

THE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING WORKFORCE



10 facts New York employers should know

1. Ninety-three percent of behavioral health workers reported experiencing burnout, and 48% said workforce shortages had caused them to consider another job.¹

Vacancies put more pressure on the people who remain, increasing the risk of further burnout and turnover.

2. Fifty-four percent of New York's supportive housing tenants are age 55 or older.²

Providers increasingly need staff with experience in aging, chronic conditions, mobility, behavioral health and care coordination.

3. Human services employment in New York grew 89% between 2000 and 2023, while inflation-adjusted wages grew only 3%.³

Demand for workers has increased dramatically without compensation keeping pace.

4. Seventy-two percent of staffed nonprofits with vacancies said those vacancies were hurting their ability to fulfill their mission.⁴

Open positions can directly affect workloads, service capacity, waiting lists and client outcomes.

5. One NYC human services provider estimated that 400 to 500 candidates entered its hiring process but never started work.⁵

Interview speed, communication and follow-up between offer and start date can determine whether a candidate actually begins.

6. NYC Health + Hospitals reduced behavioral health turnover from nearly 18% to 8%, while social worker vacancies fell from 12% to 5%.⁶

Workforce results can improve when recruiting, retention, training, incentives and career development are addressed together.

7. Frontline vacancy rates exceeded 40% for some difficult-to-fill roles at NYC human services organizations.⁵

These positions often require targeted outreach and specialized recruiting, not simply another job posting.

8. One NYC human services provider hired 1,400 employees in one year but lost 1,100 during the same period.⁵

Recruiting volume alone does not solve a workforce problem when turnover remains high.

9. Remote nonprofit positions received approximately nine times more applications than onsite positions.⁷

Supportive housing employers often cannot compete on remote work, so scheduling, communication, hiring speed and candidate experience become more important.

10. Salary competition was cited by 82.2% of New York nonprofits as a recruitment and retention challenge.⁸

Employers need current market information and must consider the full employment package, including benefits, schedules, workload, management and career growth.

FIVE WORKFORCE QUESTIONS TO ASK NOW

- 1 Which vacancies are creating the greatest operational risk?**
Do not treat every opening equally. Identify the positions affecting service delivery, overtime, compliance or employee burnout.
- 2 Are we using the same recruiting approach for every role?**
An LMSW, RN, psychiatrist and case manager require different talent pools, outreach and recruiting expertise.
- 3 Where are candidates leaving the hiring process?**
Measure the time between application, interview, decision, offer and start date. Look for delays and communication gaps.
- 4 What is each vacancy really costing us?**
Include overtime, manager time, temporary coverage, delayed services, burnout and turnover, not only advertising or staffing fees.
- 5 When do we need additional recruiting reach?**
Some roles can be filled by the internal team. Others may require specialized networks, passive-candidate outreach or added recruiting capacity.

SOURCES

1. National Council for Mental Wellbeing and The Harris Poll. Help Wanted: Behavioral Health Workforce Survey, 2023.
2. Supportive Housing Network of New York. The State of Supportive Housing: 2025.
3. CUNY Institute for State and Local Governance. Human Services Job Growth Is Outpacing Wage Growth in New York.
4. Urban Institute. The Nonprofit Workforce Faces Compounding Challenges: What Does This Mean for Communities?, 2025.
5. Center for an Urban Future. Solving the Staffing Crisis Facing NYC's Human Services Organizations, 2024.
6. NYC Health + Hospitals. Behavioral health workforce recruitment and retention results, 2026.
7. National Council of Nonprofits. Analysis of remote-work trends in the nonprofit sector.
8. National Council of Nonprofits. 2023 New York Nonprofit Workforce Shortages Report.