

More Essential Than Ever

Rebuilding the Illinois Health and Human Services Workforce in the Wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Illinois Partners for Human Service conducted statewide research to identify what factors are most affecting the health and human services workforce in the wake of the pandemic.

KEY FINDINGS

Workforce Demographics



- Over 75% of health and human service employees identify as female and more than half of the workforce is Black, Indigenous, Latina/o/x and people of color (BILPOC);
- The majority of senior leadership is White, while the majority of frontline staff is BILPOC.

Impact of COVID-19



- The vast majority of respondents reported increases in both COVID-19 revenue and COVID-19 expenses;
- Smaller organizations experienced more volatility, with bigger swings in revenue (both positive and negative), than larger organizations;
- Emergency COVID-19 funding, while helpful, is not sustainable and does little to address growing workforce issues.

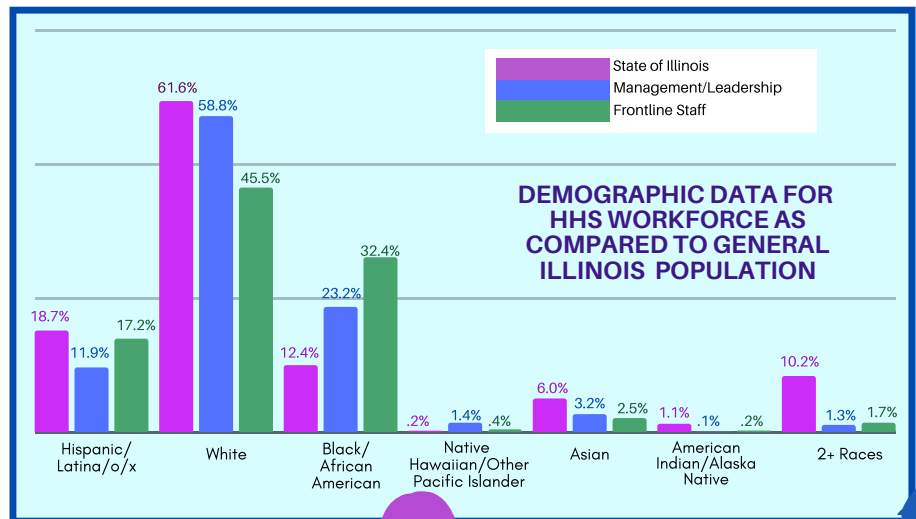
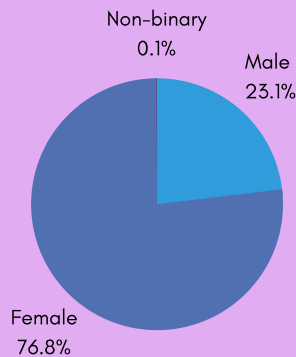
Turnover, Vacancies, and Hiring Barriers



- Most organizations experienced their highest turnover at the onset of the pandemic or in the most recent quarter surveyed;
- More than half of survey respondents experienced higher vacancies during the study period than their pre-pandemic baseline, of which over 25% reported double or more vacancies;
- Lack of applicants and lower wages were the most common hiring barriers reported by survey respondents.

WORKFORCE DEMOGRAPHICS

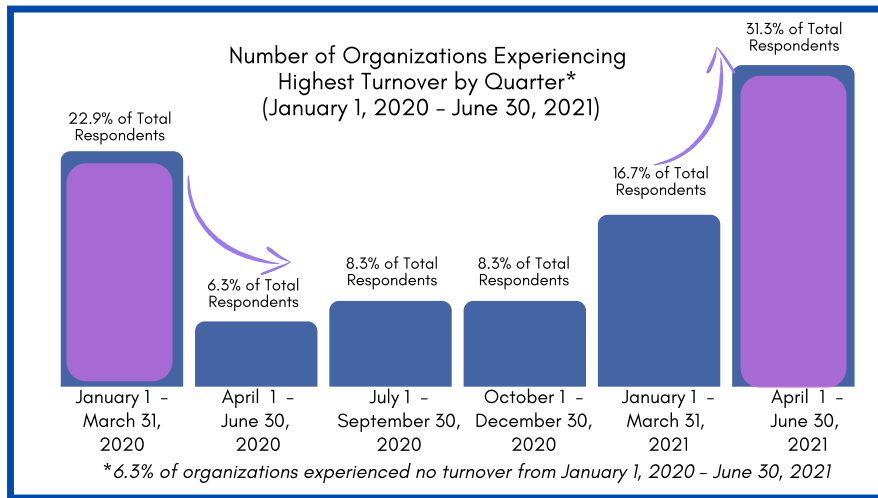
GENDER IDENTITY IN THE HHS WORKFORCE



Investing in the health and human services is inherently a gender and racial equity issue.

The sector is collectively experiencing increased workforce challenges with record levels of vacancies, turnover, and growing wage gaps, likely influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

TURNOVER



Focus group participants identified certain jobs with higher vacancies and turnover, including: domestic violence intervention; behavioral health; youth services; medical technicians; registered nurses; foster care workers; home-based caretakers; and bilingual positions across disciplines.

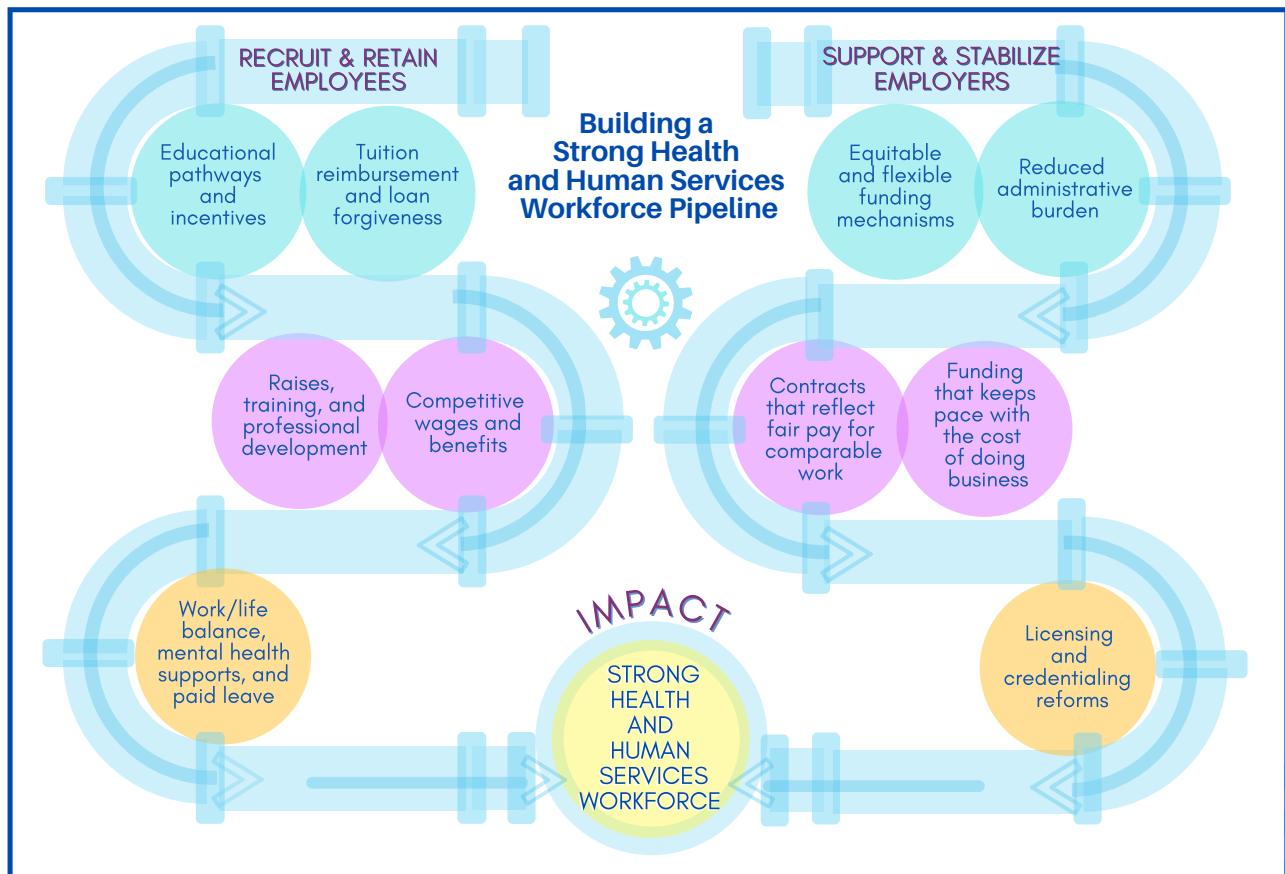
THE WAGE GAP



Average maximum: The average of the highest wage offered by each of the survey respondents

Average minimum: The average of the lowest wage offered by each of the survey respondents

RECOMMENDATION: STRENGTHEN THE WORKFORCE PIPELINE



The State must strengthen programs that help build and maintain a strong health and human services workforce pipeline.