



PLYMOUTH COUNTY

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN



Plymouth County Commission on the Status of Women

Annual Report 2026

Commissioners

Michelle Davidson, Chairwoman (Hanover); **Tamara Dzialo**, Co-Vice Chair (Bridgewater); **Daphne Remy Gomes**, Co-Vice Chair (Middleboro); **Danielle Kempe**, Treasurer (Marshfield); **Jacqueline Jones**, Secretary (Brockton); **Tess Washburn** (Mattapoisett); **Darcie Edwards** (Hanover); **Gina Formichelli** (Scituate); **Denise Carrington** (Middleboro).

Mission

The Plymouth County Commission on the Status of Women and Girls (“PCCSW”) was established by House Bill 1110, signed into law on March 15, 2018, as Chapter 45 of the Acts of 2018. The PCCSW’s mission is to provide a permanent, effective voice for the advancement of women and girls in Plymouth County.

The PCCSW is a nine-member body which represents all the towns and cities in Plymouth County including: Abington, Bridgewater, Brockton, Carver, Duxbury, East Bridgewater, Halifax, Hanover, Hanson, Hingham, Hull, Kingston, Lakeville, Marion, Marshfield, Mattapoisett, Middleborough, Norwell, Pembroke, Plymouth, Plympton, Rochester, Rockland, Scituate, Wareham, West Bridgewater, and Whitman.

The PCCSW is responsible for studying, reviewing, and reporting on the status of women and girls in Plymouth County, and it is charged with offering policy recommendations that improve access to opportunities and advance equality for women and girls in the region.

Through public hearings, public meetings, and coordination with organizations and residents across Plymouth County, the PCCSW works to assess needs, take action, and



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make recommendations that advance equity for women and girls of Plymouth County toward full equity in all areas of life and to promote rights and opportunities for all women and girls.

Advocacy

The PCCSW selected the following legislation as its priorities for the 2025-2026 legislative cycle. Fiscal year 2026 was year two of the legislative session.

- **An Act to Increase Access to Disposable Menstrual Products (IAM Bill) (H.2483/S.1549)**

Lead Sponsors: Senator Pat Jehlen, Representatives Jay Livingstone and Christine P. Barber

Coalition: Massachusetts Menstrual Equity

This bill provides access to free menstrual products to all menstruating individuals in schools, shelters, and prisons.

- **An Act Relative to Family Members Serving as Caregivers (H.1394/S.886)**

Lead Sponsors: Representative James O'Day and Senator Joan B. Lovely

This bill allows family members, powers of attorney, adult children of patients, and other legally responsible relatives to be compensated for caregiving through MassHealth.

- **An Act Promoting and Enhancing the Sustainability of Birth Centers and the Midwifery Workforce (S.784/H.1117)**

Lead Sponsors: Senator Joan Lovely, Representatives Manny Cruz and Lindsay Sabodosa

Coalition: Bay State Coalition



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This bill promotes and enhances the sustainability of birth centers and the midwifery workforce.

The PCCSW's decision to make those bills a priority came after a public listening session held during the previous year, as well as discussions Commissioners had with women and girls while participating in local events, including Plymouth Pride on June 29, 2025; the South Shore Conference for Women on Sept. 25, 2025; the MassNOW Menstrual Equity Summit on Dec. 6, 2025; and a meeting of the Brockton Women's Commission on April 16, 2026.

This was the second year advocating for those bills. To support them, PCCSW developed an outreach plan for contacting all state representatives and senators in Plymouth County asking for their support, as well as submitting testimony to legislative committees as the bills made their way through the legislative process. The Commission created a tracker that included the status of the bills, templates for emailing legislators, templates for submitting testimony, and responses from the legislators. Commissioners contacted their legislators, and the Chairwoman wrote to legislators on behalf of the Commission. The same actions were taken for submitting testimony to legislative committees.

In addition, the Commissioners used the MCSW's Take Action Hub to contact their legislators about the PCCSW's priorities, as well as the bills the MCSW advocated for—which benefit all the Regional Commissions. The Commissioners said the Take Action Hub is extremely helpful and makes it very easy to contact legislators.

Chairwoman Michelle Davidson also participated in events where she spoke about the importance of the bills:

- She was a guest on State Rep. Michelle Badger's podcast where she talked about the legislative priorities, as well as the mission of the PCCSW and the work the Commission does to help women, girls, and families in Plymouth County.



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- She gave testimony advocating for the passage of An Act Relative to Family Members Serving as Caregivers during a MCSW Public Hearing on March 24, 2026.

To reinforce its support of An Act to Increase Access to Disposable Menstrual Products (IAM Bill), the Commission purchased menstrual kits that it gave away at all the events they produced and participated in.

Programming

The PCCSW implemented the following programming in fiscal year 2026: *Women in the Trades: Breaking Barriers and Building Futures* and *Plymouth County Legislative Breakfast*.

These efforts were in addition to events where the Commission partnered with other organizations and hosted informational tables, including the 2025 South Shore Conference for Women and the 2026 Plymouth Pride Celebration.

In addition, the Commission published its *2025-2026 Plymouth County Resource Guide* and shared it with all the Plymouth County legislators, libraries, and women's organizations. The [Resource Guide can be downloaded from the PCCSW website](#).

Women in the Trades: Breaking Barriers and Building Futures: This event was held Oct. 22, 2025, at the South Shore Technical Vocational High School in Hanover, Massachusetts. Attendance: Commissioners Michelle Davidson, Tamara Dzialo, Jacqueline Jones, Daphne Remy Gomes, Tess Washburn, and Maude Gorman.

Twenty-three people attended, including young women and their parents.

Women and organizations that participated:

- Natasha Pitt, Co-owner, Pitt and Pitt Construction



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- Alysha Siciliano, Principal, General Contractor, Designer, Alluring Concepts
- Lauren Hendry, Furniture Redesigner, Funktional Designs
- MJ Hendry, Arborist/Horticulturist, RP Marzilli
- Greater Boston Joint Apprentice Training Center
- National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) Apprenticeship Program /
IBEW

The purpose was to connect young women considering working in the trades with women who work in a variety of trades. The event was set up as a mini expo, with participating women and organizations each having a table and attendees able to mingle and have one-on-one conversations with the participants. During that segment, the young women were given a Bingo card to encourage them to have conversations. After the expo segment, the Commission had a Town Hall-like discussion where participants could ask questions in an open atmosphere. The discussion explored both the challenges and rewards of working in the trades as a woman.

Attendees praised the event as well-organized, engaging, and inspiring. They especially valued the honest conversations with tradeswomen, the opportunity to learn about diverse career paths, and the supportive sense of community created by women sharing their experiences and encouraging one another. Many students reported increased interest in pursuing trade careers and expressed appreciation for the Commission's work.

Favorite quotes from the night:

"I learned that confidence, hard work, and knowledge enable women to compete in a trade. Gender is becoming less of an impediment to success."

"I really liked talking with the female arborist. It showed me that I can use my passion for plants and botany in a career."



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Plymouth County Legislative Breakfast: This event was held on April 18, 2026, at Bridgewater State University in Bridgewater, Massachusetts. Attendance: Commissioners Michelle Davidson, Tamara Dzialo, and Daphne Remy Gomes. MCSW Commissioner Emily Wilson also helped at the event.

The Commission was joined by the following elected officials and representatives:

State Legislators

- State Senator Mike Brady (Brockton; East Bridgewater, Halifax, Hanson, Whitman)
- State Representative Michelle Badger (Plymouth)
- State Representative Rita Mendes (Brockton)
- State Representative Bridget Plouffe (Brockton; East Bridgewater; West Bridgewater)
- State Representative Dennis Gallagher (Bridgewater)

Legislative Staff

- Phoebe Flynn, representing State Senator Dylan Fernandes (Kingston, Pembroke, Plymouth, Plympton)
- Lisa Adams, representing State Representative David DeCoste (Hanover, Norwell, Rockland, Hanson)

Local Officials

- Mark Linde, Bridgewater Town Council
- Susan Nicastro, Brockton City Councilor
- Tony Rodrigues, Brockton School Committee

Approximately 20 Plymouth County residents participated, sharing both professional expertise and lived experiences that grounded the conversations in real-world concerns.



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Attendees engaged directly with legislators. Discussions highlighted growing gaps in healthcare, caregiving, economic opportunity, and access to basic resources. The full report, including the five key policy priorities that emerged from the event and action items for legislators, was shared with all Plymouth County legislators and [posted to the PCCSW website](#).

Unity in Action: PCCSW at Plymouth Pride: For the fourth year, the PCCSW participated in Plymouth Pride at Nelson Park in Plymouth as both a sponsor and exhibitor. Through its advocacy booth, PCCSW shared information about the Commission's work advancing equity through legislation, policy, and community engagement. This year, the booth also provided resources on voter registration and how residents can check their voter status, helping promote civic participation. The event strengthened PCCSW's connection with the community, increased awareness of the Commission's mission, and reinforced its growing partnership with Plymouth Pride organizers and other local advocates.

Goals for the next fiscal year

1. *To increase awareness about the high rate of human trafficking in Plymouth County and encourage Plymouth County legislators to submit legislation to help victims.* During a program about domestic violence that the Commission hosted in 2024, the Commissioners learned Plymouth County has one of the highest rates of human trafficking in the Commonwealth. Since then, the Commissioners have attended informational forums and heard directly from women about the problem.

In the fall of 2026, the PCCSW plans to hold a public forum on the topic. The Commission intends to partner with the Bristol County Commission on the Status of Women on the event. Panelists will include members of law enforcement who are trained on the topic, a member of the Plymouth County Human Trafficking Task Force, and a survivor. The date and time of the event are still to be determined.



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We will know we have achieved this goal when the event takes place, attendance is close to capacity (50 attendees), and at least one Plymouth County legislator agrees to submit legislation or co-signs legislation to address the problem.

2. Gather more data and stories from older women in Plymouth County to inform the Commission's event planning and improve our communications with elected officials when advocating for bills. Senior women are often an overlooked segment of the population, yet their needs are equally important. Many of them are navigating health, caregiving, housing, and economic issues.

PCCSW's goal is to hold listening sessions at Senior Centers / Councils on Aging across the county. The Commission will invite women from the towns, along with their legislators. These sessions will give senior women an opportunity to share their concerns, talk face to face with their legislators, and increase awareness for the PCCSW and how the Commission can help them.

The Commission will know it has achieved this goal when it holds at least 3 listening sessions, each attended by 10-15 women and 2-3 legislators.

3. Launch a youth council for Plymouth County girls and young women. During the past year, PCCSW Commissioners have had more conversations with young women about their challenges. During those conversations, they learned that many young women want to be part of a group that takes action on issues affecting their lives. At the same time, Commissioners new to the PCCSW said one of their priorities is to help girls and young women. Given this alignment, the PCCSW feels the time is right to launch its own youth council.

To achieve this, the Commission has formed a committee to explore forming the council. Commissioner Gina Formichelli, who attended the MCSW training on youth



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councils in the spring of 2026, and Commissioner Daphne Remy Gomes will co-lead this effort.

The PCCSW will know it has achieved this goal when the Commission has recruited girls and young women to participate in the youth council, the council has at least three meetings, and the council completes one project.

**Submitted by PCCSW Chair Michelle Davidson on May 19, 2026*