

Poverty Rate Jumps Again; Women 29% More Likely to Be Poor Than Men

September 13, 2011: The Census Bureau 2010 poverty data released today show the largest number of poor people in the 52 years that poverty has been measured, 46.2 million, and the highest overall poverty rate, 15.1%, since 1993. The poverty rate for single mother families increased to 40.7%, the highest rate since 1997.

The large gender poverty gap that has persisted since poverty measurement began continued in 2010. Adult women were twenty nine percent more likely to be poor than adult men in 2010, with a poverty rate of 14.5% compared to the 11.2% rate for men. 17.2 million adult women were poor, compared to 12.6 million adult men. Legal Momentum today issued a report detailing the disparities, *Reading Between the Lines: Women's Poverty in the United States, 2010*.

Legal Momentum President Elizabeth Grayer states: "The Census data highlight the serious hardship facing many American families in the current economic crisis. The data indicate increased poverty and a continuing gender poverty gap in the United States – facts that underscore the need for a social safety net that is accessible and adequate. Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), the national welfare program for families with children, is neither. TANF's sub-poverty benefit levels ensure continued hardship for poor families. Barriers prevent eligible families from accessing benefits and TANF work rules block parents from participating in education and training programs that offer a permanent escape from welfare and poverty. The ever-increasing plague of poverty in America warrants an equally strong response. Even in the press of the appropriations cycle, and the convening of the Deficit Commission, Congress and the Administration should not delay making sorely needed improvements to the TANF program."

- Learn more about Legal Momentum's work to strengthen the social safety and reform Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, at our [Women and Poverty program page](#).
- Learn more about Legal Momentum's work to ensure economic and personal security for women and girls at www.legalmomentum.org.

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