

# Victim Services Compensation Report 2022



**Cover page graphics by Ashleigh R. Weaver**

This report would not have been possible without a commitment to collaboration by the following partners: Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence, Ohio Domestic Violence Network, Ohio Network of Child Advocacy Centers, and Ohio Victim Witness Association.

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## **Victim Services Compensation Questionnaire Results Report**

***“Victim Services staff are expected to provide compassionate, trauma-informed services to crime victims while struggling to make ends meet.”*** (Quote from Victim Services Staff)

### **Background**

Four (4) Ohio Victim Services state partner organizations began collecting information from victim services directors in 2015 to inform state-wide efforts. Over the past 7 years, victim services agency directors were asked to complete a survey that asked questions about organizational size, number of staff, starting hourly rates for agency positions, funding sources and budgets. This information was used to advocate for resources to support victim services in Ohio and provide an understanding of the victim services landscape.

In 2019, the Ohio Domestic Violence Network’s CDC funded prevention strategy, Wage Equity and Other Worker Supports (WOWS) workgroup, began to discuss collecting information on wages and working conditions for staff who work in domestic violence services. The WOWS workgroup outlined various questions they wanted to ask staff to determine working conditions and work/life balance. Further discussion with the ODVN staff culminated in connecting with the survey administered to directors in 2019. Dr. Ortega was contracted by ODVN to provide data analysis on the 2019 Directors Survey. Dr. Ortega and Megha Rimal, a student intern from Case Western Reserve University, completed the analysis and report. The WOWS workgroup members reviewed the Director’s Survey results after they were published and shared with the collaborating agencies in May of 2020.

In 2021, the WOWS workgroup decided to reach out to the partners that administered the Directors Survey to see if they could collaborate to add staff items to the Directors Survey. After all partners were on board for the collaboration, the WOWS workgroup began idea harvesting for items to include in what became the Victim Services Compensation Questionnaire (VSCQ). The team developed a slate of items to include in the questionnaire to glean director and staff perspectives on compensation and conditions of victim services workers. The questionnaire also focused on gathering information on work/life balance, recruitment and retention challenges and satisfaction with compensation and benefits.

## Methodology

The VSCQ development team wanted to make sure that the questionnaire took no longer than fifteen (15) minutes to complete and that the findings could be compared to the previous years' results. Additionally, the team wanted to ensure respondent anonymity so directors and staff would feel comfortable completing the questionnaire. In order to maintain anonymity, no names or organizational identifiers were included in the items. Likewise, when it came time to analyze the data, the team agreed to collapse categories that included less than 10 respondents to ensure anonymity of respondents.

The first draft of the VSCQ was developed in December 2021 and was shared with the partners for review and edit. After recommended edits were made, a second draft was developed in Survey Monkey in January 2022 that included 95 items and 4 sections. One section of the questionnaire was specific to the Victim Services Executive Directors and Child Advocacy Center (CAC) Coordinators with executive privileges. This section asked about agency budgets, starting hourly rates for victim services positions, benefits offered by the agencies, funding sources and how funding and financial decisions are made.

Another section was specific to victim services staff. The staff section included items on their income, satisfaction with working conditions, work/life balance and benefits offered to them. The other two sections were designed to gather information from both directors and staff. The items in those sections included number of hours worked, number of jobs worked, the respondents' position at the victim services agency, demographic information and the respondents' perspectives on recruitment and retention. The positions section included thirty-three options that a respondent could choose. These 33 positions were collapsed into 8 categories for the analysis and reporting.

The questionnaire included skip patterns to direct the respondents to the sections relevant to their role in the organization. Skip patterns were also used to reduce the amount of time to complete the questionnaire. Prior to administering the questionnaire, the Wows Team piloted it with a small group of reviewers to ensure that all of the items made sense and the skip patterns were functioning properly. In addition to the questionnaire being housed on Survey Monkey, the Wows Team created a

WORD version of the questionnaire that could be completed with either paper/pencil or on-line and once completed returned to the contact at ODVN.

The Victim Services Compensation Questionnaire was launched on March 6, 2022 and closed on April 30, 2022. The volume of responses was reviewed every Monday while it was open and the number of responses was shared with the partners to encourage outreach for increasing the response rate. Reminders were sent out to partner agencies so a representative number of responses could be achieved. The WOWS Team reviewed the responses by region and membership and provided the number of responses to the partners to encourage increased response rates through weekly outreach to their member organizations.

The questionnaire was closed on April 30, 2022 and the WOWS team started working on the analysis of the results. The four members of Dr. Ortega's team sorted the responses by director responses and staff responses to begin the review. All open-ended items were downloaded and separated into groups so they could be reviewed and organized by themes by a member of Dr. Ortega's team. The team then used a peer review verification process for the open-ended items to reduce independent reviewer bias. The team then shared the results with each other and started building the results tables. Once the team members developed the results tables, another member of the team would verify the numbers and other content of the tables.

## **Results**

A total of 496 victim services directors and staff started to complete the questionnaire. Three hundred and sixteen (316) victim services staff completed the entire questionnaire including the demographics section; 247 staff and 69 directors. Although not everyone provided demographic information, a much higher number of directors and staff responded to the other items in the questionnaire. The results tables and figures throughout the report are based on the numbers and percentages of the directors and/or staff responding to the specific items the tables and figures represent unless otherwise noted. All quotes are verbatim unless otherwise noted with brackets.

Table 1 shows the potential number of executive directors and CAC coordinators with executive privilege respondents and the actual number of respondents by organizational membership and program category. A very high percentage of

executive directors completed the questionnaire. Respondents could select more than one membership, meaning a respondent could be a member of OAESV and ODVN so they would be represented twice in the table as the sorting factor for the information in the table was membership. In table 1, those respondents who are members of more than one statewide victim services agency are captured in the parentheses. Although the count is not necessarily mutually exclusive, the results still indicate a large percentage of the **Victim Services Directors** completed the questionnaire.

**Table 1. Victim Services Compensation Questionnaire Director Response Potential**

	ODVN (DV)		OAESV (SV)		ONCAC (CA)		OVWA (Gen Violence)	
Potential # of Programs	74 DVC		33 RCCs		33 CAC		197/371	
# of Responses Director/CAC Exec Privs by Membership (Q.39)	68		43		15		31	
# of Responses Director/CAC Exec Privs by Program Category (Q.40)	30	(25) Dual	8	(25) Dual	5	0	16	(7) open-ended

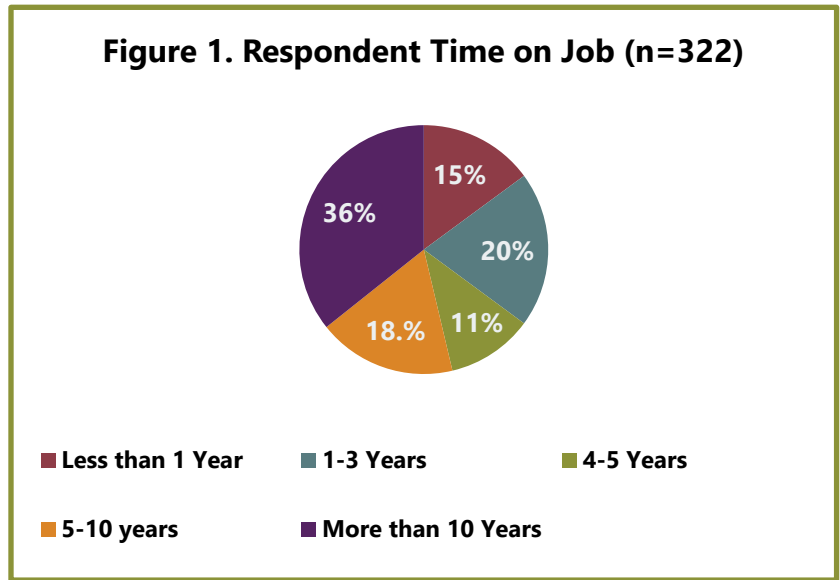
## Victim Services Compensation Questionnaire Respondents

Understanding the respondent demographics will help frame the results shared in this report. Since we do not have a way to know the demographics of the Ohio’s victim services staff overall, we are not sure if the questionnaire respondents are representative of the staff. As mentioned previously, a total of 496 victim services staff started the questionnaire and of those who started 317 (64%) completed the demographics section, which was at the end of the questionnaire. Therefore, the results that are based on the demographic items represent only two-thirds of the total respondents.

The greatest number of respondents were located in Northeast Ohio (41%), followed by Northwest Ohio (18%), Central Ohio (12%), Southeast Ohio (10%) and finally Southwest Ohio (8%). In addition, 12% of the respondents worked at statewide agencies. When it

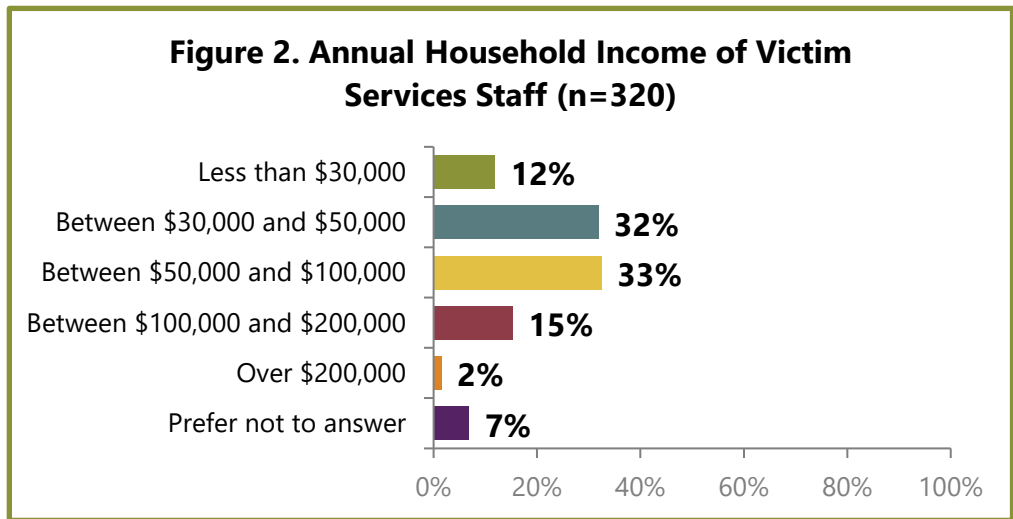


comes to personal demographics of the respondents, the majority were straight (74%), white (79%) women (92%) with at least a bachelor's degree (74%). More than half (52%) of the respondents were salary employees and 47% were hourly employees.



Nearly 65% of the respondents are experienced victim services staff with over 4 years of time on the job. The other 35% have worked in the field for 3 years or less. It is important to note that more than a third of the respondents have worked in their victim services job for more than 10 years.

The respondents' annual household income varies widely as presented in Figure 2. Almost two-thirds of the victim services staff have an annual household income between \$30,000 and \$100,000. Twelve percent reported their annual household income as less than \$30,000 and the rest of the staff that chose to respond had an annual household income over \$100,000. Only 2% of those victim services staff that chose to provide the information had annual household income over \$200,000. Only 2% of those victim services staff that chose to provide the information had annual household income over \$200,000.



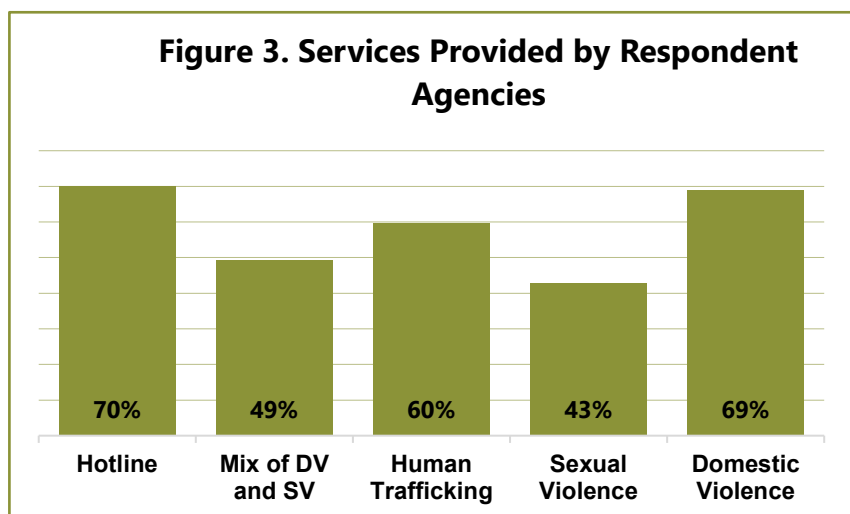
## Types of Victim Services and Service Area Coverage Provided by Respondents

As mentioned in the introduction, victim services workers associated with four (4) member agencies are included in this report. Directors were asked to select how their victim services program is best categorized. Table 2 displays the answers from the ninety-one (91) directors who responded to this item. About one-third of the directors selected domestic violence as their program type, 27.47% selected dual sexual abuse and domestic violence as their program type, almost 20% selected general or multi-crime, a small number selected only sexual violence (8.79%) and child advocacy center (5.49%). An additional 7 directors selected other and the program categories within the other answers included prosecutor based, coalition and local law firm. A majority of the

**Table 2. Director Responses to Program Categories**

Answer choices	Response %	Response #
Child Advocacy Center	5.49%	5
Domestic Violence	32.97%	30
General or Multi-crime	17.58%	16
Sexual Violence	8.79%	8
Dual SA/DV	27.47%	25
Other (please specify)	7.69%	7
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>91</b>

victim services directors' agencies provide community-based advocacy (70%). The respondents and their agencies that provide community based services provide multiple services including hotline services (70%), shelter care for domestic violence



survivors (69%), services for sexual violence survivors (43%) and almost half (49%) of the community based agency staff serve both domestic violence and sexual violence survivors (Figure 3).

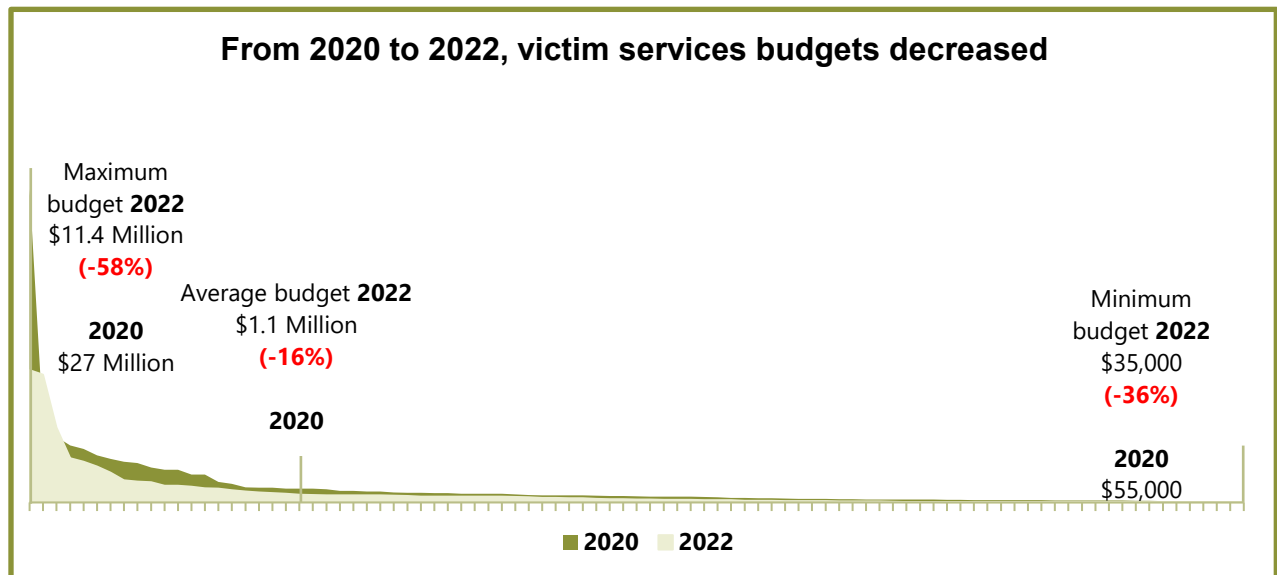
In regards to service area, the highest percentage of the respondents (45%) worked in agencies that serve one county, almost one-third of the respondents' agencies (29%) serve 2-3 counties, 14% of the respondents were from statewide agencies and the remaining 12% serve four (4) or more counties.

### Director Responses: Funding, Budgets and Staffing

***It is all grant based. Our budget got cut by 35% last year. We had to lay a person off because we no longer could afford them. The talks of VOCA being cut again may lead to heartbreaking decisions. —Victim Services Executive Director***

The Directors Survey has always included questions about funding, budgets and staffing to understand the financial landscape of victim services work. The current questionnaire repeated the items that were on the Directors Survey regarding funding, budgets and staffing.

**Figure 4. Victim Services Budgets 2020-2022**



According to the directors who responded to the funding items (72), federal and state grants make up the bulk of victim services funding. Figure 4 shows the decrease in victim services budgets between 2020 and 2022. Overall, victim services organizations

reported less funding is available in 2022 in comparison with 2020 to adequately compensate employees. As can be seen in Figure 4, there is a wide range of budget sizes for victim services agencies across Ohio.

In 2020, the minimum budget reported by the Directors Survey was \$55,000 and the highest budget report was \$27 million. The average victim services agency budget in 2020 was 1.3 million dollars. In 2022, the minimum budget the directors reported was 36% less than 2020 equaling only \$35,000. Likewise, the maximum budget for victim services agencies decreased substantially. In fact, the maximum budget amount for victim services was cut by 58%; more than half of the 2020 operating budget. The average victim services budget sustained a 16% decrease in their operating budgets as the average budget decreased from \$1.3 million to \$1.1 million between 2020 and 2022.

Federal budget cuts had a major impact on the victim services budgets as over 90% of the directors reported that their major sources of funding are federal and state funds. The director's comment captures the overall sentiment of the decreases in the federal funding for victim services agencies in Ohio. In fact, 4 out of 10 directors said they receive more than half of their operating budget from the state and federal budgets.

Funding cuts impact staffing in many different ways. For many directors, the funding cuts have left open positions, reduced staff size during a major pandemic that has driven more people to their doors, limited offering raises to employees, increased turnover and increased their dependence on volunteers. Directors are finding it difficult to fill the open positions and maintain their current staff. Several directors noted that they are having difficulty competing with other companies that pay more, offer more benefits and have less stress associated with the job duties.

***The grants keep getting cut and we are doing what we can to keep our doors open with the current staff we have. We do have a high turnover rate and it is not because of how the agency runs, but it is because of the rate of pay that can be offered.***  
***-Director***

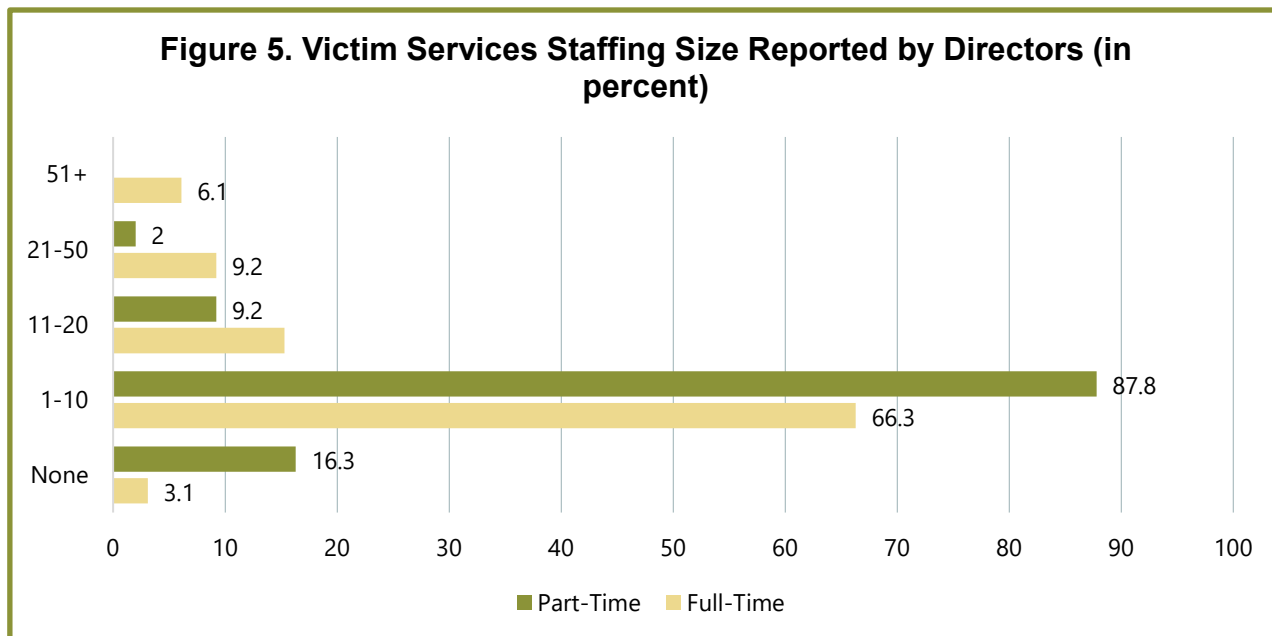


Figure 5 presents the percentage of full-time and part-time staff reported by the executive directors (n=98). The majority of the organizations the executive directors lead are small in regards to staffing. For the most part, the victim services organizations have 10 or fewer staff providing services, either full-time and/or part-time. Only 6% of the Directors work in victim services with more than 50 full-time employees. Less than 10% of the Directors work in agencies with 21-50 full-time employees and surprisingly three (3.1%) of the directors work in organizations with no full-time employees. The increased demand on services, coupled with staff turnover and difficulty in recruiting to replace staff has consequences for service provision. Almost two-thirds of directors (64%) do not believe their current staffing is adequate to support survivor-centered, trauma-informed, best-practice services.

***This is difficult work. Right now, people can make more without a degree and avoid vicarious trauma. -Director***

### **Victim Services Staff Wages**

***“Victim Service wages are not comparable or even competitive in today’s work force and yet we continue to sacrifice our mental and emotional health to care for others during the most traumatic times of their lives.” Victim Services Advocate***

Victim services agencies spend a large part of their organizational budgets on staff wages. According to the directors, either the directors or board of directors/trustees establish the salary structure for victim services agencies. A little more than a quarter (26.5%) of the directors said that grants or other funding determined the salary structure for their agency. When staff were asked the question on whether their agency has policy on salary structure that determines how salaries are offered based on position, experience and education, almost half (47%) of the respondents said they don't know

***I don't know an advocate that does this for compensation as their primary reason, we are all passionate and committed beyond work expectations and compensation. Funding and grants are seriously lacking and when available there's so many logistics, it makes it impossible sometimes to properly compensate victim services workers.***

***-Victim Services Advocate***

(n=269). One of the primary reasons for administering the Victim Services Compensation Questionnaire is to determine if staff working in victim services are making a living wage so the information can be used to advocate for better compensation through an increase in funding. In this section, we present comparison of the victim services entry level average salary for the different positions reported by directors and the average salary reported by staff who are newly hired and/or have worked for no more than 3 years. For ease of presentation the thirty-four (34) staff positions were regrouped into eight (8) job categories/position types (See Appendix 1.). Table 3 presents the results for the responses in full-time starting salaries for each of the eight (8) position groupings. The results indicate wide salary ranges for the different victim services positions across Ohio. The variability reported in

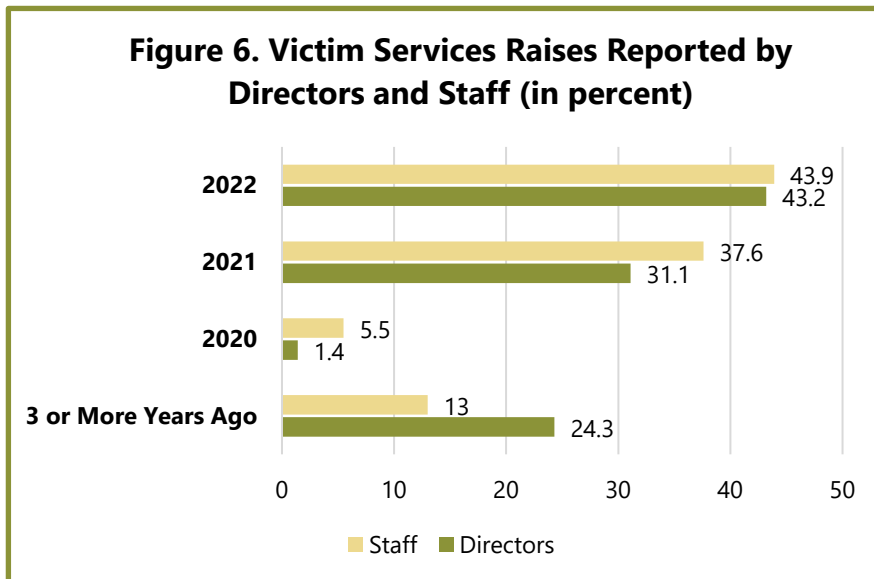
directors' annual salaries at the low end was \$30,000 per year and the high end more than \$90,000 per year. Advocates receive the lowest starting salaries with the range being between \$10,000 and \$50,000 per year. For part-time advocates the low end was less than \$10,000 a year and the average salary reported was \$10,000-\$20,000 per year. When it comes to income, for the majority of non-ED respondents, the annual salaries are less than fifty thousand dollars a year. In fact, Ohio's victim services staff are earning salaries much lower than the state's median household income of \$58,116 cited by the [U.S. Census Bureau](#).

**Table 3. Director and Staff Responses: Ave. Full-time Staff Entry Level Salaries**

Positions	Director Response (n=83)	Staff Response (n=326)
<b>Executive Directors</b>	\$60,000-\$70,000	N/A
<b>Other Directors</b>	\$41,601-\$52,000	\$50,001-\$60,000
<b>Case Managers/Probation Officers</b>	\$33,281-\$37,440	\$20,001-\$30,000
<b>Coordinators</b>	\$37,441-\$41,600	\$20,001-\$30,000
<b>Finance/Administration</b>	\$41,601-\$52,000	\$30,001-\$40,000
<b>Mental Health Service Providers</b>	\$41,601-\$52,000	\$40,001-\$50,000
<b>Medical Service Providers</b>	\$41,601-\$52,000	\$40,001-\$50,000
<b>Advocates (All)</b>	\$33,281-\$37,440	\$20,001-\$30,000

**Note.** Average difference for the 4 most discrepant salaries equaled \$11,760.00.

Comparing the director reported and staff reported responses to entry level salaries also shows some differences in understanding of the salaries. For example, directors reported higher entry level salaries for advocates, financial/administration, coordinators, and case managers and/or probation officers in comparison to the staff in those



positions. The average difference reported by directors in comparison to staff in advocate positions was \$13,000. Overall, for those positions where there was a difference between director and staff reported entry level salaries, the difference was more than \$10,000.

The amount of funding in an agency’s budget not only impacts the wages they can offer to recruit new staff; it also limits the amount and frequency of raises they can offer their employees. Sixty-five

percent of the directors that responded to the question on how raises are determined in their agency (n=74) reported raises are based on available funding. A little less than a third of the directors said they offer merit and across the board raises and twenty-eight percent said they offer cost of living raises. Staff (n=274) responded to the question regarding raises a little differently than the directors. A little more than a third said raises are determined by annual funding, 25% said they got annual raises and 21% said raises are determined by grant guidelines or the funding source. Surprisingly, over a quarter of the staff said they don't know how raises are determined.

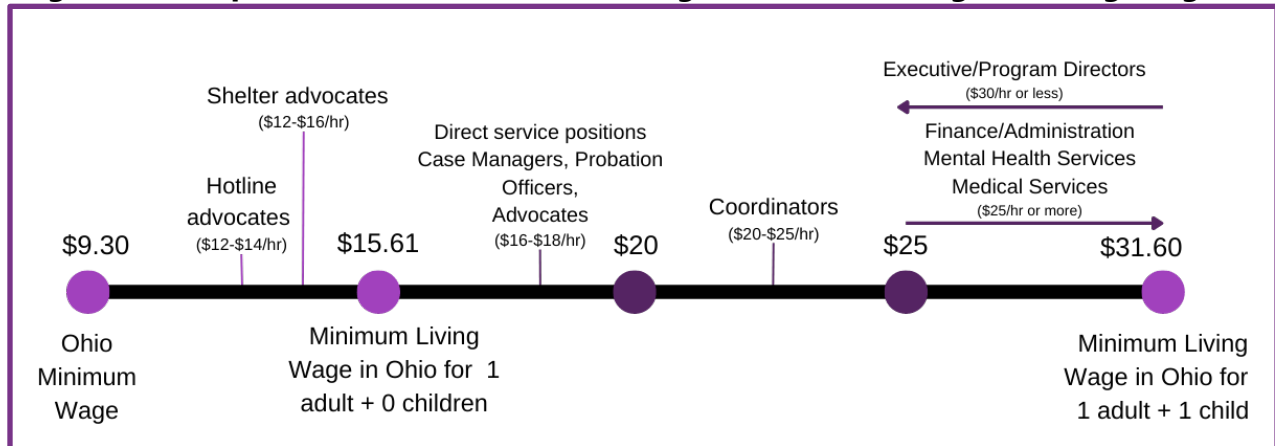
Both directors and staff were asked when the last time they were able to offer and receive raises. The responses from 74 directors and 253 staff that answered the question are compared in Figure 6. The majority of both the directors and staff said they had either given or received raises in the past two years; 2021 or 2022. However, thirteen percent of the staff and over twenty percent of the directors said their victim services agency had not given raises in three or more years. Likewise, the open-ended responses by staff mentioned the raises that were received were not keeping up with the cost of living. The inability to give raises that keep up with the cost of living coupled with the low wages demonstrates the financial stress the victim services agency staff experience. Figure 7 takes a little bit deeper of a dive into how staff in victim services wages fair in comparison to minimum wage and living wages in Ohio.

Minimum wage for the state is \$9.30 per hour. Directors reported that hotline advocates hiring range is between \$12-\$14 dollars an hour. This wage is lower than the minimum living wage in Ohio for one adult without children. Likewise, shelter advocates starting wage is between \$12-\$16 an hour, meaning at the high end of that range the victim services workers are making just over minimum living wage for one adult without children. The minimum living wage in Ohio for one adult with children is almost double of the high end of the starting salary for shelter advocates at \$31.60 per hour. Victim services staff working in Director and Administration roles are earning between \$25-30 per hour to start, which puts them right at the minimum living wage for an adult with one child in Ohio.

***"I wish we got paid more, I live paycheck to paycheck and can't afford a car."  
-Advocate***



**Figure 7. Comparison of Victim Services Wages, Minimum Wage & Living Wage**



Almost half of the staff (45%) said that their victim services wages did not cover the cost of their basic needs. It is not surprising that these low wages create the need to work more than one job for more than half of the respondents (57%). Moreover, when asked to rate their **satisfaction with their salary** on a scale of 1 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied), the average

**Top 5 consequences of working more than one job to make ends meet**

1. Chronic fatigue/extreme exhaustion
2. Negatively affects work/life balance and ability to perform self-care
3. Negatively affects level of production and quality of work
4. Chronic schedule conflicts/increased unavailability
5. Extreme stress and feeling of being continuously overwhelmed

(completely satisfied), the average rating of the 323 respondents fell right in the middle of the scale at a **5.2**. As mentioned previously, 57% of the victim services staff reported they needed to work more than one job to make ends meet. Working more than one job takes its toll on the staff in many different ways, including work/life balance. Some staff stated that working more than one job didn't impact their victim services work at all. Others provided examples of the toll

working more than one job has on not only their victim services job but also their work life balance. In their own words, ***“Working another job is exhausting, finding myself burnt out quicker and the quality of life outside of working role is impacted. Including time for myself or family.”*** ***“It’s harder to focus and maintain the amount of patience and empathy for the survivors I work with.”***

## Starting Salary by Job Category and Region

After reviewing the overall starting salaries, the WOWS team looked at the results to determine if there are regional differences in starting salaries. The results show there is some variation in the salary of the victim services workforce by region of the state. The majority of responses by region came from the Northeast (n=130) and Northwest (n=59) regions. Results by region were separated by victim services executive directors and staff responses to see trends across both respondent groups. Number of responses for some regions were significantly lower than others. Agencies serving all regions had the lowest number of responses while agencies serving Northeast Ohio had a larger number of responses.

Salary Range	Executive Director	Other Director	Case Manager or Probation Officer	Coordinator	Finance or Admin	Mental Health Service Provider	Medical Service Provider	Group Advocate
\$70-80k	NE NW							
\$60-70K	SW							
\$50-60K	SE	NE SE SW		All	C SE All	NE NW C SE	NE NW C	
\$50-40K	C		C SW	SW		SW		
\$30-40K			NE NW	NE	NW SW			NE NW C All
NA	All	NW All	SE All	NW C SE	NE	All	SE SW All	SW

**Note.** NE=Northeast (n=20), NW=Northwest (n=10), C=Central (n=8), SE=Southeast (n=9), SW=Southwest (n=8), All=Statewide Agency (n=3) N/A = not enough responses to determine for that region. Due to a high variation in salaries, we have chosen to use the mode rather than mean for this comparison.

Table 4 presents the regional starting salaries for the eight (8) categories of staff by region of the state as most often reported by the executive directors. Executive directors and CAC Coordinators with executive privileges located in the northern Ohio reported higher salaries than those in other parts of the state. Case managers and probation officers working in the Southwest and Central regions had the highest

earnings according to the executive directors. Directors in the Southwest region reported the lowest salaries for their mental health service providers.

No salaries were given by directors for medical service providers that have a statewide, Southeast or Southwest service regions. Coordinators working for statewide organizations have the highest salaries according to the executive directors. Finance and administrative positions that have a statewide service area along with those in the Southeast and Central regions have the highest salaries reported by executive directors.

Victim services staff, excluding Executive Directors and CAC Coordinators with executive privileges, were also asked about their salaries so they can be compared to the directors' responses. The table below presents the full-time staff responses regarding their salaries. The results were sorted so only those full-time staff with three years or less on the job are included in the table.

Table 5. Regional Staff Salary Comparison Reported by Full-Time Staff							
\$50-60K	NE SW			NE			
\$50-40K					NE		
\$30-40K		NE NW All	NE NW	NW			NE NW
\$20-30K		SW					C SW All
NA	NW C SE All	C SE	C SE SW All	C SE SW All	NW C SE SW All	NE NW C SE SW All	SE
	Other Director	Case Manager	Coordinator	Finance/ Admin	Mental Health Service Provider	Medical Service Provider	Grouped Advocate

**Note.** NE=Northeast (n=39), NW=Northwest (n=15), C=Central (n=6), SE=Southeast (n=3), SW=Southwest (n=6), N/A = not enough responses to determine for that region and All=Statewide Organizations (n=5). Due to a high variation in salaries, we have chosen to use the mode rather than mean for this comparison.

As can be seen in Table 5, the number of full-time staff with less than three years' service in some of the regions was so small that the starting salaries for those categories are identified as N/A. For example, only entry level other director respondents serve the Northeast and Southwest regions of the state. Respondents who are case managers and work for statewide organizations and organizations that serve Northeast and Northwest Ohio reported earning more than those respondents in the Southwest region of the state.

## Benefits

***"I'm the ED. We try as hard as we can to provide excellent benefits."***

Victim Services staff compensation includes wages and benefits. The respondents reported a wide range of benefits they receive. Like wages, the benefits the victim services agencies can afford are based on funding. Although the directors indicated that 89% of full-time staff have agency health insurance, 73% of the directors said the employees and agency share the cost of health care insurance (Table 6). On average, about 65% of health insurance premium costs are covered for full-time staff and about 16% of the cost is covered for part-time staff.

The cost burden of these benefits shift from employer to employee as we look at the other types of insurances offered by the victim services agencies. The frustration for the cost of health insurance was not only expressed by the staff, directors also expressed frustration with the rising costs of health insurance. As one executive director added the following comment regarding their frustration with being able to provide health insurance coverage for their staff: ***"I am consistently hit with road blocks, hurdles and brick walls in asking for health insurance to be covered for my small staff. With dwindling resources, that only makes sense to help a victims' services agency in my opinion. Helping us allows us to help multitudes of victims. It is far too difficult politically to gain ground on things that just make good common sense."***

***Health benefits are horrible. If I signed up for health insurance for my family, half of my check, each pay would go toward insurance. Wages should be restructured.  
-Coordinator***

**Table 6. Victim Services Full-Time Staff Insurance and Disability: Director Reported**

Insurance Benefit	Not Offered	Employer Paid	Cost Share	Employee Paid	# Responses
Health	10.8%	14.0%	73.1%	2.2%	93
Dental	15.1%	10.8%	57.0%	17.2%	93
Vision	14.1%	12.0%	54.4%	19.6%	92
HS Account	50.0%	7.5%	33.8%	8.8%	80
Life	19.8%	39.6%	23.1%	17.6%	91
S-T Disability	34.9%	20.9%	10.5%	33.7%	86
L-T Disability	46.3%	19.5%	14.6%	19.5%	82

**Note:** HS=Health Savings. Results are reported in percent and rounded to the nearest tenth.

Part time employees are offered fewer benefits in terms of health, life and/or disability insurance, even though about 29% of the directors reported their part-time employees are working between 25-30 hours. When part-time employees were asked how many hours a week they work, about 45% said they are working between 21-30 hours a week. Less than 20% of the directors reported that these forms of insurance are offered to part-time employees by their agencies. And, when offered only a small percentage of the directors indicated the costs are paid by their agency. Table 7 presents the part-time and full-time staff responses to the cost of their health insurance plans offered by their victim services jobs.

**Table 7. Health Insurance Cost Affordability Reported by Staff (n=299)**

Answer choices	Responses %	Response #
Too high--I can't afford, but I need the coverage	26.4%	79
Reasonable--I can afford my part of the health insurance	40.1%	120
Great--I don't have to pay too much for my coverage or the agency pays the premiums	13.4%	40
My Victim Services job doesn't include health insurance	20.1%	60
<b>TOTAL RESPONDENTS</b>		<b>299</b>

Victim services agencies do offer many other benefits to their employees to support their professional growth and work life balance. The benefits offered to both full-time

and part-time staff range from retirement accounts, paid time off for vacations and personal days, paid sick days paid holidays and tuition reimbursement. More than three-fourths of the directors (76.7%) reported their agencies require professional development for their staff. Of those directors that reported their agencies required professional development, 93% reported the agency pays for it. Table 8 presents some of the other employee benefits offered by victim services organizations to their full and part-time staff as reported by directors and staff. These benefits are either paid by the employer, cost-shared by employer or employee or paid by employee.

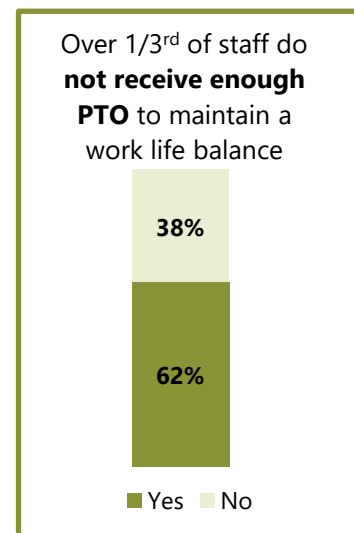
**Table 8. Staff Benefits: Director and Staff Responses Comparison**

Benefit Offered	Director Responses (n=95)		Staff Responses (n=272)	
	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time (29)	Full-Time (243)
Retirement	36.5%	75.0%	33.3%	81.2%
Paid Time Off	57.7%	99.0%	38.5%	93.9%
Paid Sick Days	51.3%	89.0%	36.0%	84.5%
Comp/Flex Time	35.1%	78.4%	40.0%	80.4%
Paid Holidays	57.7%	97.9%	46.4%	97.4%
Bonuses	29.7%	43.4%	29.6%	38.6%
Professional Development Support	77.8%	81.9%	57.7%	72.5%
Tuition Reimbursement	12.0%	21.2%	7.7%	15.8%

**Note.** The percentages are based on staff who selected yes to the question: *Are any of the listed benefits provided by your agency to full-time (part-time) staff.* Some respondents selected "not sure". The unsure responses are not included in the table.

## Work-Life Balance

***"The office environment is often so hectic and my workload is so heavy, I feel like I can't take PTO even when I'm really ill.*** Work life balance is defined as the ability of a person to achieve balance between their work/professional and private/family lives. Full-time victim services staff reported they work between 31 and 50 hours per week. Part-time staff work between 1 and 30 hours per week. Directors reported working between 31-60 hours per week. More than 20% of the full-time staff and nearly 40% of part-time staff reported they work more than one job in addition to their victim services job. The majority of victim



services directors reported their staff can work overtime (71%) and are compensated in various ways for working overtime (95.7%) such as being paid time and a half, flex-time, or comp time.

Some ways that organizations can support work life balance is through funding flexible working schedules, hybrid work models, leave sharing, paid time off, paid holidays, staff recreation/retreats and other benefits that reduce stress and increase staff ability to spend time focusing on their priorities outside of the workplace. In addition to the eleven national holidays that victim services staff receive, over half of the directors (52.3%) reported they offer their staff paid holidays outside of the national and Christian holidays. Table 9 presents some of the benefits Victim Services agencies fund for their employees to support work/life balance.

**Table 9. Benefits that Support Work/Life Balance Reported by Directors and Staff**

Benefit Offered	Director Reported (n=95)		Staff Reported (n=272)	
	Part-Time	Full-Time	Part-Time (29)	Full-Time (243)
Flexible Schedule	66.2%	89.7%	68.0%	81.6%
Remote/Hybrid Work	49.3%	69.8%	42.3%	58.9%
Leave Sharing	24.7%	47.1%	38.5%	78.7%
Paid Time Off	51.4%	88.0%	50.0%	93.9%
Paid Holidays	52.0%	87.1%	46.4%	97.4%
Staff Recreation/Retreats	53.4%	56.6%	53.9%	40.7%
Non-FMLA Maternal/Paternal Leave	18.1%	26.2%	16.0%	29.4%

Staff need time off to rest, recharge and spend time focusing on their priorities outside of work. Paid time off (PTO) is one of the benefits that supports work/life balance. The majority of staff get some type of paid time off. Unfortunately, 79% of the directors reported they have a use it or lose it policy when it comes to PTO. According to staff responses, more than a third do not feel the paid time off that they receive is adequate to support a work life balance. As one staff remarked: ***"We are encouraged to take time off, but the actual resources (PTO) are not adequate for maintaining work-life balance. So, there's a strange dynamic. Boss says, "Take time off!" But I have to***

***very carefully plan how I'll use every hour of PTO to meet my family's needs. Forget about mental health days. I can barely make it to all my family's medical appointments and still squeeze in a short family vacation."***

Respondents reported various formulas for full-time staff PTO accrual including years of service, set number of hours annually, per hours worked or per month depending on the agency policies & practices. Some respondents specified mental health days are included in PTO for their full-time staff. It is common for the amount of PTO to increase with years of service. For example, directors reported PTO time is increased at 3 years, 5 years, and 7 years of service for the victim services staff. Table 10 compares the number of hours of paid time off the staff reported they receive and the number the staff said they need. Only staff who stated they do not get enough time off currently are included in the column for number of hours needed.

**Table 10. Staff Paid Time Off Received Compared to Paid Time Off Needed**

<b>Hours Type</b>	<b># Hours Currently (n=282)</b>	<b># Hours Needed (n=104)</b>
Mean # Hours	161	226
Median # Hours	159	120
Mode # Hours	80	160

As Table 10 indicates, the average hours that staff receive in paid time off is 161 hours or about 5 weeks per year. Of those reporting almost two-thirds said the amount of time off they receive is what they need for work life balance. The other third of respondents stated they need much more time for work life balance than their victim services job offers them. When looking at the mean number of hours needed for those staff, the number of hours they receive in comparison to the number of hours they need to maintain work/life balance falls short by 65 hours or 8 full days based on an 8-hour work day.

Two items in the questionnaire asked staff about the agency supports and challenges for taking their paid time off. Staff listed numerous supports as well as some barriers when it comes to being able to use their paid leave. It's important to note that the majority (79%) of the directors responded that their agencies have a use it or lose it policy for paid leave. However, when you look at

***I would be happy with being able to accrue PTO based on the number of hours worked. Perhaps 1 hour for every 30 worked.***

***I would like to see at least 3 more days of PTO's to use at the employee's discretion.***

***-Staff***



the staff responses almost two-thirds of the respondents (n=273) reported they can take time off as freely as needed. About half of the respondents (52.4%) said that all days on the calendar are open for taking time off unless there is a catastrophic event that requires all staff be at work to address the event. And, about a quarter of the staff who responded said they are able to bank their PTO from year to year, which is similar to the director responses on the use it or lose it policy.

**Table 11. Victim Services Supports for Taking Time Off (n=273)**

<b>What supports do you have when requesting time off ?</b>		
<b>ANSWER CHOICES</b>	<b>RESPONSE %</b>	<b>RESPONSE#</b>
I am freely able to take time off as needed	61.2%	167
I am able to bank PTO from year to year	26.0%	71
My victim services job provides adequate PTO even though I cannot carry it over from year to year	28.2%	77
I do not have to provide documentation other than a formal request for PTO	60.8%	166
All dates in the calendar year are available for staff to take PTO (unless there is a catastrophe and all hands are asked to be on deck to help)	52.4%	143
My victim services job has a leave bank that can be used in case a staff has not accrued enough time and needs to take time off	5.5%	15
My victim services job does everything it can to provide sufficient staffing to allow for PTO	41.0%	112

Victim services staff (n=292) acknowledge that their victim services employers encourage them to take time off (76.6%), set healthy boundaries (85.9%) and take breaks as they need them (81.9%). But sometimes, staff face challenges when needing to take time off. The staff were asked about the challenges they face when they need to take time off. More than half of the staff (50.7%) said they do face challenges when taking time off. In addition to those challenges listed in Table 12, victim services staff mentioned numerous other barriers to taking time off. The additional barriers included coverage challenges due to small staff sizes, difficulty in making up work upon return

due to high caseloads and workloads, having to find the coverage themselves for the shift and feeling awkward asking others to cover for them, feeling as though they are letting down their clients and coworkers by taking leave. As one staff commented; ***“You have to use sick or vacation for snow days, pandemic, deaths, etc. There is never enough time for vacation I take at least 20 hrs unpaid because I need a BREAK.”*** Table 12 presents the responses to the questionnaire prompts on challenges selected by the 137-victim services staff. On the positive side, only a few staff reported that their requests for time off are denied or they are required to provide too much documentation for taking time off.

**Table 12. Victim Services Challenges to Taking Time Off (n=137)**

<b>What challenges do you face when requesting time off?</b>		
<b>ANSWER CHOICES</b>	<b>RESPONSE %</b>	<b>RESPONSE #</b>
Requests for time off are frequently denied	1.5%	2
There are some dates that employees are not allowed to request time off	14.6%	20
Requirements to provide documentation or detailed reasons for taking time off	3.7%	5
Discouraged from taking time off because it impacts other employees	28.5%	39
Discouraged from taking time off because of how it impacts workload of other employees	32.1%	44
My Victim Services job has a use it or lose it policy so I often do not get to use all of my PTO	31.4%	43
I am unable to take time off because the agency does not provide PTO	10.2%	14

When asked to rate their **satisfaction with their PTO** on a scale of 1 to 10 with one being completely dissatisfied and 10 being completely satisfied, **the average satisfaction rating was 6.2 (n=270)**. Beyond the traditional benefits victim services staff receive from their employers, there are other perks offered to victim services staff

**Figure 8. Victim Services Perks Reported by Directors and Staff**



that support work life balance. Figure 8 presents the sundry perks offered to victim services staff reported by directors and staff.

The directors reported professional licensure supervision availability as most often available to victim services staff (55%) and the staff reported self-care days most often (38%). Although a higher percentage of directors (51%) reported self-care days are available to staff than the staff reported are available to them (38%). Over half of the directors (51%) reported staff have access to wellness programs and a third of the staff who responded (33%) reporting having access to wellness programs.

The victim services staff were asked to share the three benefits of their victim services job that they appreciate the most. Two hundred and thirty-three (233) victim services staff responded to this prompt. There are a couple instances in the data where individuals add a caveat to their answers. For example, ***“I guess I like that I get health insurance... which isn't even a benefit. It is 2022 and everyone should have access to healthcare.”*** or ***“Medical even though it's too expensive.”*** These comments indicate that although people are glad to have a benefit, that does not mean the benefit is satisfactory or fulfilling their needs.

Staff were also asked if there were other benefits they would like their victim services job to offer. Mental health care that is comprehensive was the most frequently requested benefit from the victim services staff. Often there is no mental health care offered to employees, especially part-time staff. In addition, employees who need mental health care for family members remarked that either the benefit is not offered or it is too expensive for them to afford.

***"It sucks when you get 2 weeks off a year, and you have to take an entire day for 1 drs appt or if your kid is sick and needs picked up early. I wish we could flex the time, versus taking vacation. Those things arent vacation. We get barely any time off, and we have to use that time no matter what. There is 0 flexibility with our time. I really haven't taken an actual vacation ever because I do not get paid or have the time."***

***-Staff***

### **Three Benefits Appreciated Most by Staff**

1. Paid Time Off including sick leave and vacation time
2. Health Insurance Benefits including vision and dental care
3. Flexibility including ability to take time off and hours staff choose to work

The second largest category of benefits the staff requested was paid maternity, paternity, and bereavement time. A few individuals shared they must use sick time for maternity and paternity leave or they simply must take the time off without pay. Additionally, some respondents with children reported that child care would be beneficial for them. Staff would also like more opportunities to work remotely and have an increase in the flexibility of their schedules.

### **Victim Services Staff Recruitment**

***"Challenges of work itself, many difficult areas to learn with steep learning curves and high stakes regarding people's lives and safety."***-Staff

Sixty-six (66) directors and CAC Coordinators with executive privileges and 220 victim services staff provided their insights into issues related to recruiting victim services staff. Of the director responses, a very small number of the directors (3) stated they have no issues with recruiting staff. The rest of the directors cited numerous issues both with the

potential candidate pool and with the limitations of the victim services staff agency. Table 13 lists the directors’ responses in comparison to the staff responses.

**Table 13. Recruitment Issues Reported by Directors and Staff**

Issue	Directors & CAC Coordinators (n=66)	Staff (n=220)
Pay	32%	46%
Benefits	6%	8%
Qualification of Candidates	22%	12%
Competitive Labor Market	10%	3%
Hours & Flexibility	10%	9%
Nature of Work/Stress/Trauma	11%	12%
Funding Constraints	9%	3%
Location	0%	3%
Marketing	0%	2%
Organizational Culture	0%	3%

Overall, pay and benefits were listed as the biggest challenges to recruiting victim services staff by both directors and staff. Qualifications of candidates and finding a good fit for the position is the second most often mentioned challenge by the directors. The staff expanded on this category and made several comments regarding matching the qualifications with compensation and the disconnect between the job expectations, demands of the job and compensation that includes pay and benefits. The nature of the work, including the stress and vicarious trauma victim services employees endure was

***A main challenge to me is compensation for the job. As a non-profit that requires a degree and certificate, it's difficult to recruit victim service staff with the cost of education compared to compensation for work.***  
***--Victim Advocate***

the third most mentioned issue with recruiting victim services staff by both directors and staff.

Directors and staff had differences in the weight they gave to competitive job markets in staff

recruitment with 10% of directors mentioning it and only 3% of the staff mentioning it. Staff also mentioned three other challenges that directors did not mention that are worth noting. First, staff stated location of the employer either in rural communities, multi-county or in the city is a recruitment barrier. Staff also mentioned the recruitment marketing is a barrier for staffing victim services jobs with one staff making this statement, ***“the advertisement for the job is very scary.”*** Organizational culture was also mentioned by staff as an issue in recruiting for victim services agencies. Comments included, ***“This organization does not think outside of the box when recruiting. This agency does not go out of its way to recruit members of the BIPOC community.”*** Another comment related to organizational culture offered by a staff read, ***“Creating an environment of stability and support.”*** Another staff mentioned, ***“lack of competitive wages, compensation, racial inequities.”***

### Victim Services Staff Retention

***“This work is very demanding and we see a lot of burnt out. not enough resources to support well-being of professionals in this field. limited funding forces to overload on few staff which results in burnt out and being spread thin.---Director***

**Table 14. Retention Issues Reported by Directors and Staff**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Directors &amp; CAC Coordinators (n=66)</b>	<b>Staff (n=225)</b>
Pay/Compensation	44.2%	26.9%
Benefits	8.6%	5.6%
Nature of Job/Burnout/Trauma	23.0%	15.7%
Organizational Culture/Leadership	.9%	8.7%
Hours/Scheduling/Workload	5.7%	6.1%
Support/Staff Capacity/Growth Opportunities	8.6%	12.1%
Funding Instability	8.6%	1.4%

Directors and staff were asked what they think are the main challenges to retaining victim services staff. Sixty-six directors and 225 staff gave their perceptions on the main challenges facing victim services agencies retaining staff. Table 14 presents their responses.

Again, directors and staff cited pay and compensation as the biggest issue for retaining victim services staff. There were some differences in the weight given to the various retention issues with a larger percentage of directors recognizing staff burnout than the staff. Staff mentioned organizational culture and leadership more so than the directors. Staff also recognized the lack of support, low staff capacity and lack of growth opportunities more than directors. Directors recognized the funding instability to retain staff more than the staff recognized funding instability as an issue.

## Results by Race

***“I feel concerned that many of our staff who are people of color are working in entry level positions and many of our staff that are white are in the higher level or mid-level positions.”***

When the results are separated by race, we find that there are far less Black (n=21) and non-white (n=47) respondents than white respondents (n=253). This unfortunately has been a trend in the victim services field for many years and raises many concerns about agency culture, equitable promotions and fair salaries. Some respondents expressed concerns about Black and non-white staff members being paid less than white staff. One staff commented, ***“It is of my opinion that once in leadership, those staff who identify as BIPOC are not paid as much as those who identify as Caucasian.”*** As more of these comments were viewed in the results, the team decided to take a deeper look at the results by race to determine what could be learned to inform the field.

An alarming trend in Victim Services is the lack of BIPOC in leadership positions, in fact only one of the executive director respondents is Black, compared to 58 white executive directors. Again, the overall demographics of victim services staff is unknown, however if the respondents are truly representative of the victim services staff demographics, the low number of people of color in victim services is concerning. Table 15 presents the results by race for the Victim Services respondents in regards to salary, job covering basic needs, costs of healthcare and work/life balance.

**Table 15. Victim Services Staff Compensation by Race**

Item	All (n=249)	Black (n=21)	Non-White (n=47)	White (n=194)
Full-time w/Victim Services	348 (77.3%)	15 (71.4%)	34 (69.4%)	204 (80.9%)
All Management Role (other than EDs)	191 (44.1%)	10 (50.0%)	20 (42.5%)	123 (48.8%)
More than 5 years of employment in VS field	113 (45.4%)	9 (47.4%)	59(26.3%)	92 (47.4%)
Annual Household income ≤ 100K	204 (82.6%)	<b>18 (100%)</b>	<b>19 (100%)</b>	159 (82.3%)
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	181 (72.9%)	15 (78.9%)	10 (52.6%)	145 (74.7%)
Staff Annual Salary <50K	281 (86.2%)	17 (89.5%)	34 (89.5%)	166 (85.1%)
Victim Services Program covers basic needs: <b>No</b>	145 (45.2%)	<b>10 (52.6%)</b>	<b>21 (56.8%)</b>	84 (43.1%)
Health Insurance Affordability is <b>Reasonable/Great</b>	160 (53.5%)	5 (26.3%)	15 (41.7%)	110 (58.5%)
PTO adequacy for maintaining Work/Life Balance: <b>Yes</b>	179 (62.2%)	<b>11 (57.9%)</b>	<b>21 (55.3%)</b>	128 (66.0%)
Challenges Taking PTO: <b>Yes</b>	146 (50.7%)	10 (50.0%)	17 (43.6%)	104 (53.3%)
Agency offers rotating/flex holidays: <b>Yes</b>	93 (33.6%)	5 (25.0%)	12 (30.0%)	72 (36.7%)
Professional Development Required: <b>Yes</b>	240 (86.0%)	18 (90.0%)	33 (82.5%)	168 (86.2%)
Agency Pays for PD: <b>Yes</b>	219 (77.7%)	15 (75.0%)	28 (70.0%)	160 (81.2%)

**Note:** The numbers and percentages are based on those staff excluding Executive Directors and CAC Coordinators with executive privileges that responded to each item with the exception of the FTE response row.

When comparing the work experience and education of the staff by race, Black staff are more highly educated and proportionately have more seniority than the victim services staff overall. Victim services staff who identify as **Black and/or non-white** also are more likely to have annual household incomes of **\$100K or less**. The **Black and/or non-white staff** also reported their victim services **jobs do not cover their basic** needs more often than the staff overall and white staff. Likewise, a lower percentage of **Black and non-white victim** services staff **reported their health insurance costs are affordable and their PTO is adequate** for maintaining work/life balance than their white peers and the victim services staff overall.



**Table 16. Victim Service Organization Policy and Practice Transparency by Race**

Item	All (n=249)	Black (n=21)	Non-White (n=40)	White (n=194)
Raises given w/in a year: <b>Staff Responses</b>	206 (81.4%)	<b>14 (77.8%)</b>	32 (84.2%)	147 (81.2%)
How are raises determined: <b>Don't Know Staff Responses</b>	69 (25.2%)	8 (40.0%)	15 (37.5%)	43 (21.8%)
Policy related to salary structure: <b>Don't Know &amp; No Staff Responses</b>	214 (79.6)	17 (85.0%)	36 (90.0%)	150 (76.9%)
Compensation Transparency <b>Scale of 1-10</b>	4.4	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.7</b>	4.8

**Note:** The numbers and percentages are based on those staff excluding Executive Directors and CAC Coordinators with executive privileges that responded to each item.

Table 16 compares the transparency of organizational policy related to raises and compensation by race for victim services staff. **Non-white and Black staff** rated their organizations compensation transparency lower than their white peers and their peers overall. **A lower percentage of Black staff** reported **receiving a raise within the past year** in comparison to their non-Black peers. A higher percentage of Black staff reported they did not know how raises were determined or the policy related to salary structure for their organizations in comparison to their peers. The other thing the results point out is overall, **victim services staff rated compensation transparency pretty low** on the 10-point scale. In fact, of all of the 10-point scales, **compensation transparency was rated the lowest overall**. Several of the open-ended comments highlight staff concern about compensation transparency.

***“There is no transparency how wages/raises are set, raises are 1-2% and occur in 2-4 years.”*** [What is needed is] ***“Transparency about how employees are funded. People don't generally understand where their pay comes from.”***

***“It is not even close to transparent - raises are random if the (redacted for anonymity) employees get them then Supervisors Might? they hire in at higher salaries then staff that have longevity. The[y] will not release info or even talk about transparency around salaried employees.”***

Some respondents did address pay equity and transparency directly in the open-ended comments. One respondent offered they are practicing a collective theory of

compensation where all staff are paid the same. Another respondent mentioned they conduct internal audits for pay equity and have a staff position that is responsible for conducting the audits.

**Table 17. Compensation Satisfaction by Race**

Item	All (n=315)	Black (n=20)	Non-White (n=40)	White (n=253)
Satisfaction w/VS job salary <b>Scale of 1-10 (Average)</b>	5.2	5.5	4.5	5.5
Satisfaction w/VS Health Insurance Costs <b>Scale of 1-10 (Average)</b>	4.7	3.2	3.4	5.1
Satisfaction w/VS Benefits <b>Scale of 1-10 (Average)</b>	5.6	5.4	4.9	5.9
Satisfaction w/ PTO <b>Scale of 1-10 (Average)</b>	6.2	6.3	5.6	6.6
Satisfaction w/Compensation <b>Scale of 1-10 (Average)</b>	4.9	5.1	4.5	5.2

**Note:** The numbers and percentages in the table are based on those staff excluding Executive Directors and CAC Coordinators with executive privileges that responded to each item.

Table 17 compares the victim services staff satisfaction with various components of their compensation. Satisfaction with job salary was highest for Black and white victim services staff and lowest for non-white victim services staff. Satisfaction with health insurance costs was lowest among Black victim services staff and non-white victim services staff compared to their white peers. White victim services staff were most satisfied with their benefits overall and non-white staff were least satisfied with their overall benefits. Likewise, non-white victim services staff rated their satisfaction with paid time off lower than their white and Black peers. And, non-white victim services staff were the least satisfied with their overall compensation in comparison to their Black and white peers.

## Discussion

When the team embarked on this data collection endeavor, we had a good idea about the number of organizational members that could provide responses. What we did not ask before the launch of the questionnaire was how many staff members each victim services organization supported. In addition, we did not have a clear image of the demographic composition of victim services employees across the state. As a result, while the response rate was robust, we cannot be sure that the respondents are representative of those who work in Victim Services in Ohio.

Within the questionnaire, executive directors and CAC directors with executive privileges reported what they believed to be the starting salary for each position within their agency. When the results were separated between director responses and full-time employee responses, we found that directors reported higher average starting salaries for their employees than the employees reported for themselves. On average, directors reported that advocates make over \$13,000 more than what the full-time advocates (one to three years of employment) reported that they make annually. A similar trend appears for positions such as coordinators, case managers, and administrative positions. To what can this be attributed? It is possible that many executive directors are removed from hiring and offering salaries to entry-level staff. It is also possible that many organizations have not standardized salary ranges for hiring based on experience, education, and other qualifications.

Most troubling is the fact that annual salaries, on average, are below a living wage in Ohio. Figure 7, **Comparison of Victim Services Position Wages, Minimum Wage & Living Wage**, in this report demonstrates that nearly all starting salaries of victim services employees fall below \$31.60, which is considered a living wage for an adult and one child in Ohio. Comparing this result to recommendations made in the **2015 Directors Report**, wage growth has been stagnant, at best. Victim services employees have not gained any ground in terms of compensation for the work they do. This likely accounts for the high turnover of staff that costs organizations time and resources for on-boarding and on-going professional development of new staff.

***[With] low wages, we cannot compete with companies like Target, Starbucks, and Hobby Lobby hiring in at more than what we offer, but we require a college education.***

Between 43-57% of all races said their annual salary does not cover their basic needs. Less than half the Black and non-white respondents said their healthcare costs were reasonable/affordable. Consistently, concerns raised around inadequate salaries and lack of agency benefits focused on VOCA funding cuts as a primary reason.

The majority of staff said the amount of PTO offered by their agency was adequate for maintaining work/life balance. However, they also said that it was difficult to take PTO for a variety of reasons. The majority of all races responded 'Yes' when asked if their agency gives out raises within one year of hiring. Again, the majority also stated they were unsure of how raises were determined or the agency's policy on salary structure.

Most victim services agencies across the state require professional development for staff. However, in the Southwest only 60% of respondents said their agencies cover the cost of professional development compared to 70%-90% in other areas. Covering the cost of their own professional development may create another undue financial burden for victim advocates whose agencies do not cover those costs even though they are a requirement for staff.

Satisfaction for victim services employees on a scale of 1 to 10 for their total compensation package was just under 5. Compensation includes salary, benefits, and paid time off (PTO). Given low wages and the apparent difficulty with work/life balance many employees expressed, it is not surprising that job satisfaction ranks in the middle of the road. Interestingly, open-ended responses indicate that employees are passionate and committed to the work of serving victims of crime.

Another cost that is becoming more difficult for victim services organizations and staff to pay is health insurance. Almost half (46.5%) of staff stated their health insurance costs are either too high or they are not offered health insurance at their victim services job. Directors also expressed concern about the rising cost of health insurance and their lack of options for funding it. It is clear that stress has health consequences and the victim services staff are under a great deal of stress daily at their jobs. The need for health care coverage to address their stress and the health consequences is critical for all victim services staff.

We did not ask staff respondents about the size of the organization for which they worked. As a result, we are unable to compare the size of the organization with employee satisfaction and we wonder if larger organizations with bigger budgets are able to offer employees more support, which may translate into greater job satisfaction.

Knowing the staff size of the agencies where the respondents work would help understand if there is a link between organizational size and the ability of the organization to offer more affordable benefits to their employees.

It is unclear if the respondents represent the demographics of the victim services staff. If the respondents do represent the staff employed in the victim services then another troubling finding is related to the apparent lack of diversity among victim services employees of which 79% are white, 92% are women, and 74% are heterosexual. Among the respondents who identified as Black, only one indicated they were an executive director. Again, we do not know how representative the respondents were, but even combined with non-white people, there were only 11 non-white executive directors compared to 58 white executive directors.

Overall, the victim services workforce is highly educated and poorly compensated while working with an incredibly vulnerable population of highly traumatized crime victims. This translates into secondary trauma as well as the trauma of living precariously due to low wages and other worker supports including health insurance.

The majority of staff who completed the questionnaire have been employed in victim services agencies for more than 5 years and are highly educated. This indicates they are committed to their advocacy work and have given the time and dedication to become well educated in their fields. It is unfortunate that there is so much disappointment in how these dedicated advocates are compensated for their hard work and loyalty. Some comments that express this dedication and frustration are below.

***“As a single person living alone, my paycheck barely covers the basics with very little left over. I am not able to save or have enough for emergencies.”—Advocate***

***“To be able to keep, train, and maintain quality advocates we have to be better about competitively paying them, paying a percentage of their education, and giving better incentives. All of us in victim services that have stuck it out are exhausted and overworked. We deserve to be compensated for our dedication. If we cannot maintain quality staff then crime victims also suffer.” –E.D.***

The above quote from an executive director highlights their overall frustration with budget cuts that have occurred repeatedly since 2019 when the Victim of Crime Act (VOCA) fund was depleted. When the VOCA fund was fixed by the federal government in 2021, it was hoped that funding increases would occur. However, it is taking much

longer than anticipated for the fund to be replenished and grant funds to increase. Moreover, depending primarily on federal resources to support victim services organizations is not sustainable. If Ohioans are committed to the rights of victims of crime, there needs to be more money from the state budget dedicated to financial support for victim services across the board. This means increasing funding for domestic violence services, rape crisis centers, child advocacy centers, and crime victim services.

Concerning the need for work/life balance, the majority of respondents said their PTO is adequate for maintaining work/life balance. However, most of the staff responding also said that it is difficult to take PTO due to the need for staffing and the vital importance of their work. In addition, few of the regions offer rotating/flex holidays, averaging around only 30%. This creates an environment where preventing burnout and vicarious trauma is almost impossible.

***“I am really pleased with the PTO I receive at my job, it’s the best I have ever had at any job. However, it feels that my job uses this as an excuse to not provide adequate resources or pay to us, because we get great time off we should settle for less than living wages and go without resources to do our job.”—Victim Advocate***

The results surely indicate the complexities of working in victim services. The staff emphasized their love and passion for the work they do and frustration with the current funding environment within which they do their work. The results are even more troubling when it comes to the stress, trauma and need for self-care that are expressed in the comments of the staff and the directors. It is telling that less than a third of the directors believe their current staff configuration and capacity is adequate to support survivor-centered, trauma informed best-practices services. This is not due to the lack of passion or talent, but to the lack of resources that are allocated to the organizations to support their work.

## **Recommendations**

### **Methodology Recommendations:**

1. ***Collect staff demographics.*** Going forward it will be helpful to have/collect demographic information on employees to determine if the respondents reflect the demographic composition of victim services employees. As mentioned several times within this report, we need to exercise caution in interpreting and generalizing the results as we are unsure if they are representative.
2. ***Determine number of victim services staff employed in Ohio.*** Similarly, prior to launching another Victim Services Compensation Questionnaire, it is important

to determine how many victim services positions there are in membership programs. This will enable the researchers to better estimate the overall number of potential respondents and thus, what constitutes a representative sample.

3. **Emphasize the importance of completing the questionnaire.** Encourage all staff, executive directors, and **all** employees of victim services organizations, to complete the entire questionnaire so we can learn what they need to support their work. Again, without a clear understanding of the number of victim services staff in Ohio we cannot be sure of the response rate and therefore we cannot generalize across victim services from these findings. Likewise, for the regional comparisons some of the number of respondents was too small so we miss understanding regional differences if/when they do exist. Moreover, some respondents skipped sections, which reduced the number of responses for those sections. Skip patterns are built in to the questionnaire to increase item relevancy and reduce time burden to complete. The more staff and directors complete the questionnaire, the more representative and the useful the results will be in reflecting Ohio's victim services workforce and organizational conditions within which they work.

#### **Program Recommendations:**

1. **We highly recommend that this report is shared with local, state, and federal legislators who make decisions about how community, state, and federal funds are distributed.** In addition, we recommend sharing this report with local and state media outlets that may shine a light on the poor compensation of those staff who work with Ohio's most vulnerable people. We also recommend you use this report as an advocacy tool and complement this report with the 2022 Crime Victim Services Compensation Results infographic that can be accessed here: <https://www.odvn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/VSCQ-FINAL-Report-6.15.22.pdf>
2. If applicable, **when applying for state and federal grants, request the maximum amount and allocate additional resources to compensating staff at a living wage with benefits.** As additional funding from VOCA becomes available, although not likely for some years to come, apply for the maximum

amount and allocate additional resources to compensating staff at a living wage with benefits.

3. ***Victim Services organizations should consider more flexibility when it comes to PTO.*** Allowing staff to use PTO in hourly increments is helpful to organizations struggling to staff shifts rather than requiring staff to use PTO in full-day increments. Consider removing “use it” or “lose it” policies for PTO and work with staff to negotiate time off in a manageable way that supports both the organization and staff.
  
4. ***Increase transparency about how salaries and raises are determined.*** Victim Services organizations should have policies in place that provide entry-level staff with a pathway to promotion. All staff should have an understanding of what entry, mid, and senior level salary ranges are.
  
5. ***Commit to becoming a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization.*** Violence is oppression and oppression is violence. The field of victim services cannot divorce itself from doing the difficult work of self-examination of how we are complicit with white supremacy and racist law enforcement policies. We must work to eliminate implicit and explicit bias from ourselves as organizational leaders and staff. This can be done through strategic planning, professional development, staff engagement, and intentional conversations about how white supremacy culture permeates the organization and impacts who gets hired, promoted, and leads. Whether our organizations are in urban or rural settings, becoming a more welcoming organization for staff and all those we serve, will promote a culture that is inclusive of others. This is, after all, at the very heart of our work.



## Appendix

### Appendix 1. Staff Positions and Categories

Category	Positions
<b>Executive Directors</b>	Executive Directors, CAC Coordinators with Executive Privileges
<b>Other Directors</b>	Program Director
<b>Case Managers/Probation Officers</b>	Case Manager, Probation Officer
<b>Coordinators</b>	CAC Coordinator, Outreach Coordinator, Prevention Coordinator, Program Coordinator (any coordinator not listed), SART Coordinator, Trainer/Training Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator
<b>Finance/Admin</b>	Administrative Assistant/Receptionist, Office Manager, Communications/Marketing/PR, Grant Writer/Fundraising/Development Officer, Evaluation Specialist/Quality Assurance, Facilities Manager, Finance/Accountant, IT/Tech Support
<b>Mental Health Services Providers</b>	Clinical Supervisor, Counselor/Therapist, Mental Health Services Providers
<b>Medical Services Providers</b>	Medical Services Providers, SANE/SAFE Nurse Advocate, Forensic Interviewer
<b>Grouped Advocates</b>	Child or Youth Advocate, Hotline Advocate, Hospital Advocate, Court/Legal Advocate, On-call Advocate, Family Advocate, Shelter or Resident Advocate, Victim Advocate