



Who We Are

We are the grassroots arm of the women's movement. The National Organization for Women is the largest organization of feminist activists in the United States. NOW has hundreds of thousands of contributing members and more than 500 local and campus affiliates in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. Since our founding in 1966, NOW's goal has been "to take action" to bring about equality for all women. Both the actions NOW takes and its position on the issues are principled, uncompromising and often ahead of their time. NOW is a leader, not a follower, of public opinion.

NOW activists use both traditional and non-traditional means to push for social change. NOW activists do extensive electoral and lobbying work and bring lawsuits. We also organize mass marches, rallies, pickets, non-violent civil disobedience and immediate, responsive "zap" actions. NOW re-instituted mass marches for women's rights in the face of conventional wisdom that marches went out with the 1960s. A NOW-organized march in support of the Equal Rights Amendment drew more than 100,000 people to Washington, D.C. in 1978. NOW's Marches for Women's Lives drew 500,000 reproductive rights supporters to Washington, D.C. in 1989 and 750,000 in 1992, for the largest women's rights demonstration ever. In 1995, NOW organized the first mass demonstration to focus on the issue of violence against women-and drew a quarter million people to the Mall. The 1996 March to Fight the Right in San Francisco drew more than 50,000 activists to kick off an electoral season focused on efforts to defend affirmative action. In 2004, the March for Women's Lives became the largest mass action of any kind in U.S. history, bringing a record 1.15 million people to Washington, DC to advocate for women's reproductive health options.

NOW's actions have established the organization as a major force in the sweeping changes that put more women in political posts; increased educational, employment and business opportunities for women; and enacted tougher laws against violence, harassment and discrimination.

NOW is a multi-issue, multi-strategy organization that takes a holistic approach to women's rights. Our official priorities are winning economic equality and securing it with an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will guarantee equal rights for women; championing abortion rights, reproductive freedom and other women's health issues; opposing racism and fighting bigotry against lesbians and gays; and ending violence against women.