



Office on the Economic Status of Women

Monthly Newsletter
September 2026 | Issue 13/282



The Minnesota State Fair photographed by Lawrence Sawyer,
courtesy of Canva.

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★ Per **Minnesota Statute Sec. 3.303, Subdivision 7**, the Office on the Economic Status of Women “shall study study and report to the legislature on all matters relating to the economic status of women... The [OESW] shall communicate its findings and make recommendations to the legislature on an ongoing basis.”

September: Suicide Prevention Month

September is **National Suicide Prevention Month**, with the goal of speaking openly and honestly about suicide, sharing resources, and learning how to spot warning signs and offer support.

In Minnesota, the death by suicide rate has increased since **2005**, from **10.5** per **100,000** people to **14.3** per **100,000** people in **2025**. For women, the rate of death by suicide was **5.8**. While Minnesota has a lower suicide rate than many states in the U.S, suicide is the **10th** leading cause of death in the United States.

YOU MATTER. TALK TO US.

No concern is too small.

People call to talk about: substance use, economic worries, relationships, mental and physical illness, and more.

Call or text for free and confidential help if you or someone you know is struggling.

Call or Text 988

Chat 988lifeline.org/chat

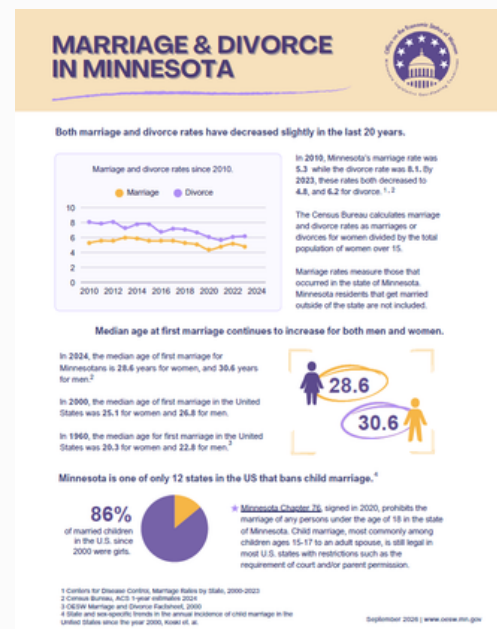
If you or someone you know is in need of support, call or text 988, or visit the [CDC's page](#) on prevention to learn more about how to support a loved one.

Marriage and Divorce Factsheet

Our September factsheet explores marriage and divorce rates in Minnesota in 2026 and how they've changed over the past decade.

Both marriage and divorce rates have decreased slightly since 2010, while the median age of first marriage has increased to 28.6 for women and 30.6 for men.

The majority of adult women in Minnesota are married, with rates of divorce and being widowed increasing with age. The proportion of women married versus never married has changed only slightly in since 2010, a decrease of around 3 percentage points.



[Read the full factsheet on our website!](#)

World Economic Forum: Global Gender Gap Report 2026

Since 2006, the World Economic Forum has researched and published a yearly report on gender gaps worldwide. The report measures gender parity in four subindexes: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment.

In 2026, the U.S. ranked **47th** out of all participating countries, the lowest ranking for the United States in the history of the report. This ranking is a **5 rank decrease** from **2025**, and a **20-rank decrease from 2022**, when the U.S. was **27th**. The highest ranking held by the U.S. was **17th in 2011**. By category, the U.S. is **tied for first place** among almost 30 countries for extremely high **educational attainment**. The U.S. also ranks highly for economic participation and opportunity, at **21st**. However, the U.S. lands **47th** for health and survival, and **64th** for political empowerment.

Sweden, Norway and Iceland have all held the #1 spot at some point, with Iceland ranking first for seventeen years in a row. Countries that have regularly been in the **top 5** include those listed above as well as Finland, Germany, New Zealand, Philippines, Ireland, Rwanda, Nicaragua, Denmark, the U.K. and Namibia.

Voter Registration Day



September 15th was Voter Registration day! To prepare for elections on **November 3rd** be sure to:

- [Check your voter registration](#)
- [Figure out how you'd like to vote](#)
- [Find out what will be on your ballot](#)
- [Learn more about election security](#)
- [Get involved as an election judge!](#)

All Minnesota voters will be voting on their U.S. Senators, U.S. Representatives, Governor and Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, State Auditor, Attorney General, State Senator, State Representative and Judicial Seats. Some Minnesotans may have races for county officials, city officers, school board members, township officers, and some local questions on their ballots.

THE HISTORY OF WOMEN'S HOCKEY IN MINNESOTA

Initially intended to be just an interesting social media post, **A Dream of the Future: 125 Years of Women's Hockey in Minnesota** quickly turned into a full research project and museum exhibit as Lisa Imbryk at the Dakota County Historical Society uncovered the incredible breadth of history behind women's hockey in Minnesota. The historical record begins in 1901, when local newspapers begin publishing stories about girls playing hockey in towns in Northern Minnesota, and travels through time to 2025, when the Minnesota Frost wins their second Walter Cup.

Though women's ice hockey has certainly seen an increase in popularity in the last few decades, these archives show us that women have been playing ice hockey for as long as ice hockey has existed. The first University of Minnesota Women's Ice Hockey Tournament was held in 1917, almost 80 years before the Minnesota State High School League sanctioned girl's varsity ice hockey in high schools in 1995.



Miss Bennowitz, left, from an unknown local hockey team published in the Minneapolis Journal, and Elizabeth Lagaard, Winifred Bailey, and Sarah Paper, right, members of the U of M girls hockey team, around 1917.



The University of Minnesota Women's Hockey team in late 1910s and early 1920s. Photos courtesy of the Dakota County Historical Society, originally from University Archives.

While the exhibit is no longer on display at the Dakota County Historical Society, it is available for travel.

Reach out to Lisa Imbryk at lisa.imbryk@co.dakota.mn.us for more information about the exhibit and historical questions.

READING LIST

Reading list features a variety of news and articles related to the OESW's areas of interest from different perspectives, but does not necessarily reflect the views of the OESW or function as an endorsement of the views expressed.

[Minnesota Child Care Overview 2026](#)

Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

[Opinion | What it means to be 'too old' and a woman: systemic gendered ageism](#)

Interpress Service News Agency

[National Vital Statistics Reports: Fetal Mortality, 2024](#)

Centers for Disease Control

[An Outdoor Awakening for Women](#)

American Hunter

[In many countries, the biggest barrier to prosperity is in the home](#)

The Economist

[Two jobs, one household: Minnesota families now depend on dual incomes](#)

Star Tribune

[Minnesota's disappearing delivery wards leave pregnant patients far from care](#)

Star Tribune

[Olivia Miles is the WNBA Rookie of the Year](#)

Star Tribune

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