



## VIRGINIA

**W**ith a population of 8.7 million residents, Virginia is ranked 12th in population among states in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

- One-fifth (20%) of the state population is comprised of Black individuals, compared to 13.6 percent of the national population.<sup>2</sup>
- Virginia has the 9th largest Black population in the country.<sup>3</sup>
- Black Americans account for 20% of the state's population, compared to 13.6% nationally. In Virginia, 59.8% of the population is white; 10.5% is Latino/Hispanic; 7.3% is Asian; .6% is American Indian and Alaska Native; and .1% is Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.<sup>4</sup>

### Legislative Profile:<sup>5</sup>

- Governor Glenn Youngkin (R) opposes reproductive autonomy.
- The Virginia House of Delegates opposes reproductive autonomy.
- The Virginia Senate supports reproductive autonomy.

### Policy Profile on Key Issues

#### AFFORDABLE CARE ACT <sup>6 7</sup>

Virginia expanded Medicaid as part of the Affordable Care Act and, as a result:

- 1,926,548 Virginians are covered by Medicaid/CHIP as of late 2021.
- The uninsured rate among Virginians fell by 41% between 2010 and 2019.
- Total enrollment in Medicaid/CHIP increased 83% between 2013 and 2023.

The uninsured rate for Black people in Virginia is 7.5 percent; nationally, an average of 10.9 percent of Black people are uninsured.<sup>8</sup>

#### ABORTION RIGHTS <sup>9 10 11</sup>

- The parent or other guardian of a minor must consent and be notified before they can have an abortion.
- Public funding is available for abortion only when the pregnant person's life is endangered, when the pregnancy result-

ed from rape or incest, or when fetal impairment exists.

- Abortion can only be performed in the third trimester if the woman's life or health are endangered.
- Providers and institutions may refuse to participate in abortion care.
- Medicaid covers abortion care only if the pregnant person's life is endangered, when the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest, or when fetal impairment exists.
- Virginia's abortion rate in 2020 was 9.2 procedures per 1,000 women aged 15 – 44.

#### COMPREHENSIVE SEX EDUCATION<sup>12</sup>

- Virginia schools are mandated to provide health education, but sexuality education is not required. Local school boards can develop family life education programs to reduce adolescent pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and substance abuse. If offered, family life programs must meet Board of Education guidelines and standards.
- The Board of Education suggests that family life education include content on the “benefits, challenges, responsibilities, and value of marriage for men, women, children, and communities; abstinence education; the value of postponing sexual activity; the benefits of adoption as a positive choice in the event of an unwanted pregnancy; human sexuality; human reproduction; dating violence, the characteristics of abusive relationships, steps to take to avoid sexual assault, and the availability of counseling and legal resources, and, in the event of such sexual assault, the importance of immediate medical attention and advice, as well as the requirements of the law; the etiology, prevention and effects of STDs; and mental health education and awareness.”
- Parents or other guardians may remove their child from any class.

#### FAMILY PLANNING<sup>13</sup>

- All minors are allowed to get a birth control prescription without a parent or other guardian's permission.
- Virginia's state Medicaid program includes extended eligibility for family planning services to those making 205% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and for 12 months post-partum for women under 205% of the FPL.

#### MATERNAL & INFANT MORTALITY<sup>14 15 16 17</sup>

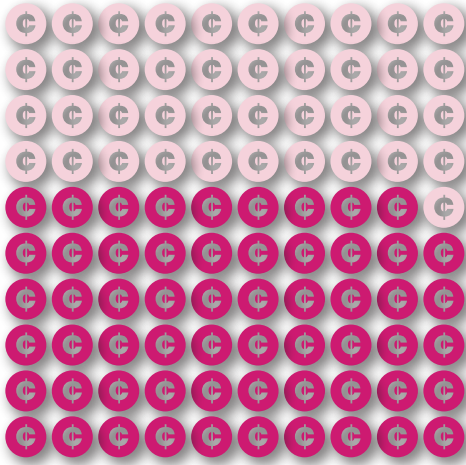
- Virginia's maternal mortality rate is 15.6 per 100,000 pregnancies, on par with the U.S. average of 17.4 deaths for every 100,000 pregnancies.
- The maternal mortality rate for Black women in Virginia is 47.2 deaths for every 100,000 pregnancy; more than twice the rate for white women (18.1).
- Virginia has the 12th-highest rate of maternal mortality in the country. From 2018-2021, there were 65 pregnancy-related deaths in the state. The state's maternal mortality rate was 22.3 deaths for every 100,000 live births. In comparison, the U.S. national rate is 20.4/100,000 live births.
- New data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (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 (26.6).
- On average 9.9 of every 1,000 Black infants born in Virginia will die before their first birthday, compared to 4.8 white babies.

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

- Black women in Virginia have a breast cancer rate of 125.2 cases per 100,000 women, compared to 133.4 per 100,000 for white women. Overall, the rate among Virginia women is 128.2 breast cancer cases per 100,000 women.
- Black women in Virginia experience 7.1 cases of cervical cancer per 100,000

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## VIRGINIA'S WAGE GAP



BLACK WOMEN MAKE **59 CENTS**  
FOR EVERY \$1.00 A WHITE MAN MAKES,  
A WAGE GAP OF **41 CENTS.**

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BLACK WOMEN'S **LIFETIME LOSSES**  
DUE TO VIRGINIA'S WAGE GAP ARE

**\$1,162,040**

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A BLACK WOMAN'S  
**CAREER EARNINGS**  
CATCH UP TO A WHITE MAN'S AT  
**AGE 87.**

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Sources: National Women's Law Center (NWLC), *Lifetime Wage Gap Losses State by State*, Washington, DC: NWLC, 2023. National Women's Law Center (NWLC), *Women in Poverty, State by State* 2021, Washington, DC: NWLC, 2022.

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women, compared to 5.4 per 100,000 for white women. Overall, the rate among Virginia women is 6.1 cervical cancer cases per 100,000 women.

- Black women in Virginia experience 7.0 cases of ovarian cancer per 100,000 women, compared to 8.5 cases per 100,000 white women. Overall, the rate among Virginia women is 8.4 ovarian cancer cases per 100,000 women.

### STD/STIS, INCLUDING HIV/AIDS<sup>19</sup>

- In Virginia, in 2021, of the STI/STD diagnoses where race/ethnicity was known:
  - » Of the 93 cases of Syphilis, 53% were among Black women, 41% were among white women, and 4% were among Hispanic women.
  - » Of the 15,740 cases of Chlamydia, 54% were among Black women, 31% were among white women, and 12% were among Hispanic women.
  - » Of the 4,882 cases of Gonorrhea, 68% were among Black women, 26% were among white women, and 3.5% were among Hispanic women.
- In 2022, 67% of the women who received an HIV diagnosis were Black women, 19% were white women, and 9% were Hispanic women.
- In 2021, 64% of the AIDS-related deaths among women in Virginia were among Black women; 18% were among white women, 12.5% were among multi-racial women.

### VIOLENCE

- Virginia ranks 24th in the nation in the number of Black homicides. In 2020, there were 343 Black homicide victims in Virginia.<sup>20</sup>
- More than one-third (34%) of all Virginia homicides are attributable to family and intimate partner violence.<sup>21</sup>
- Virginia ranks in the top 20 (17<sup>th</sup>) of US states with the highest lifetime prevalence of sexual violence experienced by Black women.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2020, 68 women in Virginia were killed in their spouse or intimate partner; of those, 28 were Black women.<sup>23</sup>
- For all forms of fatal family and partner violence, Black Virginians died at a rate nearly three times higher than their white peers (4.0 compared to 1.4). With respect to intimate partner homicide, Black women died at a rate three times higher than white women (2.4 compared to 0.8), and had the highest fatality rate of all groups.<sup>24</sup>

- From January 2021- April 2023, 54 people were shot and killed by police in Virginia; of these, 16 were Black men and 8 were men of unknown race/ethnicity; one woman of unknown race/ethnicity was killed.<sup>25</sup>

### LGBTQIA+ <sup>26 27</sup>

- State law bans discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity for employment, housing, public accommodations, credit and lending.
- LGBTQIA+ individuals are allowed to adopt in Virginia; second-parent adoptions are protected for married, same-sex couples.
- State law has a broad religious exemption law that permits individuals, faith-based organizations, and other non-profits to seek exemption from state laws that "burden" their religious beliefs.

### CRIMINAL JUSTICE <sup>28 29 30</sup>

- Black people in Virginia are 4.3 times more likely to be incarcerated than white people are; the national Black-to-white incarceration ratio is 4.8 to 1.
- The Virginia chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and Protect Democracy are suing Governor Youngkin and others over the recent changes to the process by which formerly incarcerated individuals' voting rights are restored. This Administration's actions are a change from previous governors from both parties, who had expanded and simplified the process of restoring voting rights.
- Virginia is one of 12 states where more than half of the incarcerated population is Black; 55% of the state's prison population is Black.

### ECONOMIC JUSTICE<sup>31 32 33 34</sup>

- Black women make 59 cents for every \$1 that a white man makes, a wage gap of 41 cents.
- Black women's lifetime losses due to Virginia's wage gap are \$1,162,040. A Black woman's career earnings catch up to a white man's at age 87.
- In Virginia, 28.5% of women-headed households live in poverty. Among Black women, 16.2% live in poverty, compared to 10.7% of all women aged 18 and older, and 8.4% of white women in the state.
- Virginia is one of five states where Black women's educational attainment rate exceeds 40% (the others are CO, MD, GA, and MA).

## MATERNAL MORTALITY IN VIRGINIA

### MATERNAL MORTALITY AMONG BLACK WOMEN IN VIRGINIA IS MORE THAN TWICE THAT OF WHITE WOMEN.



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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:  
NATIONAL BLACK WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE AGENDA**  
601 13th St., NW, Suite 650 N • Washington, DC 20005 • 202-545-7660 • [www.blackrj.org](http://www.blackrj.org)

## Strategic Partners



P.O. Box 292516  
Los Angeles, CA 90029  
(323) 290-5955  
[www.bwwla.org](http://www.bwwla.org)



55 M Street SE | Suite 940  
Washington, D.C. 20003  
(202) 548.4000  
[www.bwhi.org](http://www.bwhi.org)



The Beatty Building  
5907 Penn Avenue, Suite 340  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15206  
(412) 450-0290  
[newvoicesrj.org](http://newvoicesrj.org)



P.O. Box 10558  
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[www.sisterlove.org](http://www.sisterlove.org)



1750 Madison Avenue  
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Memphis, Tennessee 38104  
(901) 222-4425  
[sisterreach.org](http://sisterreach.org)



P.O. Box 89210  
Atlanta, GA 30312  
(404) 331-3250  
[www.sparkrj.org](http://www.sparkrj.org)



501 Wynnewood Dr, Ste 213  
Dallas, Texas, TX 75224  
(972) 629-9266  
[theafiyacenter.org](http://theafiyacenter.org)



1226 N. Broad Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119  
(504) 301-0428  
[wwav-no.org](http://wwav-no.org)

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### Authors

Regina Davis Moss, PhD, MPH, MCHES, President & CEO,  
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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.*