

## **Employment Crisis Worsens for Black Women during the Recovery**

While total job growth has been weak since the recession officially ended in June 2009, women actually lost jobs and their unemployment rate increased during the first two years of the recovery (June 2009 to June 2011), while men gained jobs and their unemployment rate declined.<sup>1</sup>

The first two years of the recovery have been especially grim for black women, who have suffered disproportionate job losses and larger increases in unemployment than other groups. These trends are especially troubling because black women are a majority (53.4 percent) of the black workforce, head a majority (52.8 percent) of black families with children,<sup>2</sup> and were more economically vulnerable even before the recession started.

While the recession hit black men particularly hard, during the first two years of the recovery black men gained back jobs, while black women continued to lose jobs. Indeed, since the start of the recession in December 2007 through June 2011, black women lost more jobs than did black men. Unemployment rose more sharply for black women than black men during the recovery, although it remained higher for black men than black women.

### **Black women *lost* over twice as many jobs as black men *gained* during the first two years of the recovery.**

- Between June 2009 and June 2011, black women lost 258,000 jobs while black men gained 127,000 jobs.

### **Black women have lost more jobs than black men since the beginning of the recession.**

- During the recession – from December 2007 to June 2009 – black men suffered the majority of job losses among black workers. However, because black women continued to lose jobs after the recession officially ended, while black men regained jobs, black women lost more jobs (491,000) than black men (477,000) between December 2007 and June 2011.

### **Black women lost jobs disproportionately compared to women overall during the recovery.**

- Black women represented 1 in 8 (12.5 percent) of all women workers in June 2009. But between June 2009 and June 2011, black women accounted for more than 4 in every 10 jobs (42.2 percent) lost by women overall.

**Black women lost more jobs during the recovery than they did during the recession.**

- Black women lost more jobs during the recovery (258,000) than they did during the recession (233,000); women overall lost slightly more than half as many jobs during the recovery (612,000) as they did during the recession (1,199,000).

**Black women’s unemployment rate rose more than other groups’ in the recovery.**

- Black women’s unemployment rate rose 2.1 percentage points between June 2009 and June 2011, compared to an increase of 0.7 percentage points among black men. Unemployment also rose during the recovery by 0.3 percentage points among women overall and among white women by 0.2 percentage points. Some groups experienced a decrease in unemployment during the recovery, including men overall by 0.8 percentage points, and among white men, Hispanic men, Asian men, Hispanic women, and Asian women.

Change in Unemployment Rates during the Recovery			
	June 2009	June 2011	Percentage Point Change in the Recovery
All women	7.7%	8.0%	0.3
All men	9.9%	9.1%	-0.8
Black women	11.7%	13.8%	2.1
Black men	16.3%	17%	0.7
White women	6.9%	7.1%	0.2
White men	9.2%	8.1%	-1.1
Asian women	7.6%	7.0%	-0.6
Asian men	7.4%	6.3%	-1.1
Hispanic women	11.5%	11.4%	-0.1
Hispanic men	10.7%	9.8%	-0.9

Source: Current Population Survey

**Conclusion**

Unemployment remains painfully high overall and for some vulnerable groups, including women generally and black women in particular, the employment picture has gotten worse in the two years since the recession ended. Policy makers must address the jobs crisis facing women and men.

Technical note:

NWLC's earlier report, "Second Anniversary of the Recovery Shows No Job Growth for Women," which tracked job changes for women and men from June 2009 to June 2011, shows different totals for job losses than does this analysis. The analyses differ because examinations of job loss or growth by race require the use of a different data source. The "Second Anniversary" report uses data from the Current Employment Statistics (CES), a survey of employers. CES, the primary survey used to track job change in the United States, provides information regarding the gender of job holders. However, data regarding job change among different racial groups and data regarding unemployment are not available from CES. This analysis of black women's unemployment and job loss in the recovery instead uses data from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a household survey. Job figures reported in CPS differ from those reported by CES because CPS includes individuals who work in jobs not surveyed by the CES such as the self-employed, farm workers, unpaid family workers and domestic workers.

The source of the data for this analysis is *NWLC calculations from U.S. Dep't of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, Tables A-1, A-2 and A-3* available at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsatabs.htm> and *CPS database*, available at <http://data.bls.gov/pdq/querytool.jsp?survey=ln> (last visited Aug. 3, 2011). All figures are for individuals 20 years and older. Data for Hispanics and Asians are not seasonally adjusted.

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<sup>1</sup> National Women's Law Center, "Second Anniversary of the Recovery Shows no Job Growth for Women" (July 2011), available at <http://www.nwlc.org/resource/second-anniversary-recovery-shows-no-job-growth-women>

<sup>2</sup> NWLC calculations from U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2010 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Table POV-07: Families With Related Children Under 18 by Number of Working Family Members and Family Structure: 2009, available at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/cpstables/032010/pov/toc.htm> (last visited Aug. 3, 2011).