

Talking Points

Ohio Victim Services Compensation Results

1. According to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology *Living Wage Calculator**, the living wage for **one adult with one child is \$31 an hour**. Most victim services employees earn between \$5 and \$10 dollars an hour less than the living wage. That means **we would need to raise the wage** of the victim services workforce on average **by at least \$7 more an hour** to bring them up to a living wage.
2. **Almost half** (45%) of the victim services staff said that their salary **DOES NOT cover basic needs** like housing, food, and utilities.
3. Victim services agencies rely primarily on state/federal funding to operate. Since 2020, **overall budgets for victim service agencies decreased by 16%**. One significant source, Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding, has decreased by more than 70% since 2019. Without the necessary funding, fewer and fewer intimate partner violence and sexual violence survivors will receive lifesaving care.
4. About 60% of victim services workers said that **low compensation was the main reason organizations couldn't retain their staff**. Understaffing has led to 45% of organizations depending upon volunteers to fill in the gaps. Volunteers may not have the **skills, capacity, or training necessary to perform the daily functions of a paid staff person** and should be used to perform tasks that staff wouldn't ordinarily complete.
5. The majority of directors reported that **raises and salary structures were largely affected by funding and funder requirements**. Many directors noted they have

difficulty competing with jobs and companies that pay more, offer more and better benefits, and have less stress associated with job duties.

6. Due to staffing shortages, **victim services workers are overextended**. More than **one-third do not get enough PTO** to recuperate from their jobs. Even when workers have adequate PTO, many **are not able to take it** because no one is available to cover their shifts.
7. **Over half (57%)** of victim services workers **must work more than one job to make ends meet**. Working more than one job means **chronic exhaustion, lower work quality, inability to cover open victim services shifts, and chronic stress**. These consequences often lead to negative health outcomes for staff.
8. Although many victim services organizations offer employee health insurance, **almost 30% of the workers said the health insurance offered through their work was too costly**. Unaffordable insurance costs **leave workers without the needed health care** and result in an **increased financial burden for medical care**.
9. Directors reported that the **cost of company health insurance continues to rise**, and that **funding doesn't keep pace with increasing costs** for quality healthcare packages. Without healthy victim service workers, survivors do not get the care and attention they deserve.

*<https://livingwage.mit.edu/>

Advocacy Actions and Opportunities

1. Share the [*Victim Services Compensation Report*](#) with your state and federal legislators so they understand the conditions faced by the victim services workforce.
2. Victim services organizations can develop pay equity committees/task forces to address pay equity issues.
3. Victim services agencies can show more transparency in staff compensation/pay and advocate for innovative ways to increase salaries.
4. Victim services organizations can offer professional development on negotiation skills for staff. [Check out this pay equity resource from ADP Payroll Services.](#)
5. Victim services organizations can offer more non-pay perks such as flexible hours, work from home, in-office daycare, etc. to show appreciation for their employees' dedication and hard work. It is important to ask employees how best to compensate them when you may not be able to increase the financial benefits.
6. State-level victim services organizations may be able to work together to pool their combined membership's staff and negotiate for better insurance costs/benefits across the workforce.
7. The victim services workforce can unionize to improve their compensation and working conditions.