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### Women's Political Leadership in Massachusetts

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# Fact Sheet

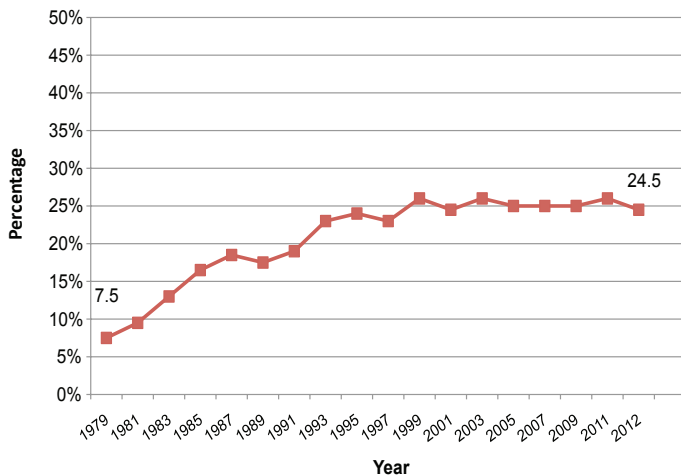
CENTER FOR WOMEN IN POLITICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

## Women's Political Leadership in Massachusetts

### Women in the Massachusetts Legislature

- The legislature has 200 members (40 in the Senate and 160 in the House). There are currently 11 women senators and 38 women representatives for a total of 49 female legislators.
- Women make up 24.5% of all state legislators - nearly a 4% decrease from 2009.
- The percentage of women in the Massachusetts Legislature (24.5%) is lower compared to the percentages of women serving in the legislatures of four other New England states.
- According to the Massachusetts Caucus of Women Legislators, only 173 women have served in the Massachusetts Legislature while more than 20,000 men have served.
- Women of color currently constitute 10.2% of the 49 women serving in the legislature.

### Women in the Massachusetts State Legislature 1979 - 2012



### Female Elected Officials in Massachusetts: Congressional, Statewide, Legislative, and Municipal, 2012

	Total	Number of Women	Percent Women
US Senate	2	0	0%
US House	10	1	10%
Statewide*	6	2	33.3%
MA Legislature	200	49	24.5%
MA Senate	40	11	27.5%
MA House of Representatives	160	38	23.8%
Municipal Governing Bodies**	1745	363	20.8%

These data reflect the November 2011 or 2012 election results, depending on the office.  
\*Includes: Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Auditor, Secretary of State, Treasurer.  
The Attorney General and the Auditor are women.  
\*\* Does not include school board/school committee positions.

### Legislative Leadership

Women currently hold seven of the 25 (28%) leadership positions in the legislature:

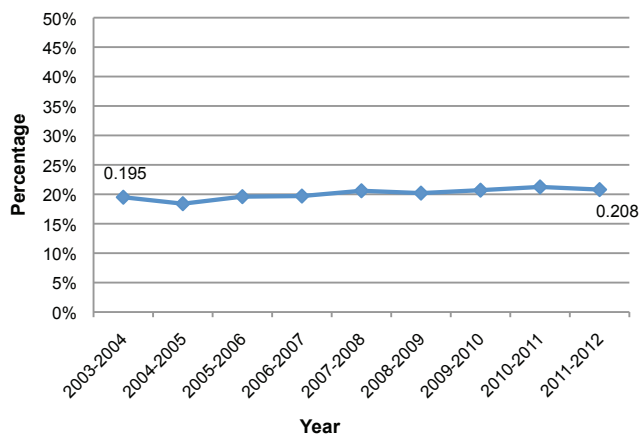
#### Legislative Leadership Positions Held by Women

Senate	House
Therese Murray <i>President of the Senate</i>	Patricia A. Haddad <i>Speaker Pro Tempore</i>
Harriette L. Chandler <i>Majority Whip</i>	Kathi-Anne Reinstein <i>Second Assistant Majority Leader</i>
Karen Spilka <i>Assistant Majority Whip</i>	Ellen Story <i>Division Chair</i>
	Elizabeth A. Poirier <i>Third Assistant Minority Leader</i>

## Women in Municipal Government: The Significance of Serving at the Local Level

- Municipal offices serve as the direct link between the government and the residents of a community.
- Women serving on local governing bodies may increase the delivery of frontline services to women and families.
- Municipal offices often serve as a “pipeline” to higher office for many female officeholders.

### Women Municipal Officials in Massachusetts 2003 - 2012

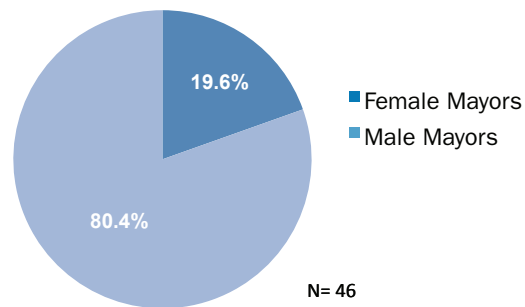


### Women of Color in Elective Office

- In 2009, the first woman of color was elected to the Boston City Council (Ayanna Pressley).
- Former Cambridge Mayor Denise Simmons, elected in 2008, was the first African American woman to serve as mayor in the Commonwealth.
- Mayor Lisa Wong of Fitchburg is the first Asian American woman to serve as mayor in Massachusetts.
- State Senator Sonia Chang-Diaz is the first Latina to be elected to the Massachusetts State Senate.
- According to the Women's Pipeline for Change, approximately 65 women of color have been identified as having won election to office in the Commonwealth (including local and state levels of government) since 1968. The Pipeline has identified close to 105 women of color who have run for any level office in Massachusetts from 1968 to present.

## Local Leadership

### Massachusetts Mayors, by Sex 2012



- The rate of women serving in municipal office has been stagnant and has not risen over 21% for well over a decade (since 1997).
- 126 cities/towns (out of a total of 351) have no women on their governing boards. This represents a slight improvement from 2007, when 130 cities/towns had no women on their governing boards.
- Of the 46 cities/towns in Massachusetts with mayoral-council governments, almost 20% (9 cities/towns) have a female mayor.
- The city of Boston has yet to have a female mayor.

### About the POLITICAL PROGRESS FOR NEW ENGLAND WOMEN Project

The Center for Women in Politics & Public Policy (CWPPP) at UMass Boston's McCormack Graduate School of Policy and Global Studies has been tracking the election of women at the municipal level in Massachusetts since 1996. In 2003, the Project expanded to include all New England states. CWPPP remains the only research center in the United States that regularly tracks women's political representation at the local level.

#### NOTES

1. Sources:  
Ransford, Paige, Carol Hardy-Fanta, and Anne Marie Camissa. "Women in New England Politics." *New England Journal of Public Policy* Vol. 23, Nos. 1 and 2 (Spring 2007): 17-36.

Center for Women in Politics & Public Policy analysis of data collected from Massachusetts Municipal Association's Massachusetts Municipal Directory and Massachusetts city government websites.

Center for Women in Politics & Public Policy analysis of data collected from the Center for American Women in Politics.

2. As used here, the term "Municipal Offices" include City/Town Councilors and Members of Boards of Selectmen/Aldermen; these terms do not refer to Mayors, School Board/School Committee members, or other officials. Therefore, all analyses presented refer to the elected governing bodies of cities and towns.

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