

# Focus on Women Entrepreneurs

Among the economic development policies in the District's Comprehensive Plan is the need to promote local entrepreneurship, including supporting women-owned businesses. District government plans, programs and policies have helped fuel the continued growth of women-owned businesses over the last two decades especially in core sectors such as professional, scientific and technical services, and healthcare and social assistance.

The number of women-owned firms in the District rose **33.7 percent** over the past two decades. In contrast, the number of all firms increased **6.0 percent** during the same period.

District of Columbia Employer Businesses by Gender: 1997 to 2019

	2019		1997		Change, 1997 to 2019	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	15,372	100.0%	14,500	100.0%	872	6.0%
<b>Female-owned</b>	<b>2,791</b>	<b>18.2%</b>	<b>2,088</b>	<b>14.4%</b>	<b>703</b>	<b>33.7%</b>
Male-owned	8,562	55.7%	7,705	53.1%	857	11.1%
Equally Male/Female	1,274	8.3%	1,487	10.3%	-213	-14.3%
Other*	2,745	17.9%	3,242	22.4%	-497	-15.3%

\*Publicly held or other businesses not classifiable by gender.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1997 Survey of Survey of Business Owners and 2019 Annual Business Survey (ABS)

## Top Sectors for Women-Owned Businesses in the District of Columbia



Professional, Scientific,  
and Technical Services  
**980 Firms**



Healthcare  
and Social Assistance  
**252 Firms**



Administrative, Support,  
Waste Management,  
and Remediation Services  
**128 Firms**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 Annual Business Survey (ABS)