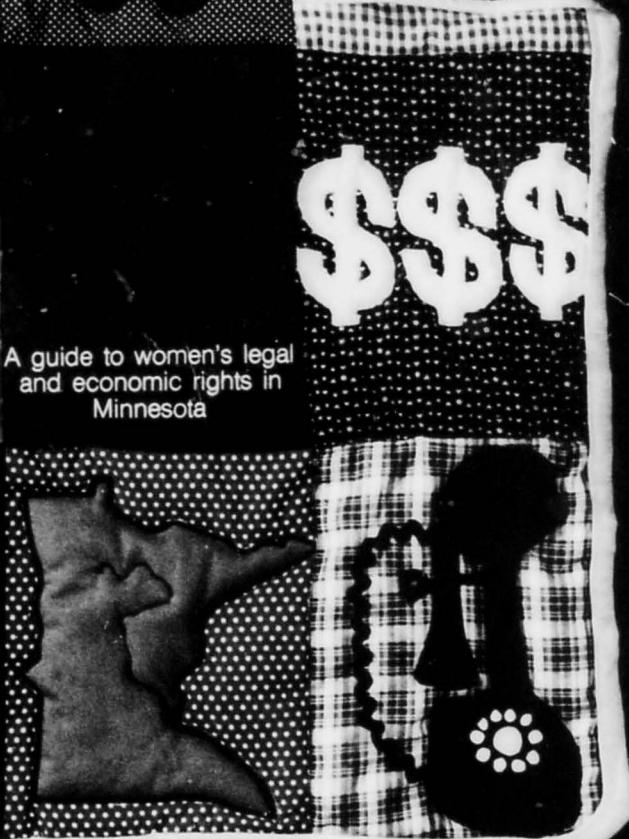


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A WOMAN'S PLACE



A guide to women's legal
and economic rights in
Minnesota



Published by Council on the Economic Status of Women

INTRODUCTION

This booklet is a compilation of newspaper columns the Council on the Economic Status of Women made available to newspapers in Minnesota. The columns answer questions related to the economic status of women in Minnesota and provide basic information about some state and federal laws affecting women. This booklet is intended for use as general resource material. It includes suggestions about where to go for more information and help.

The information is current as of June of 1980. Readers should be aware that laws are subject to change and to interpretation by courts. The booklet is not intended to take the place of legal advice in solving individual legal problems. It is the hope of the Council that making the columns available in this booklet will help Minnesota women be informed of their legal and economic rights.

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Consumer

Landlord Responsibility

My apartment is badly in need of repairs. I have been calling my landlord asking that they be made, with no success. I'm fed up and feel I shouldn't have to pay my rent until he fixes things up. What responsibility does a landlord have?

Minnesota law requires that a landlord see that rented areas are: 1) fit for the use intended; 2) kept in reasonable repair; and 3) maintained in compliance with health and safety codes. It also states that if an apartment is unfit for occupancy, without fault or neglect of the occupant, the tenant is no longer liable for rent. A Minnesota Supreme Court decision declared that the obligation of the tenant and the landlord is mutually dependent. That means that if the landlord does not live up to his obligation, the tenant is not legally responsible to pay rent.

A landlord must be notified of needed repairs and provided with sufficient time for the repairs to be made. Other actions should be considered before rent is withheld.

If there are code violations, you may file a complaint with your local building inspector, health authority or fire department, depending on the nature of the complaint. Another method is to sue for damages in conciliation court. Conciliation court handles claims up to \$1000.

Minnesota law makes it illegal for a landlord to evict a tenant, raise the rent, or reduce the services as a penalty for a tenant reporting a code violation to the proper authority or for exercising his or her rights as a tenant.

Before you withhold rent, it is wise to contact an attorney, tenant's union or legal aid for advice. The Minnesota Public Interest Research Group has a handbook on tenants' rights available for a small fee. The address is 3036 University Av. SE, Mpls., Mn. 55414.

Discrimination in Housing

I have been looking for a place to live for myself and my 6-year-old daughter. Right now I'm looking for an apartment and having trouble finding anything. For one thing, there isn't a lot of choice here. Also, I've gotten the feeling that being divorced has an effect on whether I can get something. Can a landlord not rent to someone just because they are divorced? I have a job that pays well and receive child support, so I don't have financial problems. I feel I would be a good tenant. What can I do?

Sex discrimination in the rental of housing has been widespread. Many landlords have been reluctant to rent to women on welfare, divorced women, and women who are heads of households.

Sex discrimination in housing is prohibited by both state and federal laws. Despite these laws, housing discrimination continues. This is due in part to a lack of knowledge of the law and the difficulty of enforcement of it.

The Minnesota Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination on a number of bases, including sex, marital status, and status with regard to public assistance. This law says that it is an unfair discriminatory practice for landlords to: 1) refuse to rent; 2) discriminate in the terms, conditions, or privileges or in the furnishing of facilities or services in the rental of property; or 3) use any form of application, have any advertisement or sign, or make any form of inquiry which indicates discrimination on those bases.

Complaints may be filed with the Department of Human Rights, Bremer Bldg., St. Paul, Mn. 55101 (612/296-5663). The Act does not cover rooms rented by a landlord in a one-family accommodation in which he or she lives or rooms run by a non-profit organization.

The federal Housing and Community Development Act also prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Under this law it is illegal to: 1) refuse to rent; 2) discriminate in the terms, conditions, or privileges or in the provisions of services or facilities of rental; 3) indicate a preference, limitation, or discrimination in any notice, statement, or advertisement; or 4) represent a dwelling as unavailable for inspection on the basis of sex.

Complaints may be filed with the Housing and Urban Development, 6400 France Av. S., Mpls., Mn 55435 (612/725-4717).

Consumer Protection

Minnesota Statute 325.79 prohibits the use "of any fraud, false pretense, false promise, misrepresentation, misleading statements, or deceptive practices, with the intent that others rely thereon in connection with the sale of any merchandise." The definition of merchandise includes services such as auto repairs.

The state agency that handles complaints pertaining to this statute is the Office of Consumer Services. This office handles written complaints and telephone inquiries. About 75% of the written complaints are resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant. Unsolved complaints are usually referred to conciliation court or to private legal counsel. Complaints are usually resolved within ten to thirty days.

Upon receipt of a complaint, the Office of Consumer Services asks the complainant to attempt to resolve the problem on their own. This permits the business involved to show good faith, and it also avoids unnecessary expenses. If this effort fails, the Consumer Services Office will act as a mediator between the complainant and the business to negotiate a settlement.

The address for the Office of Consumer Services is: Fifth Floor Metro Square Bldg, 7th and Robert St., St. Paul, Mn 55101 (612/296-2331).

Complaints against a business may also be reported to the Better Business Bureau, 1745 University Av., St. Paul, Mn. 55104 (612/646-4631).

Conciliation court is used for claims of \$1000 or less. It's a legal process which people can use without the aid of an attorney. Suits may be filed against a person, business, or corporation. Call the county court clerk to find out if there is a conciliation court, where it is, and when it "sits".

Before filing a complaint in conciliation court, try to settle the matter yourself. Contact your landlord asking for a settlement. It's best to log times and dates of phone calls and to keep copies of correspondence.

A complaint must be filed in the county where the defendant resides. The form for filing a complaint is simple. You'll need to provide: 1) your full name and address; 2) the full name and address of the defendant; and 3) a brief statement of your complaint and the basic facts of the case. Then you will have to swear under oath that the facts are correct and to sign the complaint. There is a small filing fee, usually from two to five dollars. A time and date for the trial is set. A summons will be sent to the defendant.

If you do not show up at the trial, the court will dismiss the case. If the defendant does not come, you win the case by default. If both parties are present, they are called before the judge, sworn in, and present their cases. Presentations should be direct and factual. You may bring witnesses and papers to support your story.

The judgement is usually mailed to both parties. If you lose, you have ten days to appeal the decision. If you win, the defendant may pay the amount awarded whether directly to you or to the court, which will in turn send you a check.

For more information contact your county court or conciliation court. The Minnesota Public Interest Research Group has a booklet on conciliation court procedure available for a small fee. The address is 3036 University Av. SE, Mpls., Mn 55414.

Last week I took my car into the shop to be fixed. I was told it would cost sixty dollars. I left the car and told them that if it was going to cost more to please call me before they did anything. When I went to pick up the car the bill was ninety dollars. I paid it because I didn't know what else to do. I feel I was treated unfairly. I'd like to know what protection a person has in such a case. Where can I file a complaint?

Conciliation Court

What is conciliation court and how can one use it? I recently moved out of an apartment and the landlord kept my security deposit. I feel his action is unjustified. I'm wondering if I could use conciliation court to get my money back.

Conciliation Court

I recently won a case in conciliation court. So far I haven't seen the money I was awarded. What can I do to get my money?

Conciliation court does not function as a collection bureau. The one who is owed the money must follow up on the claim. There is a legal process you can use to collect your money. There are several pieces of information you should have before beginning that process.

You will need to determine the assets belonging to the defendant which are available to you. Basically that includes: 1) money in bank accounts; 2) wages; and 3) personal property, excluding such items as cars and boats. You will also need to determine where the assets are located.

The collection procedure can take time and it involves a number of steps. The clerks in the offices you will need to use will help you throughout the process.

The exact procedure depends on the location of the assets. If they are in the same county as the conciliation court, the process is simpler and less costly. Fees range from \$15-30. They will be returned to you when the money is collected, but you will need to pay the sheriff for expenses. That is usually based on mileage and the amount collected.

If the defendant is unable to pay the judgement at the time, you may continue to attempt collection for ten years. You may force the defendant to disclose his or her assets in court once each year.

For more information contact your county court or conciliation court. The Minnesota Public Interest Research Group, 3036 University Av. SE, Mpls., Mn. 55414, has a booklet on conciliation court procedure.

Debt Collection

I am making payments on a bill, and I plan to continue these payments until the bill is paid off. Several weeks ago a man from a collection agency started calling me at work and at night. Can he do this?

Those actions are no longer legal under the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, which became effective March 1, 1978. Bill collectors may no longer harass debtors by calling them at odd hours, threatening them, or using abusive language.

This act defines "debt collector" as any person who regularly collects or attempts to collect consumer debts. A consumer debt is the amount a person owes a creditor for personal products or services.

The Act requires certain actions and prohibits certain activities of debt collectors. It requires that they: 1) notify the consumer at the beginning of the collection process of the amount of the debt, the party the debt is owed to, and how the consumer may dispute the debt; 2) use the consumer's payments in the manner the consumer directs; and 3) stop communications to a consumer upon a written request by the consumer to do so. However, a debt collector may let the consumer know that there will be no further communications or may tell the consumer what further efforts will be made to close the account. The consumer may inform the debt collector of the attorney representing him or her and request that all further communications be directed to the attorney.

The Act also makes illegal many actions used by some collectors. It prohibits threats of violence, use of profane language, calling without identifying agency and purpose, repeated calling, misleading statements, and several other unfair practices. The act specifically prohibits: contact with third parties, including employers, except to obtain information as to the consumer's location; communicating with a consumer at his or her place of employment when prohibited by the employer; and contact with a consumer at any unusual time or place, unless agreed to by the consumer. Convenient time is defined to be from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.

For more information on the Act you can contact the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis at 250 Marquette Av., Mpls., Mn 55480 (612/340-2511).

Welfare Appeal

Anytime a county welfare department takes an action that negatively affects you, you have the right to appeal their decision. You can file an appeal if your grant is reduced, suspended, or terminated, if your application is turned down, or if your application is not acted upon within 45 days.

The welfare department is required to notify you in writing of these decisions. The notice should contain a clear statement of the reasons for their action and an explanation of your appeal rights.

You can begin the appeal process by calling or writing your county welfare department or by writing the Appeals Office of the Minnesota Department of Public Welfare, Centennial Office Building, St. Paul, MN 55155.

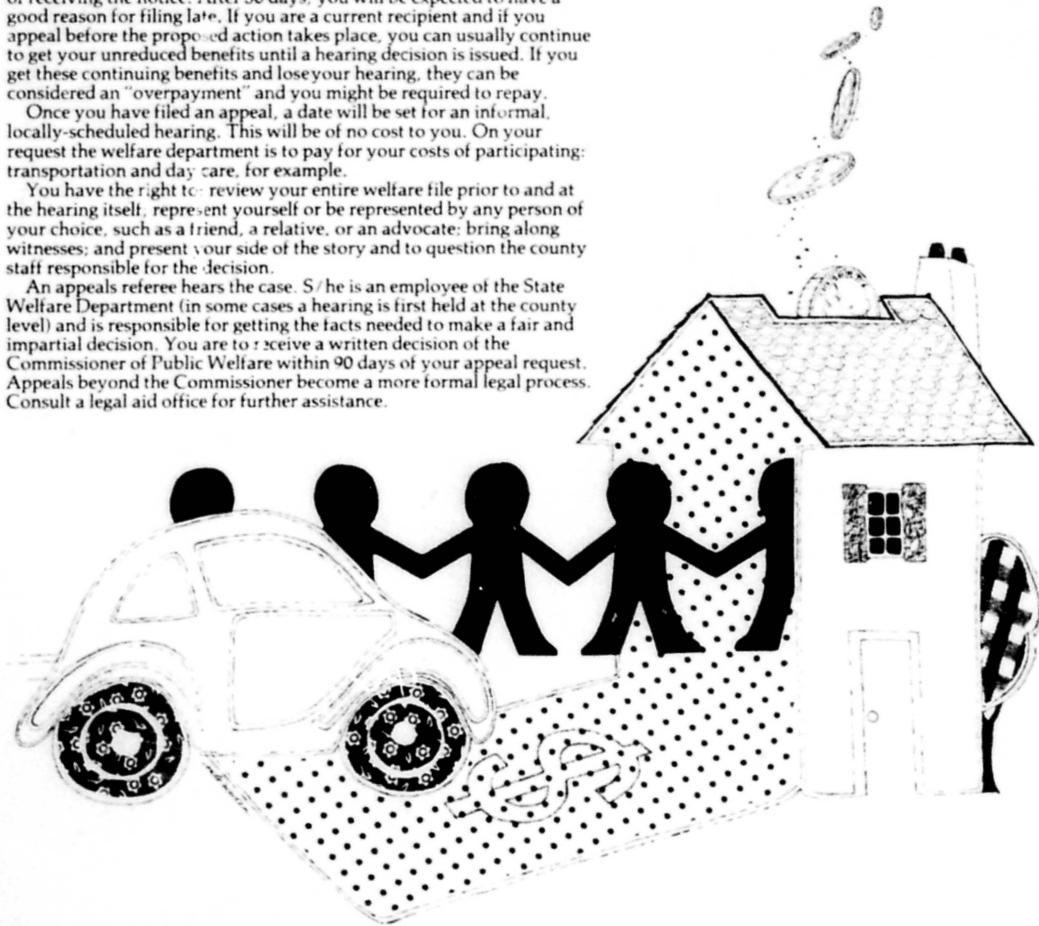
To be assured of your right to a hearing, you must file within 30 days of receiving the notice. After 30 days, you will be expected to have a good reason for filing late. If you are a current recipient and if you appeal before the proposed action takes place, you can usually continue to get your unreduced benefits until a hearing decision is issued. If you get these continuing benefits and lose your hearing, they can be considered an "overpayment" and you might be required to repay.

Once you have filed an appeal, a date will be set for an informal, locally-scheduled hearing. This will be of no cost to you. On your request the welfare department is to pay for your costs of participating: transportation and day care, for example.

You have the right to: review your entire welfare file prior to and at the hearing itself; represent yourself or be represented by any person of your choice, such as a friend, a relative, or an advocate; bring along witnesses; and present your side of the story and to question the county staff responsible for the decision.

An appeals referee hears the case. S/he is an employee of the State Welfare Department (in some cases a hearing is first held at the county level) and is responsible for getting the facts needed to make a fair and impartial decision. You are to receive a written decision of the Commissioner of Public Welfare within 90 days of your appeal request. Appeals beyond the Commissioner become a more formal legal process. Consult a legal aid office for further assistance.

I am a divorced mother with young children. I have been receiving AFDC for about a year as I can't get by on my income from work. Yesterday I received a notice from the welfare department saying they were stopping my AFDC for next month. It didn't really explain why. What can I do? If I lose my AFDC my income from work will barely pay the rent.



Education

General Provisions of Title IX

In our school system's monthly newsletter to parents there was a notice about some federal regulations which prohibit certain discriminatory practices against girls in education. What are these regulations and what do they do?

In June of 1972, the Congress passed Title IX of the Education Amendments of the Higher Education Act, a law which affects virtually every educational institution in the country. The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs that receive Federal money.

Nearly all elementary, secondary, vocational, undergraduate, graduate, and professional schools are covered by Title IX. Its sex discrimination provisions are patterned after the race discrimination provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

The spirit of the law is reflected in this opening statement: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance . . ."

The final regulation, which was effective July 21, 1975, includes the following areas: 1) all aspects of all education programs or activities; 2) recruitment and admission policies and practices; 3) treatment of students; 4) employment; and 5) enforcement procedures.

This is a big step in the effort to assure equality of opportunity for all citizens in pursuing their full potential through education.

Copies of Title IX can be obtained from the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D.C. 20202. Contact your school's Title IX Coordinator to find out what your district has done to comply with Title IX.

Questions concerning the application or interpretation of this regulation should be addressed to: Mr. Kenneth A. Mines, 309 W. Jackson Blvd., 10th Floor, Chicago, Ill. 60606.

Schools Covered by Title IX

I would like to know what schools are covered by Title IX.

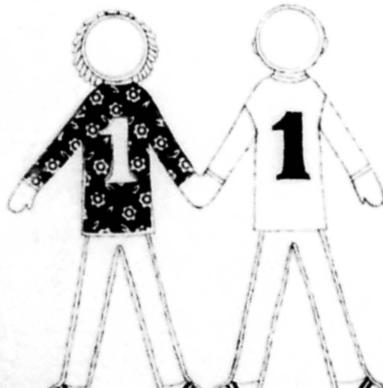
Title IX applies to all educational institutions which receive federal funds. It covers every program or activity operated or sponsored by the recipient of federal funds, whether or not that specific program or activity directly receives the funds. Most educational institutions receive some federal funds.

Title IX covers: 1) course offerings and extracurricular activities; 2) benefits, services, and financial aids; and 3) rules concerning housing and use, comparability and availability of facilities.

There are two overall exemptions. Military institutions at both the secondary and higher education levels are exempt. However, a separate law requires military service academies to admit members of both sexes. Practices in schools run by religious organizations are exempt to the extent compliance would be inconsistent with religious tenets.

In addition, an institution which receives federal funds may not provide significant assistance to any organization, agency or person which discriminates on the basis of sex. Assistance may include faculty sponsors, facilities, and administrative staff. Membership practices of social fraternities and sororities at the post-secondary level, the Girl Scouts, the Boy Scouts, the Campfire Girls, both the YWCA and the YMCA and certain voluntary youth service organizations are exempt. However, significant assistance by institutions to professional honorary fraternal organizations is prohibited.

Questions concerning the application or interpretation of this regulation should be addressed to: Mr. Kenneth A. Mines, 309 W. Jackson Blvd., 10th Floor, Chicago, Ill. 60606.



The regulation says that "no person shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, be treated differently from another person or otherwise be discriminated against in any interscholastic, intercollegiate, club or intramural athletics offered by recipient, and no recipient shall provide any such athletics separately on such basis." A recipient is a school receiving federal education aid.

A school must provide equal athletic opportunity for both sexes. In determining whether athletic opportunities are equal, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare considers whether the selection of sports and levels of competition effectively accommodate the interests and abilities of members of both sexes. The Department also considers such factors as: facilities, equipment, supplies, game and practice schedules, travel and per diem allowance, coaching (including assignment and compensation of coaches), academic tutoring, housing, dining facilities, and publicity.

Equal expenditures are not required under Title IX, but the Department "may consider the failure to provide necessary funds for teams for one sex in assessing equality of opportunity for members of each sex."

Separate teams for each sex are permissible in contact sports or where selection for teams is based on competitive skill. Contact sports include boxing, wrestling, rugby, ice hockey, football, basketball, and any other sport "the purpose of major activity of which involves bodily contact."

Title IX went into effect on July 21, 1975. Elementary schools had to comply fully with the section covering athletics in July of 1976.

Secondary schools had to be in compliance by July of 1977.

Your district was required to designate a Title IX coordinator and to adopt a grievance procedure for your school system. For further information contact that person or write: Mr. Kenneth A. Mines, 309 W. Jackson Blvd., 10th Floor, Chicago, Ill. 60606. Copies of Title IX can be obtained by writing the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Washington, D.C. 20202.

Title IX is federal legislation. Equal opportunity in athletics is also covered by Minnesota law. Those laws are discussed in the following column.

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 363, the Human Rights Act, says that it is an unfair discriminatory practice "... to discriminate in any manner in the full utilization of or benefit from any educational institution or the services rendered thereby to any person because of . . . sex . . ." The law defines the term discriminate as including "segregate or separate."

Another Minnesota Statute, 126.21, directly addresses the issue of discrimination in athletics. This law follows the tradition of civil rights law and holds that separation is always suspect, that a history of separation does not justify the practice, and that it should be permitted only if a clear and compelling purpose is served.

The law states that the only justification for restricting membership on a team to one sex is the need to provide equal opportunity to participate. It says that if two separate teams are provided in the same sport, then they must be treated in a substantially equal manner, including budget. The law requires substantially equal budget per participant, exclusive of gate receipts. It also prohibits separation based on sex in athletic programs designed for participants 11 years old or younger and in the sixth grade or below after the school year 1977-78.

Under Minnesota law you may file a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, Bremer Bldg., St. Paul, MN 55101, (612/296-5663) or file a lawsuit.

Athletic Requirements under Title IX

We are having some problems in our school district in the area of athletics. My daughter and several other girls feel that the girls are not being treated fairly. I've heard that Title IX might cover this, but I haven't been able to find a copy. Just what does it require a school system to do in the area of athletics?

Athletic Requirements under Minnesota Law

This column will discuss Minnesota legislation regarding equal opportunity in athletics under two Minnesota laws: Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 363, and Minnesota Statute 126.21.



Employment

Minimum Wage

I would like to know what the minimum wage is. When I was hired I was told I'd be getting minimum wage. My sister is a waitress and she said she doesn't get minimum wage. Who gets minimum wage?

Most employees are protected by either federal or state law on minimum wage. The federal minimum wage increased to \$3.10 an hour on January 1, 1980. For a person working eight hour days five days a week and paid every week of the year that amounts to a yearly salary of \$6,448. The federal minimum wage will increase to \$3.35 an hour beginning January 1, 1981.

Most workers are covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act, often called the minimum wage and hour law. The law applies to most employers whose gross volume of sales exceeds \$275,000 a year. There are a number of employees who are covered regardless of the dollar volume.

For employees who receive tips, an employer may count those tips toward the minimum wage due the employee. A tipped employee is one who regularly receives \$30 per month in tips. The tips may be counted for up to 40% of the minimum wage or for the amount of tips actually received, whichever is lower.

The Fair Labor Standards Act is enforced by compliance officers in the Wage and Hour Division of the U.S. Department of Labor. There is an office located in Minneapolis at 100 No. 6th St., zip code 55403 (612/725-6106).

Minnesota law requires every employer to pay employees 18 years and older \$2.90 per hour. That amount will increase to \$3.10 beginning January 1, 1981, and to \$3.35 beginning January 1, 1982. Employees under 18 must receive \$2.61 per hour. That amount will increase to \$2.79 beginning January 1, 1981, and to \$3.02 beginning January 1, 1982. An employee who is paid less may file suit in court to obtain the wages due to him or her as well as damages and attorney's fees.

Under Minnesota law a tipped employee is one who receives \$35 or more per month in tips. An employer is entitled to a credit up to 20% of the minimum wage the employee receives. However, the employer may not take the credit unless the employee signs a statement that he or she received and retained the tips during the pay period.

For more information on Minnesota practices, write the Division of Labor Standards, Department of Labor and Industry, 5th Fl., Space Center, 444 Lafayette Rd., St. Paul, Mn. 55101 (612/296-2282).

Volunteer Credit

I am in my middle 40's and recently widowed. I still have children at home and can make it financially for several years. After that I will need to go to work to support myself. In the meantime I would be able to take some training. I have been a homemaker full time, so I don't have any work experience, but I have done some volunteer work in addition to homemaking. I read somewhere that homemakers and volunteers are sometimes given either academic or employment credit for what they've done. Can you tell me more about this?

When women who have devoted themselves to homemaking look for jobs or educational opportunities, there is the question of what credit, if any, they will receive for the skills and experience they have acquired through work in the home and community. Through home management, for example, a homemaker may have developed skills in human relations, budgeting, and administration. But until recently there were few methods for translating these skills into employment qualifications or academic credits and little interest in doing so on the part of employers or educational institutions.

In recent years, a small but growing number of public and private agencies and businesses have recognized the value of homemaker and volunteer experiences and have been giving them consideration, along with paid experience. Some employers already have "volunteer experience" included on their job application form.

Educational institutions have also been giving greater recognition to the kinds of learning that go on outside of the classroom, and this includes the area of experience gained through homemaking and volunteering.

Contact the educational institution you plan to attend to find out if they give credit for volunteer experience. When you apply for a job, include your homemaking and volunteer skills on the job application or on your resumes as part of your work experience.

There are a number of groups which help homemakers and volunteers in preparing resumes and applications. Other organizations conduct research projects and work to facilitate and promote the acceptance of such experience by educational institutions and employers.

For more information contact the Governor's Office of Volunteer Services, 130 State Capitol, St. Paul, MN. 55155 (612/296-4731).

Qualifications! Let's look at what you've done. As a homemaker you have planned, budgeted, organized, supervised, and administered functions of a household. And your volunteer experience, in addition to the skills you used, is excellent background and helps you become known in your community. Qualifications need not be tied to pay to be considered valid.

There are many boards and commissions which advise and set policy at all levels of government. The appointment of more women to them is another way to increase the representation of women in policy-making positions. As in elective office, women hold only a small percentage of appointive posts.

A major barrier for women is often that they don't know of such openings. In the 1978 Session, the Minnesota Legislature passed an open appointments bill which provides for public notice of vacancies of appointive positions in state agencies. The listing of vacancies is published in the State Register, available at most public libraries, and at the Secretary of State's office. To apply for those positions write to the Governor's Appointments Commission, 130 State Capitol, St. Paul, Mn. 55155. Include a resume of your qualifications and interests.

Check to see if your local units of government have an open appointment process. If not, it may take some time to uncover the positions, their terms of office and qualifications, and the appointing officials. Organizations that monitor and make recommendations for appointments may also be helpful. To apply for a position, find out who the appointive powers are and write a letter indicating your interests and qualifications. You may want to have a letter of recommendation from an individual or organization sent on your behalf.

Displaced homemaker describes the situation of countless women in their middle years who have "lost their jobs" through death or divorce of spouse. Because homemakers receive no health, retirement, or unemployment benefits for their labor, the divorced or widowed homemaker is often without any source of income and ineligible for certain benefits.

They are ineligible for Social Security benefits because they are too young or because they are divorced from the family wage earner. They are ineligible for federal welfare assistance if they are not physically disabled and their children are past a certain age. They are ineligible for unemployment insurance because they have been engaged in unpaid labor in the home. Many have lost insurance coverage through divorce or death of spouse and are ineligible for or cannot afford private individual insurance.

Displaced homemakers are subject to the highest unemployment rate of any sector of the work force. They face discrimination because they are women, older, and have no recent paid work experience. Programs to meet the needs of displaced homemakers have been funded through public and private sources. The Minnesota Legislature passed legislation funding counseling and training centers for women who have been homemakers, but now need to enter the paid work force. There are now three pilot programs in the state.

Both the Department of Economic Security and the Department of Education have established positions to provide technical assistance and coordination related to displaced homemaker programs. For more information contact: Displaced Homemaker Programs, Department of Economic Security, 690 American Center Bldg., 150 Kellogg Blvd., St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-8005); or Displaced Homemaker Specialist, Department of Education, Capitol Square Bldg., 7th Fl., 550 Cedar, St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-1261).

See the resources section of this booklet for a listing of programs.

Volunteer Credit

I have been a homemaker while my children were young. Now that they're older I'd like to serve on some boards and commissions. I have done some volunteer work, but have no paid experience, so I don't know if I'm qualified. How do I go about getting such an appointment?

Displaced Homemaker

I heard the term "displaced homemaker" recently. What does it mean? I understand there have been some legislation passed about the subject.

CETA

I am a recently divorced mother of two teenagers. I have spent the last fifteen years of my life raising my family and running my home. Now I must look for a job and support myself and my children. I know that I am capable of doing many things, but I don't know what kind of job to apply for. Is there any place I can go for help?

Yes. The federal government through the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act established the agency CETA. CETA was established to help people like you who are entering or reentering the work force. Over 41% of their clients in Minnesota are women.

Specifically the purposes of the Act are: 1) to provide job training and employment opportunities for disadvantaged, unemployed, and under-employed persons; 2) to assure that training and other services lead to employment and enhance self-sufficiency; and 3) to establish flexible and decentralized systems of federal, state, and local programs. There are forty-one CETA centers in Minnesota.

CETA first helps the client identify his or her employment barriers and to recognize his or her undeveloped skills. These might include: lack of work experience; limited access to transportation; lack of education; or undeveloped job-seeking skills. Then, through various programs, such as classroom training, on-the-job training, or public service employment, CETA helps the client to find good permanent job placement.

In addition to this, CETA provides other supportive services in a variety of areas. Included are: job-seeking support; personal, family, and marriage counseling; and job follow-up services.

For more information on CETA and how it can help you, write: Department of Economic Security, 390 No. Robert, St. Paul, Mn. 55101, or contact your local employment agency.

Apprenticeships

I need a job to support myself and my kids. It can't be done on my earnings as a waitress. I'm willing to go to school but I won't spend the time and money to train for a job that pays a low salary. I have a friend who went to school for a year to become a secretary and she doesn't earn much more than I. I have read of women who get jobs which men have usually done. Those jobs are usually higher paid. Where can I find out about such jobs and how to get into those occupations?

Consider an apprenticeship occupation. It involves on-the-job training and experience under supervision plus related classroom instruction. Many jobs considered non-traditional for women are entered through apprenticeships.

An apprentice is a trainee in a skilled craft. You earn a wage while learning and working. Fringe benefits are generally available. An apprenticeship may last from 1 to 5 years. Upon completion of the training period, you are recognized as a skilled craft worker.

Apprenticeship is based on a written agreement with an employer on the conditions of the training period. It includes the length of time, amount of pay, and certification as a journeyman upon completion of the term.

There is a big difference in pay and career outlook between the semi-skilled worker and the skilled craft worker. Apprenticeships are available in a variety of jobs in industrial, service, and technical occupations. There is an increasing demand for skilled workers.

New federal regulations require that women be included in affirmative action plans of apprenticeship sponsors. The goal set in Minnesota for an entering class of apprentices is twenty percent female.

To find out more about apprenticeships contact: an employer; a vocational school; the Division of Voluntary Apprenticeship, Mn. Department of Labor and Industry, 444 Lafayette, St. Paul, Mn. 55101 (612/296-2771); or the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 134 Federal Bldg., 316 Robert St., St. Paul, Mn. 55101 (612/725-7951).

There is. In fact there is now both federal and state legislation prohibiting discrimination in employment on the basis of age.

The Federal Age Discrimination in Employment Act prohibits employers, employment agencies and labor unions from discriminating on the basis of age against any person between the ages of 40 and 70 in hiring, firing, promotion, or other aspects of employment.

The law is enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. A complainant's identity is never revealed without that person's knowledge and consent. The employer cannot fire or otherwise discriminate against a complainant who has started proceedings under the law.

To file a complaint contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 12 So. 6th St., Minneapolis, MN 55402 (612/725-6101).

The Minnesota Legislature passed an age discrimination law in 1977. It amended the Minnesota Human Rights Act to protect individuals over the age of majority from discrimination based on age in employment and education.

The Minnesota law goes further than the federal legislation in that it includes education and has a greater age protection.

To file a complaint under state law write: Minnesota Department of Human Rights, Bremer Bldg., St. Paul, Mn. 55101 (612/296-5663).

You may be covered by Title V of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Employers covered by sections of this Act are required to take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified handicapped individuals without discrimination based on their physical or mental handicap.

Non-discrimination programs must be carried out for handicapped women and men qualified for training or employment by the federal government, by federal contractors and subcontractors whose contracts are in excess of \$2,500, and by any program or activity receiving federal funds.

Regulations require outreach and positive recruiting as well as accommodation to the physical or mental limitation of a handicapped applicant or employee, if necessary for compliance. Penalties can be imposed for noncompliance. These range from withholding of partial payment to prohibiting further contracting with the federal government.

You have a right to complain if: a federal agency, contractor, or subcontractor refuses to let you file an application but accepts others; a union or an employment agency refuses to refer you to job openings; you are fired or laid off without cause; you are passed over for a promotion for which you are qualified; you are paid less than others for comparable work; you are placed in a segregated seniority line; you are placed in a segregated workplace; or you are left out of training or apprenticeship programs.

If you believe that the reason for any of the above acts is your handicap, the history of your handicap, or you are regarded as handicapped, you have a right to complain. You are encouraged to resolve complaints through internal voluntary procedures.

However, if you have a formal complaint or need further information, contact the Merit System Protection Board, 230 So. Dearborn St., 31st Fl., Chicago, IL 60604 (312/353-2923), if the problem is with a federal agency. Contact the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, 100 No. 6th St., Minneapolis, MN 55403 (612/725-2192) if the complaint is against a federal contractor.

The Minnesota Human Rights Act also prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Contact the Human Rights Department, Bremer Bldg., St. Paul, Mn. 55101 (612/296-5663).

Age Discrimination

In addition to my sex, I feel that my age (52) has been a barrier to getting a job. I feel that I was qualified for several jobs for which I applied, but the reason I didn't get them is because of my age. Is there anything I can do about it?

Handicapped Discrimination

You've had several letters on employment, but none on handicapped workers. I'm job-hunting and I'm sure I'm facing double discrimination — as a woman who is handicapped. What rights do I have?

Sex Discrimination

I went to apply for a job and was told I needn't bother filling out an application form because they wanted a man. I thought that was illegal.

It is illegal. Unfortunately, it still happens. There are laws against that type of discrimination at both the state and federal levels.

The Minnesota Human Rights Act states: "It is an unfair employment practice . . . for an employer because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or disability . . . to refuse to hire or maintain a system of employment which unreasonably excludes a person from seeking employment . . . or to discriminate against a person with respect to his hire, tenure, compensation, terms, upgrading, conditions, facilities, or privileges of employment."

The Human Rights Act covers employers who have one or more employees. There are several exemptions, including: the employment of immediate relatives or domestic servants and the employment according to religious preference by religious or fraternal corporations. The law allows for both physical exams and medical history investigation to determine a person's capability to do a job.

If a person is not able to resolve the issue at the local level, he or she may file a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights. The complaint must be filed within 6 months after the discrimination occurs. To file the complaint call or write the Department of Human Rights, 240 Bremer Bldg., St. Paul, Mn. 55101 (612/296-5663).

Sexual Harassment

As an older woman, I felt lucky to get a job that really uses my skills and pays enough to support my family — until my boss made it clear that sleeping with him is one of the job duties. I've managed to avoid him so far on that one, but I can't take it much longer. When his clients are in the office, he makes remarks that imply we're having an affair. When we're alone he's always grabbing me or pinching me. This is driving me crazy, but I need this job. Is there anything I can do?

Sexual harassment is a relatively new problem for the courts, although it's been happening to women for years. A number of national studies suggest that more than half of all employed women have experienced some form of sexual harassment at one time or another.

The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has issued guidelines which define sexual harassment as "unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment." This kind of behavior is sex discrimination as defined by Title VII.

A recent Minnesota Supreme Court decision identifies sexual harassment as sex discrimination under the Human Rights Act as well. In that decision the employer was held responsible for sexual harassment inflicted by a woman's co-workers, on the basis that the employer was made aware of the harassment and did not act promptly to change the situation.

Individuals who have this kind of experience should keep a log of such incidents and any witnesses who may be helpful. It may be possible to resolve a grievance of this nature through an internal company process, perhaps with the assistance of a union. For further information or to file a complaint contact: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 12 So. 6th St., Mpls., MN 55402 (612/725-6101); or the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, 240 Bremer Bldg., St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-5663).

New federal and state laws regarding pregnancy disability and maternity leave can help many employed women, but are widely misunderstood.

The Minnesota Human Rights Act now defines discrimination against pregnant workers as sex discrimination. Women affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related disabilities must be treated the same as other persons who are "similar in their ability or inability to work." This applies to fringe benefits as well as other employment factors.

The federal law, an amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, is very similar. It states: "Women affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions shall be treated the same for all employment-related purposes, including the receipt of benefits under fringe benefit programs, as other persons not so affected but similar in their ability or inability to work."

Neither law requires that any specific benefits be provided — only that benefits available for other conditions be extended to pregnant workers.

It is most useful to determine what benefits would be available to an employee who suffers a heart attack or a broken leg. If s/he is able to take a paid leave of absence, and/or is covered by the company's health insurance, the same policies must be available to the pregnant worker.

During the period of time in which you are physically unable to work, you are entitled to whatever provisions are made for sick leave or disability leave under company policy. If you are able to work but wish to stay home with your baby, your company's personal leave policies apply.

If you need further information or want to file a complaint contact: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 12 So. 6th St., Mpls., MN 55402 (612/725-6101); or the Minnesota Department of Human Rights at 240 Bremen Bldg., St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-5663).

The Federal Equal Pay Act covers most employees working in commerce and the production of goods for commerce and in federal, state, and local government. Most employees who work in the following areas are included: manufacturing, processing, and distributing establishments; telephone, telegraph, radio, television, construction, and transportation industries; banks, insurance companies, and advertising agencies; laundries and dry cleaning establishments; hospitals and nursing homes; public and private schools; large hotels, motels and restaurants; and other retail service establishments. It also applies to executive, administrative, professional and outside sales employees.

The Act requires that men and women performing equal work must receive equal pay. There are four considerations in determining equal work: skill, effort, responsibility, and similar working conditions. Skill means the performance requirements of the job and includes such factors as experience, training, education and ability. Effort is the measure of physical or mental exertion needed to do a job. Responsibility is the extent to which an employer depends on the employee to do the job. Minor or insignificant differences do not justify unequal pay.

Wages include all payments due an employee for work performed. Overtime, sick, holiday, and vacation pay are considered part of wages. Payments made by an employer to provide benefits are also included in wages.

You will need to know several things to determine if you are covered by the Equal Pay Act: the kind of firm you are employed by, what it does, and with whom it does business; the jobs involved; the method of pay; and any other relevant details.

You may obtain information about the application of the Equal Pay Act by contacting the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 12 So. 6th St., Minneapolis, MN 55402 (612/725-6101).

Pregnancy

Several women in our office are pregnant. The company we work for has a health plan and leave policy. There are some requirements and restrictions in them for pregnancy and not for anything else. I thought that was no longer legal. What is the law?

Equal Pay

I don't feel I'm being treated fairly by my boss. A man is being paid more than I and we do the same job. He also gets some benefits which I don't get. He does have a different title, but still we do the same thing. I think we should get the same salary. I think the Equal Pay Act might apply to me. How do I find out?

Comparable Worth

My job taking care of mentally retarded adults is challenging. I have a college degree and fourteen years of experience, but I earn less than some men here who never went beyond eighth grade and who don't have near the responsibility that I do. My neighbor is a secretary. She runs the whole office when the boss is gone, but she still receives minimum wage. This doesn't seem fair. Can something be done?

You've identified a common problem. The laws require "equal pay for equal work," but women and men rarely do the same jobs in our society. Women are secretaries, waitresses, teachers, and nurses. Men are craft workers, technicians, and managers. What happens to the woman who enjoys her job, but feels it is not recognized in economic terms?

This issue is called "equal pay for work of comparable value," or comparable worth. Eleanor Holmes Norton, Chair of the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), states that: "The majority of women work in women's jobs that are undervalued and underpaid. It is hard to believe that female jobs are inherently worth less."

Some studies have been conducted to compare different jobs within an organization on the basis of knowledge and skill required, amount of accountability and working conditions. Each job classification is then assigned a point value, which is compared to other jobs having the same point value to determine whether pay differences exist. Ideally different jobs receiving the same number of points should be paid equally because they are of "equal value."

One such study, conducted among Washington State employees, showed that "Clerk Typist I" and "Warehouse Worker I" were each worth 94 points. However, the predominately female clerk's job paid \$8,040 while the predominately male warehouse job paid \$13,104. No "woman's job" studied paid as much as the lowest paid "man's job" with the same point value.

The courts have been reluctant to consider comparable worth under current sex discrimination laws. Decisions on pending lawsuits, studies being undertaken, and continued attention to this issue may lead to change.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is advocating a broad interpretation of these laws. Such an interpretation would speed up the process of improving women's pay, since women remain heavily concentrated in traditional, low-paying "women's jobs."

Flextime

My husband and I both work in order to support ourselves and our 3 children, ages 8, 6, and 3. We are having difficulty managing our work schedules and the children's school and child care arrangements. For instance, school starts at 8:30 and both of us have to be at work at 8. We can't afford to lose any income and neither one of us has been able to find a job with different hours. Are there any solutions?

Both public and private employers are beginning to realize that a rigid work schedule can be very frustrating for workers. Some are looking at alternative work patterns, which give employees a degree of choice in their daily schedule.

The management concept allowing employees to select a work schedule that balances their life style with the requirements of the job is called flextime. Flextime consists of a flexible period and a core time. The flexible time is at the beginning and ending of a day and at lunch time, when employees arrive, depart and eat at times of their own choosing, as long as they put in the usual eight hour day. The core time includes the work hours when all employees must be on the job.

Private industry began to experiment with flextime in the mid 1960's and the federal government in 1974. Results from these experiments show that flextime has been popular with employees and supervisors. Some have resulted in flextime becoming a permanent part of the work schedule.

While there is considerable interest in flextime from employees, management, unions, and others, all groups have been reluctant to start even pilot programs. There has been legislation introduced in several states and in Congress relating to flextime employment. Most employees of the State of Minnesota now have the option of choosing flextime under an executive order signed by the Governor.

There are a number of advantages with the flextime system. Employers experimenting with it feel it boosts employee morale and productivity. Employees working under flextime favor it because it enables them to manage their time to suit their family needs. Job schedules can be adjusted to suit child care and other personal responsibilities.

Check with your employer or prospective employer or with your employee group about experimenting with flextime.

There have been many reasons given for providing part-time employment for people who out of need or preference cannot or do not want to work full-time. Among them are: the number of older people wishing to remain active and / or supplement retirement income; the need of students to earn money for education; the high rate of unemployment; the desire of workers to pursue leisure activities and other interests; and the needs of workers who have family responsibilities, physical limitations, or educational requirements. Some suggest that part-time employment may become an economic necessity.

Many married women consider part-time employment a solution to their need or desire for paid employment while continuing to fulfill home responsibilities. Unfortunately, part time employment is often not available. When available, many part-time jobs have little responsibility, low status, lower pay, and no benefits.

Bills relating to part-time employment have been considered in Congress as well as in several state legislatures. A number of governmental units as well as a number of businesses have implemented part-time jobs programs. Both employers and employees have expressed their satisfaction and continued support for the programs.

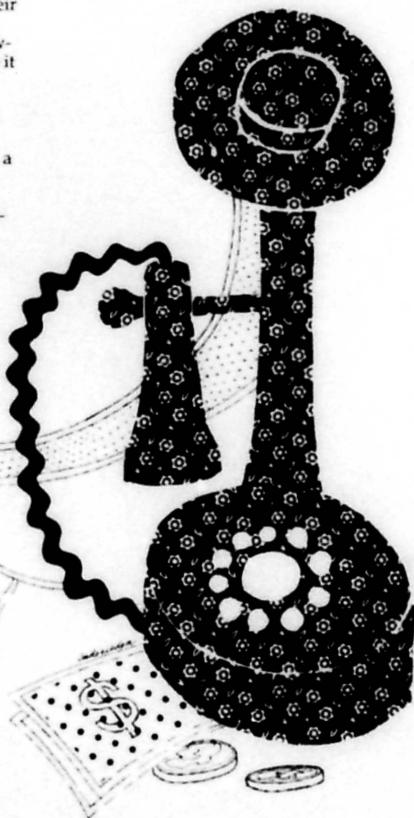
Successful part-time employment programs have included the following: part-time jobs at all levels of employment, with exemptions where it would be impossible; part-time jobs considered permanent positions; pro-rated fringes; and the filling of part-time jobs by employee choice.

There are a number of types of part-time jobs: a position whose responsibilities require less than full-time work; a full-time position shared by two part-time employees who each take half of the position; a full-time job where two employees share responsibility for the whole job; and consulting and short-term projects.

Approach an employer or potential employer with the idea of a part-time job. Some people have applied together for a full-time position. Part-time positions might also be negotiated through a union contract. The Minnesota Legislature has established a pilot project of 50 shared jobs within state government employment.

Part-time

I work full-time because we need the income. We could manage with my income from a part-time job, but I can't find one. With a part-time job I could manage both the job and have more time for my family responsibilities and still have the income we need. There must be others who would like part-time jobs. How does one find such a job?



Family Law

Name After Marriage

I'm getting married in August and want to keep my present name. What do I have to do?

Minnesota law has never required a woman to take her husband's last name upon marriage. It has been traditional social custom and not law which causes most married men to adopt their husband's surname. Legally, a woman can use the name she chooses as long as she does not intend to defraud anyone.

In the 1975 session, the Minnesota Legislature passed a law requiring individuals applying for a marriage license to declare a "name after marriage." In addition the law states: "If in completing the report of marriage the woman fails to designate a name after marriage in the space provided, it shall be presumed that she has adopted the surname of the groom."

You have the right to use whatever name you choose. However, use it continually and consistently. Since consistency is one of the standards for use of a name, you should refuse in all circumstances to use your future spouse's surname if you wish to retain your name. There is no legal requirement to report your name as a "married" name. Do report changes of address promptly.

In order to retain your present name simply fill in that name after "name after marriage" when you go to apply for a marriage license. Then use that name consistently. Miss / Mrs. / Ms. are courtesy titles and not part of a legal name. "Mrs. John Jones" is a social title and not a legal name. It is important to use your legal name in banking, business, and other legal transactions.

Child Support

While I am employed full-time, my salary barely covers necessary living expenses for myself and my two children. Their father is supposed to be sending a support payment each month, but I haven't seen one. What can I do?

There is a child support program available to all families whose children need the financial assistance of an absent parent. Congress established the program to identify and locate absent parents and to obtain financial support for their children from them. Its basic premise is that children ought to be supported by their parents.

The child support program is administered by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare under Title IV-D of the Social Security Act. Under the law, Minnesota was required to establish a Child Support Agency, which works to obtain child support for applicants, and a Parent Locator Service.

Lack of child support has become a serious problem in this country. In a study conducted at the University of Michigan, it was shown that 40% of women eligible to receive payments from the fathers of their children never received a single payment. Even those payments that were made tended to be irregular and unreliable.

In order to apply for child support services, contact the Support Enforcement Unit in your county at either the Department of Social Services or the county attorney's office. There is an application fee of \$20.00. In addition, the State deducts the cost of collection from the child support payment up to 10%. Information you are asked to supply is treated confidentially.

If you have further questions, contact your local agency or write: Child Support and Enforcement, 400 Centennial Building, 658 Cedar St., St. Paul, Mn. 55155.

Child Abuse

Child abuse is a widespread, yet often unrecognized and unreported crime. In 1976 there were over 900 cases of child abuse reported in Minnesota. Nationally, there are over 100,000 cases of physical neglect, and 10,000 cases of severely battered children reported annually.

Minnesota Statute defines physical abuse as "any physical injury inflicted by a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's care on a child other than by accidental means; or any physical injury that cannot reasonably be explained by the history of injuries provided by a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for the child's care."

A law just passed by the Minnesota Legislature redefines neglect as "failure by a parent, guardian, or other person responsible for a child's care to supply a child with the necessary food, clothing, shelter, or medical care when reasonably able to do so." There is an exclusion for people because of religious or spiritual beliefs.

Minnesota law requires certain persons to report suspected neglect or abuse of children. Persons required to report include those employed in medical professions, social services, hospital administration, psychological or psychiatric treatment, child care, education, and law enforcement. In addition to this, any person may voluntarily report suspected abuse or neglect.

Yo^u, may report suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the local welfare agency, police department, or county sheriff. Any person who in good faith reports child abuse or neglect has immunity from any liability, civil or criminal, that otherwise might result from this action. Reports are then investigated by the local welfare agency or law enforcement agency.

Domestic violence has been an unreported, unrecognized, and misunderstood crime in Minnesota as in the rest of the nation. The Minnesota Department of Corrections estimates an annual incidence of 26,000 cases of spouse abuse. Many assaulted women feel lonely, guilty, and ashamed of their situation.

The Minnesota Legislature has made initial efforts to address these problems. Two new laws are designed to help: the Domestic Abuse Act, which provides for an "order for protection," and a legal provision for "probable cause misdemeanor arrest."

The order for protection allows a battered person to obtain protection without filing for divorce. The order may require that the abusive person be removed from the household, or it may simply require an end to the abusive behavior. The order may apply to minor children and to unrelated people living together as well as to a husband and wife. The law was written so that the process of obtaining an order for protection would not require an attorney. A simple form, and assistance in completing the form, are available from the county clerk of court in each county.

The probable cause arrest law allows a police officer to make an arrest in cases of assault which the officer has not witnessed. There are certain qualifications to this law — for example, the arrest must occur within four hours of the assault and the officer must observe evidence of physical injury to the abused person. The arrested person is then held for a cooling-off period; if charged, a trial or hearing date is set. A person convicted of domestic assault may be sentenced to pay a fine, and / or to jail. The judge may put the defendant on probation on the condition of participation in counseling or another appropriate program.

Several legislative appropriations have supported a network of emergency shelters for battered women and their children as well as community education and advocacy programs related to domestic violence. Shelters are listed in the resources section of this booklet. For most information contact the Battered Women's Program, Minnesota Department of Corrections, 430 Metro Square Building, St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-3521).

I am writing because I am concerned about my neighbor's daughter. I think one of her parents is beating her. I feel torn because I don't want to interfere with the family, yet I can't just stand by thinking this child is being abused. What qualifies as abuse? Is there anything I can do about the situation?

Battered Women

I am writing about a friend who has a problem and doesn't know what to do. Her husband beats her. She has three kids, and is worried about breaking up the family by moving out or getting a divorce. Is there any way for her to get protection from her husband? Also, is there any place she can go and take her kids if things get worse? She doesn't have any money.

Rape

Recently the mother of a friend of mine was raped. This woman is 42 years old. She is suffering such shock, fear, and shame that she won't report the crime. What can be done in our part of the state to provide some information and support for people like her? I'm sure there are others in this area who need help.

Current studies show that the number of reported rapes is increasing. However, the number of unreported rapes is still estimated at 5 to 10 times the reported number. Victims still often fear reporting rapes for a variety of reasons.

Rape, same-sex assault, child sex abuse, and incest are forms of sexual assault. They are all crimes of violence. Victims may be young or old, urban or rural, single or married. The victims need to regain a sense of control over their lives. Strong support is needed from family and friends as well as from medical, legal, and social services. Attempts are being made in Minnesota to provide support so that victims will feel free to report the assault.

The Minnesota Program for Victims of Sexual Assault is a project sponsored by the State Department of Corrections. Its aim is to deliver comprehensive services to sexual assault victims through a coordinated statewide network. Program goals include providing the following: a statewide support and referral service for victims; direct victim assistance; training programs to those in contact with victims; and information to increase public understanding and sensitivity to the problems of sexual assault and its victims.

In addition, the Program serves as a clearinghouse for programs, materials, services, and resources for and about victims of sexual assault. The Program will provide to any agency, organization, group, or individual within the state assistance with specific programs for victims as well as workshops, forums, or information about the problem of sexual assault and the development of local services.

For further information contact: The Minnesota Program for Victims of Sexual Assault, 430 Metro Square Building, St. Paul, MN 55101. The telephone number is (612) 296-7084. See the resources section of this book for a listing of sexual assault services.

Spousal Rape

A friend of mine confided recently that her husband abuses her sexually, usually when he is drunk. This is painful and humiliating for her, and she lives in constant fear it will happen again. I've been told that because they're still married, there is nothing she can do. Is this true?

Minnesota's criminal laws contain a section on criminal sexual conduct, which includes rape. In the past, these laws did not apply to "voluntary relationships" — people living together in an "ongoing voluntary sexual relationship" or legally married at the time of the offense.

Ironically, the law provided more protection to the woman raped in an alley by a stranger than to the woman raped in her own home, perhaps repeatedly, by someone she once loved and trusted. Regardless of the circumstances or the amount of force involved, the law ignored her problem unless the woman was separated from her husband — and one of them had filed for divorce.

Thirty-six percent of women entering battered women's shelters reported having been sexually as well as psychologically and physically assaulted by a cohabiting adult. Sixty-five percent of those offenders were spouses.

The law was expanded in the 1980 session of the Minnesota Legislature to allow prosecution for rape in marriage. The new law states that "it shall not be a defense to prosecution" that the man was married to the woman or lived with her in an ongoing voluntary sexual relationship. It recognizes that no one is "entitled" to commit this crime, that no one deserves to be raped.

For further information contact: Minnesota Program for Victims of Sexual Assault, 430 Metro Square Building, St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-7084). Sexual assault services are listed in the resources section of this booklet.

Divorce

The bill you are referring to was passed in the 1978 legislative session. It was patterned after the Uniform Marriage and Divorce Act. The law took effect on March 1, 1979.

This bill makes irretrievable breakdown the only grounds for a marriage dissolution. Fault is removed in determining the terms of the settlement. Provisions are made for the economic protection of dependent spouses and children. Standards are set up for granting child support and maintenance (alimony) and for property division. The overriding concern is the best interest of the child in setting support. Requirements for property division include the recognition of the contribution of the homemaker.

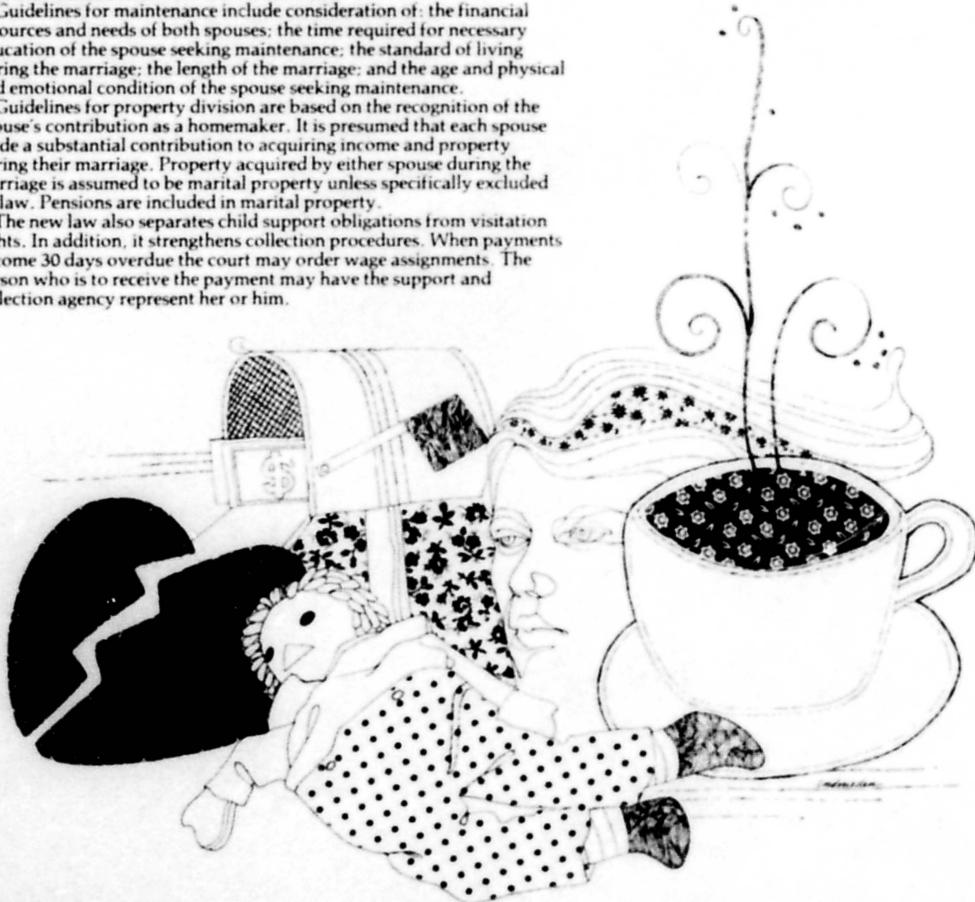
Guidelines for child support include the consideration of: the financial resources and needs of the child and of each parent; the standard of living the child would have enjoyed; and the physical and emotional condition and educational needs of the child.

Guidelines for maintenance include consideration of: the financial resources and needs of both spouses; the time required for necessary education of the spouse seeking maintenance; the standard of living during the marriage; the length of the marriage; and the age and physical and emotional condition of the spouse seeking maintenance.

Guidelines for property division are based on the recognition of the spouse's contribution as a homemaker. It is presumed that each spouse made a substantial contribution to acquiring income and property during their marriage. Property acquired by either spouse during the marriage is assumed to be marital property unless specifically excluded by law. Pensions are included in marital property.

The new law also separates child support obligations from visitation rights. In addition, it strengthens collection procedures. When payments become 30 days overdue the court may order wage assignments. The person who is to receive the payment may have the support and collection agency represent her or him.

I heard that there was a bill passed in the Minnesota Legislature making some changes in the divorce law. What are some of the changes?



Child Care

I'm in desperate need of low-cost, decent child care for my son. I am a single parent and work full-time to support myself and my child. I have had my mother babysitting, but her health won't allow her to do so any longer. My salary as a secretary just isn't enough to buy child care and if I quit work I'll have to go on welfare. There must be others who have this problem. Is anything being done to provide low-cost, decent child care to families who need it?

Child care is expensive. Funding from public and private sources is necessary if child care is to be available to all who need it. Currently, there are limited monies for child care.

Federal, state and local governments cooperate to underwrite the cost of child care services for the children of economically and socially disadvantaged families. The intent of those programs is to allow parents to move off public assistance and into jobs.

At the other end of the spectrum are child care centers and related services, generally supported by upper and upper-middle income families for the care of their children.

Between these polar extremes falls the majority of families which need child care services, but have insufficient funds to cover the full cost. These families, ineligible for welfare benefits and unable to afford the full cost of child care, must either make ad hoc arrangements for it, accept part-time or late shift employment, or forfeit a necessary income.

In 1979 the Minnesota Legislature appropriated monies to provide a sliding scale subsidy for child care. It is available for families whose: 1) income is above the maximum allowed for fully subsidized child care under the federal Title XX program, but below 70% of the state median income; and 2) parents are unable to care for the child because of employment, school attendance or other circumstances. For more information contact your county social services department.

In addition to providing funding for child care, the federal government permits employer contributions to trust funds for the establishment of child care centers for the pre- and school-age dependents of their employees. Another form of federal support for child care is an income tax credit. There are deductions for both individuals and for business. The State of Minnesota also provides for an income tax credit for child and dependent care.

A few federal agencies have worked with their employees to establish child care centers. Several are either investigating the feasibility of establishing a center or are in the planning stage.

Several industries operate child care centers for their employees' children. Employees usually pay a sliding fee for the service, based on total annual family income. Many of these centers are at the work site.

There is an increasing need for child care. The majority of American mothers with pre- and school-age children work outside the home. A growing number of women with children in that age group who are not now currently employed outside the home plan to enter or re-enter the paid labor market.



Child Care

You mentioned one way that government supports child care is by providing for income tax deductions for such expenses. I am divorced and working to support myself and my two children. Babysitting expenses really add up. With my limited income, I need to watch every penny. I don't itemize deductions. What is there for me?

In the past there have been deductions allowed for child care expenses. Deductions have been replaced by tax credits in both state and federal taxes. Tax credits are line items on both the long and short forms.

The Tax Reform Act of 1976 provides for a tax credit on the U.S. income tax return of 20% of the cost of child care up to \$2000 for one child and \$4000 for two or more children. Thus the maximum credit is \$400 for one child and \$800 for two or more children.

The credit is available to single working parents, families in which both parents work full-and/or part-time, and families in which one spouse is employed and the other is a full-time student. There is no income requirement.

The credit may be claimed for payments to relatives of the taxpayer who care for his or her children. The relative cannot be a dependent of the taxpayer. Social Security taxes must be paid on the relative's child care earnings.

According to Minnesota law a taxpayer may take a tax credit on the Minnesota income tax return equal to the dependent care credit for which he or she is eligible under the federal law. There is a limitation for those with incomes over \$15,000. For those above that income level the credit is reduced by 5% of the taxpayer's income.

For further information on federal taxes contact the Internal Revenue Service, 316 No. Robert, St. Paul, Mn. 55101. The toll-free number is 800/652-9062 or 612/291-1422. For information on state tax matters, contact the Department of Revenue, Centennial Office Bldg., St. Paul, Mn. 55145. That number is 612/296-3781 or toll free 800/652-9094.

Insurance

Women often find it difficult to obtain insurance on an equal basis with men. Different rules are often made that limit the access, cost, and extent of coverage of insurance for women. Many studies have been conducted in the area of sex discrimination in insurance. From these studies it has become apparent that insurance needs of women are neither being realistically assessed nor satisfactorily met. Thus, a significant sector of the population is under-insured for many necessary services and in danger of grave financial difficulties.

The inequities practiced by the insurance industries come out of the attitude of society toward the role of women. Women are still often thought of in terms of the traditional female stereotypes — women as wives or widows, not breadwinners. Women are not thought of as providing necessary income for their families nor is their economic contribution as homemakers recognized.

Before buying insurance, shop around. Company policies and the attitudes of individual agents toward women vary. The policy you buy should be individually tailored to your needs. Check the fine print and ask the agent to explain anything you don't understand.

Each state has the responsibility of regulating the industry within its borders. In the 1978 session of the Minnesota legislature, legislation was introduced that would have prohibited unfair discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status, or occupation as a homemaker in the sale, underwriting, and rates of insurance policies.

If you feel that you are being discriminated against in insurance, consult your agent or insurance company. If you feel that your concerns have not been addressed, contact the Commissioner of Insurance, 5th Floor Metro Square Building, 7th and Robert St., St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-2488) or the Department of Human Rights, 240 Bremer Bldg., St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-5663).

Retirement Planning

My next door neighbor is a 75-year-old widow who lost her husband nearly 10 years ago. They lived comfortably when he was alive, but now she is almost penniless. She can't afford badly needed dental care or the maintenance of her small home. It's sad to see her in such poverty. Why does this happen?

Social Security was enacted in 1935 to provide benefits for the retired worker and for the dependents of a deceased worker. Today Social Security provides continued income to the worker and his or her dependents when family earnings are reduced or stopped because of retirement, disability, or death.

In order to qualify for benefits for himself or herself and dependents, a worker must have credit for a certain amount of work under Social Security. The amount depends on the age and the earnings of the worker.

In order to receive benefits you must apply at the local Social Security Administration office. The monthly benefit is determined by the average earnings of the worker over a period of years and the age of the recipient.

If your husband is eligible for a Social Security retirement benefit, the amount he will receive will be based on average earnings over a period of years. Your retirement benefit as his dependent at age 65 is half the amount to which he is entitled at 65. If either of you elect to receive benefits before 65, the amount of the benefit is reduced.

You may collect Social Security when your husband is retired and you are 62 or older. If, when your husband retires, you are caring for a child who is under 18 or disabled and entitled to benefits, you qualify for a benefit regardless of your age.

In addition to the retirement benefit, you will be eligible at age 65 for Medicare protection. Under Medicare, you automatically receive hospital insurance and you can enroll for medical insurance for a nominal fee.

There are other situations — if your husband is disabled or deceased — under which you might qualify for Social Security benefits as your husband's dependent. The next column will discuss those circumstances.

Social Security

The question in the previous column was about Social Security benefits that a dependent wife can receive when she reaches retirement age and her husband is also retired and receiving benefits. The following are other circumstances under which a dependent wife can receive Social Security benefits.

If her husband is disabled and receiving benefits, she must be 62 or older to receive benefits. But if she is caring for a child who is under 18 or disabled and receiving benefits, she can get benefits at any age.

If her husband is deceased she may be eligible for a widow's benefit. This can be up to 100% of the amount which her husband would be receiving if he were still alive. She may elect to receive this as early as age 60. If she is disabled she may receive the benefit as early as age 50. As a disabled widow she may also qualify for Medicare. Again, the amount of the benefit is reduced if she chooses to receive the benefits before age 65. She may also receive a widow's benefit at any age if she is caring for a child who is under 18 or disabled and receiving benefits.

A widow who remarries before age 60 usually loses her Social Security benefits. If she remarries after age 60, she may receive 50% of the retirement benefit to which her deceased husband was entitled. However, she may elect to receive the wife's benefit on her present husband's record if it is higher than the widow's benefit to which she is entitled.

For further information on Social Security qualifications, payments, and benefits, contact your nearest Social Security office. It is listed under Social Security Administration or under United States Government Offices, Social Security Administration, in your local telephone directory. Your local post office can supply the address.

Social Security

It is unfair. According to a Social Security report, in June of 1976 the average benefit paid to retired women workers was \$182 per month, compared to \$221 for men. Social Security retirement benefits are lower for women than for men for several reasons.

First, Social Security laws reflect the discrimination of women in the labor force. Since women typically earn low wages, they also receive low benefits as retirees. Also, women receive no credit toward Social Security while out of the paid job market as full-time homemakers.

Secondly, Social Security laws do not reflect the changing role of women in the U.S. economy. They are still based on the old idea that a woman is dependent on her husband. There is no consideration that in three-fifths of marriage she is an economic partner through employment. Nor is there recognition of the economic contributions of homemakers.

There may be changes ahead. Bills have been introduced in Congress which would provide for equity in Social Security. They would enable each partner in a marriage to develop their own wage record for Social Security purposes.

I was a full-time homemaker while my 4 children were at home. After they were grown I took a part-time job awhile and for the past 7 years I have worked full time. When I filed for Social Security I was shocked that my payment would be so low. And I filed as a dependent wife because my benefits are higher than if I claimed as a retired worker. This doesn't seem right. Is something being done to change this?

You've hit upon a problem that plagues many older women. Women over 65 make up the poorest segment of our society. The 7 1/2 million single and widowed women in the U.S. over 65 have annual incomes of less than \$2000, below the current poverty level of \$2590 for a one-person household.

There are many reasons. There are inequities between the Social Security benefits of women and men. In addition, the average American married woman can expect about 10 years of widowhood. Upon widowhood, fixed expenses such as utilities and taxes don't go down, yet income diminishes significantly. Currently, the average couple receives \$341 in Social Security benefits and the average widow \$193. Unfortunately, Social Security is the sole source of income for many.

Women who work outside the home are far less likely than men to be covered by a pension. Less than 10 percent of all unmarried retired women workers are eligible for pensions.

Many women depend on their husband's pension, only to find out that most retirement plans stop upon the death of the husband. This may be because he did not take a reduction in his benefit to cover his wife or chose not to take it in order to receive higher benefits during his lifetime.

Women need to take steps to safeguard their financial future. There are a number of ways this can be done. The Tax Reform Act of 1976 includes a provision which allows for pensions for homemakers. Under this law a worker who has no other pension plan can set aside up to \$1500 a year in an individual retirement account. The contribution could be raised to \$1750 a year if it includes a homemaker. Subaccounts may then be set up in each person's name.

There are other ways that women can plan for retirement. Accountants, attorneys, banks, insurance agents and other investment counselors can provide more information.

Social Security

I am 49 years old and have never had any paid employment. I'm concerned about my financial situation when I'm older. My husband is 51 and he has a pension plan at work which does not cover me. I suppose I'll get Social Security. I'm not really sure what "getting Social Security" means. What will happen when my husband and I reach retirement?

Property Ownership

I have always assumed that my husband and I own our property together. A conversation with a friend the other day left me wondering. I am a homemaker. Does that make a difference?

Minnesota has a separate property system. Under this system each spouse separately owns property which she or he owned at the time of marriage, including the profits from it. Earnings during marriage and property or assets received by gift, grant, bequest, or will before and during marriage are also separately owned. Each spouse has control and management of her or his property and the right of action concerning it. Therefore, the owning spouse determines what will happen to the property. She or he is free to sell, transfer, or give it away without the consent of the other spouse.

There are few limitations on these actions. One is that the husband must support his wife. However, the husband may choose the fashion and manner of support. It is difficult for a wife to enforce during the marriage, as courts are reluctant to interfere in on-going marriages. The husband is liable only for "necessaries." The courts have strictly defined necessities as medical services and funeral expenses. A second limitation is that property cannot be transferred with the intent to defeat the other spouse's forced share in the estate.

One spouse may make a gift to the other of some portions of her or his property by placing it in their names jointly or the other spouse's name alone. These gifts are subject to taxation to the extent they exceed allowable exemptions. In order for property to be considered jointly owned, provision must be made in the deed specifying joint tenancy.

Questions of ownership generally come up when property is sold, transferred, or divided. It is best to determine ownership before such a transaction is necessary.

Inheritance

I am interested in knowing more about property ownership. What happens to the property of a married couple upon the death of one of them? I'm concerned about what would happen if my husband should precede me in death. We have all our property in joint tenancy.

When property is held in joint tenancy, it passes to the surviving spouse without having to be included in a will and is not included in the decedent's probate estate.

In order for real property, land and buildings, to be held in joint tenancy, the deed must include the names of both spouses and specifically state that the property is held in joint tenancy. In the case of personal property, such as a car, stock, or a bank account, it should be held in the names of both spouses.

The amount of the estate passing to the surviving joint tenant may be subject to state and/or federal estate taxes. Both state and federal laws allow property held in a "qualified joint interest" to be treated for estate tax purposes as belonging 50% to each spouse. (In general, a "qualified joint interest" means a joint tenancy in which only husband and wife are joint tenants.) That portion owned by the surviving spouse is not subject to tax.

Under Minnesota law the amount of the estate passing to the surviving spouse is allowed a marital deduction before the estate tax is imposed. This deduction is limited to the greater of: 1) 50% of the decedent's federal gross estate, excluding certain reductions; or 2) \$250,000.

Under federal law the amount of the estate passing to the surviving spouse is also allowed a marital deduction. This deduction is the larger of: 1) one-half of the adjusted gross estate; or 2) \$250,000. In addition there is a unified credit which equals a \$161,563 exemption in 1980 and increases to a \$175,625 exemption equivalent in 1981.

Both the state and federal laws recognize that both spouses make a contribution to the economic well-being of the marriage. This contribution may be financial, but it may also consist of the homemaker's physical labor, knowledge, and skill. Particularly in the case of family farms and small businesses, recognizing the wife's contribution can make a significant difference for the survivor's financial situation.

If property is not held in joint tenancy, it must be probated upon the death of the owner. Through probate ownership is transferred from the decedent to other people.

If a spouse dies without a will, or dies leaving property not disposed of by a will, the law establishes an order of priority, "intestate succession," for distributing that property as follows: 1) If there is a surviving spouse and no children that spouse receives the entire intestate estate, or that portion of the estate not covered by the will, if one exists; 2) if there is a surviving spouse and one child, the spouse and the child each receive one-half of the estate; or 3) if there is more than one child, the spouse receives one-third of the estate and the children two-thirds.

The surviving spouse takes a life estate in the homestead. That means he or she has the right to possess and occupy the homestead during his or her lifetime.

Even if there is a will, a wife has the right of a "widow's election" against her husband's will. This entitles her to one-third of all the property which her husband owned at the time of his death if there is more than one child, one half if there is one or no children. She may also take a life estate in the homestead.

The entire estate passing to the surviving spouse may be subject to tax under state and federal law. However, the estate is allowed the state marital deduction and the federal marital deduction and unified credit described in the previous column.

A will is one way by which property can be transferred upon the death of a property owner. Property held in joint tenancy is another. When a deed specifies joint tenancy, that property passes to the survivor. A third way by which property is transferred when an owner dies is by intestate succession. The law determines the descent of property when no provision has been made to transfer it. Anyone who wishes that his or her property be transferred other than as provided by law and has not made any other provisions ought to make a will.

When a person dies leaving property not disposed of, Minnesota law designates an order for the transfer of it after the expenses of the estate are paid. The homestead passes to: 1) the spouse if there are no children; or 2) the spouse for the remainder of his or her lifetime and then in equal shares to the children. The spouse receives half of the personal and real property if there is one child and a third if there are two or more children. The remainder of the estate passes in the following order: children, spouse, parent(s), sibling(s), next of kin, and finally to the state.

Even if a person makes a will, the law makes certain provisions protecting the interest of the surviving spouse. He or she may elect to receive a life estate in the homestead and one-half of the estate if there is one child and one-third if there is more than one child.

Under Minnesota law the person making the will must be 18 years old and of sound mind. The will must be in writing and signed by the person making the will and by two witnesses.

Self-written wills are recognized in Minnesota. However, some states do not recognize them. Problems arise when the maker moves from the state or owns property in another state. The meaning and legal effect of a will is determined by the law. Will terminology is technical. Provisions are subject to interpretations based on definitions in the law and on court interpretations. It is best to consult an attorney for advice for your individual situation.

Inheritance

When one spouse dies, what happens to the property not held in joint tenancy?

Wills

I am wondering if my husband and I ought to have a will. We own our house and have three children, all of whom have left home. What would happen to our property if there's not a will and one or both of us should die?

Credit

I recently heard about a credit law that says married women can get a credit rating in their own name. I have been married 25 years and my husband and I have a number of accounts, all of which have my husband's name. I feel it's important for me to have my own credit rating. What do I have to do to get it?

While establishing credit has always been important for women, it is essential today. For married women, statistics show that most can expect to be widowed or divorced at some point in their lives. Unless a woman has previously established a credit rating in her own name, losing a husband still means losing his credit rating and the financial independence that goes with it.

The Equal Credit Opportunity Act says that "... it shall be unlawful for any creditor to discriminate against any applicant with respect to any aspect of a credit transaction on the basis of ... sex or marital status." Among other things, it offers a woman the opportunity to maintain a credit rating separate from her husband's so that she may benefit from their joint credit history.

Many married women erroneously believe that they have credit and a credit rating in their own name, when they have only a courtesy card which entitles them to use accounts in their husband's name. It is in a woman's best interests to have a credit rating in her own name.

If you lost your credit identity when you married, and chances are you did if you were married before 1976, you should make every effort to establish a credit rating in your own name. Contact your creditors to change any joint accounts to include your name. Any joint accounts you open now may be maintained in both names.

For a free copy of the booklet "Women: To Your Credit," write: Director of Public Relations, Commercial Credit Corp., 300 St. Paul Place, Baltimore, MD 21202.

Credit

I'm really confused by all the terms in the credit area. What is the difference between credit and credit rating? After reading the column on credit, I took out my credit cards. Everyone of them has my husband's name, sometimes preceded by Mrs. Since all the accounts are in his name, I assume I don't have any credit or even a credit rating. How can I get them in my name?

Let's start by defining some terms. Credit is a privilege granted by a creditor to an applicant. Credit-worthy means demonstrating that you are a good risk. Your credit rating is a measure of your credit-worthiness. A credit history is a record of your past credit transactions and payments. The credit bureau is a business that keeps files of credit information on consumers of its member creditors and reports that information to creditors requesting it. Anyone who has had credit extended to them probably has a file at the credit bureau.

In order to get credit, you will need to fill out an application form from a creditor. Within 30 days you should hear whether your application was approved or rejected or whether more information is needed to process your application.

In deciding whether to grant you credit, the creditor will want to determine your credit-worthiness. That includes your willingness and ability to repay, and whether you have collateral if required. In judging credit-worthiness, a creditor may look at a number of things, including your credit history, length of employment, length of residence, and personal references.

In order to get a good credit history, there are several things you can do: 1) open a checking account in your own name, being careful not to overdraw it; 2) open a savings account in your own name, regularly making additions to indicate stability; 3) get charge accounts or credit cards in your own name, use them and pay on them promptly and regularly; 4) request that all information on accounts in your husband's name which you use be reported in your name; and 5) request that the local credit bureau open an account in your name if you do not have one.

Having credit and a good credit rating can be invaluable.

You're right! Credit is an important form of insurance for anyone. Changing circumstances might make you responsible for your own and your family's finances. Frequently women do not discover what a hardship it can be to lack one's own line of credit after a catastrophe such as death or divorce occurs.

Both at the federal and state levels there is legislation prohibiting discrimination against women in credit. The Federal Equal Credit Opportunity Act prohibits ". . . any creditor to discriminate against any applicant with respect to any aspect of a credit transaction on the basis of . . . sex or marital status." The Minnesota Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination ". . . in the extension of credit to a person because of sex or marital status."

A woman who has established credit in her own name before her marriage can now retain her credit identity after her marriage. She need only change the account to her new last name, if she is changing her name. Creditors may not require reapplication for credit, may not close the account, may not require the use of the husband's name, and may not change the terms of the credit. She and her husband may open joint accounts, which will be maintained in both names.

You have the right to file an administrative complaint or a lawsuit to enforce your rights under the Equal Credit Opportunity Act or to file a complaint with the Minnesota Department of Human Rights. For information contact: Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, 250 Marquette Ave., Minneapolis MN 55401 (612/340-2511) or the Minnesota Department of Human Rights, Bremer Bldg., St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-5663)

In the past women who were widowed as well as those married, separated or divorced had no credit records in their own names. Many had to start from scratch at a time when access to credit was desperately needed. Denial of credit often placed an economic stress on those women and their families. With the passage of the federal Equal Credit Opportunity Act, credit and a credit rating is much easier for these women to get.

Don't automatically assume your husband's debts. You are only liable for debts which you took on jointly with him. Find out whether he had credit life insurance. If so, the insurance may pay part or all of the debt(s).

Since you have no credit in your own name, you'll probably have to start by making application for credit. Be sure to include all income on the applications. You may be able to put up collateral in order to get credit.

Accounts which you used cannot automatically be closed, unless creditors have evidence that your financial situation has changed for the worse. However, if the account was based solely on your husband's income, you may be asked to prove your credit-worthiness.

You should try to get a credit history from the accounts which you used. If you can show that you paid bills that came in his name, you may request that information on those accounts be included in your own credit history.

For an informational booklet on credit write: Director of Public Relations, Commercial Credit Corporation, 300 St. Paul Place, Baltimore, Maryland 21202.

Credit

I was recently married. When I wrote to change my last name and address, a store at which I have an account wanted my husband's signature in order to change the account to his name. I hold the same job as prior to my marriage and have always kept the account current. I think it's important for a woman to maintain a credit in her own name as a form of insurance. Isn't there some way I can keep the account in my name?

Credit

My husband recently passed away. He had a number of charge accounts and credit cards, all in his name. I used some of them and would like to continue doing so. I also would like to keep several of them just in case I might need them. What should I do?

Credit

I just became aware of the credit bureau. Could you tell me more about it? I'd like to know what it does and what rights a person has about the information on file about them.

The credit bureau stores records on all people who have credit. Each file is a summary of how a person has handled credit obligations. The information on file is supplied in several ways: 1) by the person when filling out credit applications, information such as name, address, employer, and social security number; 2) by merchants that belong to the credit bureau, information on how promptly an individual pays bills; and 3) from public records, information such as divorce notices, deaths, bankruptcies, and court judgements.

When a person applies for credit, a merchant who is a member of the credit bureau may request the information compiled on that person. From the information the creditor decides if he or she is a good credit risk. To protect privacy all members must sign a contract with the credit bureau that they will order reports only on persons they are considering for credit or employment.

Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act of 1971, the consumer now has a right to see what is in his or her file. To review the file a person can go to the credit bureau and ask to see it. There is usually a small charge, unless the person has been refused credit on the basis of information on file within the past thirty days. Errors can be corrected. If an account is in dispute, the consumer can file his or her side of the story. Except for bankruptcy adverse information can be kept on file for seven years. Bankruptcy can remain on file for fourteen years.

The credit bureau is there to help businesses give credit without great risk. With the Fair Credit Reporting Act and the Equal Credit Opportunity Act, the consumer has protections in the credit reporting system.

Business Loans

I want to go into business. I have an opportunity to buy a store, but I do not have the money. I tried to get a loan, but the bank turned me down. I know if I could just get the money I could run the business well and pay back the loan. Is there any place I can get one?

There are loans available from the Small Business Administration (S.B.A.). That agency was established to stimulate small business growth throughout the country. The purpose of S.B.A. loans is to enable the development of small businesses or to keep them in operation. They may also be approved if they help persons whose ownership of small businesses has been prevented because of economic, physical, or social disadvantages. Women comprise a small portion of business owners, and have been made a priority of S.B.A. assistance and funding.

Loans are made to small manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, service concerns, and other businesses. Loans are granted for the following purposes: 1) to construct, expand, or convert facilities; 2) to purchase buildings, equipment, and materials; or 3) to obtain working capital.

Applicants for loans must agree to comply with S.B.A. regulations that there will be no discrimination in employment or service to the public on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, or marital status.

Generally loans may be made for as long as ten years. Loans made for the purpose of acquiring real property or constructing facilities may be made for up to twenty years. Working capital loans, however are usually limited to six years. Loans are usually granted at the standard interest rate.

The S.B.A. may only make loans if a business or person cannot obtain funds from a bank or other private sources. You must apply at your local bank (at two banks in cities over 200,000) and be turned down before you can apply at the S.B.A.

For more information about qualifications for S.B.A. loans and application procedures contact the Minnesota field office of the S.B.A. at 12 South Sixth Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402 or call 612/725-2363.

The State of Minnesota has a Small Business Assistance Center that provides information, referral and counseling to small businesses. For further information contact the center at the Department of Economic Development, 480 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101 (612/296-5011).

Resources

Consumer Housing

Tenant's Rights Handbook
Minnesota Public Interest Research Group
3036 University Ave. SE
Mpls., MN 55414

Minnesota Human Rights Act
Department of Human Rights
Bremer Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5663

Housing and Community Development Act
Housing and Urban Development
6400 France Ave. So.
Mpls., MN 55435
612/725-4717

Consumer Services

Office of Consumer Services
Metro Square Building, First Floor
7th and Robert St.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-2321

Better Business Bureau
1745 University Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55104
612/646-4631

Fair Debt Collection Practices Act
Federal Reserve Bank
250 Marquette Ave.
Mpls., MN 55480
612/340-2511

A Consumer's Guide to Minnesota Conciliation Courts
Minnesota Public Interest Research Group
3036 University Ave. SE
Mpls., MN 55414

Toll-Free Telephone Service to State Agencies
(callers outside the Twin Cities only)
1-800-652-9747

Tel-Law Tape Library
Minnesota Bar Association
700 Cargill Building
Mpls., MN 55402
612/227-5297 (Twin Cities residents)
1-800-652-9728 (outstate residents)
Tape #1: Where to go for legal help in the Twin Cities.
Tape #2: Where to go for legal help outside the Twin Cities.

Education

Title IX

Copies:
Office for Civil Rights
Department of Health, Education and Welfare
Washington, D.C. 20202

Interpretation and complaints:
Kenneth A. Mines
309 W. Jackson Blvd., 10th Floor
Chicago, IL 60606

Minnesota Law

Department of Human Rights
Bremer Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5663

Minnesota Department of Education
Equal Educational Opportunities Section
550 Cedar
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5020

Employment

Minimum Wage

Federal:

Fair Labor Standards Act
Wage and Hour Division
Department of Labor
100 No. 6th St.
Mpls., MN 55403
612/725-6106

State:

Division of Labor Standards
Department of Labor and Industry
Space Center, 5th Floor
444 Lafayette Rd.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-2282

Volunteerism

Governor's Office of Volunteer Services
130 State Capitol
St. Paul, MN 55155
612/296-4731

Displaced Homemaker Programs

Barbara Whitmore
Department of Education
Capitol Square, 7th Fl.
550 Cedar
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-1216

Marge Revoir
Department of Economic Security
690 American Center Bldg.
150 Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-2684

Programs:
Metropolitan Center for Displaced Homemakers:
2233 University Av., Suite 340
St. Paul, MN 55114
612/647-9961 or
2344 Nicollet Av. So., Suite 240
Mpls., MN 55404
612/874-6636

South Central Minnesota Displaced Homemaker Program:
Fairmont CETA
932 E. 10th
Fairmont, MN 56031
507/238-4214 or
Mankato CETA
709 N. Front
Mankato, MN 56001
507/389-6073 or
New Ulm CETA
1200 So. Broadway
New Ulm, MN 56073
507/359-2031

Project Soar
YWCA
202 W. 2nd St.
Duluth, MN 55802
218/722-3126

Mainstay
700 No. 7th St.
Marshall, MN 56258
507/537-7166

Southern Minnesota Support Coalition
Displaced Homemaker Program
c/o Blue Earth County Human Services
402 No. 5th St.
Mankato, MN 56001

Women in Transition
8800 West Highway 7
St. Louis Park, MN 55426
612/935-5517

CHART
123 E. Grant St., Suite 1210
Mpls., MN 55403
612/871-9100

Perspectives, Inc.
Lake Village Center
Chaska, MN 55318
612/448-2277

Employment Opportunities

CETA

Local employment agency or
Department of Economic Security
390 Robert St.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/774-6083

Apprenticeships

Division of Voluntary
Apprenticeship
Minnesota Department of Labor and
Industry
444 Lafayette
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-2371

Bureau of Apprenticeship and
Training
U.S. Department of Labor
134 Federal Bldg.
316 Robert St.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/725-7951

Pregnancy

Title IX
Office for Civil Rights
Kenneth A. Mines
309 W. Jackson Blvd., 10th Floor
Chicago, Ill. 60606

Minnesota Human Rights Act
Department of Human Rights
Bremer Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5663

Title VII Civil Rights Act
Equal Employment Opportunity
Commission
1800 G St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20505

Sex Discrimination

Equal Pay Act
U.S. Department of Labor
Employment Standards
Administration
Women's Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20210

Minnesota Human Rights Act
Department of Human Rights
Bremer Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5663

Family Law

Child Support and Enforcement

Local Welfare or Social Services
Department or
400 Centennial Bldg.
658 Cedar St.
St. Paul, MN 55155
612/296-2499

Battered Women's Programs

Ellen Pence, Coordinator
Minnesota Department of
Corrections
430 Metro Square
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-3521

Shelters:
Mid-Minnesota Women's Center,
Inc.
Box 602
Brainerd, MN 56401
218/828-1216

N.E. Minnesota Coalition for
Battered Women
Box 6345
Duluth, MN 55806
218/722-0222

S.W. Women's Shelter, Inc.
111 E. Main
Marshall, MN 56258
507/532-4604 or 532-2350

Harriet Tubman Center
Box 7026 Powderhorn Station
Mpls., MN 55407
612/827-2841

Women's Shelter Board, Inc.
Box 61
Rochester, MN 55901
507/285-1010

Women's Advocates
584 Grand Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55102
612/227-8284

Minnesota Program for Victims of Sexual Assault

Peggy Specktor, Director
430 Metro Square Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-7084

Sexual Assault Services:

Beltrami County
Beltrami County Task Force
on Sexual Assault
Bemidji State University
Oak Hall, A-125
Bemidji, MN 56601
218/755-2594

Blue Earth County
Mankato Rape Crisis Center
P.O. Box 3206
Mankato, MN 56001
507/345-4000

Carver County
Carver County Program for
Victims of Sexual Assault
Courthouse
Chaska, MN 55318
612/448-3435, ex 260

Clay County
F-M Program for Victims
of Sexual Assault
P.O. Box 1655
Fargo, ND 58102
701/235-6433 (8 AM — 5 PM)
701/235-7335 (7 PM — 1 AM)

Crow Wing County
Women's Center of Mid-Minnesota
P.O. Box 602
Brainerd, MN 56401
218/828-1216

Dakota County
Community Action Council
13710 Nicollet Av. So.
Burnsville, MN 55337
612/894-2424

Douglas County
Listening Ear Crisis Center
Douglas County Hospital
111 17th Av. E.
Alexandria, MN 56308
612/762-1511, ex 283
Hotline 612/763-7687

Hennepin County
Sexual Assault Services
2000 Government Center
Mpls., MN 55487
612/348-5397

Resources

ADDITIONS AND UPDATED INFORMATION TO PAGES 30 & 31

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Employment

Age Discrimination

Age Discrimination in Employment Act
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
12 So. 6th St.
Mpls., MN 55402
612/725-6101

Minnesota Human Rights Act
Department of Human Rights
Bremer Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5663

Information and Discrimination Complaints for Handicapped Workers

Rehabilitation Act:
Merit System Protection Board (federal employees)
230 So. Dearborn St., 31st Fl.
Chicago, IL 60604
312/353-2923 or
Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (federal contractors)
100 No. 6th St.
Mpls., MN 55403
612/725-2192

Minnesota Human Rights Act
Department of Human Rights
Bremer Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5663

Sex Discrimination

Title VII Civil Rights Act

Equal Pay Act
Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
12 So. 6th St.
Mpls., MN 55402
612/725-6101

Family Law

Battered Women's Programs

Shelters:
Ripley Alliance for Battered Women
Box 96
Thief River Falls, MN 56701
218/681-5557

Northwoods Coalition for Battered Women
Box 563
Bemidji, MN 56601
218/751-0211

Women's Coalition
Box 3205
Duluth, MN 55803
218/728-3679

Region IV Council on Domestic Violence
Box 815
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
218/739-3359

Women's Center of Mid-Minnesota, Inc.
Box 602
Brainerd, MN 56401
218/828-1216

Shelter House
1125 6th St. SE
Willmar, MN 56201

Woman House
Box 195
St. Cloud, MN 56301
612/253-6900

Southwest Women's Shelter, Inc.
210 South First
Marshall, MN 56258
507/532-4604

Women's Shelter Board, Inc.
Box 61
Rochester, MN 55901
507/285-1010

B. Robert Lewis House
4750 Cedar
Eagan, MN 55122
612/452-7288

Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter
Box 7026, Powderhorn Sta.
Minneapolis, MN 55407
612/827-2841

Women's Advocates
584 Grand Av.
St. Paul, MN 55102
612/227-8284

Alexandria House
Box 32142
Fridley, MN 55432
612/571-5908

Hopkins Project
Box 272
Hopkins, MN 55343
612/933-7433

Home Free
11111 36th Av. No.
Plymouth, MN 55441
612/559-2022

Minnesota Program for Victims of Sexual Assault

Peggy Spektor, Director
430 Metro Square Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-7084

Services:
Victim Witness Assistance Program
Anoka County Attorney's Office
Courthouse
Anoka, MN 55303
612/421-4760, ext. 1192

Beltrami County Task Force on Sexual Assault
Box 1112
Bemidji, MN 56601
218/751-1657
Hotline: 218/751-4333

Victims Assistance
410 So. 5th St.
Mankato, MN 56001
507/625-9034

Carver County Program for Victims of Sexual Assault
401 E. 4th St.
Chaska, MN 55318
612/448-5425
Hotline: 612/448-2111

Resources

ADDITIONS AND UPDATED INFORMATION TO PAGES 30 & 31

SEPT. 1980

Fargo-Moorhead Program for
Victims of Sexual Assault
Box 1655
Fargo, ND 58107
701/293-7273
Hotline: 701/235-7335

Mid-Minnesota Women's Center
Box 602
Brainerd, MN 56401
218/828-1216

Sexual Assault Advocates
Community Action Council
13760 Nicollet Av. So.
Burnsville, MN 55337
612/894-4212
Hotline: 612/894-2424

Dakota County Sexual Assault
Program
Hastings Government Center
Highway 55
Hastings, MN 55033
612/437-3191, ext. 0438

Listening Ear Center
111 17th Av. E.
Alexandria, MN 56308
612/762-1511
Hotline: 612/763-6638

Rape and Sexual Assault Center
1222 W. 31st St.
Mpls., MN 55408
612/825-4357

Sexual Assault Services
Office of the County Attorney
2000-C Government Center
Mpls., MN 55487
612/348-5397

Adult Protection Council
Advocacy Program
Box 45
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218/326-1034 (8 AM - 5 PM)
218/326-8565 (5 PM - 8 AM)

Social Abuse Program
West Central Community Services
Center, Inc.
1125 6th St. SE
Willmar, MN 56201
612/235-4613

Southern Minnesota Crisis Support
Center
Box 214
Fairmont, MN 56031
507/235-5446
Hotline: 507/235-3456

Victims Crisis Center
Box 649
Albert Lea, MN 56007
507/373-2223

Victims Crisis Center
908 NW 1st Dr.
Austin, MN 55912

The RAPELINE Program
1500 Building
1500 1st Av. NE
Rochester, MN 55901
507/285-8242
Hotline: 507/289-0636

Sexual Offense Services
65 E. Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/298-5898

Women Against Rape
217 MacKubin
St. Paul, MN 55102
612/292-1092

Victim Support Program
Box 171
Northfield, MN 55057
507/645-5555

Ripley Alliance
Sexual Assault Program
Box 96
Thief River Falls, MN 56701
218/681-5557
218/281-2864 (Crookston)

Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault
2 E. 5th St.
Duluth, MN 55805
218/727-4353
Hotline: 218/727-8538

Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault
235½ Chestnut St., Rm. 7 & 8
Virginia, MN 55792
218/749-4225
Hotline: 800/232-1300
(toll-free, outside Duluth)

Rape Crisis Center
Box 195
St. Cloud, MN 56301
612/251-4357

Sexual Assault Services
7066 Stillwater Rd.
Oakdale, MN 55119
612/738-0080

Sexual Assault Crisis Aid
205 Exchange Bldg.
Winona, MN 55987
507/452-4440
Hotline: 507/452-5590

Finances

Social Security

Local telephone directory:
Social Security Administration or
U.S. Gov't Office, Social Security
Administration or
Local Post Office or
1-800/462-5360

Credit Discrimination

Equal Credit Opportunity Act
Federal Reserve Bank
250 Marquette Ave.
Mpls., MN 55401
612/340-2511

Minnesota Human Rights Act
Department of Human Rights
Bremer Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5663

Business

Small Business Administration
12 So. 6th St.
Mpls., MN 55402
612/725-2363

Small Business Assistance Center
Department of Economic
Development
480 Cedar St.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5011

NIP Rape and Sexual Assault Center
2617 Hennepin Av. So
Mpls., MN 55408
612/374-4357

Itasca County
Nightingale Help Phone Service
126 1st Av. SE
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
218/326-1034 (8 AM — 5 PM)
218/326-8565 (after 5 PM)

Mower County
Victim's Crisis Center
Freeborn-Mower Mental Health
Center
908 NW 1st Dr.
Austin, MN 55912
507/437-6680 (8 AM — 5 PM & 7
PM — 1 AM)
Emergency 911 (5 PM — 7 PM & 1
AM — 8 AM)

Olmsted County
Rapeline Program
913 3rd Av. SE
Rochester, MN 55901
507/289-0636

Ramsey County
Sexual Offense Services
65 E. Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul MN 55101
612/298-5898

St. Louis County
Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault
2 E. 5th St.
Duluth, Mn 55805
218/727-4353
Hotline 218/727-8538
Hotline outside Duluth 800/232-1300

Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault
Rm 16 Courthouse
Virginia, MN 55792
218/749-4725

**Stearns, Benton, Sherburne, and
Wright Counties**
Central Minnesota Rape Crisis
Center
1900 Minnesota Blvd.
St. Cloud, MN 56301
612/251-4357

Washington County
Washington County Sexual Assault
Services
8155 Hudson Rd.
Woodbury, MN 55042
612/738-3600

Finances

Child Care

Day Care Projects, Pamphlet 14
Women's Bureau
Employment Standards
Administration
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, D.C. 20210

Income Tax

Federal:

Internal Revenue Service
316 No. Robert
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/291-1422 or toll-free 800/652-
9062

State:

Department of Revenue
Centennial Office Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55145
621/296-3781 or toll-free 800-652-
9094

Discrimination in Insurance

Commissioner of Insurance
Metro Square Bldg., 5th Floor
7th and Robert
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-2488

Department of Human Rights
240 Bremer Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101
612/296-5663

Social Security

Local telephone directory:
Social Security Administration or
U.S. Gov't Office, Social Security
Administration or
Local Post Office

Credit Discrimination

Equal Credit Opportunity Act
Federal Reserve Bank
250 Marquette Ave.
Mpls., MN 55401
612/340-2571

Minnesota Human Rights Act
Department of Human Rights
Bremer Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55101

Information:
"Women: To Your Credit"
Director of Public Relations
Commercial Credit Corp.
300 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202

Small Business Administration
12 So. 6th St.
Mpls., MN 55402
612/725-2363

Women's Centers

The following is a list of Women's Centers which are sources of information for local resources available to women.

Women's Center of Mid-Minnesota

Box 602
Brainerd, MN 56401
218/828-1216

Women's Center
U of M, Crookston
Hill Bldg.
Crookston, MN 56716
218/281-4444

Women's Center

Mankato State University
Box 16
Mankato, MN 56001
507/389-6146

Women's Center
Southwest State University
Marshall, MN 56258
507/537-7160

Chrysalis Center for Women

2104 Stevens Ave.
Mpls., MN 55404
612/871-0118

Women's Center
University of Minnesota
306 Walter Library
117 Pleasant Ave. SE
Mpls., MN 55455
612/373-3850

Women's Center
U of M, Morris
Morris, MN 56267
612/589-2211

Women's Resource Center
709 1st Ave. SW
Rochester, MN 55901
507/289-0638

Women's Center
501 Mall Germain
St. Cloud, MN 56301
612/252-8831

Women's Resource Center
205 Exchange Bldg.
51 West 4th St.
Winona, MN 55987
507/452-4440



PURPOSE

The Council studies all matters relating to the economic status of women in Minnesota. This includes credit, family support, security of the homemaker, educational and employment opportunities as well as laws and business practices that discriminate against women.

The Council maintains the Women's Information Line which provides information on legal and economic matters related to women in Minnesota.

Twenty-two members serve on the Council: five Senators, five House members, and twelve public members appointed by the Governor.

The state-wide toll free number is:

(800) 652-9744

Metro area residents may call the Council office at:

296-8590

Publications

The following publications are available free of charge from the Council office upon request:

NEWSLETTER, issued monthly, with summaries of Council reports and research, notices of Council activities and hearings.

MINNESOTA WOMEN: INCOME & POVERTY, with special emphasis on the groups most vulnerable to poverty: older women and single-parent families.

MINNESOTA WOMEN & MONEY, a study of insurance, retirement income, credit, and taxes as they affect women's economic security.

MINNESOTA WOMEN & EDUCATION, a study of elementary, secondary, and higher education in the state.

WOMEN IN MINNESOTA, a statistical profile of the population describing age, educational status, marital status and living arrangements, employment and income of Minnesota women.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: PROGRAM & STAFF, a study of sex equity in the state's vocational education programs.

MINNESOTA WOMEN: CITY & COUNTY EMPLOYEES, employment patterns and salaries in local government jobs.

WOMEN IN THE TRADES, a study of apprenticeship programs preparing women for employment in the skilled trades.

COUNCIL ON THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF WOMEN

**Room 400 SW, State Office Building
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155**