



## **Takeaways from JOHS SHS Provider compensation Study: released August 2023**

### **Compensation:**

- Study-wide, the median annualized salary was around \$46,000. The median salary for associate (entry) level staff was \$42,795.
- Fewer than one-third (31 percent) of employees felt their compensation allows them to take care of their basic needs.
- 64% of employees in Associate roles, or 1,419 workers are below a living wage of \$44,928.
- Workers in director roles all made median incomes well above living wage, receiving a median salary of \$94,439.

Generally speaking, smaller organizations, fewer than 100 employees are paying associate level positions higher than at larger organizations: the median salary for employees at small organizations is \$7,030 higher than the median salary for associate roles at large organizations. Further, manager and director roles at smaller organizations are paid less than at larger organizations.

“I am seeing people leave to other fields, I’m seeing people leave to be bartenders and sex workers so that they can make more money. I’m seeing people who really feel passionate about the work and want to stay in this field do side hustles in order to stay in the field just to make it work and make ends meet.” -Employee Focus Group Participant

“Rent is so expensive today. The \$2 increase is good, but I’m barely making it. They want \$1,600 for a 1-bedroom that is only 500 square feet. There’s just no way I can afford that. I have to have a side job just to make my rent now. We definitely need more in order to be able just to live.” -Employee Focus Group Participant

### **Retention:**

- Over 50% of employees surveyed said they were somewhat or very likely to look for a new job during the next year and 78% said they would leave their current role if offered more pay somewhere else.
- However, 86% of employees said they would stay at their current organization for better pay- demonstrating the commitment to this work people in these roles have.

References: [Final Full Wage Study Report.docx \(johs.us\)](#), [Census Tract 23.03, Multnomah, OR - Profile data - Census Reporter](#), [Here's how many transgender people live in your state \(splinternews.com\)](#)



- Unsurprisingly, front-line staff experience significantly greater levels of Burnout and Turnover Intentions than non-front-line staff.

“The emotional part of the job is probably what gets the people the most... You want to help people, but the rules and regulations don’t make it so that you can help them easily or help them stay afloat. It can be frustrating, and it can feel like a waste of energy, depending on how you look at it. I’ve watched a person walk out on the job.” – Employee Focus Group Participant

“Our work is very triggering at times: I’m in recovery myself, like some clients. It is easy to drop that at the door when I show up to work, but it takes a toll on me.” – Employee Focus Group Participant

### **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:**

- Employees identified transparency in salary determination (53 percent), communication about things that affect staff (50 percent) and improved processes for collecting and responding to staff feedback (47 percent) as the top 3 actions that their agency could take to advance DEI efforts.
- Employees who were more satisfied with their workplaces’ efforts to advance DEI were less likely to report burnout and look for a new job in the next year.
- Employees in the survey who identified as Black/African American, Hispanic and American Indian or Alaska Native were represented at higher rates than in the general population, demonstrating that pay equity in social services is also a racial equity issue.
- Additionally, transgender and non-binary identified social employees were represented at a higher rate than in the general population, demonstrating that pay equity is also a gender equity issue.

“We experience and witness racism and misgendering at work, which makes us feel further demoralized.” – Employee Focus Group Participant

“Being so snow-capped [e.g., the organizations are led by white people] makes it harder for BIPOC staff to feel like their voices are heard within their organizations. This is the first time we’ve even had a BIPOC designated focus group for our voices to be centered.” – Employee Focus Group Participant

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