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Women's Municipal Leadership in Massachusetts: Snapshot of Cape Cod

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Women’s Municipal Leadership in Massachusetts: Snapshot of Cape Cod

Significance of Local Representation

- Municipal offices serve as the direct link between the government and residents of a community.
- Local representation is invaluable given that many communities face declining revenues and the necessary delivery of essential services.
- Research suggests that women in municipal decision-making positions can increase the delivery of services to more women and families, work collaboratively, and encourage other women to run.¹
- When there are few (or no) women serving as elected officials² on local governing bodies, the perspectives of women are not fully realized.
- Women’s public service at the local level is often a pipeline to higher office.

Figure 1. Women Municipal Officials, Massachusetts, 2003-2014³

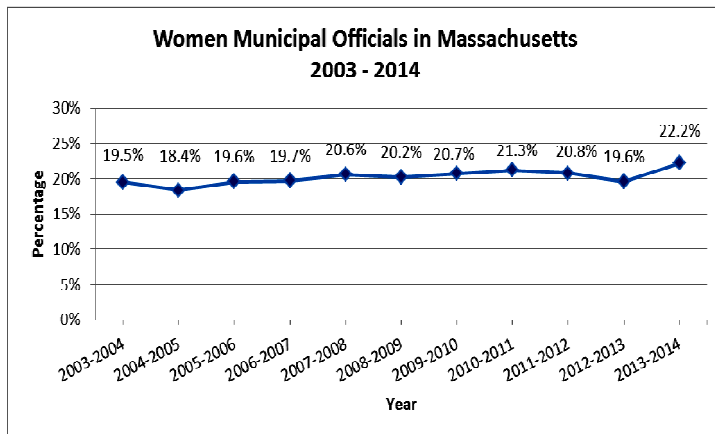


Table 1. Municipal Elected Officials by Sex, Cape Cod, 2014⁴

Town	Total Number on Council/Board	Number of Women
Barnstable	13	5
Bourne	5	1
Brewster	5	1
Chatham	5	1
Dennis	5	2
Eastham	5	2
Falmouth	5	2
Harwich	5	1
Mashpee	5	1
Orleans	5	0
Provincetown	5	1
Sandwich	5	1
Truro	5	2
Wellfleet	5	1
Yarmouth	5	1
TOTAL	83	22 (26.5%)

Key Facts

- 2014 data demonstrate a slight uptick from 2013 in the percentage of female municipal elected officials in the Commonwealth. As shown in Figure 1, the current rate in Massachusetts is 22.2%.
- 101 municipalities in the Commonwealth (29%) have no women serving on their local governing bodies. Data not shown.
- As indicated in Table 1, Cape Cod towns have a slighter higher rate of women municipal elected officials (26.5%) compared to the state as a whole (22.2%).

About This Fact Sheet

The center tracks the status of women at all levels of government in New England. It also provides dynamic web resources to inform and support the public leadership of women of color.

For more information and resources, visit:

Political Progress for New England Women

www.umb.edu/cwppp

Pathways to Political Leadership for Women of Color

www.umb.edu/pipeline

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Sources

1. Source: 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.
2. As used here, the terms "Elected Officials" and "Municipal Elected Officials" 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 elected governing bodies of cities/towns.
- 3, 4. Source: Center for Women in Politics and Public Policy analysis of data collected from Massachusetts Municipal Association’s Massachusetts Municipal 2012/2013 Directory and Massachusetts city and town government websites.