



The State of Black Women & Reproductive Justice

GEORGIA

Georgia has a population of 10.9 million people, making it the 8th-most populous state in the U.S. and the 3rd-most populous state in the South, after Texas and Florida.¹

Black Americans account for 33% (more than 3.3 million individuals) of the state's population, compared to 13.6% nationally. In Georgia, 50.4% of the population is white; 10.5% is Latino/Hispanic; 4.8% is Asian; .6% is American Indian and Alaska Native; and .1% is Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders.²

Legislative Profile³

- Governor Brian Kemp (R) opposes reproductive autonomy.
- Georgia State House opposes reproductive autonomy.
- Georgia State Senate opposes reproductive autonomy.

Policy Profile: Access to Health Care

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE^{4 5 6}

- Georgia has not expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As a result:
 - » 678,000 people who would be covered under expansion are not.
 - » 269,000 people have no realistic access to health insurance.
 - » \$3.5 billion was lost to the state in 2022 alone.
- The state partially expanded Medicaid in July 2023, with a work requirement.
- The uninsured rate for Black people in Georgia is 14.8 percent. The national average uninsured rate for Black people is 10.9 percent.
- Georgia's state Medicaid program includes extended eligibility for 12 months postpartum for those making less than 225% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL).

HEALTH IMPACT FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC^{7 8}

- The Black population accounted for 32% of all deaths in Georgia, which aligns with the percentage of the state's population (33%).
- The white population comprises 61% of deaths and 52% of the population; the Hispanic population accounts for 5% of deaths and 10% of the population.
- More than half of Black, white, and Hispanic people in Georgia are vaccinated (55%, 56%, and 57%, respectively).

ACCESS TO ABORTION CARE^{9 10 11 12}

- In Georgia, abortion is now illegal after 6 weeks of pregnancy, unless it is required to save the pregnant person's life or preserve their health, in the case of lethal fatal anomaly, or when the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest.
- A person seeking abortion care must receive state-directed counseling that provides information designed to discourage them from having an abortion. They must wait 24 hours before the procedure is provided.
- If a minor seeks an abortion, the parent must be notified before the procedure is performed.
- Health plans under the Affordable Care Act only cover abortion in cases of life endangerment or severely compromised physical health issues.
- Abortion is only covered in insurance policies for public employees in cases of life endangerment or is provided state funding in cases of life endangerment, rape, or incest.
- Georgia's abortion rate in 2020 was 17.1 procedures per 1,000 women aged 15 – 44.

FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES^{13 14}

- Georgia's state Medicaid program includes extended eligibility for family planning services to those making less than 216% of the FPL.
- People under age 18 are allowed to get a prescription for birth control without a parent or guardian's permission.

SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION¹⁵

- Georgia public schools are required to teach sexuality education and STD and HIV prevention education. The State Board of Education requires that schools stress abstinence-only-until-marriage, basic refusal skills, and how to maintain personal boundaries. Local school boards decide what other subjects to teach.
- State law mandates that parents must be notified about sexual health education and can opt their child out of it.

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GEORGIA'S WAGE GAP



BLACK WOMEN MAKE **62 CENTS** FOR EVERY \$1.00 A WHITE MAN MAKES, A WAGE GAP OF **38 CENTS**.

AN ESTIMATED 19% OF BLACK FEMALES IN GEORGIA LIVE IN POVERTY; BLACK WOMEN ARE ALMOST **TWICE AS LIKELY** TO LIVE IN POVERTY THAN WHITE WOMEN (10%)

Source: National Women's Law Center (NWLC), *Wage Gap by State for Black Women—March 2023*, Washington (DC): NWLC, 2023.

National Women's Law Center (NWLC), *Women in Poverty, State by State*, Washington, (DC): NWLC, 2022.

Systemic Disparities

MATERNAL AND INFANT MORTALITY^{16 17 18 19 20}

- Georgia has the seventh-highest rate of maternal mortality in the country. From 2018-2021, there were 169 pregnancy-related deaths. The state's maternal mortality rate was 28.8 deaths for every 100,000 live births. In comparison, the US national rate is 20.4/100,000 live births.
- The pregnancy-related death rate for Black women was 48.6, compared to 22.7 for white women, from 2018-2020. The majority (83%) of all maternal deaths were deemed to be preventable.
- Pregnant people who live in a state like Georgia that banned abortion post-Dobbs were up to three times as likely to die during pregnancy, childbirth, or soon after giving birth. Babies born in those states were almost 30% more likely to die during the first month of life.
- 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).
- The Black infant mortality rate in Georgia is 9.2 deaths for every 1,000 live births; the U.S. rate is 10.4/1,000 live births. For whites, the rate is 5.0/1,000, compared to 4.4/1,000 nationally.

STD/STIS, INCLUDING HIV/AIDS²¹

- In Georgia, in 2021, of the STI/STD diagnoses where race/ethnicity was known:
 - » Of the 333 cases of Syphilis, 66% were among Black women, 30% were among white women, and 3% were among Hispanic women.
 - » Of the 36,729 cases of Chlamydia, 74% were among Black women, and 25% were among white women.
 - » Of the 12,368 cases of Gonorrhea, 74% were among Black women, 22% were among white women, and 3.4% were among Hispanic women.

- In 2022, 76% of the women who received an HIV diagnosis were Black women, 15% were white women, 7% were Hispanic women, and 1.2% were multi-racial.
- In 2021, 77% of the AIDS-related deaths among women in Georgia were among Black women; 11% were among white women, 6% were among Hispanic women, and 5.5% were among multi-racial women.

REPRODUCTIVE CANCERS²²

- In Georgia, the age-adjusted rate of new breast cancer cases is 125.8 cases for every 100,000 women. Black women's rate is 125.2 for every 100,000 women, compared to 129.9 and 103.5 for white and Hispanic women, respectively.
- The breast cancer mortality rate for Black Georgians is 26.8 deaths for every 100,000 women, compared to 18 and 10.8 per 100,000 for white and Hispanic women, respectively.
- The age-adjusted cervical cancer rate is 7.7 cases for every 100,000 Georgian women. The rate for Black women is 8.1 per 100,000 women, compared to 7.7 and 9.5 for white and Hispanic women, respectively.
- The cervical cancer mortality rate for Black Georgians is 2.6 deaths for every 100,000 women, compared to 2.2 per 100,000 for white women.

LGBTQIA+ LIBERATION^{23 24}

- In 2023, Georgia passed a law banning medically necessary medication and surgery for transgender youth; current patients may continue to receive hormone replacement therapy. The Georgia American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) intends to file a suit against this law.
- No state law explicitly prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity with respect to employment, housing, public accommodations, or 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."

The pregnancy-related death rate for Black women was 48.6, compared to 22.7 for white women, from 2018-2020.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE^{25 26 27}

- Black women make 62 cents for every dollar that a white man makes, creating a wage gap of 38 cents.
- The lifetime wage gap for Black women in Georgia is \$953,120; a Black woman has to work until age 84 to make what a white man does by age 60.
- In Georgia, 34.9% of women-headed households live in poverty. Among Black women, 18.9% live in poverty, compared to 13.7% of all women aged 18 and older, and 10.1% of white women in the state.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE^{28 29}

- Georgia is one of 12 states where more than half of the incarcerated population is Black.
- Black individuals comprise 60% of the Georgia prison population; they are almost three times more likely (2.8 times) as white individuals to be incarcerated.
- Georgia disenfranchises individuals who have had a felony conviction at a rate of 3.1% of the voting age population (the national rate is 2%). Black citizens are more likely to be disenfranchised than others in the state; 5.2% of Black people of voting age are currently denied the vote.
- Georgia prohibits pregnant inmates from being shackled.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN³⁰

- Reported family violence incidents decreased 2.5% from 2018-2021.
- In 2022, there were 193 known domestic violence-related deaths in Georgia.
- Guns were the cause of death in the vast majority (81%) of Georgia's family violence-related deaths.
- Georgia ranks 4th in the U.S. for murder-suicide incidents.

Endnotes

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THE UNINSURED RATE FOR BLACK PEOPLE IN GEORGIA IS 14.8% NATIONALLY, AN AVERAGE OF 11% OF BLACK PEOPLE ARE UNINSURED.

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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.



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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.