

Women’s Political Representation in Kenosha and Racine Counties

Key Findings

- Overall, women hold local government elected offices in Kenosha and Racine counties at similar rates when compared to the rest of the state of Wisconsin.
- Women do not hold notable local level government leadership positions in either Kenosha or Racine counties.

Overall Representation

- Women are underrepresented in Kenosha and Racine counties on school boards and county board elected bodies.
- Women’s representation is overall higher than the statewide average when exploring town boards, village boards, and city councils.
- The most notable difference between Kenosha and Racine counties in regards to women’s representation is City Council membership. Female representation on the Racine City Council is 25% higher (37% - 10 out of 27 members) compared to the Kenosha City Council (12% - 2 out of 27).

Leadership

- Women hold local government leadership seats in Kenosha and Racine counties at a higher percentage than the rest of the state. 6 out of 25 leadership positions in the two counties are held by women.
- Women only hold local government leadership positions as Town Board Chair (3 out of 11 towns - all three in Racine county) or Village Board Chair (3 out of 16 villages).
- Women are absent from higher level leadership positions in local government (school board president, city mayor, county board chair, or county executive).

Table 1: Percent of Local Government Elected Offices Held by Women (2019) (Kenosha and Racine & Statewide)

	Kenosha & Racine	WI (statewide)*
Local Elected Officials (all)	22%	23%
School Board	31%	40%
Town Board	19%	9%
Village Board	24%	9%
City Council	27%	23%
County Board	11%	19%

*Information from 2017 Status of Women Report in Northeastern Wisconsin.

Table 2: Percent of Local Government Elected Offices Held by Women (2019) (Kenosha and Racine & Statewide)

	Kenosha	Racine	WI (statewide)*
Local Elected Officials (all)	21%	24%	23%
School Board	29%	33%	40%
Town Board	18%	20%	22%
Village Board	27%	22%	22%
City Council	12%	37%	23%
County Board	9%	14%	19%

*Information from 2017 Status of Women Report in Northeastern Wisconsin.

*Village and Town Boards were not calculated separately for Wisconsin Statewide.

Table 3: Leadership Seats in Local Government Held By Women (2019)

	Kenosha & Racine	WI (statewide)*
Local Elected Officials (all)	17%	14%
School Board President	0%	29%
Town Board Chair	27%	5%
Village Board Chair	19%	11%
City Mayor	0%	12%
County Board Chair	0%	15%
County Executive	0%	9%

*Information from 2017 Status of Women Report in Northeastern Wisconsin.

*Village and Town Boards were not calculated separately for Wisconsin Statewide.

State Legislative Representation

In 2019, there were two women out of the eleven elected State Representatives (18.18%) whose districts include some portion of the two counties:

- Republican Representative Samantha Kerkman (Assembly District 61 - Kenosha), since 2001.
- Democratic Representative Greta Neubauer (Assembly District 66 - Racine), since 2018.

References

Data on current office holders collected via review of current information posted on local government officials websites and in County Clerk official directories.

Women's Council, Women in the Wisconsin Legislature, 2019 <https://womenscouncil.wi.gov/PublishingImages/Pages/home/Women%20in%20the%202019%20WI%20Legislature.pdf>.

WI statewide information collected from the 2017 Status of Women Report in Northeastern Wisconsin. The data was collected for 2016.
<http://womensfundfvr.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Status-of-Women-in-NE-WI-Report-2017-Full-Report.pdf>.