

# AANHPI Women's Equal Pay

Factsheet · April 2025



**AANHPI Women's Equal Pay Day marks when Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander women's earnings catch up to those of non-Hispanic, white men from the previous year.**

Equal Pay Day is not just an opportunity to highlight economic injustice in our communities, but also to advocate for policies that address these complexities and create a more inclusive and equitable economy.

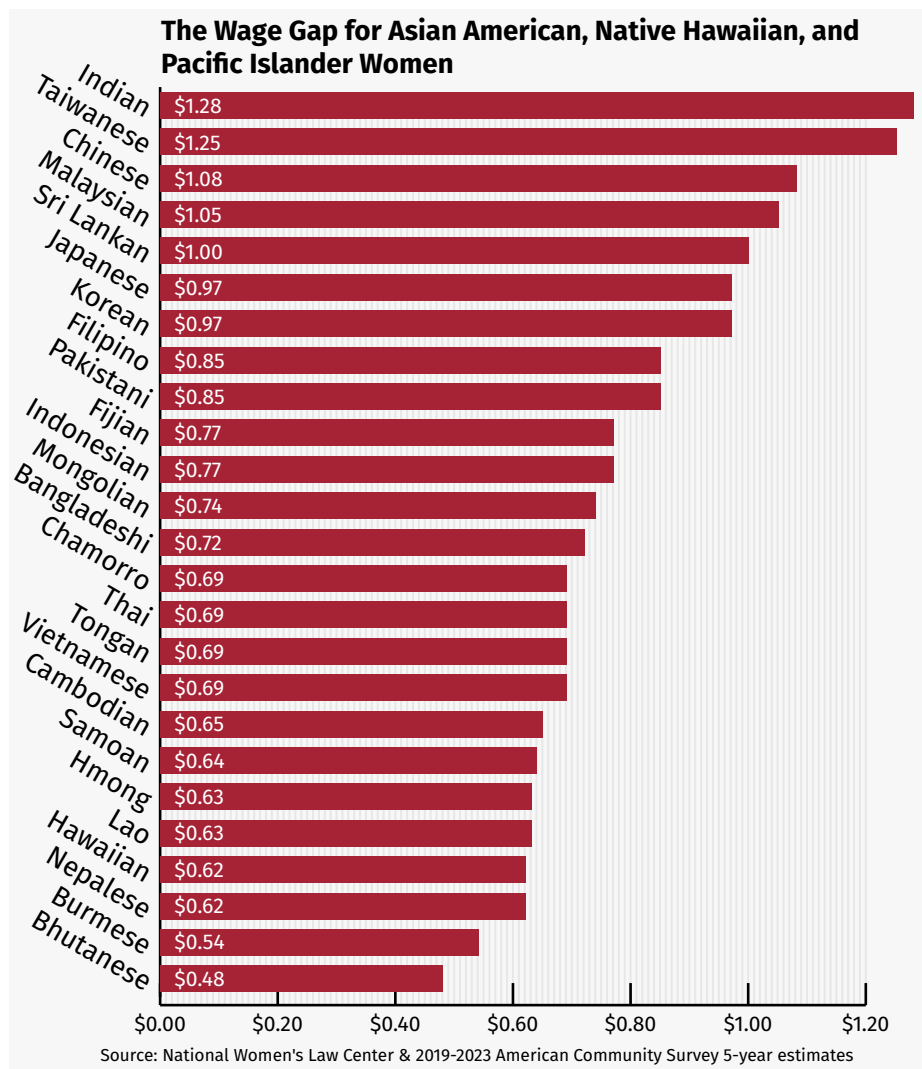
## Overview

While Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) women as a group were typically paid 83 cents for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men, the data reveals a range of disparities between ethnicities and does not fully portray the compounding factors of immigration status, language barriers, and other socioeconomic factors that may impact income.<sup>1</sup>

While gender expansive AANHPI communities face many of the same barriers as their cisgender counterparts, there isn't enough data available to accurately reflect their experiences. Improved data disaggregation and research are not only critical to reflecting the differences between ethnic subgroups, but are also needed to shed light on the unique barriers that gender expansive people face.

## Hidden Disparities

The wage gap within the AANHPI community is far from uniform. Disparities persist not only between AANHPI ethnic subgroups but also within ethnic groups, between men and women, and based



on immigration status. These differences are often masked by the model minority myth, which portrays Asian American communities as universally successful, ignoring the realities of economic injustice and discrimination these communities face.

**Wage gaps vary widely across different AANHPI ethnic groups.** While some groups, such as Taiwanese and Indian women, do not have a pay gap, at least when compared to white, non-Hispanic men, other ethnicities face stark disparities. The wage gap for Bhutanese women is 48 cents and for Burmese

women, 54 cents. This adds up to a loss of over a million dollars over the course of their career.<sup>2</sup>

**AANHPI women are overrepresented in low-wage occupations.** Occupational segregation - unequal representation of a group across industries - not only limits opportunities and income for AANHPI women but also demonstrates the stark income inequality across the AANHPI community. The jobs employing the greatest number of AANHPI women include both relatively high-paying occupations in health care and the tech sector, and very low-paying occupations

in the service sector.<sup>3</sup>

**Within many AANHPI communities, significant gender disparities exist.** Though Chinese women make \$1.08 for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men, they make just 82 cents for every dollar paid to Chinese men. Indian women make \$1.28 for every dollar paid to white, non-Hispanic men, but make just 75 cents for every dollar paid to Indian men.<sup>4</sup>

**AANHPI women who are immigrants face additional challenges that further compound their wage gaps.** Immigrant women often experience barriers such as a lack of English language proficiency, limited access to professional networks, and challenges related to work authorization. These factors make it harder for them to access higher-paying jobs and contribute to the overall wage gap.

**At every level of education, AANHPI women are paid less than their white, non-Hispanic male counterparts.** AANHPI women must earn a bachelor's degree to make more than white, non-Hispanic men with some college education but no degree. Additionally, we see gaps

between AANHPI women and white women, with college-educated Asian immigrant women, on average, making less than white women with comparable backgrounds.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, Asian American women who are highly educated face bias and employment discrimination and are much less likely to be in management and executive positions than white men, despite being highly qualified.<sup>6</sup>

## Economic Justice is Reproductive Justice

The fight for economic justice is also intrinsically tied to other forms of oppression and inequality. Just like abortion bans and limited access to reproductive healthcare more broadly disempower and strip bodily autonomy from communities of color, so do the wage gap, labor exploitation of immigrants, and other economic harms.

When our communities have bodily autonomy and are able to decide if, when, and how many children to have, they are also able to freely make decisions about other aspects of their lives, including

education and work. We cannot separate economic justice from the fight for reproductive justice. It is the key to working with dignity, providing for our families and having the resources and dignity to direct our own lives.

## Building Solidarity to Bridge the Gap

Achieving wage justice will require a collective effort that tackles the underlying inequalities that contribute to the wage gap. We have more in common with each other than we do with the top 1%. Building solidarity means understanding how differences like gender, race, immigration status, and class [intersect to create unique barriers](#) for our communities, and working to build community across those lines. Together, we must fight for policies that not only protect our own families, but that also protect our neighbors, communities, and historically underresourced and marginalized populations. When we advocate for others, we create a more inclusive economy and healthier communities for all of us.

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## Endnotes

1 Coillberg, A. (2025, March). Some Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander women lose \$1 million or more over a lifetime to the racist and sexist wage gap. National Women's Law Center. <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/EPD-FS-2025-AANHPI-3.19.25v1.pdf>

2 Coillberg, A. (2025, March). Some Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander women lose \$1 million or more over a lifetime to the racist and sexist wage gap. National Women's Law Center. <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/EPD-FS-2025-AANHPI-3.19.25v1.pdf>

3 Reddy, V. (2023, April 5). How Racism and Sexism Create the AANHPI Wage Gap. National Partnership for Women and Families. <https://nationalpartnership.org/how-racism-and-sexism-create-the-aanhpi-wage-gap/>.

4 Coillberg, A. (2025, March). Some Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander women lose \$1 million or more over a lifetime to the racist and sexist wage gap. National Women's Law Center. <https://nwlc.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/EPD-FS-2025-AANHPI-3.19.25v1.pdf>

5 Peterson, M. (2024, April 2). Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander women and the wage gap. Institute for Women's Policy Research. <https://iwpr.org/asian-american-native-hawaiian-and-pacific-islander-women-and-the-wage-gap/>

6 Peterson, M. (2024, April 2). Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander women and the wage gap. Institute for Women's Policy Research. <https://iwpr.org/asian-american-native-hawaiian-and-pacific-islander-women-and-the-wage-gap/>