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# Women in Mass. were paid 84 cents for every dollar men got in 2016

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ASSOCIATED PRESS/JESSICA HILL

Fans stand behind a large sign for equal pay for the women's soccer team during an international friendly soccer match between the United States and Colombia at Pratt & Whitney Stadium at Rentschler Field in Connecticut in April 2016.

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

GLOBE STAFF SEPTEMBER 13, 2017

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The gender pay gap in Massachusetts narrowed a bit in 2016, but women who worked full-time still collected median earnings equivalent to about 84 cents for every dollar earned by their male counterparts.

[New figures](#) from the US Bureau of Labor Statistics show that full-time female workers in Massachusetts received median earnings of about \$932 a week. That lagged well behind the median earnings for their male counterparts of about \$1,105 a week.

Even so, the female-to-male earnings ratio of 84.3 percent was 2.7 percentage points higher than in 2015 and marked its highest level since at least 1997, which was the earliest year of data in the bureau's report.

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The report said the ratio has followed a general upward trend dating to 2007, when it was at 74.8 percent.

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The ratio for Massachusetts in 2016 was higher than the nationwide ratio of 81.9 percent and tied with Rhode Island for the 13th-highest ratio among US states.

The highest ratio among states was 90.2 percent in Vermont, followed by California and New Mexico, each at 88 percent. The lowest was 69.9 percent in Utah, followed by 72.1 percent in Wyoming and 75.2 percent in New Hampshire.

### The gender pay gap in Mass. in 2016

Figures show weekly median earnings for full-time workers.



SOURCE:

The bureau noted in its report that its comparisons did not account for many factors that can be significant in explaining earnings differences, such as job skills and responsibilities, work experience, and specialization.

The bureau and other organizations have calculated somewhat [varying estimates](#) of the nationwide gender pay gap in recent years, with female-to-male earning ratios ranging from percentages in the high 70s to low 80s.

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According to the American Association of University Women, when factors such as differences in occupation, education, and experience between men and women are accounted for, the pay gap shrinks to less than 10 percentage points.

College-educated women working full time one year out of college are paid 7 percent less nationwide than their male peers, according to the association.

This 7 percent gap, which is there from the beginning of women's careers and puts them on an unequal footing from the start, only grows as women move up through the ranks.

[Estimates](#) also show significant differences in earnings based on race and ethnicity.

The City of Boston has been aggressive about tackling pay disparities between men and women. It was the first city in the nation to offer salary negotiation training, starting in 2015.

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## Women in Mass. were paid 84 cents for every dollar

Results released this month from a survey of women who [attended those workshops showed nearly half negotiated a pay raise](#) at their current job, or a starting salary at a new one, that bumped them up to or above the market rate. The city has also launched an initiative to collect wage data from local employers so it can study and monitor progress in addressing the gaps.

The Massachusetts Legislature [last year passed a law](#) aimed at helping to narrow the gender wage gap. It will go into effect in July 2018.

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