



TO REACH OUR REGION'S HOUSING GOALS WE NEED ADEQUATE WAGES FOR SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS.

As a coalition that represents direct service organizations, we work to advocate for adequate wages for workers. For those most affected by the housing crisis, the repercussions of social service workers not making living wages are dysfunctional systems that undermine our goals of addressing our housing crisis. Our region needs adequate pay to ensure a thriving workforce to house our communities.

- **Housing in the Portland Metro Area is unaffordable on most social service worker wages:**
 - According to the 2022, Out of Reach report by the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, to afford the average two-bedroom home in Portland Metro Region requires an hourly wage of \$33.37. That means an annual income of \$69,400.
- **When social service workers do not make a living wage, it has negative impacts on the folks we serve:**
 - Shuffling direct service workers around impacts their quality of life and their ability to build trusted relationships with the population in one area over time.
 - Trust and expectations are at the heart of agencies' ability to get households out of homelessness and keep them housed.
 - When there is a high turnover of employees, there is a loss of expertise.
- **There is an emotional toll for direct service workers with unsustainable wages that impacts direct service workers' work capacity and productivity:**
 - It takes a lot to show up for this type of work. Additional stressors that can be easily mitigated, such as housing stability, need to be in order for workers to practice self-care. Living wages are essential for the long-term health of the workforce and for the quality of services delivered.
- **Living wages in social services is also a racial equity issue:**
 - We can not ignore how low wages in social service positions disproportionately impacts communities of color, women, and folks with lived experience who choose to do this work. It is a matter of equity as much as it is the right thing to do.
- **Community-Based Organizations should not be burdened with fundraising to pay workers:**
 - When agencies are required to fundraise for living wages, it puts the long-term financial health and stability of the agency in jeopardy.