

# PENNSYLVANIA

**P**ennsylvania has a population of 12.9 million people, making it the 5<sup>th</sup>-most populous state in the U.S.

Twelve percent (12.2%) of the population is Black (compared to 13.6% nationally); 74.5% of the population is white; 8.6% is Hispanic; 4.1% is Asian; and .4% is American Indian and/or Alaska Native.<sup>1</sup>

## Legislative Profile

- Governor Tom Wolf (D) supports reproductive autonomy.
- The Pennsylvania State House supports reproductive autonomy.
- The Pennsylvania State Senate opposes reproductive autonomy.

## Policy Profile: Access to Health Care

### AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE<sup>2 3 4</sup>

- Pennsylvania adopted Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As a result:
  - » 3,344,155 people are covered by Medicaid/CHIP. This was an increase of 958,109 covered individuals from 2013 to 2021.
  - » There was a 43% reduction in the uninsured rate from 2010 to 2019.
- The uninsured rate for Black people in Pennsylvania is 6.8%. The national average uninsured rate for Black people is 10.9%.
- The state Medicaid program includes expanded coverage of services for 12 months post-partum, for those making less than 220% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

### HEALTH IMPACT FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC<sup>5 6</sup>

- The Black population accounted for 11% of all deaths in Pennsylvania, a percentage that is comparable to the state's population. The white population comprises 83% of deaths, a percentage that exceeds the overall state population. The Hispanic population accounts for 4% of deaths, less than the state population.

- » Overall, the COVID-19 vaccination rate in Pennsylvania is 66.6% (fully vaccinated).
- » More than 50% of both white people and Hispanic people in Pennsylvania are fully vaccinated (52.2% and 57%, respectively); 47.6% of Black people are fully vaccinated. The highest population with full vaccination is Asian/Pacific Islander (59.5%) and the lowest is Native American (26.2%).

### ABORTION RIGHTS<sup>7 8 9</sup>

- Abortion is legal in Pennsylvania until 23 weeks and 6 days of pregnancy. Exceptions after that point may include when abortion care is needed to save the pregnant person's life or to prevent serious risk to the pregnant person's physical health.
- Pennsylvania requires a pregnant person to get counseling information from a provider and then wait 24 hours before getting abortion care.
- If the pregnant person is under 18, a parent or legal guardian must give permission for abortion care.
- Public funding of abortion care is limited to procedures that are necessary to prevent the death of the pregnant person or when the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest.
- The state's abortion rate in 2020 was 13.5 procedures for every 1,000 women.

### FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES<sup>10 11</sup>

- Pennsylvanians of any age can buy over-the-counter emergency contraception (EC). Pennsylvania requires emergency rooms to provide EC or information about EC to rape survivors.
- Pennsylvania has secured a waiver or state plan amendment from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to cover family planning services under Medicaid, based solely on income criteria of earning less than 220% of the FPL.

### SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION<sup>12</sup>

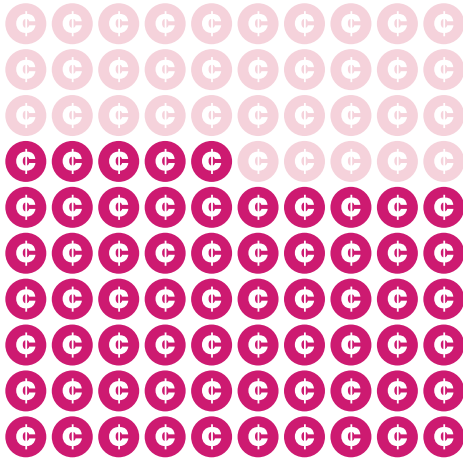
- Pennsylvania state law does not require public schools to provide sexual health education. Pennsylvania does require schools to provide education on sexually transmitted diseases and infections (STDs/STIs) and HIV/AIDS prevention.
- If they provide sexual health education, the materials must be age-appropriate and stress the benefits of abstaining from sex.
- Students do not need permission of parents or guardians to participate in classes, but parents or guardians can opt their child out of it.

## Systemic Disparities

### MATERNAL AND INFANT MORTALITY<sup>13 14 15 16</sup>

- The maternal mortality rate in Pennsylvania from 2018—2020 was 15 deaths for every 100,000 live births.
- According to the state, there were 85 pregnancy-associated deaths in Pennsylvania in 2018. The vast majority (92%) of those deaths were deemed to be preventable. The overall pregnancy-associated mortality ratio was 82 deaths/100,000 live births. Blacks had the highest ratio (163/100,000 live births), which was 2 times higher than that of white women (79) and Hispanics (70).
- New data from the CDC indicate that the nation's maternal mortality rate increased in 2021, to 32.9 deaths for every 100,000 live births. The U.S. mortality rate for Black women was 69.9 deaths per 100,000 live births, 2.6 times the rate of white women.
- The Black infant mortality rate in Pennsylvania is 10.5 deaths for every 1,000 live births; the U.S. rate is 10.4/1,000 live births. For whites, the rate is 4.4/1,000, which equals the national rate; the rate for Hispanics was 5.6, compared to 4.7 nationally.

## PENNSYLVANIA'S WAGE GAP



BLACK WOMEN MAKE **65 CENTS**  
FOR EVERY \$1.00 A WHITE MAN MAKES,  
A WAGE GAP OF **35 CENTS**.

Source: National Women's Law Center (NWLC), *Wage Gap by State for Black Women—March 2023*, Washington (DC): NWLC, 2023. Online: <https://nwlc.org/resource/wage-gap-state-black-women/>.

PENNSYLVANIA ADOPTED  
**MEDICAID EXPANSION**  
UNDER THE AFFORDABLE  
CARE ACT (ACA). AS A  
RESULT THERE WAS A  
**43% REDUCTION** IN THE  
**UNINSURED RATE**  
FROM 2010 TO 2019.

Source: HealthInsurance.org, *Medicaid Eligibility and Enrollment in Pennsylvania: HealthInsurance.org*, 2023. Online: <https://www.healthinsurance.org/medicaid/pennsylvania/>

*In 2021, of the AIDS-related deaths among women in Pennsylvania, 62% were Black women, 19% were white women, and 13% were Hispanic women.*

### STDS, INCLUDING HIV/AIDS<sup>17</sup>

- Of the total new diagnoses of STDs/STIs in 2021 for which race/ethnicity was reported in Pennsylvania:
  - » There were 188 new diagnoses of Syphilis: 43% were among Black women, 26% were among white women, and 22% were among Hispanic women.
  - » There were 45,971 new diagnoses of Chlamydia: 43% were among Black women; 33% were among white women; and 15% were among Hispanic women.
  - » There were 7,439 new diagnoses of Gonorrhea: 53% were among Black women, 24% were among white women, 13% were among Hispanic women, and 9% were among multi-racial women.

- Among women who received an HIV diagnosis in Pennsylvania in 2022 for whom race/ethnicity was known, 44% were Black women, 30% were white women, and 21% were Hispanic women.
- In 2021, of the AIDS-related deaths among women in Pennsylvania, 62% were Black women, 19% were white women, and 13% were Hispanic women.

### REPRODUCTIVE CANCERS<sup>18</sup>

- In Pennsylvania, the age-adjusted rate of new breast cancer cases is 120.8 cancers for every 100,000 women. The rate for Black women is 116.8 for every 100,000 women; for white women, the rate is 123.5; and for Hispanic women it is 88.4.
- The breast cancer mortality rate for Black women in Pennsylvania is 27.7 deaths for every 100,000 women, compared to 18.9 and 11.7 per 100,000 for white and Hispanic women, respectively.
- The age-adjusted cervical cancer rate is 6.3 cases for every 100,000 women in Pennsylvania. The rate for Black women is 6.3 per 100,000 women, compared to 5.9 and 8.8 for white and Hispanic women, respectively.

- The cervical cancer mortality rate for Black women is 4.3 deaths for every 100,000 women, compared to 1.9 per 100,000 for white women.

### ECONOMIC JUSTICE<sup>19 20 21</sup>

- In Pennsylvania, Black women make 65 cents for every dollar that a white man makes, creating a wage gap of 35 cents.
- The lifetime wage gap for Black women in Pennsylvania is \$881,200; a Black woman has to work until age 81 to make what a white man does by age 60.
- In Pennsylvania, 36.5% of women-headed households live in poverty. Among Black women, 23.5% live in poverty, compared to 12.4% of all women aged 18 and older and 9.7% of white women.

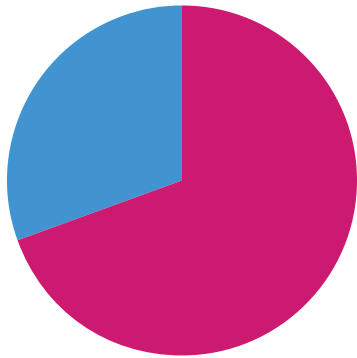
### LGBTQIA+ LIBERATION<sup>22 23</sup>

- Pennsylvania does not ban best practice medical care for transgender youth.
- There are state laws in place that explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity with respect to employment, housing, public accommodations; there is no state law that prohibits discrimination in credit and lending policies.
- No state law protects LGBTQIA+ parents with respect to adoption or foster care; state family leave laws do not include LGBTQIA+-inclusive definitions of "spouse" or "partner."

### CRIMINAL JUSTICE<sup>24 25 26 27</sup>

- Black individuals comprise 46% of the prison population, compared to just 12% of the overall state population.
- Black individuals are 7.4 times more likely than white individuals in Pennsylvania to be incarcerated.
- Pennsylvania denies the right to vote to 42,976 citizens due to confinement in prison or jail for a felony conviction. Black citizens in Pennsylvania are four times as likely to be disenfranchised voters, compared to all Pennsylvanians.
- Pennsylvania has anti-shackling legislation that protects pregnant inmates.

# THE INFANT MORTALITY RATE FOR BLACK INFANTS IS 10.5 DEATHS FOR EVERY 1,000,



A RATE MORE THAN  
**TWICE**  
THAT OF WHITE INFANTS  
**(4.4/1,000)**

## VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN<sup>28 29</sup> 30 31

- More than one-third (37.1%) of women in Pennsylvania and 30.4% of men have experienced intimate partner physical violence (IPV), intimate partner rape, and/or intimate partner stalking in their lives.
- In 2021, 112 people were killed in domestic violence homicides in Pennsylvania. More than half (56%) were killed by a partner or former intimate partner; 63% of the deaths were committed with a firearm.
- State law prohibits people who have been convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence crimes from possessing firearms. Protection from abuse orders can also require removal of firearms from the offender.
- Black women in Pennsylvania experience slightly higher rates of IPV than women of other racial/ethnic groups. 39% of Black women have reported experiencing IPV, compared to 36.6% of white women.
- Since 2015, police have killed 7 women in Pennsylvania; 3 were Black, 2 were white, and 2 were unidentified.

## Endnotes

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We are a national partnership focused on lifting up the voices of Black women leaders at the national, regional, and state level in our ongoing policy fight to secure Reproductive Justice for all women and girls.



**IN OUR OWN VOICE:  
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*Because the Reproductive Justice framework encompasses bodily integrity and autonomy, our use of the term "women" includes cis, femmes, trans, agender, gender non-binary, and gender non-confirming individuals.*