

# Small Business Facts

## Women-Owned Employer Businesses

August 2021, Victoria Williams, Economist



**1.1 Million** Women-owned Employer Businesses  
**10.1 Million** Employees

**\$388.1 Billion** Payroll  
**\$1.8 Trillion** Receipts

**945,514** Nonminority Women-owned Businesses  
**285,454** Minority Women-owned Businesses

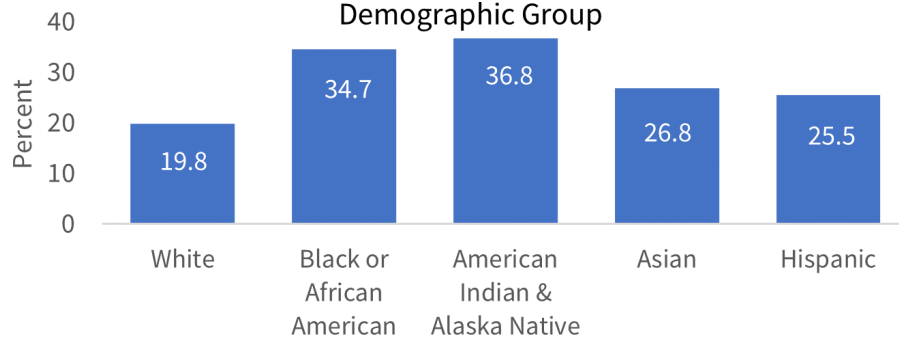
### Overview

There were roughly 12 million women-owned businesses in 2017.<sup>\*</sup> According to the 2019 Annual Business Survey, women employer businesses numbered 1.1 million, employed 10.1 million workers, and accumulated \$1.8 trillion in receipts. Women-owned firms make up 20% of all employer firms. Women remain underrepresented in every demographic group (Figure 1). Most women-owned firms are small. 90% of all women-owned businesses have no employees.<sup>\*</sup> Over half of women employers have 1-4 employees.

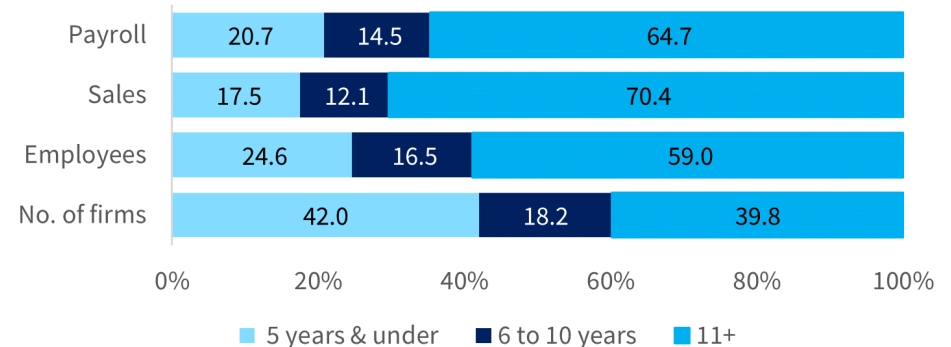
**Table 1. Top 5 Industries by Women-owned employer businesses**

Industry	Employees	Firms	Payroll (\$billion)
Health care and social assistance	1,972,252	189,351	\$64.0
Accommodation and food services	1,522,579	108,135	\$27.8
Administrative and support	1,277,280	71,019	\$43.4
Professional, scientific, & technical services	989,099	191,230	\$60.4
Retail trade	871,369	130,203	\$ 25.8

**Figure 1. Women-owned Employer Business Share by Demographic Group**



**Figure 2. Business Activity of WOB by Age of Firm**



### Industry Characteristics and Age

Women businesses are concentrated in professional, scientific, and technical services and health care and social assistance industries. Table 1 shows the industries with the largest number of workers employed by women-owned firms. The top employment industries are health care; accommodation and food services; and administrative and support. These three sectors account for 47% of total industry employment by women-owned businesses.

42% of women-owned businesses are young firms that have been operating for 5 years or less (Figure 2). These young businesses employed a quarter of workers of women-owned businesses with roughly one-fifth of payroll. About 40% of women-owned firms are mature firms aged 11 years or more, employing 59% or workers, and generating 70.4% in sales with 65% in payroll.

<sup>\*</sup>See the Office of Advocacy publication "[Small Business Facts, Business Ownership Demographic.](#)" For more information visit U.S. Census Bureau's [Annual Business Survey](#) and [Nonemployer Statistics by Demographic Program](#) (NES-D, 2017).