New York State Must Invest in Not-for-Profit Service Providers to Protect New Yorkers and Advance Equity Goals

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The Social Assistance subsector includes workers who provide direct and vital social assistance services to consumers, including vulnerable and at-risk populations and communities. It consists of the following industry groups: Individual and Family Services; Community Food and Housing, and Emergency and Other Relief Services; Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Child Day Care Services.¹

In 2019, there were nearly 380,000 people estimated to be employed in New York’s social assistance subsector by not-for-profit, government, and private employers, 133,000 of whom (35 percent) were employed by not-for-profits. In New York State, total not-for-profit employment is largest in the Individual and Family Services and Child and Day Care Services industries.

Within the Social Assistance subsector, 2019 average annual wages were $31,545, growing only 17 percent from $26,149 in 2010.² A larger share of not-for-profit Social Assistance workers, when compared with workers employed by state and local government, earn less than the average annual wage.

- 73 percent of all not-for-profit social assistance workers in New York State are women.
- 47 percent of the total not-for-profit social assistance workforce was comprised of people of color, 43,000 women and 19,000 men.
- Of the not-for-profit workers who are women, 55% are white, 21% are Black, 5% are Asian, 2% are Two or More Races, and 16% are Hispanic/Latina.³

Recommendations

- Use federal aid to include the statutory Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) for human services workers in the final Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 budget to help raise their wages.
- Standardize administrative rates on contracts, and work with not-for-profits to determine fair rates so that they and their services are sustainable.
- Make prompt contracting a priority to avoid service interruptions and provide stability to not-for-profits.
- Provide capital funding for nonprofit infrastructure investments, such as new roofs or HVAC systems. These investments help not-for-profits better serve vulnerable New Yorkers.⁴

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² New York State Department of Labor, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), NAICS Industry 624.
³ Of the 133,000 not-for-profit workers, it is estimated that 77 percent (102,000) worked at least 30 or more hours per week over 12 months.
⁴ A $120 million appropriation was made in FY 2017 and was largely spent by FY 2018 with no new funding since.