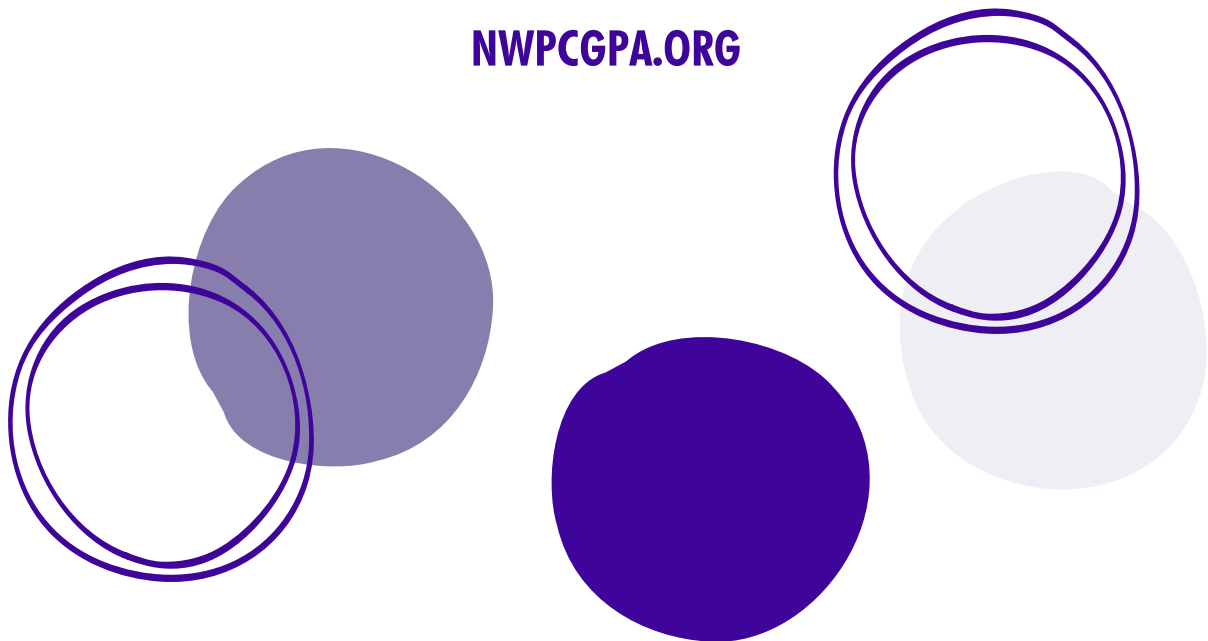


# Local Caucus Reproductive Justice Handbook

Altadena • Glendale • La Cañada • Pasadena • Sierra Madre

[NWPCGPA.ORG](http://NWPCGPA.ORG)



## What is the National Women's Political Caucus?

The National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) is a multi-partisan grassroots organization dedicated to increasing women's participation in the political process. NWPC recruits, trains and supports pro-choice women candidates for elected and appointed offices at all levels of government. In addition to financial donations, the Caucus offers campaign training for candidates and campaign managers, as well as technical assistance and advice. State and local chapters provide support to candidates running at state and local levels by helping raise money and providing crucial hands-on volunteer assistance.

Founded in 1971, the National Women's Political Caucus is the only national organization dedicated exclusively to increasing women's participation in all areas of political and public life — as elected and appointed officials, as delegates to national party conventions, as judges in the state and federal courts, and as lobbyists, voters and campaign organizers. With state and local affiliates, our membership today spans across the nation.

Our founders include Fanny Lou Hamer, Shirley Chisholm, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, Bella Azbug, and many other civil rights and equal rights activists from across the nation. Spurred by Congress' failure to pass the Equal Rights Amendment in 1970, these women believed legal, economic and social equity would come about only when women were equally represented among the nation's political decision-makers. That struggle continues, and the 2022 overturn of *Roe vs. Wade* means that fight is just as critical today as it was fifty years ago.



## Building long-term political power for women means better communities for everyone

Even with the strides made in recent years, women are far from reaching gender parity in [American] political leadership. As of 2021, there are 118 women in the House (27%), 24 women in the Senate (24%), and nine women governors (18%).

49 out of 50 state legislatures are made up of less than 50 percent women (Nevada is the only exception with a majority of female legislators, around 60%).

Among mayors of the 100-largest U.S. cities, only 27 percent were women—and only 10 percent were women of color—as of June 2020.

*(Source: The State of Women's Leadership, Center for American Progress)*

## And research worldwide shows that the US is not alone in lacking representative participation in government by women.

Although women can vote and run for public office in nearly every country, in 2013, they accounted for only 21 percent of parliamentarians worldwide and served as head of state or head of government in twenty-four countries.

Talented women who would make effective public leaders are excluded from the pool of available candidates due to financial, social and legal barriers, to the detriment of their communities.

**[Research shows that] when women hold public office, they prioritize public goods that are of concern to women, including water, infrastructure, sanitation, roads, education and health.**

**With female political leaders present, female citizens engage more in civic discussion, women and minorities are more likely to report crimes committed against them, and adolescent girls' career aspirations and educational attainment increase while their time spent on household chores decreases.**

Because of gendered behavioral expectations, women face different political challenges and opportunities than men. When they perceive female politicians as power-seeking, voters react negatively with feelings of moral outrage. Although women's leadership is imperative for their communities, particularly for other women and adolescent girls... [social] norms [continue to] inhibit women's political participation.

*(Source: Harvard Kennedy School Women & Public Policy Program)*





**Local civil rights leader and activist Dolores Hickambottom**



**Congresswoman Judy Chu (US 27)**



**Assemblymember Laura Friedman (AD 43)**

## **What is the Greater Pasadena Area Caucus?**

Part of the statewide and national infrastructure of NWPC, the Greater Pasadena Area (GPA) Caucus serves the communities of Altadena, Glendale, La Cañada, Pasadena, and Sierra Madre. NWPC has been active in the Pasadena area since the earliest days of the organization, and many current GPA members have been groundbreaking civil rights and equal rights leaders.

The current incarnation of the Greater Pasadena Area Caucus (rechartered in 2018) counts among its members LA County Supervisors, members of Congress and of the California State Assembly, and many city council members, school board members, community college and library board trustees, and other local elected and appointed officials.

The GPA Caucus works to recruit, train, elect, and support women for local office in our five communities, primarily via endorsement and financial support (as well as strategic and tactical support). Our Political Action Committee (PAC) interviews and recommends endorsements to our Working Council.

The governance and structure of the Greater Pasadena Area Caucus is intentionally non-hierarchical. Although an elected set of officers comprise the Working Council, who meet at least quarterly to oversee the business of the Caucus, every meeting and every vote is open to any member of the Caucus in good standing.

## What are NWPC's bottom line issues for women?

We only endorse candidates who support the following bottom-line issues for women:

- Pro-Choice Reproductive Rights
- Equal Rights & Equal Pay
- Quality, affordable dependent care
- Elimination of discrimination
- Elimination of sexual harassment/violence

## What is reproductive justice?

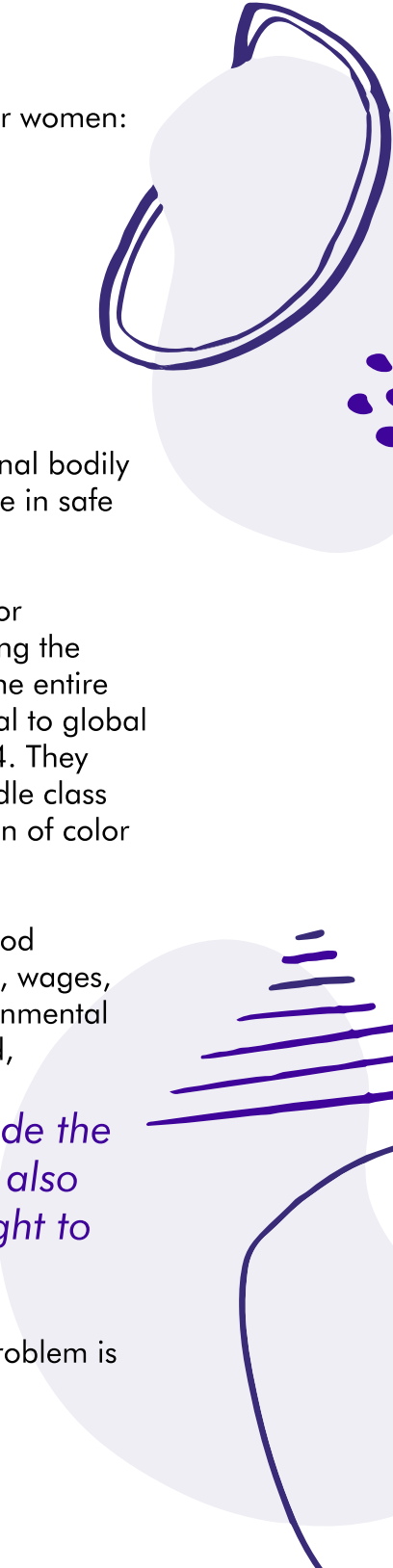
SisterSong defines reproductive justice as the human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities.

Indigenous women, women of color, and trans people have always fought for reproductive justice, but the term was invented in 1994. Right before attending the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, where the entire world agreed that the individual right to plan your own family must be central to global development, a group of black women gathered in Chicago in June of 1994. They recognized that the women's rights movement, led by and representing middle class and wealthy white women, could not and did not defend the needs of women of color and other marginalized women and trans people.

Reproductive justice argues that abortion and birth control can't be understood separately from the factors that constrain or allow real access: housing, jobs, wages, health care, policing, racial and sexual hierarchies, immigration, and environmental health. As Loretta Ross, a founder of the reproductive justice movement, said,

*"We placed ourselves in the center of our analysis and made the case that while abortion was a crucial resource for us, we also needed health care, education, jobs, day care, and the right to motherhood."*

Reproductive justice is not difficult to define or remember," Ross said. "The problem is not defining reproductive justice but achieving it."



**What do you do after the successful mobilization?**

**How can we produce a sense of belonging to communities in struggle that is not evaporated by the onslaught of our everyday routines?**

*- Angela Davis*

**Everything worthwhile is done with other people.**

*- Mariame Kaba*



## REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE RESOURCE GUIDE

### **Access Reproductive Justice**

California's only abortion fund. Most people believe that reproductive health care is easy to get in California because we enjoy some of the strongest reproductive rights in the nation. Medi-Cal covers prenatal care and abortion, and low-cost family planning services are widely available. Legally, there are few restrictions on abortion. Yet, thousands of people in California still find it nearly impossible to act on these rights or obtain reproductive health care without a struggle. Reproductive rights are meaningless when you don't know where to get birth control, no abortion provider accepts your insurance, you are afraid to seek prenatal care because of your immigration status, or the closest clinic is hours from your home. Access RJ serves all those who need reproductive health care in California.

### **SisterSong: Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective**

### **Planned Parenthood Pasadena San Gabriel Valley (PPPSGV)**

### **We Organize to Change Everything: Fighting for Abortion Access and Reproductive Justice (free ebook)**

Edited by Natalie Adler, Marian Jones, Jessie Kindig, Elizabeth Navarro, and Anne Rumberger (Verso 2022)

### **Addressing America's Black Maternal Health Crisis**

In Our Own Voice: National Black Women's Reproductive Justice Agenda

### **National Network of Abortion Funds**

Abortion funds are the experts in overcoming obstacles people face when getting their abortions. In FY 2020, member abortion funds received 81,692 requests for assistance and were able to support 44,880 callers. Those numbers are skyrocketing with the overturn of Roe vs Wade. Find a state-by-state listing of all abortion funds nationwide, with information on how to contact and donate.

