



## #JUSTPAY CAMPAIGN

The Network is proud partner in the #JustPay campaign, organized by the Human Services Council (HSC), whose mission is to put an end to government-sanctioned poverty wages for human services workers. Recovery from the pandemic has put us on the cusp of change and human services are critical for New York's recovery from COVID-19.

## SUPPORTIVE HOUSING STAFF ARE VASTLY UNDER-PAID

The government is the direct funder of human services and thus the main driver of human services salaries. Current New York City and State contracts have resulted in the essential human services workforce being some of the lowest paid workers in New York's economy. It is unacceptable that human services workers are given inadequate pay, benefits and opportunities for career advancements. The majority of direct care staff in supportive housing are women of color and these wages reflect a long history of the devaluation of the work of women in general and women of color, specifically.

## LOW STAFF WAGES & SHORTAGES IMPACTS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING TENANTS

The suppressed wages for supportive housing staff creates instability for employees, their families and the communities in which they live. Burnout and turnover are common, with some providers reporting 50% turnover pre-pandemic. COVID exacerbated these issues: a recent study showed a 20% staff vacancy rate at supportive housing agencies. The success of supportive housing lies in the relationships between tenants and staff; when staff turnover is high, tenants cannot rely on these relationships and their ability to rebuild their lives is impeded.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish, fund, and enforce an automatic annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) on all human services contracts of at least 3%.
- Set a living wage floor of no less than \$21/ hour for all City and State-funded human services workers.
- Create, fund, and incorporate a comprehensive wage and benefit schedule for government contracted human services workers comparable to the salaries made by City employees in the same field.