



## THE PROBLEM

- **Low and stagnant wages for human services staff have dramatically impacted our workforce.**
  - Wages are lagging 34% behind inflation for OMH and OASAS funded workers over the last 17 years.
  - Nonprofit human services workers make 20-35% less in median wages and benefits than workers in comparable positions in the public and private sectors.
  - Low pay disproportionately impacts women, specifically women of color, who are over-represented in the human services workforce.
  - Low pay often requires workers to hold multiple jobs.
- **Programs have a chronic staff vacancy rate of over 20%.**
- **Workers are trending younger and less experienced.**
- **The result is higher caseloads, low morale, turnover, burnout, and unmet tenant needs.**



## THE SOLUTIONS

- **Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and wages**
  - Include a 3.2% COLA tied to the Consumer Price Index (July 2023) in the Adopted SFY 2024-25 Budget.
  - S7793A/ A08437A: Extends COLA statute to previously excluded human services programs, including the New York State Supportive Housing Program (NYSSHP).
  - S1291/A4046: Establishes an annual COLA for human services programs indexed to inflation.
  - S4675/A3329: Establishes a Human Services Employee Wage Board.
  - Add \$500 million to account for decades of underfunding.
- **Create skill enhancement programs**
  - Identify credentials, certifications, and training programs and clearly connect them to State-funded nonprofit human services career ladder with job requirements and salary increases.
  - Pay for staff to receive credentials.
- **Develop case management career roadmaps**
  - Recognize and fund senior case management positions so staff can grow without needing to become supervisors.
  - Create and fund a Qualified Mental Health Assistant with credentialing program.
  - Extend and invest in peer employment opportunities; reexamine job requirements.
- **Design robust recruitment strategies**
  - Deepen and expand partnerships between SUNY/CUNY and human services programs.
  - Provide tuition reimbursement, scholarships, or student loan repayment.
- **Provide ongoing personnel support**
  - Free or low-cost, convenient childcare options.
  - Connection to free or low-cost therapy for staff.

