



Published on National Council of Nonprofits (<https://www.councilofnonprofits.org>)

Original URL: <https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/nonprofit-workforce-shortage-crisis>

# The Nonprofit Workforce Shortage Crisis

In April 2023, the networks of the National Council of Nonprofits conducted a nationwide survey to secure the latest, comprehensive information about the nonprofit workforce.

**When nonprofits cannot hire enough employees to provide vital services, the public suffers. Data from this survey and others show that along with increased demands for services, there are longer waiting lists, reduced services, and sometimes elimination of services. When any of those happen, the ripple effects cannot be ignored: communities lose access to food, shelter, mental health care, and other vital services on which people depend.**

The following report analyzes the more than 1,600 responses collected from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. It also references data from reports by state associations of nonprofits and others to present the most current information on the challenges nonprofits face. Finally, the report presents practical solutions, many shared with us by the nonprofit respondents themselves, and discusses recommended public policy solutions.



2023

## Nonprofit Workforce Survey Results

Communities Suffer as the Nonprofit Workforce  
Shortage Crisis Continues



# 2023 Nonprofit Workforce Survey Results: Communities Suffer as Nonprofit Workforce Shortage Crisis Continues

In April 2023, the networks of the National Council of Nonprofits conducted a second nationwide survey to secure the latest, comprehensive information about the nonprofit workforce.

[Read the report](#)

## Why It Matters

When organizations dedicated to serving the public good can't secure the workforce to provide vital services, their communities suffer. While staffing shortages in delivery services result in longer times to receive a package, staffing shortages in direct-care services mean that families and individuals cannot access life-saving support. When a nonprofit closes, the ripple effects cannot be ignored: communities

lose access to food, shelter, mental health care, and other vital services. Nonprofits are doing their part to raise **awareness** of the challenge to whole communities, to collect and **analyze** data to identify the problem and solutions, and to take **action** to protect our communities.

## Key Findings



- Nearly three out of four nonprofits (74.6%) completing the survey reported job vacancies.
- More than half of nonprofits (51.7%) reported they have more vacancies now compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic, and nearly three out of ten (28.1%) have longer waiting lists for services.
- The nonprofit jobs most commonly unfilled are those that interact with the public the most. Almost three out of four respondents (74.0%) reported vacancies in their program and service delivery positions, and two out of five (41.1%) reported vacant entry-level positions.
- Almost three out of four respondents (72.2%) said salary competition affects their ability to recruit and retain employees, followed by budget

constraints/insufficient funds (66.3%). Additional causes for nonprofit workforce shortages reported by nonprofits were stress and burnout (50.2%) and challenges caused by government grants and contracts (20.6%).

- Seven out of ten nonprofits (70.5%) anticipate charitable giving to decrease or remain flat in 2023, while 68.7% of nonprofits anticipate the number of donors to decrease or remain unchanged.

Collectively, the data confirm that nonprofits are still enduring a shortage of employees, and as a natural consequence, the public continues to suffer because fewer employees mean reduced capacity, longer waiting lists for services, reduced amounts and types of services provided, and sometimes a complete end of needed services.

## **Barriers Creating Nonprofit Workforce Shortages**

Flourish

Nonprofits responding to the 2023 survey identified the following barriers to recruiting and retaining nonprofit staff:

- Salary competition was the most frequently cited challenge, having been identified by nearly three out of four respondents (72.2%).
- Two-thirds of those completing the survey (66.3%) named budget constraints/insufficient funds as a factor, which, of course, impacts salary competition.
- More than half (50.2%) pointed to stress and burnout.
- One out of five respondents (20.6%) identified challenges caused by government grants and contracts as a major cause of nonprofit workforce shortages.
- The lack of available, affordable child care continues to be a major problem impacting recruitment and retention, according to 14.6% of respondents.

## **Practical and Public Policy Solutions**

Recognizing that the people leading, working in, and volunteering for charitable nonprofits are, by nature, problem solvers, the 2023 survey invited participants to share solutions they had utilized or identified to mitigate the nonprofit workforce

shortages crisis. The report explores examples they provided of practical solutions, and also points to public policy solutions of general applicability, especially essential reforms to government grants and contracting systems.



## State Reports

The National Council of Nonprofits has prepared state-specific reports in the 23 states with at least 25 survey responses. (click to expand)

- [Alaska](#)
- [Arizona](#)
- [California](#)
- [Connecticut](#)
- [Florida](#)
- [Illinois](#)
- [Kentucky](#)
- [Maine](#)
- [Maryland](#)
- [Michigan](#)
- [Minnesota](#)
- [Montana](#)
- [Nebraska](#)
- [New Jersey](#)
- [New York](#)
- [North Carolina](#)
- [Oregon](#)
- [Pennsylvania](#)
- [South Carolina](#)
- [Tennessee](#)
- [Vermont](#)
- [Washington](#)

- [Wyoming](#)

## Related Insights and Analyses

- [The Scope and Impact of Nonprofit Workforce Shortages](#), initial survey on the workforce shortage crisis conducted by the National Council of Nonprofits and its networks, Dec. 13, 2021.
- [Nonprofit Workforce Shortages: A Crisis That Affects Everyone, An Update](#), highlighting positive actions governments at all levels had taken to alleviate workforce shortages -- and much that still remains to be done. National Council of Nonprofits, July 2022.
- [Creative Approaches to the Nonprofit Workforce Shortage](#) that can elevate equity, address burnout and stress, and discover, nurture, and develop talent in nontraditional ways.