Many women struggle to meet their and their family’s basic needs. In Michigan:

- A single woman without children needs to make at least $13.97 per hour to meet her basic needs; a single mother with 2 children under age 6 needs to make at least $31.24 per hour to provide for her family's needs. However, the hourly minimum wage is currently only $8.15.
- The average annual cost of full-time, center-based child care ranges from $6,764 to $9,882 per child for infant to preschool-aged care; for an infant, this represents 48% of the average single mother's income.
- Of the family households headed by women, 32% have incomes that fall below the federal poverty level, which is $24,250 annually for a family of four.

Many women struggle to advance in their careers and education. In Michigan:

- An estimated 10.5% of women were unemployed from 2011 to 2013, compared to 9.0% nationally during those same years.
- Women make up 49% of the workforce, but they are disproportionately represented in the low-wage workforce at 69%, which is 3% higher than the nationwide average of women in the low-wage workforce.
- Only 26% of women in 2013 had obtained a bachelor’s degree compared to 29% nationally; a Michigan woman with a bachelor’s degree makes an average of $19,000 more per year than a woman with a high school diploma.
- A woman earns 74 cents for every dollar earned by a man; for women of color, the wage gap is even greater: a Black woman earns 67 cents and a Latina woman earns 54 cents for every dollar earned by a man.

Policies must be strengthened to support Michigan women and families.

- More state and local programs are needed that support women with low or no incomes to complete higher education and workforce development programs.
- Michigan currently has no policies that expand on the minimum federal protections supporting women, such as paid family leave, unpaid leave longer than mandated by FMLA, and access to earned sick time.
- In 2013, Michigan expanded the Great Start Readiness Program, which helps mothers work and earn income by providing safe childcare. But this and other childcare programs could still support more families who live right above the poverty line and struggle to make ends meet.

Learn more about what MPP is doing to address these issues at www.cew.umich.edu/michigan-partners
Endnotes


The Michigan Partners Project is an initiative to convene a network of practitioners, researchers, and activists with the goal of developing and promoting policy recommendations that address the most critical avenues of supporting women living in poverty in Michigan.