., Hartwell, C., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, April 6). *The impact of COVID-19 on Utah women and work: Changes, burnout, & hope*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/30-impact-of-covid-19-on-utah-women-work-changes-burnout-hope.pdf>

¹³ Christensen, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, May 5). *The impact of COVID-19 on Utah women and work: Career advancement challenges*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/32-covid-19-career-advancement-challenges.pdf>

Homeschooling;¹⁴ Caregiver Experiences;¹⁵ Resilient Mindset and Wellbeing;¹⁶ and Health Impacts¹⁷ (see footnotes for details).

Third, more than 60% of Utah’s population are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints,¹⁸ and this religion has a profound influence on the actions, attitudes, and beliefs of its members. The Latter-day Saint Church emphasizes family formation, and, while recognizing equality between partners in marriage, it also emphasizes that genders have different roles—men and fathers to provide and protect, and women and mothers to nurture and teach their children.¹⁹ This division of effort and focus continues to influence the labor force decisions of many Utah residents and most likely impacts how Utah scores on several of the metrics measured in the WalletHub survey (e.g., gender wage gap, corporate leadership representation, and hours worked outside the home). It is also important to recognize that WalletHub’s ranking and weighting system may not include other potential equality metrics that could shed a more positive light on Utah women’s contributions in various domains, including the home and community.

Finally, the fact that WalletHub has identified Utah as the worst state for women regarding women’s equality does not mean that it is the worst state for women more generally. WalletHub has two annual state ranking reports that focus on women. The report analyzed herein is focused on women’s *equality*, where Utah ranked 50th of 50 states. The other report centers on “Best & Worst States for Women”²⁰ more generally, where Utah ranks much better—28th. This ranking includes women’s economic and social wellbeing (Utah=32) and women’s health and safety (Utah=24). Only a few of the metrics from that index are repeated in the women’s equality index. Importantly, neither ranking directly addresses metrics that focus specifically on women of color. Although we do not analyze the results of the second report (“Best & Worst States for Women”) in this paper, Appendix A lists the metrics used to determine these rankings. In terms of the “Best and Worst States for Women’s Equality,” it is interesting to note that there was a nearly 50-point gap in the total scores between the top state—Nevada—at 77.55 and Utah’s score of 29.85 (of 100 points possible)²¹ on the women’s equality ranking. However, while Nevada is the best and Utah is the worst state for women’s equality, Utah ranks significantly higher than Nevada in the “Best & Worst States for Women,” where Utah ranks 28th and Nevada 44th. In addition, while Utah slightly closed the women’s equality gap with 49th-ranked Idaho in 2021, Utah lags by 7.52 points.²²

¹⁴ Hartwell, C., Hansen, J., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, June 2). *The impact of COVID-19 on Utah women and work: Childcare and homeschooling*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/33-covid-19-childcare-homeschooling.pdf>

¹⁵ Christensen, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, July 14). *The impact of COVID-19 on Utah women and work: Caregiver experiences*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/35-covid-19-caregiver-experiences.pdf>

¹⁶ Hansen, J., Hansen, J., Hartwell, C., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, August 18). *The impact of COVID-19 on Utah women and work: Resilient mindset and wellbeing*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/36-covid-19-resilient-mindset-wellbeing.pdf>

¹⁷ Christensen, M., Madsen, S. R., Dyckman, J., & McAdams-Jones, D. (2021, September 1). *The impact of COVID-19 on Utah women and work: Health impacts*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/37-covid-19-health-impacts.pdf>

¹⁸ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (2021). *Utah*. <https://newsroom.churchofjesuschrist.org/facts-and-statistics/state/utah>

¹⁹ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. (1995). *The family: A proclamation to the world*. <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/the-family-a-proclamation-to-the-world/the-family-a-proclamation-to-the-world?lang=eng>

²⁰ McCann, A. (2021, March 1). *Best & worst states for women*. WalletHub. <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-and-worst-states-for-women/10728>

²¹ Jacobs, B. (2021, August 23). *Utah ranked worst state for women’s equality—again*. The Salt Lake Tribune. <https://www.sltrib.com/news/2021/08/23/utah-ranked-worst-state/>

²² McCann, A. (2021, August 23).

Research Methods

This study comprises a three-part data gathering and analysis process.

First, this research investigates WalletHub’s “2021’s Best & Worst States for Women’s Equality” report released on August 23, 2021.²³ To rank women’s equality, WalletHub compared the 50 states across 17 key indicators of women’s equality and evaluated the states on workplace environment, education and health, and political empowerment. They analyzed the 17 metrics, each of which are highlighted below with their corresponding weights. According to WalletHub, “Each metric was graded on a 100-point scale, with a score of 100 representing the most favorable conditions for women’s equality.”²⁴ For all metrics, they compared the differences between women and men. The report’s author explained that for certain metrics—where women showed an advantage over men—they treated the state as having gender equality. They then determined each state’s weighted average across all metrics to calculate its overall score to rank-order their sample. The data WalletHub used to create their rankings were collected from a variety of sources: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, National Women’s Law Center, Institute for Women’s Policy Research, National Center for Education Statistics, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, and Center for American Women and Politics.

Second, we contacted WalletHub directly on multiple occasions to request further data and clarification. Although they would not share their proprietary algorithm, they did provide a Utah-specific spreadsheet that included results and ranks for each of the 17 key indicators, which was not available online. They also provided the results for the best and worst states that helped us set a baseline for each indicator and provided data sources used for the eight indicators we were not able to locate.

Third, we located original sources measuring and reporting the metrics incorporated into the WalletHub women’s equality analysis. On many metrics, we found the exact data source utilized by WalletHub. However, as there is significant complexity in the analysis of each metric, our data and data source could have differed from the WalletHub data based on time frame, target population, inclusions, exclusions, or a host of other elements. We then calculated our own scores with the data collected from all sources, and, although some of our final scores were slightly different from those of WalletHub (ours were slightly higher), Utah was still ranked last with Idaho in the next-to-last position. This confirmed our calculations were close to WalletHub’s final analysis, and these calculations provide the foundation from which to answer the three questions posed in the introduction of this report. In the analysis that follows, rankings in the summary tables are WalletHub calculations, as are the best and worst scores. The point totals for each are UWLP calculations. WalletHub published combined points based on the three areas—workplace environment, education and health, and political empowerment—but they did not publish or provide scores on the 17 individual metrics.

Analysis and Findings

To determine women’s equality, WalletHub compared the 50 states across 17 key indicators categorized in three primary areas: (1) Workplace Environment, (2) Education & Health, and (3) Political Empowerment. This section analyzes the data by area and key indicator. As mentioned previously, all metrics compared the differences between women and men, with the total state score representing scores out of 100 points possible, with 100 being the most favorable for women’s equality.²⁵ Although Idaho’s data are not discussed in depth in this report, we have included Idaho in the tables below because they were ranked overall as the second-worst state for women’s equality and are of particular interest to Zions Bank, who commissioned this report. We have also included tables in the appendices that summarize WalletHub’s findings, along with our own analysis for Utah (see Appendix B) and Idaho (see Appendix C). Our review and explanation of the three primary areas and 17 related metrics, along with recommendations on how to improve Utah’s scores for each, follows.

²³ McCann, A. (2021, August 23).

²⁴ McCann, A. (2021, August 23).

²⁵ McCann, A. (2021, August 23).

WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT (40 POINTS)

Utah ranked 44th overall in the “Workplace Environment” section of WalletHub’s report, while Idaho ranked 41st. Ten key indicators comprise this area, and scores of each were combined to comprise 40 of the 100 points available for the overall state equality measure. Each key indicator will be discussed in turn.

1. Income Disparity (~12.63 Points)

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
Neighbor State	Idaho	-25.80%	47	1.29

For this indicator, “income” refers to median weekly earnings. The percentage in the “Measure” column indicates the percentage that women earn compared to men’s wages. The WalletHub report shows Utah women earning 25.5% less than men,²⁶ while other gender pay gap reports have shown Utah having an even larger pay gap (~30%).²⁷ The best state for income disparity is Maryland, where women, on average, earn 10.9% less than men. The worst-ranked state is Wyoming, where women earn 27.5% less than men. An annualized analysis of March 2021 payroll reports by the National Women’s Law Center (NWLC) has Wyoming and Utah with 35% and 30% disparities in compensation, respectively. The NWLC also has Utah ranked lower than WalletHub’s ranking, at 49th, but increases Utah’s women’s equality points to 2.43. In addition to assessing the wage gap, another important income metric for Utah women is their overall pay when compared to women nationally. The NWLC data also indicate that Utah women working full time on average earn \$39,784 per year, which ranks 34th among the states for women’s income. Men in Utah earn an average of \$57,117 per year, which puts Utah men in 16th position nationally.²⁸

Recommendations: Raise the minimum wage in Utah by \$2.00. First, based on 2019 data, 8.1% of men and 14.9% of women earn at or near minimum wage.²⁹ Because of the higher percentage of women, each \$1.00 per hour added to the minimum wage would shrink Utah’s wage gap percentage by approximately 0.25%. Therefore, each \$1.00 increase in the minimum wage would increase Utah’s point score by 0.17. Utah’s current minimum wage is \$7.25, so raising it to \$9.25 would increase the WalletHub score by 0.34.

Second, establish a stand-alone equal pay act. Based on a recent in-depth analysis of all 50 states’ public policies on the state equal pay laws (“Addressing the Gender Pay Gap in Utah with State Equal Pay Laws”),³⁰ UWLP analysts recommend a stand-alone equal pay act comparable to what already exists in most states that would provide the following provisions: (a) a private right of action for aggrieved employees, (b) at least a one-year statute of limitations, (c) antiretaliation protections, (d) pay transparency protection, and (e) a salary history ban. Each provision could be enacted independently. The report also recommends conducting a comprehensive, Utah-specific study on the causes and effects of Utah’s gender pay gap.

²⁶ McCann, A. (2021, August 23).

²⁷ Winkel, R., Darowski, E. S., Christensen, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, October 5). *Utah gender wage gap: A 2021 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/31.pdf>

²⁸ National Women’s Law Center. (2021, March). *Wage gap overall state rankings*. <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Overall-Wage-Gap-State-By-State-2021-v2.pdf>

²⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). *Earnings in the past 12 months (in 2019 inflation-adjusted dollars)*. <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=S2001&g=0100000US%240400000&tid=ACSST5Y2019.S2001&hidePreview=true>

³⁰ Gould, L. J. (2021, June 29). *Addressing the gender pay gap in Utah with state equal pay laws*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/wp/no-2.pdf>

More general recommendations recently published in the research snapshot “[Utah Gender Wage Gap: A 2021 Update](#)”³¹ include encouraging women in Utah to complete postsecondary certificates and degrees at all levels, including graduate education. In addition, teen and young adult Utah women need resources and support to help them navigate family and work options and to plan education and career goals. Cultural norms or attitudes that prevent or deter young women from this decision-making process—that suggest moral implications for women who work outside the home or that put work and family priorities at odds without considering that success can be attainable in both areas—need to be evaluated, discussed openly, and adjusted. Women of all ages would benefit from a greater awareness of the career options available to them, including occupations and industries that are currently dominated by men and are higher paying. Additionally, women need access to organizations that instruct and support those who wish to re-launch into careers after time spent away from the workforce.

Utah’s well-respected business community could provide additional support for female-owned businesses, including equitable access to funding, which can help narrow the gender wage gap. Forward-thinking companies would also do well to find ways to support female talent and develop female leadership within their organizations; they can also remove structural and cultural barriers to retaining that female talent. Finally, women can benefit from a variety of professional development opportunities, including negotiation training. These broader recommendations could impact the pay gap as well as other indicators also highlighted in this report.

2. **Higher Income Disparity** (~4.21 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-13.00%	48	0.23
Best State	Maine	-6.20%	1	4.21
Worst State	New Jersey	-13.40%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	-8.40%	19	2.92

For this indicator, “higher income” refers to median annual earnings of \$100,000 or more. The figure in the “Measure” column above shows the difference between the percentage of full-time working men and women earning more than \$100,000 per year. According to our calculations of U.S. Census data,³² 18.9% of Utah men have “high income,” while only 5.9% of Utah women have that level of compensation. The 13.0% disparity between Utah men and women places the state in 48th position. According to U.S. Census payroll data, the best state in this metric is Maine, where 13.1% of men and 6.9% of women working full time earn more than \$100,000 per year. The state with the widest gap is New Jersey, where 31% of men and 17.6% of women earn more than \$100,000, making the disparity between men and women 13.4%.³³ For this key indicator, our analysis matched WalletHub’s report.

Recommendations: Increase the number of women who earn higher incomes. Currently, 21,887 Utah women have incomes above \$100,000, representing 5.9% of all full-time working women. Each additional 3,700 women who earn over \$100,000 would increase the rate 1%, adding 0.60 to Utah’s total score.

More general recommendations also include continued work with girls and young women—and those who influence them—to envision a myriad of choices when considering college and university certificates, degrees, and future occupations. Most Utah women do not pursue careers in highly compensated fields such as science, technology, engineering, math (STEM), sales, law, and business management. In addition, Utah employers who are proactive in terms of offering flexible and family-

³¹ Winkel, R., Darowski, E. S., Christensen, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, October 5).

³² U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). *Earnings in the past 12 months (in 2019 inflation-adjusted dollars)*.

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=S2001&g=0100000US%240400000&tid=ACSST5Y2019.S2001&hidePreview=true>

³³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2019).

friendly benefits are better able to hire, engage, retain, and promote female employees into higher-paying positions within their organizations.³⁴ Such policies could include remote work/flexibility with work location, flexibility with working hours, paid maternity and paternity leave, paid family leave, professional part-time and job-sharing roles, programs for returning workers, childcare resources and support, and tuition reimbursement. Legislation that encourages, supports, and rewards businesses with these policies can also impact these employment efforts as well.

3. **Disparity in Share of Executive Positions** (~4.21 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-1.37%	46	0.92
Best State	Wyoming	-0.26%	1	4.21
Worst State	New Jersey	-1.66%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	-0.95%	23	2.17

This indicator reflects the number of working individuals who hold executive positions as a percentage of full-time workers by gender. Executive titles include positions such as CEO, CFO, COO, Vice President, and Director. According to datasets from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, in Utah, 6,668 men hold executive positions, representing 2.1% of working men, while 1,831 women hold executive positions, representing 0.8% of working women.³⁵ Hence, Utah men are almost three times more likely than Utah women to hold an executive role. The state with the narrowest difference between men and women in executive representation is Wyoming, where the percentage differential is slightly over 0.25%; the worst state is New Jersey, where the differential is 1.7%. For this key indicator, the findings of our analysis were identical to those of WalletHub.

Recommendations: Promote more women executives. For every 130 additional women executives, Utah’s score will raise by 1/10th of a percent, increasing Utah’s point total by 0.3 points. We recommend working toward increasing the number of women in executive positions by at least 780 Utah women, which would add 1.80 points in this category.

In addition to those highlighted in the previous section, additional general recommendations include efforts to increase awareness of, along with tools to mitigate, conscious and unconscious bias for all Utah residents. Employers can also initiate the exploration of invisible systemic sexism and racism that are often intertwined with the procedures, processes, and systems that often do not benefit all employees equitably. In addition, we recommend career development initiatives and programs that encourage and prepare women for executive roles.

4. **Disparity in Share of Minimum–Wage Workers** (~2.11 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-10.00%	1	2.11
Best State	Utah	-10.00%	1	2.11
Worst State	Delaware	66.00%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	60.00%	47	0.19

³⁴ Scribner, R. T., Vargas, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2020, December 2). *Flexible and family-friendly policies at Utah’s “Best Places to Work.”* Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/27-flexible-family-friendly-policies-utah-best-places-to-work.pdf>

³⁵ U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2018). *2018 job patterns for minorities and women in private industry (EEO-1) raw datasets.* <https://www.eeoc.gov/statistics/2018-job-patterns-minorities-and-women-private-industry-eeo-1-raw-datasets>

On this metric, we located the exact data used in WalletHub’s analysis, supplied by the National Women’s Law Center.³⁶ This metric compares the number of full-time individuals in each state earning minimum wage by gender. However, because Utah has so many more men (634,400) than women (369,454) working full-time, year-round, according to 2019 U.S. Census data,³⁷ this metric—showing a disparity of 10%—is not particularly useful. Hence, because of the way WalletHub calculated their points, more men earning minimum wage than women gives Utah the best ranking in the nation for the gender ratio of workers in minimum wage jobs. The worst state is Delaware, where the number of women in minimum wage jobs exceeds the number of men by 66%. WalletHub allotted only 2.11 points to this metric, and Utah received all possible points.

Recommendations: As Utah received all possible points on this metric, no immediate or longer-term actions can be taken to improve Utah’s score on the WalletHub women’s equality report.

More generally, however, Utah’s minimum wage matches the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour, which has not changed since 2009. Increasing it would raise the earnings and family income of most low-wage workers—thousands of whom are women—lifting some families out of poverty.³⁸ Some experts fear that it could cause other low-wage workers to become jobless, but with Utah’s thriving economy and employee shortage, this should not pose a significant concern. We also recommend increasing investments in training and upskilling opportunities for women that will result in higher-paying employment.

5. Unemployment Rate Disparity (~4.21 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	0.50%	26	3.25
Best State	Wyoming	-1.60%	1	4.21
Worst State	New Jersey	2.20%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	0.70%	32	2.87

This measure compares unemployment rates for women and men. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the 2020 unemployment rate for Utah women was 5.1%, while the unemployment rate for Utah men was 4.6%, leaving a disparity of 0.5%.³⁹ More specifically, in 2020, there were 686,000 Utah women employed and 37,000 unemployed and seeking work. The best state for this metric is Wyoming, where the unemployment rate for women was 1.6% lower than the rate for men. The worst state for this metric was New Jersey, where the rate for women was 2.2% higher than for men. Although Utah stands in the middle of the 50 states on this disparity metric, the unemployment rate for Utah women is 6th-lowest in the nation. Our data analysis and ranking mirror WalletHub for this measure.

Recommendations: Reduce the unemployment rate for women and pay a living wage. Finding jobs for 686 women reduces the unemployment rate by 0.1%, which increases Utah’s total by 0.19 points. Of course, women, their families, and the state as a whole benefit when women who are looking for employment find stable work that provides a living wage.

³⁶ National Women’s Law Center. (2021). *Women and the minimum wage, state by state*. <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Women-Minimum-Wage-2021.pdf>

³⁷ National Women’s Law Center. (2018). *Women in the low-wage workforce by state*. <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/women-in-low-wage-workforce-by-state-2018-1.pdf>. The low-wage workforce is defined here as occupations with median wages of \$11.50 or less per hour based on U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

³⁸ Congressional Budget Office. (2021). *How increasing the federal minimum wage could affect employment and family income*. <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/55681>

³⁹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2020). *Geographic profile of employment and unemployment, 2020*. <https://www.bls.gov/opub/geographic-profile/home.htm>

More generally, we recommend, as was mentioned previously, increasing investments in training and upskilling opportunities for women, including initiatives related to STEM, trade, and business occupational readiness. In addition, encouraging women to complete postsecondary certificates and degrees at all levels, including graduate education, is directly linked to the reduction of unemployment for women. Utah women also need resources and support to assist them in navigating the intersection between work and family, as well as planning for future education and career goals.

6. **Entrepreneurship Rate Disparity** (~4.21 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-44.68%	39	0.69
Best State	Alaska	-29.30%	1	4.21
Worst State	Massachusetts	-47.70%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	-36.94%	12	2.46

This metric compares the number of women-owned businesses with the number of men-owned businesses. The U.S. Census Bureau collects and publishes data on women- and men-owned private businesses as part of their Annual Business Survey.⁴⁰ For each state, they publish the total number of private businesses, the number of male- and female-owned businesses that exist, along with sales volume, number of employees, and total payroll. The WalletHub analysis was done solely on the number of firms, gender-based totals as a percent of the total number of privately-owned businesses. Utah, based on the 2017 Annual Business Survey, had 10,215 women-owned businesses, 39,451 male-owned businesses, and 65,430 total, with some being co-owned by men and women. Men owned 60.3% of businesses, women owned 15.6%, with the difference being 44.68%, as shown above. The best state for this metric is Alaska, where the disparity in the calculation is only 29.3%, while the worst state is Massachusetts where the disparity is 47.7%. Idaho is better than Utah, with a disparity of 36.9%, while Utah, at 44.7%, ranks of 39th among the states. Our data source, rankings, and analysis match WalletHub for this measure.

Recommendations: Prioritize the creation of women-owned businesses. Adding 1,000 additional women-owned businesses in Utah would reduce the disparity by 2.2%, which would increase the state’s women’s equality score by half a point.

More general recommendations include continued support and expansion of the Women’s Business Center of Utah and women-focused initiatives connected to Utah’s Small Business Development Centers, the Business Resource Centers, and Chambers throughout the state. Utah is also the home to a host of women’s networks and groups focused on women and business.⁴¹ Utah has numerous academic courses and programs at public and not-for-profit colleges and universities that provide in-depth knowledge and skills to succeed in business creation and growth. Some Utah academic centers are beginning to focus on initiatives specifically for women, which is critical. In addition, efforts to increase women’s access to venture capital will be foundational for Utah to become an optimal environment for women wanting to start and grow thriving businesses. Finally, additional work and resources related to policy, professional development, networking, and other best practices more broadly for women continue to be important.⁴²

⁴⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, (2017). *Annual Business Survey*. <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=ABSCS2017.AB1700CSA01&y=2017&d=ECNSVY%20Annual%20Business%20Survey%20Annual%20Business%20Survey&tid=ABSCS2017.AB1700CSA01&hidePreview=true>

⁴¹ See the Utah Women & Leadership Project’s webpage titled “Utah Women Groups and Networks: <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/resources/utah-womens-groups>

⁴² Townsend, A., Madsen, S. R., & Wallace, A. M. (2020). *The status of women and entrepreneurship in Utah: A 2020 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/22-status-of-women-and-entrepreneurship.pdf>

7. **Disparity in Average Number of Work Hours** (~2.11 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-17.78%	50	0.00
Best State	Nevada	-9.16%	1	2.11
Worst State	Utah	-17.78%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	-17.07%	47	0.17

For this indicator, “Average Number of Work Hours” pertains to full-time workers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, full-time women employees in Utah work an average of 33.3 hours per week, while full time-men in Utah work an average of 40.5 hours per week, representing a 17.8% difference; Utah ranks as the worst state on this metric.⁴³ The highest-scoring state for this metric is Nevada, where the difference is only 9.0%. In Idaho, men work 41.5 hours on average, while women work 34.5, a difference of 17.1%. Our data analysis and ranking match WalletHub on this measure. Interestingly, WalletHub notes that this key indicator disadvantages men because they work more hours. Again, the WalletHub ranking focuses on the disparity between men and women in all metrics.

Recommendations: To move Utah up from last place, women need to increase their paid working time per week by 26 minutes. Each hour’s increase in weekly employment beyond that would decrease the discrepancy by almost 2.5% and would increase Utah’s total by 0.63 points.

More generally, Utah has a higher fertility rate than the national average, which impacts parents’ employment decisions. However, the research is clear that when employers offer flexible and family-friendly policies—such as remote work/flexibility with work location, flexibility with working hours, paid maternity and paternity leave, paid family leave, professional part-time and job-sharing roles, programs for returning workers, and childcare resources and support—parents are better able to be more productive and thrive in their chosen occupations.⁴⁴ Legislation that encourages, supports, and rewards businesses with these policies can also impact these employment efforts as well. The limitation with this measurement is that it does not consider unpaid labor performed by women. Utah women spend an average of 5.5 hours per day in unpaid work vs. 3.2 hours per day for Utah men, which is a wider gap than the national average.⁴⁵ If women are to increase their hours doing paid work, it should be balanced by a complementary increase in the unpaid work performed by men, which would reduce the likelihood of women experiencing overwork and burnout.

8. **Job Security Disparity** (~2.11 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	2.77%	1	2.11
Best State	Maryland	6.67%	12	2.11
Worst State	Rhode Island	-3.73%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	0.62%	1	2.11

This metric, in our opinion, is not ideal for measuring what WalletHub was hoping to capture. Overall, unemployment rates improved from 2018 to 2019. WalletHub indicated that they analyzed 2018 and 2019 unemployment data provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and developed this metric based on whether men or women benefitted the most from the changes that occurred in the

⁴³ U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). *Mean usual hours worked in the past 12 months for workers 16 to 64 years*. <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=B23020&g=0100000US%24040000&tid=ACSDT5Y2019.B23020&hidePreview=true>

⁴⁴ Scribner, R. T., Vargas, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2020, December 2).

⁴⁵ Madsen, S. R., & Scribner, R. T. (2017, June 5). *Unpaid care work among Utah women*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/21.pdf>

unemployment rate.⁴⁶ From whatever the rate of unemployment was in 2018, if women improved more than men by 2019, the rate is positive. If not, the rate is negative. In Utah, unemployment rates for women dropped from 3.7% in 2018 to 2.7% in 2019, a 1% improvement. In the same period, unemployment for men improved from 2.9% to 2.5%, a 0.4% increase. Therefore, using this form of analysis, women benefitted 0.6% more than men. Because Utah women’s improvement in unemployment was larger than the improvement for men, Utah earned full points for this metric, as did every state in which women’s progress exceeded men’s. However, our analysis and ranking are significantly different from WalletHub’s findings. In addition, this metric is based on older data, which have not considered the impacts of COVID-19 on women at work (see Appendix D for a list of UWLP reports on this topic).

Recommendations: It is hard to say why this change is labeled “job security,” and it is likewise difficult to develop a strategy to maintain or improve this metric going forward other than to mention that any strategies that families, organizations, and governments can utilize to strengthen job security for all Utahns will benefit women and their families.

9. **Economic Security Disparity** (~2.11 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-1.00%	1	2.11
Best State	Nevada	-1.00%	1	2.11
Worst State	Louisiana	-8.00%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	-2.00%	9	1.81

This metric is based on the Basic Economic Security Tables (BEST) Index published by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR),⁴⁷ which measures the amount of income working adults of different family configurations need in order to be economically secure. Economic security means having “enough income to meet basic monthly expenses—such as housing, food, transportation and childcare expenses—and save for emergencies and retirement.” For each state, the IWPR index indicates the percentages of men and women who enjoy economic security. In every state, men have higher economic security than women. Among Utahns aged 19–64, 66% of women and 67% of men enjoy economic security on this metric, a discrepancy of 1%, which ties with Nevada and Vermont as the best of the states. The worst state is Louisiana, where 71% of men and 63% of women enjoy economic security, a disparity of 8%. Our data analysis and ranking are identical to those of WalletHub on this metric.

Recommendations: Although Utah’s performance on this metric is excellent, the data need to be updated for the impact of COVID-19 and the rising cost of housing and childcare. According to a Utah IWPR Fact Sheet published in October of 2018,⁴⁸ a single working adult with employment-based benefits (such as health insurance and a retirement plan) needs an hourly wage of \$13.31 for full-time work (176+ hours per month) to have basic economic security from earned income, which is well above the state minimum wage (\$7.25). Working single adults with benefits need approximately \$2,342 per month or \$28,104 per year. A working adult with one preschooler and one school-aged child needs an hourly wage of \$29.34—or an income of \$5,163 per month or \$61,956 per year—to be economically secure. Of course, working adults without employment-based benefits need even higher incomes to have basic economic security. As mentioned, this information was published before the recent dramatic increase of housing costs, so more recent data are needed.

⁴⁶ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2019). *Expanded state employment status demographic data*. <https://www.bls.gov/lau/ex14tables.htm>

⁴⁷ Institute for Women’s Policy Research. (2018). *Basic economic security in the United States*. <https://iwpr.org/job-quality-income-security/basic-economic-security-in-the-united-states/>

⁴⁸ Institute for Women’s Policy Research. (2018, October). *Basic economic security in Utah: How much income do working adults need?* https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/R583_Utah.pdf

10. Disparity in Poverty Rate (~2.11 Points)

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
Neighbor State	Idaho	1.80%	12	1.67

Utah ranks third in disparity in poverty. However, our data analysis and ranking differ from WalletHub on this metric. Data published in 2019 by the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF)⁴⁹ indicate that 10.6% of Utah’s non-elderly women (younger than 65) live at or below the poverty line, compared to 8.3% of non-elderly men. Based on the disparity between men and women, KFF data rank Utah 11th in terms of the smallest disparity. Kaiser ranks Idaho best, with the difference between men and women’s poverty rate of 0.8%, while WalletHub ranks Idaho as 12th. KFF’s data align with WalletHub in that Mississippi ranks the worst among the 50 states, but they calculate the difference at 7.0% (14.1% men vs. 21.1% women). KFF cites U.S. Census Bureau data, which indicate the overall poverty rate for Utah in 2019 was 8.9%;⁵⁰ this puts Utah in second position behind New Hampshire for the lowest overall poverty rate.

It is also important to note that poverty rates are notably worse for certain groups in Utah. For example, in 2016, we reported that minority women are much more likely to live in poverty, as shown here by race or ethnic group: Black (20.3%), Asian/Pacific Islander (21.3%), “Other” or two or more races (21.3%), Hispanic (25.9%), and Native American (36.1%).⁵¹ Other demographic factors, including age, location of residence (rural/urban), and individual living situation also influence the way Utah women experience poverty. For example, in the United States, women aged 65 and over are more likely to be impoverished than men their age, at 12.1% vs. 7.4%, respectively. The higher incidence of poverty among female seniors exists in Utah as well: 8.9% of women live below the poverty line vs. 4.4% of men. Experts attribute some of the disparity to the fact that many women who are now retired worked lower-wage jobs and were less likely to be eligible for retirement benefits. Those factors, combined with women’s generally longer life span, contribute to Utah women seniors’ higher poverty rates.⁵²

Recommendations: Reducing the disparity in our unemployment differential between men and women by 4/10s of a percent would give us full points on this metric, an increase of 0.3 points on the women’s equality score.

Even though Utah does comparatively well on this metric, thousands of women in Utah still live in poverty, and the tight housing market makes living in poverty a reality for more women. In fact, 37.5% of single mothers with children under 18 and 46.9% who have children under five live in poverty.

Section Summary

As mentioned, Utah ranked 44th overall in the “Workplace Environment” section of WalletHub’s report. Ten key indicators comprise this section, and combined scores make up 40 of the 100 points available for the overall state equality measure. This first section includes complex key indicators that are weighted

⁴⁹ Kaiser Family Foundation. (2019). *Nonelderly adult poverty rate by sex*. <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/adult-poverty-rate-by-sex/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22%3A%20%22Location%22%2C%22sort%22%3A%22asc%22%7D>

⁵⁰ U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *Poverty thresholds*. <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html>

⁵¹ Madsen, S. R., & Scribner, R. T. (2016). *Poverty among Utah women*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/14.pdf>

⁵² Madsen, S. R., & Scribner, R. T. (2016).

differently, and there is a significant difference between indicators in terms of the amount of work it will take to improve the related WalletHub score. The box below includes one key recommendation for each of the ten sections discussed, along with the points, if applicable, Utah would gain toward the 100 points allotted through the WalletHub metric.

Workplace Environment Recommendations	
1.	Raise the minimum wage by \$2.00. (+ 0.34)
2.	Increase the number of women who earn over \$100,000 by 3,700. (+ 0.20)
3.	Add 780 women to executive positions within the state. (+ 1.80)
4.	Find solutions to shift more women out of minimum wage jobs.
5.	Find jobs for 686 women to reduce the unemployment rate by 0.1%. (+ 0.19)
6.	Add 1,000 additional women-owned business in Utah. (+ 0.50)
7.	Support female employees by creating flexible and family-friendly policies.
8.	Continue efforts regarding job security metrics.
9.	Focus on economic security for Utah women.
10.	Reduce the disparity between men and women in poverty by 0.4%. (+ 0.30)

EDUCATION & HEALTH (40 POINTS)

Utah ranked 50th overall in the “Education & Health” section of WalletHub’s report, while Idaho ranked 49th. The three key indicators in this section were combined to make up 40 of the 100 points available for the overall state equality measure. Each of the key indicators carries a maximum of 13.33 points.

11. Disparity in Advanced Educational Attainment (~13.33 Points)

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
Neighbor State	Idaho	-1.80%	47	5.40

According to WalletHub, “Advanced Educational Attainment” refers to the share of the population aged 25 and older with an advanced degree (higher than a bachelor’s degree).⁵³ In most states, and in the U.S. in general, women are earning the majority of college degrees. Women earn 57% of bachelor-level diplomas, 60% of master’s degrees, and 51.7% of doctorates.⁵⁴ In the United States, 13.5% of women earn graduate degrees. Using U.S. Census Bureau educational attainment data, we get slightly different figures than those of WalletHub. In Utah, 9.2% of women and 13.5% of men earn a college degree above bachelors, either a masters or doctorate.⁵⁵ The gap in Utah is 4.3%, 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, and the state with the next-widest gap to Utah is Idaho,

⁵³ McCann, A. (2021, August 23).

⁵⁴ Sawyer, K., & Valerio, A. M. (2018). *Making the case for male champions for gender inclusiveness at work*. *Organizational Dynamics*, 47(1), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2017.06.002>

⁵⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). *Age by educational attainment*. <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=education&d=ACS%201-Year%20Estimates%20Subject%20Tables&tid=ACSS1Y2019.S1501>

where men’s attainment exceeds women’s by only 1.5%. The best state for this metric is North Carolina, where women’s graduate or professional degree attainment exceeds men’s by 4.5%.

Recommendations: Increase the percentage of Utah women completing graduate degree programs. Further, engage in efforts, initiatives, and programs to encourage more girls and women to participate in and complete graduate degrees. This metric is one of the most significant factors in Utah’s scoring and ranking last on the women’s equality index. However, moving the needle on this metric is complex. In fact, in order to add a fraction of a point to WalletHub’s overall total for Utah, the disparity between men and women’s advanced degree attainment would have to be reduced from 4.9% to less than 1.8%.

Of course, efforts to encourage girls and women to obtain graduate degrees have a far greater purpose than getting a better ranking with WalletHub, and, for Utah to match the levels of education for other states, we need to encourage and support girls and women toward pursuing graduate degrees. Along with numerous other benefits, obtaining a graduate degree is also linked to higher pay.⁵⁶

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

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
Neighbor State	Idaho	-4.0	50	0.00

WalletHub keeps the source and calculation of math scores confidential, so it was challenging to reverse engineer their metric. They did inform us that Utah ranks 41st in math disparity, and that Kentucky is the best state while Idaho is the worst. Using 2019 data as reported on the Nation’s Report Card, which differ slightly from WalletHub data, Utah 8th grade girls score two points lower on the math assessment exam than do Utah 8th grade boys.⁵⁷ The best state for this metric is North Carolina, where girls score five points higher than boys, and, different from the WalletHub data, the worst state is Alaska, where girls score five points lower than boys. Using the Nation’s Report Card data, Utah ranks 46th in disparity, while Idaho ranks 49th. While the two produce similar numbers, there is not perfect alignment between the two data sources.

Recommendations: Shrinking the disparity in math scores by one point would increase Utah’s overall score by 2.67 points.

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

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
Neighbor State	Idaho	5.20%	48	5.08

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention collects and publishes statistics on behavioral risk factors.⁵⁸ This metric measures the share of adults who felt they could not afford a doctor’s visit due

⁵⁶ College Board. (2020, January 14). *A college education pays off: New College Board report.*

<https://newsroom.collegeboard.org/college-education-pays-new-college-board-report>

⁵⁷ The Nation’s Report Card. (2019). *NAEP report card: Mathematics.*

https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/math_2017/states/gaps/?grade=8

⁵⁸ Centers for Disease Control. (2019). *Behavioral risk factor surveillance system.*

<https://chronicdata.cdc.gov/Behavioral-Risk-Factors/Behavioral-Risk-Factor-Surveillance-System-BRFSS-P/dttw-5yxu>

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. The best state for this metric is Vermont where more men (9.9%) than women (8.7%) felt they could not afford a visit, while the worst state is Texas, where the disparity is 8.4%. Idaho has a 5.2% difference—17.1% for women and 11.9% for men. Our data on this metric are identical to those of WalletHub.

Recommendations: Reducing this disparity related to women’s perceptions of the affordability of doctor’s visits in Utah by 50%—from -3.70% to -1.85%—would increase the women’s equality score by 2.93 points. Implementing programs and policies that help qualifying individuals and families cover doctor visits will improve scores on this metric.

Section Summary

As mentioned, Utah ranked 50th overall in the “Education & Health” section of WalletHub’s report, while Idaho ranked 49th. Three key indicators that comprised this section were combined to make up 40 of the 100 points available for the overall state equality measure, with each indicator carrying a maximum of 13.33 points. The box below includes one key recommendation for each element, along with the points Utah would gain toward the 100 points allotted through the WalletHub metric.

Education & Health Recommendations	
1.	Increase the percentage of Utah women completing graduate degree programs. (+ 0.10-13.33)
2.	Shrink the disparity in math scores by one point. (+ 2.70)
3.	Reduce the disparity related to Utah women’s perceptions of the affordability of doctor visits by 50%. (+ 2.93)

POLITICAL EMPOWERMENT (20 POINTS)

In the “Political Empowerment” section of WalletHub’s report, Utah ranked 49th overall, while Idaho ranked 34th. Four key indicators were included in this area; the four equally weighted scores make up 20 of the 100 points of state equality measures. The four are discussed below.

14. Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in U.S. Senate (~5.00 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-100%	21	0.00
Best State	Minnesota	200%	1	5.00
Worst State	30 States Have 0	-100%	21	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	-100%	21	0.00

All states have two U.S. Senators, and currently in Utah those two seats are held by Mitt Romney and Mike Lee. Four states (Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, and Washington) have two women senators, while 16 states have one man and one woman serving in those positions. The 30 remaining states, including Utah, have no female representation. Utah has never elected a woman to serve in the U.S. Senate.

Recommendations: Electing one woman U.S. Senator would add five points to Utah’s overall women’s equality score. This is one area in which Utah would make substantial and immediate progress toward shifting Utah’s score upward on the WalletHub ranking for women’s equality.

Generally, continuing to support Utah initiatives and efforts designed to raise the political aspirations of girls and women and to provide training, support, and development for women to successfully run

for office—and win—can prepare the next generation of women political leaders. In addition, assertively addressing sexism and discrimination amongst political parties—from caucuses to statewide leadership—will help shift the tide in Utah for all key indicators in this section.

15. **Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in U.S. House of Representatives** (~5.00 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-100%	37	0.00
Best State	Wyoming	100%	1	5.00
Worst State	14 States Have 0	-100%	37	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	-100%	37	0.00

Since Utah gained statehood, only four women have served in Congress, and two of the four served a single term⁵⁹: Rep. Reva Z. Beck Bosone (1949–1953), Rep. Karen Shepherd (1993–1995), Rep. Enid Greene Waldholtz (1995–1997), and Rep. Mia Love (2015–2019). Of the 439 Representatives currently serving in the U.S. House, 120 (27.3%) are women. Utah has four Representatives, John Curtis, Blake Moore, Burgess Owens, and Chris Stewart. Utah and 13 other states, including Idaho, have no female Representatives in the U.S. House. Three states (Wyoming, Delaware, and New Mexico) have elected only women to represent the state in the U.S. House.

Recommendations: Electing one woman to Congress would add 2.50 points to Utah’s overall women’s equality score and electing two women would add 5 points. Again, this is one of the places Utah would make immediate progress toward shifting Utah’s score upward on the ranking for women’s equality.

In addition to the recommendations for Key Indicator #14, conducting rigorous research to unearth details of the existing political culture can help bring awareness to both the positive and negative environment and how it encourages or discourages engagement among women. It will also bring to light changes that need to occur to ensure that all Utahns—no matter gender or race/ethnicity—will be treated fairly and ethically in their ability to run for and be elected to public office.

16. **Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in State Legislature** (~5.00 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-68.3%	40	0.65
Best State	Nevada	52.00%	1	5.00
Worst State	West Virginia	-86.40%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	-54.20%	22	1.17

Rutgers Eagleton Institute of Politics⁶⁰ reports that 2,290 women hold seats in state legislatures, of 7,383 possible positions; therefore, women hold 31% of the total representation. In 2020, Utah was ranked 32nd in terms of women serving in the state legislature, and that ranking decreased to 40th in 2021, as Utah experienced a 2% decrease in female representation compared to the prior year.⁶¹ One additional woman recently took the seat of a male legislator who resigned in November of 2021. Currently, 17.2% of Utah senators, or 5 of 29 (4 D, 1 R), and 28% of the House of Representatives, or 21 of 75 (12 D, 9 R), are female. Overall, in 2021, 25% (26 of 104) of Utah legislators are women. The best state for this metric is Nevada, where women have been elected to 38 of 63, or 60.3%, of all

⁵⁹ Payne, H., Christensen, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, February 3). *The status of women in Utah politics: A 2021 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/29-status-of-women-in-utah-politics-2021.pdf>

⁶⁰ Rutgers Eagleton Institute of Politics. (2021). *Women in state legislatures 2021*. <https://cawp.rutgers.edu/women-state-legislature-2021>

⁶¹ Payne, H., Christensen, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, February 3).

seats. The worst state is West Virginia, where women fill just 16 of 134, or 11.9%, of all seats. In Idaho, women fill 33 of 105 seats, or 31.4% of total representation. While our own analysis of state legislature representation was slightly different, we also found that Utah ranked 40th (1.59 points) and Idaho 22nd (2.56 points).

Recommendations: Each woman elected to the Utah legislature would add nearly a tenth of a point to Utah’s overall women’s equality score for WalletHub. Hence, it would take ten additional women elected for each point added to the score. Adding at least four women senators and three women representatives will provide enough women for what the literature calls a “tipping point”—where a critical mass is represented and seen as more of an influence in the governing body. It would also increase the WalletHub points by 0.88.

17. Disparity in Share of State–Elected Executives (~5.00 Points)

Description	State	Measure	Rank	Points
Where We Stand	Utah	-75.00%	39	2.00
Best State	Oregon	300%	1	5.00
Worst State	11 States at 0	-100%	50	0.00
Neighbor State	Idaho	-25.00%	12	4.29

At the national level, 2021 data show that women now hold 30.3% (94 of 310) of statewide executive offices (SEO) (51 D, 41 R, 2 NP), compared to 24.4% in 2017. Currently, two states (Tennessee and Maine) have only a single state elected official, while six states have 10 or more. Utah has five elected SEO seats: governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, treasurer, and auditor. There is currently one woman serving in Utah SEO, as Deidre Henderson won the 2020 election for lieutenant governor. Of the five statewide offices up for election in 2020—governor/lieutenant governor, attorney general, state auditor, and state treasurer—both the Democratic and Republican parties nominated a female candidate for lieutenant governor. The best state for this metric is Oregon, where four of five state elected officials are women. Alaska and nine other states have no women serving as elected executives. In Idaho, three of the seven elected state executives are women. While our calculations differed slightly from WalletHub’s, the points awarded for Utah and Idaho are 2.00 and 4.29, respectively. In our own analysis, Utah ranks at 33rd, with Idaho falling to 14th.

Recommendations: Adding another female to an elected statewide executive office in Utah would increase the overall women’s equality score by 2 points.

Section Summary

As mentioned, Utah ranked 49th in the “Political Empowerment” section of WalletHub’s report, while Idaho ranked 34th. The four combined key indicators in this section comprise 20 of the 100 points available for the overall state equality measure. Each of the key indicators in this section is worth five points. The box below includes one key recommendation for each of the four indicators in this section, along with the points Utah would gain toward the 100 points allotted through the WalletHub metric.

Political Empowerment Recommendations
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. Elect 7 additional women to the Utah House and Senate. (+ 0.88)
4. Elect 1 additional woman to a statewide executive office. (+ 2.00)

Conclusion & Final Recommendations

The purpose of this white paper is to explore what Utahns can do to shift the negative national rankings of women’s equality in the state, the harmful perceptions that abound related to Utah not being a good place for women, and Utah women’s lived experiences in terms of gender inequality. To do this, we conducted an in-depth analysis of the most recent WalletHub report, “2021’s Best & Worst States for Women’s Equality,” to assist us in answering three questions:

1. What are the specific metrics that WalletHub uses for their state-by-state rankings?
2. What do these metrics tell us about Utah women?
3. What can Utah decision makers and residents do to improve women’s equality in Utah?

We explored WalletHub’s 17 key indicators categorized in three primary areas—Workplace Environment, Education & Health, and Political Empowerment. Related to the last question, what Utah decisions makers and residents can do to improve women’s equality in Utah, we have not only included recommendations in each key indicator section, but we have also included one key recommendation for each indicator at the end of each of the three primary area sections. In the box that follows, we have included our top 10 recommendations for Utah decisions makers, particularly in terms of shifting the negative national rankings of women’s equality in the state. These are generally listed in the order of the highest point values related to the WalletHub metrics.

Top 10 Recommendations for Utah Decision Makers

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 50%. (+ 2.93)
4. Shrink the disparity in math scores by one 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 percentage of Utah women completing graduate degree programs. (+ 0.10-13.33)

Intriguingly, all four of the “Political Empowerment” key indicators made it to the top 10 recommendations, which means that progress in this area can immediately move Utah out of its last-place ranking. All three of the indicators from the “Education & Health” section are also included, along with three of 10 from “Workplace Environment.” Increasing the percentage of Utah women completing graduate degree programs and narrowing the gender pay gap can make a substantial impact for Utah as well, but instead of providing specific point values, we offer a range; progress on these metrics with their related points, are complex discussions beyond the scope of this report.

In addition to Utah data, this report also includes some data on Idaho as well (see Appendix C for a summary of key indicators, measures, ranks, and points for WalletHub and our UWLP analysis). Appendix D includes a list of UWLP reports on Utah women regarding subjects such as business, COVID-19, economics, education, gender-based violence, general leadership, government, health and wellbeing, nonprofit organizations, political and civic engagement, and “What Can I Do?” (each has a hyperlink to the actual report). Next, Appendix E provides a summary of findings on other research topics related to Utah women. Finally, Appendix F includes a final summary of best and worst states for women’s equality by primary area with both WalletHub and UWLP rankings and points.

Importantly, reports like this highlight a critical dilemma that is often the elephant in the room. Yes, Utah ranks as the worst state in the nation for women’s equality, measured by WalletHub metrics. And scores of some of these metrics may directly or indirectly link to the fact that more than 60% of Utah residents are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Clearly, the division of effort and focus on the family continues to influence the decisions of many Utah residents and most likely impacts how Utah scores on several of the metrics measured in the WalletHub survey. As mentioned previously, WalletHub’s ranking system did not include other potential equality metrics that could shed a more positive light on Utah women’s important contributions in the home, community, and beyond. Yet, it remains clear that for more of Utah’s women to thrive, gender inequality needs to be tackled.

The questions then become: Can Utah create a unique path forward that will improve gender equity and equality, while also respecting the circumstances and choices of women and families? And, if so, what might that distinctive path forward look like? Although this report looks specifically at the WalletHub metrics, there may be other metrics to consider as well. Again, shifting the ranking simply serves as a proxy for making meaningful changes in the state so that all women—and Utahns as a whole—can experience equitable access to opportunities of all kinds that will help them better thrive. As Utah decision makers and residents join to find ways to strengthen the impact of girls and women more effectively, more Utah women and families will feel connected to our state’s well-known mantra—“This Is the Place.”

Zions Bank commissioned Dr. Susan R. Madsen and the Utah Women & Leadership Project (UWLP) to conduct this research. The Project’s mission is to strengthen the impact of Utah girls and women, with a foundational focus on producing relevant, trustworthy, and applicable research for decision makers and residents at large. For questions, email Dr. Madsen at susan.madsen@usu.edu, and find other research publications at <http://utwomen.org/>.

Authors: Dr. Susan R. Madsen is considered one of the top global scholars and thought leaders on the topic of women’s leadership, has authored or edited seven books, and has published hundreds of articles, chapters, and reports. Her research has been cited in the *U.S. News and World Report*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *Parenting Magazine*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, and *The Washington Post*. She is also a regular contributor to *Forbes* and local and state newspapers. Professor Madsen is the Karen Haight Huntsman Endowed Professor of Leadership in the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business at Utah State University and the Founding Director of the Utah Women & Leadership Project; she also serves on many nonprofit and community boards. Dr. Greg. P. Madsen recently completed his Ph.D. in global leadership at Indiana Tech University, with his dissertation focused on “Men’s Perception of Gender Bias and the Relationship Between Psychological Standing and Willingness to Engage as an Ally.” He is currently a product manager of heavy mining equipment at Wheeler Machinery Company, the Caterpillar dealer headquartered in Salt Lake City.

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Appendix A

WalletHub “Best & Worst States for Women” Metric Categories

WalletHub also publishes a state-by-state ranking on the “Best & Worst States for Women”⁶² more generally, where Utah ranks much better (28th of 50) compared to the “Best & Worst States for Women’s Equality.” Idaho ranks 40th of 50. This ranking includes women’s economic and social wellbeing (Utah=32; Idaho=48) and women’s health and safety (Utah=24; Idaho=26). The list below includes the metrics used to determine the state rankings for this broader index, which was not analyzed in this report.

Women’s Economic & Social Well-Being

- Median earnings for female workers
- Unemployment rate for women
- Job security for women
- Share of women living in poverty
- Unaffordability of doctor’s visit
- Share of women-owned businesses
- “Economic clout” of women-owned firms
- High school graduation rate for women
- Friendliness toward working moms
- Friendliness toward women’s equality
- Share of women who voted in the 2016 presidential election

Women’s Health Care & Safety

- COVID-19 positive testing rate in the past week
- COVID-19 death rate during the past week
- Equality of women’s hospitals
- Share of women ages 18–44 who reported having one or more people they think of as their personal doctor or health care provider
- Female uninsured rate
- Share of women with good or better health
- Women’s preventive health care
- Share of physically active women
- Share of women who are obese
- Baby-friendliness
- Depression rate for women
- Suicide rate for women
- Women’s life expectancy at birth
- Female homicide rate
- Prevalence of rape victimization among women

⁶² McCann, A. (2021, March 1). *Best & worst states for women*. WalletHub. <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-and-worst-states-for-women/10728>

Appendix B
UTAH—Summary of Key Indicators, Measures, Ranks, and Points

UTAH Key Indicators	WalletHub Current Analysis			UWLP Current Analysis		
	Measure	Rank	Points	Measure	Rank	Points
Income Disparity	-25.50%	45	1.52	-30.00%	49	2.43
Higher Income Disparity	-13.00%	48	0.23	-13.00%	48	0.23
Disparity in Share of Executive Positions	-1.37%	46	0.92	-1.37%	46	0.91
Disparity in Share of Minimum-Wage Workers	-10.00%	1	2.11	-10.00%	1	2.11
Unemployment Rate Disparity	0.50%	26	3.25	0.50%	32	3.25
Entrepreneurship Rate Disparity	-44.68%	39	0.69	-44.68%	39	0.69
Disparity in Average Number of Work Hours	-17.78%	50	0.00	-17.78%	50	0.00
Job Security Disparity	2.77%	1	2.11	0.60%	12	1.73
Economic Security Disparity	-1.00%	3	2.11	-1.00%	1	2.11
Disparity in Poverty Rate	1.60%	3	1.82	2.30%	10	1.60
Disparity in Advanced Educational Attainment	-4.90%	50	0.00	-4.30%	50	0.00
Disparity in Math Test Scores	-2.00%	43	6.67	-2.00%	49	8.00
Disparity in Perception of Doctor Visit Affordability	3.70%	41	7.46	3.70%	41	7.46
Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in U.S. Senate	-100%	21	0.00	-100%	21	0.00
Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in U.S. House	-100%	37	0.00	-100%	37	0.00
Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in State Legislature	-68.30%	40	0.65	-52.00%	40	1.59
Disparity in Share of State-Elected Executives	-75.00%	39	2.00	-60.00%	33	2.00
Overall Scores		50	31.54		50	34.50

Note: WalletHub’s reported total came to 29.85, but in our attempts to recreate their scale, item by item (without having all their original sources), our calculations came to 31.54 (see 4th column). When we updated some sources to more current data (columns 5–7), our total came to 34.50.

Appendix C
IDAHO—Summary of Key Indicators, Measures, Ranks, and Points

IDAHO	WalletHub Current Analysis			UWLP Current Analysis		
Key Indicators	Measure	Rank	Points	Measure	Rank	Points
Income Disparity	-25.80%	47	1.29	-25.00%	45	4.86
Higher Income Disparity	-8.40%	19	2.92	-8.40%	21	2.92
Disparity in Share of Executive Positions	-95%	23	2.17	-95%	23	2.17
Disparity in Share of Minimum-Wage Workers	60.00%	47	0.19	60.00%	47	0.19
Unemployment Rate Disparity	0.70%	32	2.87	-0.70%	32	2.87
Entrepreneurship-Rate Disparity	-36.94%	12	2.46	-36.94%	12	2.46
Disparity in Average Number of Work Hours	-17.07%	47	0.17	17.07%	47	0.17
Job Security Disparity	0.62%	1	2.11	0.80%	6	2.11
Economic Security Disparity	-2.00%	9	1.81	-2.00%	9	1.81
Disparity in Poverty Rate	1.80%	12	1.67	0.80%	1	2.11
Disparity in Advanced Educational Attainment	-1.80%	47	5.40	-1.50%	49	4.24
Disparity in Math Test Scores	-4.00%	50	0.00	-4.00%	49	2.67
Disparity in Perception of Doctor Visit Affordability	5.20%	48	5.08	-5.20%	48	5.08
Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in U.S. Senate	-100%	21	0.00	-100%	21	0.00
Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in U.S. House	-100%	37	0.00	-100%	37	0.00
Disparity in Share of Lawmakers in State Legislature	-54.17%	22	1.17	31.40%	22	2.56
Disparity in Share of State-Elected Executives	-25.00%	12	4.29	42.86%	14	4.29
Overall Scores		49	33.62		49	40.51

Note: WalletHub’s reported total came to 37.37, but in our attempts to recreate their scale, item by item (without having all their original sources), our calculations came to 33.62 (see 4th column). When we updated some sources to more current data (columns 5–7), our total came to 40.51.

Appendix D

UWLP Reports on Utah Women by Topic Area

Area	Report Titles & Hyperlinks
Business	<p>Flexible and Family-Friendly Policies at Utah’s “Best Places to Work” (2020)</p> <p>The Status of Women and Entrepreneurship in Utah: A 2020 Update</p> <p>Strategies that Male Allies Use to Advance Women in the Workplace (2019)</p> <p>The Status of Women Leaders in Utah Business: A 2018 Update</p> <p>Entrepreneurship & Women-Owned Businesses: Recommendation Report (2018)</p> <p>The Status of Women and Entrepreneurship in Utah (2016)</p> <p>Utah Women and STEM (2016)</p> <p>The Status of Women Leaders in Utah Businesses (2014)</p>
COVID-19 (2021 Reports)	<p>The Impact of COVID-19 on Utah Women and Work: Health Impacts</p> <p>The Impact of COVID-19 on Utah Women and Work: Resilient Mindset and Wellbeing</p> <p>The Impact of COVID-19 on Utah Women and Work: Caregiver Experiences</p> <p>The Impact of COVID-19 on Utah Women and Work: Childcare and Homeschooling</p> <p>The Impact of COVID-19 on Utah Women and Work: Career Advancement Challenges</p> <p>The Impact of COVID-19 on Utah Women and Work: Changes, Burnout, & Hope</p>
Economic	<p>Utah Gender Wage Gap: A 2021 Update</p> <p>Utah Is Changing: Should Our Leave Laws Follow Suit? (2021)</p> <p>Addressing the Gender Pay Gap in Utah with State Equal Pay Laws (2021)</p> <p>Women and Finances: What Utahns Need to Know (2020)</p> <p>Women & Finance: Recommendation Report (2019)</p> <p>Childcare: What Utahns Need to Know (2018)</p> <p>The Gender Wage Gap in Utah (2017)</p> <p>Gender Wage Gap: Recommendation Report (2017)</p> <p>Unpaid Care Work Among Utah Women (2017)</p> <p>Unpaid Care Work: Recommendation Report (2017)</p> <p>Childcare: Recommendation Report (2017)</p> <p>Poverty Among Utah Women (2016)</p> <p>Labor Force Participation Among Utah Women (2016)</p> <p>Labor Force Participation: Recommendation Report (2016)</p>
Education	<p>The Status of Women Leaders in Utah Higher Education: A 2021 Update</p> <p>Utah Women in STEM Education: A 2019 Update</p> <p>Utah Women’s Postsecondary Education Roundtable: Recommendations to Governor Gary R. Herbert & The Utah Legislature (2018)</p> <p>Utah Women in Higher Education: A Progress Report, 2018</p> <p>Utah Women in Higher Education, 2000–2017 (2018)</p> <p>The Status of Women Leaders in Utah Education: A 2017 Update</p> <p>The Status of Women Leaders in Utah Education (2014)</p> <p>Utah Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) (2013)</p> <p>College Enrollment and Graduation: A Utah Women and Education Update (2013)</p> <p>Educational Attainment: A Utah Women and Education Update (2013)</p> <p>Utah Women’s College Task Force Recommendation (2012)</p> <p>The College Attendance Decisions of Young Women in Utah (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of Other Significant People on a Young Woman’s College Decision (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of Religion and Values on a Young Woman’s College Decision (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of Aspirations on a Young Woman’s College Decision (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of Finances on a Young Woman’s College Decision (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of School Activities and Leadership Roles on a Young Woman’s College Decision (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of College Preparation Activities on a Young Woman’s College Decision (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of Teachers on a Young Woman’s College Decision (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of School Counselors and Administrators on a Young Woman’s College Decision (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of a Mother on a Daughter’s College Decision (2011)</p> <p>The Influence of a Father on a Daughter’s College Decision (2011)</p>

	<p>The Benefits of Higher Education for Women in Utah (2011)</p> <p>Introduction: Women and Education Research Snapshots (2011)</p> <p>Women and Higher Education in Utah: A Glimpse at the Past and Present (2010)</p> <p>The Value of Higher Education for Women in Utah (2010)</p>
Gender-Based Violence	<p>Sexual Harassment: What Utahns Need to Know (2018)</p> <p>Domestic Violence Among Utah Women (2017)</p> <p>Sexual Assault Among Utah Women (2016)</p>
General Leadership	<p>The Leadership Development Gained by Women Serving Full-Time Missions (2020)</p> <p>Women, Confidence, and Leadership: What Do Utah Women Leaders Think? (2015)</p> <p>Why Do We Need More Women Leaders in Utah? (2015)</p>
Government	<p>Women Leaders in Utah Government – Their Paths to Power (2020)</p> <p>The Status of Women Leaders in Government – Utah Cities and Towns (2020)</p> <p>The Status of Women Leaders in Government – Utah Counties (2020)</p> <p>The Status of Women Leaders in Government – State of Utah (2020)</p> <p>The Status of Women on Utah State Boards and Commissions: A 2019 Update</p> <p>The Status of Women on Utah State Boards and Commissions (2016)</p>
Health & Wellbeing	<p>Utah Girls, Young Women, and Physical Activity (2021)</p> <p>Substance Use Disorders Among Utah Women (2018)</p> <p>Utah Women and Mental Health (2017)</p> <p>Cosmetic Surgery and Body Image Among Utah Women (2017)</p> <p>Mammography Among Utah Women (2017)</p> <p>Access to Healthcare: Recommendation Report (2017)</p>
Nonprofit Organizations	<p>The Status of Women Leaders in Utah Nonprofits: A 2018 Update</p> <p>The Status of Women Leaders in Utah Nonprofits (2014)</p>
Political & Civic Engagement	<p>An Analysis of Utah Media: Women & Politics (2021)</p> <p>The Status of Women in Utah Politics: A 2021 Update</p> <p>Perceptions of Women Elected Officials in Utah: Challenges, Benefits, and Lessons Learned (2021)</p> <p>A Historical View of Women in Utah’s Top Political Roles (2020)</p> <p>Voting and Civic Engagement Among Utah Women: A 2019 Update</p> <p>The Status of Women on Utah State Boards & Commissions: A 2019 Update</p> <p>The Status of Women in Utah Politics: A 2017 Update</p> <p>The Status of Women on Utah State Boards and Commissions (2016)</p> <p>Voting and Civic Engagement Among Utah Women (2016)</p> <p>Female Political Representation: Recommendation Report (2016)</p> <p>The Status of Women in Utah Politics (2014)</p>
“What Can I Do” Series	<p>What Mayors Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Women</p> <p>What City Council Members Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Women</p> <p>What Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Specialists Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Women of Color</p> <p>What Leaders in the Interfaith Community Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Women</p> <p>What Therapists Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Women</p> <p>What Media Professionals Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Women</p> <p>What Academic Advisors Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Women</p> <p>What Women in Medicine Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Women</p> <p>What Athletic Coaches Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Young Women</p> <p>What Young Women Leaders Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Teens</p> <p>What Utah Fathers Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Their Daughters</p> <p>What Elementary School Administrators Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls</p> <p>What Utah Mothers Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Their Daughters</p> <p>What Women’s Networks and Groups Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls/Women</p> <p>What Male Allies Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Women in Workplace Settings</p> <p>What School Counselors Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Young Women</p> <p>What Business Leaders Can Do to Strengthen the Impact of Utah Girls and Women</p>

Appendix E

Summary of Other Research on Utah Women

Focus Area	Status
Childcare ⁶³	Fifty-two percent of Utah children under age six have all available parents in the workforce. In state-by-state rankings, Utah fares poorly in several categories. Utah was ranked as the second least affordable state for infant and toddler care in a center, the third least affordable state for infant care in a family care setting, and the least affordable state in the U.S. for three months of full-time care for a school-aged child. However, another report ranked Utah as the second most affordable state overall for childcare center affordability, so sources are mixed. In addition to affordability, availability is a critical challenge in Utah. COVID-19 has exacerbated the childcare issues in Utah and beyond. ⁶⁴
Civic Engagement ⁶⁵	For the past 14 years in a row, Utah has ranked first in the nation for percentage of residents who regularly volunteer at 51% (a full 20 points higher than the national average of 30.3%). Nationally, women’s volunteer rates are six percentage points higher than men’s (27.8% vs. 21.8%), and this gap seems to hold for Utah as well.
College Graduation ⁶⁶	Utah men and women have different degree attainment and completion patterns. The recent data show that women now edge out men in three categories (some college, no degree; associate degree; and bachelor’s degree), while men surpass women in graduate degree attainment. The percent of the population holding only a bachelor’s degree has been nearly equal for Utah men and women for the past several years, holding steady at about 20% for each since 2010.
Cosmetic Surgery ⁶⁷	National media and scholars have puzzled over the high levels of plastic surgery among Utah women, and a national magazine even called Salt Lake City the “Vainest City in America.” Many wonder why Salt Lake City, capital of one of the most religious states in the nation, would employ more plastic surgeons per capita than Los Angeles. Years ago, <i>Forbes</i> magazine reported that Salt Lake City residents spent more than ten times the amount residents of similarly sized cities spent on cosmetics and skincare products.
Domestic Violence ⁶⁸	One in three Utah women will experience some form of domestic violence in her lifetime, and our rate is slightly higher than the national average (32.4% vs 28.8%). More than 40% of adult homicides in Utah since 2000 have been domestic violence related. A recent survey shows that 86% of Utah women believe domestic violence is a problem in their communities, and 63% believe violence against women is increasing.
Entrepreneurship ⁶⁹	In 2016, Utah was ranked 8th in the U.S. for women-owned businesses, 11th in growth by number of firms, 4th in growth by revenue, and 30th in growth by employment. By

⁶³ Scribner, R. T., & Madsen, S. R. (2018, September 5). *Childcare: What Utahns need to know*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/25.pdf>

⁶⁴ Hartwell, C., Hansen, J., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, June 2). *The impact of COVID-19 on Utah women and work: Childcare and homeschooling*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/33-covid-19-childcare-homeschooling.pdf>

⁶⁵ Madsen, S. R., Pierucci, D. C., & Scribner, R. T. (2021, October 27). *Voting and civic engagement among Utah women: A 2021 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/32.pdf>

⁶⁶ Jeppsen, C. (2018, March). *Utah women in higher education: A progress report*. *Women in the Economy Commission and the Utah*. Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.utah.gov/women/documents/Utah-Women-in-higher-education-brief.pdf>

⁶⁷ Madsen, S. R., Dillon, J., & Scribner, R. T. (2017, April 10). *Cosmetic surgery and body image among Utah women*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/20.pdf>

⁶⁸ Madsen, S. R., Turley, T., & Scribner, R. T. (2017, February 6). *Domestic violence among Utah women*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/18.pdf>

⁶⁹ Townsend, A. T., Madsen, S. R., & Wallace, A. M. (2020, May 5). *The status of women and entrepreneurship in Utah: A 2020 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/22-status-of-women-and-entrepreneurship.pdf>

	2019, the state's thriving economy contributed to Utah's ascent to 6th in the nation in economic clout for women-owned businesses, 5th for revenue growth (19.2%), 10th in employment growth (7.6%), and 12th in growth by number of firms (12%). In 2019, Salt Lake City was also ranked the #1 metropolitan area in the growth of employment vitality in women-owned businesses.
Finances ⁷⁰	Only 30% of women and 35% of men worldwide show a basic level of financial literacy. There are no gender data available for Utah. Nearly half of Utah women over age 65 are either single or married with a spouse absent (80,000 women total), hence individual financial literacy is critical, especially for senior women. In Utah, the share of payday loans taken out by women is 55%.
Gender Wage Gap ⁷¹	In Utah, women earn approximately 30% less than men, ranking close to last in most state comparisons. Nationally, women earn 16–18% less than men (see key indicator #1 in the report for more details).
Labor Force Participation ⁷²	Women comprise 44% of the total labor force in Utah, while they comprise 47% nationally. Overall, 59% of Utah women aged 16+ are in the labor force, compared to 58% in the U.S. Utah is first in the nation for women who work part-time (37% compared to 28% nationally).
Mammography ⁷³	Studies in past years have shown Utah to be among the five lowest states in the nation for mammography screening rates. In 2014, only 64.5% of Utah women aged 40 and older had received a mammogram within the two previous years, compared with 72.3% of U.S. women.
Mental Health ⁷⁴	Although one recent in-depth study showed Utah ranking slightly below the national average in the percentage of adults who suffer from poor mental health, the state regularly reports rates higher than the national average for depression. Another recent study ranked Utah last out of all 50 states. Utah women, like women nationally, are diagnosed with depression at much higher rates than men. 29.1% of Utah women with less than a high school degree report poor mental health vs. 13.9% of college graduates. Many Utah women suffer with postpartum major depression.
Physical Activity ⁷⁵	For school-aged children, 28% of boys meet the recommended physical activity levels set by the state of Utah, compared to only 14% of girls. Based on a different set of standards for adults, globally 37.1% of women are insufficiently physically active compared to 23.4% of men; this trend is also found in Utah, where 19.4% of women are insufficiently physically active compared to 17.6% of men.
Poverty ⁷⁶	Although Utahns in general experience lower rates of poverty than the national average (11.3% in Utah vs. 14.7% nationwide), Utah women are more likely than Utah men to live in poverty, especially women who are heads of households and/or single parents. Overall, Utah women live in poverty at a lower rate (12.2%) than the national average (16%), and minority women in Utah are much more likely to live in poverty compared to White women.
Sexual Assault ⁷⁷	Nearly one in two women in the U.S. will experience some form of sexual violence

⁷⁰ Scribner, R. T., & Madsen, S. R. (2020, April 1). *Women and finances: What Utahns need to know*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/29.pdf>

⁷¹ Winkel, R., Darowski, E. S., Christensen, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, October 5). *Utah gender wage gap: A 2021 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/31.pdf>

⁷² Madsen, S. R., & Scribner, R. T. (2016, December 2). *Labor force participation among Utah women*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/17.pdf>

⁷³ Madsen, S. R., Barnes, E., & Scribner, R. T. (2017, March 1). *Mammography among Utah women*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/19.pdf>

⁷⁴ Scribner, R. T., & Madsen, S. R. (2017, November 1). *Utah women and mental health*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/23.pdf>

⁷⁵ Buesser, K., Myrer, R., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, August 2). *Utah girls, young women, and physical activity*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/30.pdf>

⁷⁶ Madsen, S. R., & Scribner, R. T. (2016, November 7). *Poverty among Utah women*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/14.pdf>

	victimization in her lifetime (broadly defined), and Utah has the same overall rate. Studies show that one in three Utah women has been sexually assaulted, and one in six women report having been raped. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, rape occurs in Utah at a rate higher than the national average.
Sexual Harassment ⁷⁸	Approximately 85–95% of those who experience sexual harassment do not file a formal legal complaint, and studies show that around 70% do not even report the incidents within their own organizations. Anywhere from 25–85% of women have experienced workplace sexual harassment. In Utah, the rate of formal charges regarding sexual harassment is roughly in line with national averages: both Utah and the U.S. averaged 3–4 charges of sexual harassment per 100,000 population for the last four years, and only 16 states had fewer per capita charges than Utah in 2017.
State Boards & Commissions ⁷⁹	In 2019, 32.7% of Utah state boards and commissions seats were held by women, an increase of 4.6% since 2016. Increasing diversity on these boards and commissions is a top priority of the Cox-Henderson Administration, so we expect this percentage has already increased since January of 2021. Comparable national data cannot be found.
STEM ⁸⁰	In 2016, Utah women held only 23.5% of STEM sector jobs vs. 28.8% for women nationally. Utah ranked last in the U.S. for the percent of women employed in STEM.
STEM Education ⁸¹	The total number of students in Utah public institutions who completed STEM degrees has increased through the years, including the number of women who earn these degrees. However, as a percentage of the total graduating class, women increased only 1% (from 20% to 21%) between 2012 and 2017. The share of degrees earned by women in Utah remains substantially lower than men in all STEM categories and below the national average for women getting STEM degrees.
Substance Use ⁸²	In 2016, Utahns died from a drug overdose at a rate (per 100,000 population) that was above the national average; Utah was the 19th highest state that year. Regarding use of all illicit drugs more generally, Utah rates are below the national average, but when considering only the misuse of prescription drugs, the rate for Utahns is higher than the national average. A 2014 study of prescription opioid use during pregnancy, among women receiving Medicaid, showed that Utah had the highest rate in the nation for pregnant women receiving an opioid prescription, at twice the national rate.
Unpaid Care Work ⁸³	U.S. women who participate in unpaid work average 4.92 hours per day vs. 3.79 hours per day for U.S. men. The gap in Utah is wider: Utah women spend 5.55 hours per day in unpaid work vs. 3.22 hours for Utah men. In Utah, and in most countries around the world, the daily combined hours of paid and unpaid work are higher for women.
Voting ⁸⁴	In 2020, 66.6% of eligible female voters in Utah voted compared to 68.4% of U.S. women—the highest rate achieved over a 14-year period. Utah ranked 33rd of 51 (including the District of Columbia) for the percentage of eligible female voters voting.

⁷⁷ Madsen, S. R., Turley, T., & Scribner, R. T. (2016, November 7). *Sexual assault among Utah women*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/15.pdf>

⁷⁸ Scribner, R. T. Madsen, S. R., & Thackeray, A. (2018, March 1). *Sexual harassment: What Utahns need to know*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/24.pdf>

⁷⁹ Madsen, S. R., & Roper, M. (2019, November 5). *The status of women in Utah state boards & commissions: A 2019 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/20-status-of-women-on-utah-state-boards-commissions-2019.pdf>

⁸⁰ Madsen, S. R., Goryunova, E., & Scribner, R. T. (2016, December 2). *Utah women and STEM*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/16.pdf>

⁸¹ Hanewicz, C., Thackeray, S., & Madsen, S. R. (2019, August 1). *Utah women in STEM education: A 2019 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/19-women-in-stem-2019.pdf>

⁸² Utah Women & Leadership Project. (2018, November 1). *Substance use disorders among Utah women*. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/blog/2018/substance-use-disorders-among-utah-women>

⁸³ Madsen, S. R., & Scribner, R. T. (2017, June 5). *Unpaid care work among Utah women*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/21.pdf>

⁸⁴ Madsen, S. R., Pierucci, D. C., & Scribner, R. T. (2021, October 27). *Voting and civic engagement among Utah women: A 2021 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/snapshot/32.pdf>

Women in Politics ⁸⁵	Utah has no women in its delegation to Congress, while one of five Utah state executive office seats is held by a woman, and 24% of the state legislative seats are held by women. Other statistics: Women hold 15% of Utah county commission and council seats; 53.3% of the predominately full-time elected positions of clerk/auditor, treasurer, recorder, and assessor; 17% of Utah’s mayoral posts; and 29.3% of council member seats. Although some progress has been made, all are below the national averages.
Women Leaders in Business ⁸⁶	Utah is significantly lower than the national average in terms of women who are corporate CEOs, presidents, top manager/director (if headquarters is outside of Utah), board of directors’ members, and board chairs (see report for specific percentages).
Women Leaders in Government ⁸⁷	Women hold 39.3% of supervisory, managerial, and leadership positions in Utah State Government; 42.5% of supervisory, managerial, and executive leadership positions in Utah’s county governments; and 29.1% of supervisory, managerial, and executive leadership positions in Utah’s municipal governments. We did not find comparable data in the U.S. or in other states or regions of the country.
Women Leaders in Higher Education ⁸⁸	Progress has been made for women in Utah higher educational leadership: 33% of college and university presidents are women (33% nationally), along with 36.4% of presidents’ cabinets (37.3% nationally), 33.3% of chief academic officers/provosts (44% nationally), 42.9% associate/assistant chief academic officers (50% nationally), 33.3% vice presidents (40% nationally); and 38.2% academic dean (40% nationally).
Women Leaders in K-12 ⁸⁹	In 2017, 41.5% of Utah state and district leadership positions were filled by women. At that time, 73.3% (48.6% nationally) leaders at the State Board of Education were women, 47.4% (44.0% nationally) on district boards of education, and 12.2% (27% nationally) of district superintendents. At the school level, 19.2% of high school principals, 31.1% of high school assistant principals, 34.3% of middle/junior high principals, 41% of middle/junior high assistant principals, and 56.1% of elementary school principals were women; these are slightly below the national average.
Women Leaders in Nonprofits ⁹⁰	In 2017, 57% of nonprofit chief executives in Utah were women (compared to 72% nationally). In that same year, 45.3% of board members of nonprofits were women (compared to 48% nationally). In Utah, when a nonprofit has a female chief executive, it is more likely that there is a higher percentage of women serving on their board.

⁸⁵ Payne, H., Christensen, M., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, February 3). *The status of women in Utah politics: A 2021 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/29-status-of-women-in-utah-politics-2021.pdf>

⁸⁶ Madsen, S. R., Quayle, S., & Scribner, R. T. (2018, May 2). *The status of women leaders in Utah business: A 2018 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/17-status-of-women-leaders-in-utah-business-2018.pdf>

⁸⁷ Townsend, A., & Madsen, S. R. (2020, August 4). *The status of women leaders in government – State of Utah*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/23-status-of-women-leaders-in-government-utah.pdf>; Townsend, A., & Madsen, S. R. (2020, September 2). *The status of women leaders in government – Utah counties*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/24-status-of-women-leaders-in-government-utah-counties.pdf>; Townsend, A., & Madsen, S. R. (2020, October 6). *The status of women leaders in government – Utah cities and towns*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/25-status-of-women-leaders-in-government-utah-cities-towns.pdf>

⁸⁸ Hauck, N. E., Hill, J. C., Townsend, A., & Madsen, S. R. (2021, April 21). *The status of women leaders in Utah higher education: A 2021 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/31-women-leaders-utah-higher-education-2021.pdf>

⁸⁹ Madsen, S. R., Goryunova, E., & Hew-Len, A. (2017, September 6). *The status of women leaders in Utah education: A 2017 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/15-status-of-women-leaders-in-utah-education-2017.pdf>

⁹⁰ Madsen, S. R., Hew-Len, A., & Thackeray, A. (2018, February 5). *The status of women leaders in Utah nonprofits: A 2018 update*. Utah Women & Leadership Project. <https://www.usu.edu/uwlp/files/briefs/16-status-of-women-leaders-in-utah-nonprofits-2018.pdf>

Appendix F
Final Summary of Best & Worst States for Women's Equality
(UWLP & WalletHub)

1. Workplace Environment

Best States	UWLP Rank	W-Hub Rank	Points	Worst States	UWLP Rank	W-Hub Rank	Points
Hawaii	1	1	35.23	Wyoming	46	40	17.61
Vermont	2	2	33.79	Alabama	47	48	16.93
Nevada	3	3	32.39	New Jersey	48	50	16.09
Alaska	4	5	30.61	Louisiana	49	49	16.07
Maryland	5	4	29.07	Utah	50	44	15.46

2. Education & Health

Best States	UWLP Rank	W-Hub Rank	Points	Worst States	UWLP Rank	W-Hub Rank	Points
Vermont	1	5	39.99	Kansas	46	47	22.52
Kentucky	2	2	36.92	Texas	47	48	19.39
Tennessee	3	4	35.78	Alaska	48	45	18.83
Rhode Island	4	8	35.57	Utah	49	50	15.46
Connecticut	5	15	34.99	Idaho	50	49	11.99

3. Political Empowerment

Best States	UWLP Rank	W-Hub Rank	Points	Worst States	UWLP Rank	W-Hub Rank	Points
Nevada	1	1	20.00	Maryland	46	41	3.82
Maine	2	2	19.15	Utah	44	49	3.59
Michigan	3	3	17.42	North Dakota	48	47	2.96
Washington	4	4	17.22	Alabama	49	48	2.81
Minnesota	5	5	17.14	Louisiana	50	50	2.33

Overall Best & Worst States for Women's Equality

State	UWLP Rank	W-Hub Rank	UWLP Points	W-Hub Points
Nevada	1	1	82.55	77.55
Vermont	2	3	81.09	68.67
Maine	3	4	79.80	67.72
New York	4	5	77.45	67.20
Hawaii	5	2	77.33	69.36
Oklahoma	46	43	50.10	47.70
Texas	47	48	47.78	41.95
Alabama	48	44	47.29	47.01
Idaho	49	49	40.51	37.37
Utah	50	50	34.50	29.85