



## Inequality Insights

A weekly dose of news and analysis on the persistent issues of poverty and inequality in California.

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*Presented by Community Access National Network*



A rental sign in front of an apartment complex in Tower District in Fresno on July 27, 2023. Photo by Larry Valenzuela, CalMatters/Catchlight Local

Happy Friday Inequality Insights readers. California's housing crisis isn't hitting everyone equally. A new report from the [Gender Equity Policy Institute](#) finds that women are bearing the brunt of the state's housing crisis. Among the key findings: 63% of Black women are rent burdened and 36% are severely rent burdened. The takeaway? It isn't just about

economics. It's about gender and racial inequality baked into the housing system. Researchers analyzed data from U.S. Census, American Community Survey (ACS) 2023 household and individual level data accessed through IPUMS USA at the University of Minnesota to come up with their findings.

The experts identified four main reasons for the disparities. Women on average enter California's housing market with lower incomes and less wealth. They are disproportionately responsible for taking care of children and family, which leaves them with less options for balancing commuting, work and care providing. Women are more likely than men to be raising children alone on one income. Finally, they live longer than men, meaning more years paying the bills solo.

Half of all Californians who live in rental units are rent burdened, which means a household spends more than 30% of its income on housing costs, including rent and utilities. But, the rate and the difference between genders varies substantially among counties. For example, 44% of men are rent burdened versus 55% of women in Kern County. In Los Angeles, 49% of men and 55% of women face that challenge.

So what can be done about it? The Gender Equity Policy Institute recommends the state incentivize building multifamily housing in urban areas near jobs. They also think state leaders should weave gender equality into housing policy and enhance state and local agencies' ability to collect and analyze gender-disaggregated data. For more information, [read the full report here](#).

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