



# The State of Black Women & Reproductive Justice

## MICHIGAN

**M**ichigan has a population of 10 million people, making it the 10th-most populous state in the U.S.

Fourteen percent (14.1%) of the population is Black (compared to 13.6% nationally); 74% of the population is white; 5.7% is Hispanic; 3.5% is Asian; and .7% is American Indian and/or Alaska Native.<sup>1</sup>

### Legislative Profile

- Governor Gretchen Whitmer (D) supports reproductive autonomy.
- The Michigan State House supports reproductive autonomy.
- The Michigan State Senate supports reproductive autonomy.

### Policy Profile: Access to Health Care

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

- Michigan adopted Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). As a result:
  - » 2,733,485 people are covered by Medicaid/CHIP. This was an increase of 821,476 people from 2013 to 2021.
  - » There was a 53% reduction in the uninsured rate.
- Michigan does not currently have a work requirement for Medicaid enrollees.
- The uninsured rate for Black people in Michigan is 7.4%. The national average uninsured rate for Black people is 10.9%.
- The state Medicaid program includes expanded coverage of services to pregnant women and for 12 months post-partum, for those making less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

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

- The Black population accounted for 19% of all deaths in Michigan, a percentage that exceeds the percentage of the state’s population (14%).
- The white population comprises 75% of deaths and the Hispanic population accounts for 4% of deaths, both respectively mirroring the population of those races.
- Less than half of Black people in Michigan are vaccinated (45%). More than half of white and Hispanic people in Michigan are vaccinated (55% and 60%, respectively).

#### ACCESS TO ABORTION CARE<sup>7 8 9</sup>

- In April 2023, Governor Whitmer signed bipartisan legislation repealing the state’s 1931 law banning abortion with exceptions for rape or incest and criminalizing nurses and doctors for doing their jobs.
- Michigan requires a person to get counseling information from the abortion provider and then wait 24 hours before the procedure is provided.
- If a minor seeks an abortion, the parent or guardian must grant permission before the procedure is performed.
- Public funding of abortion is limited to life endangerment, rape, and incest.
- There were 30,120 abortions in Michigan in 2022, a rate of 15.9 per 1000 women.

#### FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES<sup>10 11 12</sup>

- Michigan requires coverage of prescription contraception. Pharmacists may dispense emergency contraception without a prescription.
- People under age 18 are not allowed to get a prescription for birth control without a parent or guardian’s permission.

- Michigan has not secured a waiver or state plan amendment from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to expand its Medicaid family planning service coverage.

#### SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION<sup>13</sup>

- Michigan public schools are not required to teach sexual education, although HIV/AIDS education is required. Abstinence is to be discussed as both a method to prevent pregnancy and STDs and as a lifestyle choice.
- State law mandates that parents must be notified about sexual health education and are allowed to review its content and can opt their child out of it.

### Systemic Disparities

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

- The maternal mortality rate in Michigan in 2019 was 23.2 deaths for every 100,000 live births, an increase of 2.1 times over the previous year. The U.S. national rate in 2021 was 32.9/100,000 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).
- In Michigan from 2018-2020, the state reports that 80-90 maternal deaths occur each year. The pregnancy-related death rate for Black women was 29.8, compared to 10.7 for white women. The majority (63.6%) of all maternal deaths were deemed to be preventable.
- The Black infant mortality rate in Michigan was 13.4 deaths for every 1,000 live births; the U.S. rate is 10.4/1,000 live births. For whites, the rate is 5.2/1,000, compared to 4.4/1,000 nationally.

## MICHIGAN'S WAGE GAP



BLACK WOMEN MAKE **64 CENTS**  
FOR EVERY \$1.00 A WHITE MAN MAKES,  
A WAGE GAP OF **36 CENTS.**

BLACK WOMEN'S **LIFETIME LOSSES**  
DUE TO MICHIGAN'S WAGE GAP ARE  
**\$883,880**

A BLACK WOMAN'S  
**CAREER EARNINGS**  
CATCH UP TO A WHITE MAN'S AT  
**AGE 83.**

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/>

National Women's Law Center (NWLC), *Lifetime Wage Gap Losses State by State*, Washington (DC): NWLC, 2023. Online: <https://nwlc.org/resource/the-lifetime-wage-gap-state-by-state/>

*Michigan is one of 12 states where more than half of the incarcerated population is Black.*

## STDS/STIS INCLUDING HIV/AIDS<sup>18</sup>

- Of the total new diagnoses of STD/STIs in 2021 where race/ethnicity was reported:
  - » There were 203 new diagnoses of Syphilis; 62% were among Black women, 34.5% were among white women, 2% were among Hispanic women, and .5% were among Asian women.
  - » There were 23,615 new diagnoses of Chlamydia; 49% were among Black women; 42% were among white women; and 7% were among Hispanic women.
  - » There were 9,020 new diagnoses of Gonorrhea; 61% were among Black women; 33% were among white women; and 5% were among Hispanic women.
- Among women who received an HIV diagnosis in Michigan in 2022 where race/ethnicity was known, 59% were Black women, 27% were white women, and 7.5% were Hispanic women.
- In 2021, of the AIDS-related deaths among Michigan women, 66% were Black women; 32% were white women, and 2% were Hispanic women.

## REPRODUCTIVE CANCERS<sup>19</sup>

- In Michigan, the age-adjusted rate of new breast cancer cases is 114.4 cancers for every 100,000 women. Black women's rate is 107.5 for every 100,000 women, compared to 116.6 and 87.3 for white and Hispanic women, respectively.
- The breast cancer mortality rate for Black Michiganders is 27.7 deaths for every 100,000 women, compared to 18.9 and 13.3 per 100,000 for white and Hispanic women, respectively.
- The age-adjusted cervical cancer rate is 6.1 cases for every 100,000 women in Michigan. The rate for Black women is 8.3 per 100,000 women, compared to 5.8 and 7.1 for white and Hispanic women, respectively.
- The cervical cancer mortality rate for Black Michiganders is 3.1 deaths for every 100,000 women, compared to 1.9 per 100,000 for white women.

## ECONOMIC JUSTICE<sup>20 21 22</sup>

- In Michigan, Black women make 64 cents for every dollar that a white man makes, creating a wage gap of 36 cents.
- The lifetime wage gap for Black women in Michigan is \$883,880; a Black woman has to work until age 83 to make what a white man does by age 60.

- In Michigan, 35.7% of women-headed households live in poverty. Among Black women, 24.1% live in poverty, compared to 13.2% of all women aged 18 and older, and 10.8% white women in the state.

## LGBTQIA+ LIBERATION<sup>23 24</sup>

- Michigan does not ban best practice medical care for transgender youth.
- Michigan has 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.
- Michigan does have state laws that provide adoption and foster care nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQIA+ parents. State family leave laws do not include LGBTQIA+-inclusive definitions of "spouse" or "partner."

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE<sup>25 26 27 28</sup>

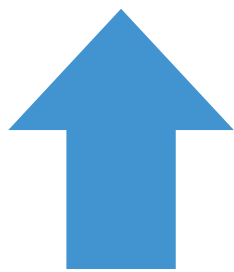
- Michigan is one of 12 states where more than half of the incarcerated population is Black.
- Black individuals comprise 53% of the Michigan prison population, compared to only comprising a total of 14% of the overall state population. Black individuals are almost 2 times more likely (1.6 times) as white individuals to be incarcerated.
- Black citizens make up 51% of the total voters in Michigan who are disenfranchised.
- Michigan does not have anti-shackling legislation for pregnant inmates.

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

- 36.1% of Michigan women and 25.8% of Michigan men experience intimate partner physical violence (IPV), intimate partner rape, and/or intimate partner stalking in their lives.
- Over half of domestic violence homicides in Michigan are committed with guns.
- In 2019, there were 63 reported domestic violence murders in Michigan.
- 56.9% of Black women in Michigan have reported experiencing IPV, compared to 33.6% of white women.
- Since 2015, police have killed 5 women in Michigan: 4 of whom were Black, 1 of whom was white.

## MATERNAL MORTALITY IN MICHIGAN

IN 2019, THE MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE IN MICHIGAN WAS **23.2** DEATHS FOR EVERY **100,000** LIVE BIRTHS,



AN INCREASE OF  
**2.1** TIMES  
OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR.

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).

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*Among women who received an HIV diagnosis in Michigan in 2022 where race/ethnicity was known, 59% were Black women, 27% were white women, and 7.5% were Hispanic women.*

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.*