

GENDER MATTERS

from the New Hampshire Women's Initiative

A Look at Gender Statistics from New Hampshire and Beyond
Compiled by the New Hampshire Women's Initiative

JUNE 2014 REPORT:

Women and Aging

LESS SECURITY AND MORE POVERTY DURING THE RETIREMENT YEARS

BEHIND THE NUMBERS



WOMEN EARN LESS

As documented in past editions of Gender Matters, women earn less on average than men over the course of their lifetimes.

Reduced earnings likely translate to reduced retirement savings.



WOMEN LIVE LONGER

Women live longer than men – on average, five years longer – meaning they have longer retirements that cost more.

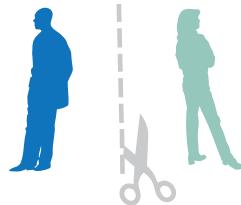


WOMEN LEAVE THE LABOR FORCE

Women are more likely to leave the labor force to care for children and other family members, so they are less likely to be eligible for and participate in employer-sponsored pension plans. This leaves women with fewer resources to cover the costs of retirement.

Older women are at a greater risk of not having financial security later in life than older men. For a number of intertwined reasons, older women have less retirement savings, are more likely to deplete their financial resources, and are more likely to live in poverty.

One government study found that women aged 65 and older consistently have less income and higher rates of poverty than men. Divorce, the death of a spouse, and unemployment negatively impact total household assets and income for both men and women who are nearing or in retirement. But divorce and the death of a spouse have more pronounced effects for women than for men.

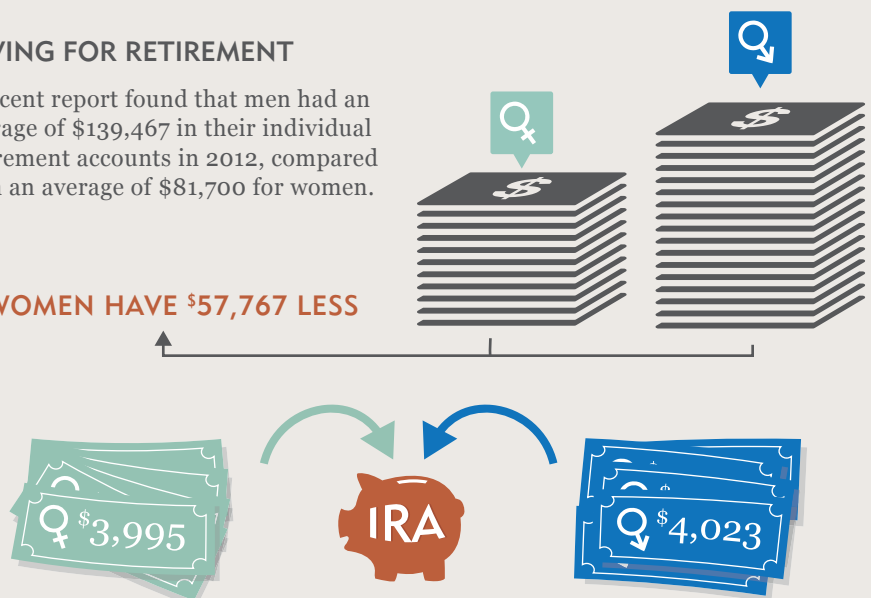


FOR EXAMPLE, A WOMAN'S HOUSEHOLD INCOME FALLS, ON AVERAGE, BY 41 PERCENT AFTER DIVORCE. THAT'S ALMOST TWICE THE SIZE OF THE DROP THAT MEN EXPERIENCE.

SAVING FOR RETIREMENT

A recent report found that men had an average of \$139,467 in their individual retirement accounts in 2012, compared with an average of \$81,700 for women.

WOMEN HAVE \$57,767 LESS



Women with IRAs are just as likely to contribute to their accounts as men, but they tend to make smaller contributions. In 2012, women IRA account holders contributed an average of \$3,995 and men contributed an average of \$4,023.

NEW HAMPSHIRE WOMEN ARE . . .



3/5
OF ALL NH ELDERS
 About three out of five New Hampshire residents over the age of 75 are women.

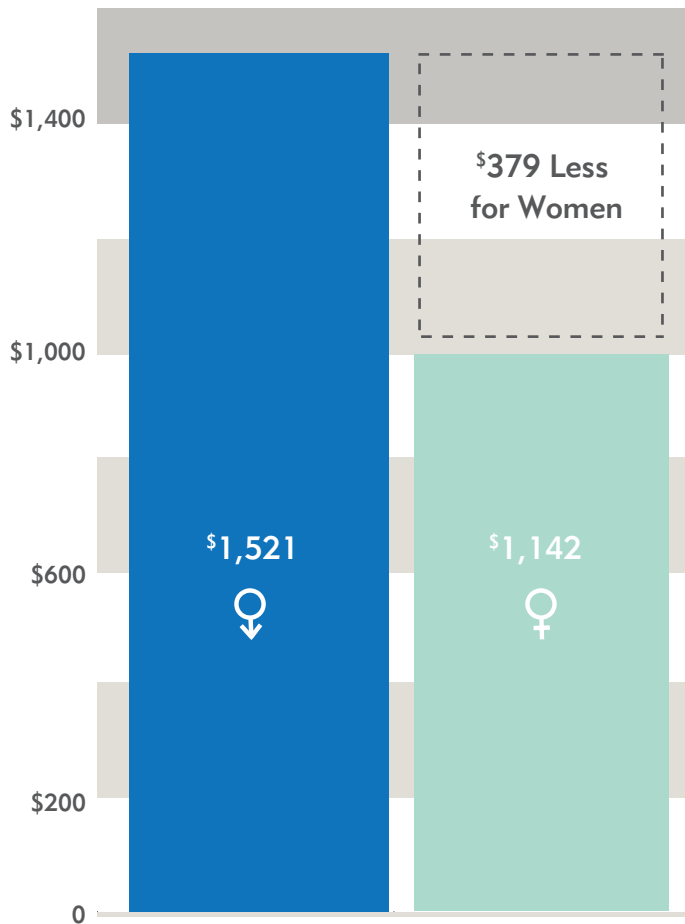


7/10
OF NH ELDERS IN POVERTY
 68 percent of people aged 75 and older who are living in poverty are women.



8/10
OF NH WIDOWS & WIDOWERS
 New Hampshire women over the age of 75 are about three times more likely than men to be living alone.

Fig 1: Average monthly Social Security benefit for NH residents 65+

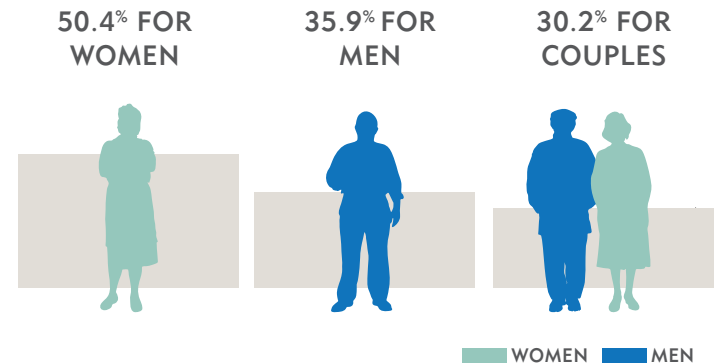


Older men and women also differ in their relative reliance on Social Security benefits. According to the Social Security Administration, half of all elderly single women receiving Social Security benefits rely on those benefits for 90 percent or more of their income.

Older women receive a lower average annual Social Security income, both in New Hampshire and nationally. This is largely because Social Security benefits are based on income from work, and women earn less than men on average.

In December 2012, the average woman in New Hampshire aged 65 or older received a monthly Social Security benefit of \$1,142. By contrast, New Hampshire men in the same age bracket received an average monthly benefit of \$1,521.

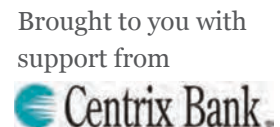
NATIONALLY, SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS PROVIDE A HIGHER SHARE OF TOTAL INCOME FOR SINGLE WOMEN THAN FOR SINGLE MEN.



SOURCES: GAO-12-699 Women’s Retirement Security, Government Accountability Office, July 2012; Individual Retirement Account Balances, Contributions, and Rollovers, 2012, With Longitudinal Results 2010–2012: The EBRI IRA Database, Employee Benefit Research Institute, May 2014; American Community Survey, US Census Bureau, 2007-2011; Annual Statistical Supplement to the Social Security Bulletin, 2013; “Social Security is Important to Women,” Social Security Administration Fact Sheet, March 2014.



The mission of the New Hampshire Women’s Initiative is to advance social, economic and political opportunity and equality for women in New Hampshire.



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