



# Legislative Report

## DWRS Labor Market Reporting 2019

### Disability Service Division

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# I. Executive summary

This report delivers the findings of a survey of Disability Waiver Rates System (DWRS) providers in 2019 about their direct support employees. This report fulfills the reporting requirement under [Minnesota Statutes 2019, section 256B.4914, subdivision 10a, paragraph \(g\)](#).

The survey was conducted in the fall of 2019. It asked for information from calendar year 2018. Providers were given four weeks to complete the survey, during which a statistically significant amount of providers responded. The collected information from each provider about its direct support professionals (DSP) included:

- Number of full-time and part-time workers
- Hourly wages
- Access and cost of benefits
- Retention and job vacancy.

The data collected for this project was only from DWRS providers, and therefore, provides a narrow view of the entire DSP labor market in Minnesota. Beginning in 2020, statute expands this reporting requirement, which will allow DHS to provide a more complete understanding of the DSP labor market for all long-term supports and services.

## A. Survey findings

Sixty-seven organizations that provide DWRS services completed the labor market survey. These respondents are representative across Minnesota geographic regions, service types and provider size. The response exceeded the necessary size for a statistically significant results at a 90 percent confidence level with a 10 percent margin of error. Below are some of the high-level findings:

- Of all DSP workers, 58 percent in this market work full time, while 42 percent work part time
- The statewide, median starting wage for full-time workers is \$12.82 and \$12.62 for part-time workers
- 92 percent of full-time DSP make less than a \$15 wage and 72 percent of part-time workers make less than a \$13 wage
- Benefits are disproportionately available to full-time workers. 94 percent of full-time workers were offered health insurance from their employer, while only 2 percent of part-time workers were offered
- Annual turnover of DSP was 48 percent, while there was a job vacancy rate of just under 20 percent.

The findings from this survey conclude that this labor market has notably low wages, lacks access to affordable benefits and is highly unstable due to turnover. Further data collection will expand the understanding of the direct support workforce in Minnesota. Continuing to study and report on the health of the direct support labor market is critical to informing and monitoring future legislative investments in this workforce.

## II. Legislation

Minnesota Laws 2019, First special session, Chapter 9, Article 5, Section 65 (codified in Minnesota Statutes 2019, section 256B.4914, subdivision 10a; paragraph g)) requires the commissioner of DHS to publish an annual report on state-level labor market data from disability waiver providers:

“(g) Providers enrolled to provide services with rates determined under section [256B.4914](#), subdivision 3, shall submit labor market data to the commissioner annually on or before November 1, including but not limited to:

- (1) number of direct care staff;
- (2) wages of direct care staff;
- (3) overtime wages of direct care staff;
- (4) hours worked by direct care staff;
- (5) overtime hours worked by direct care staff;
- (6) benefits provided to direct care staff;
- (7) direct care staff job vacancies; and
- (8) direct care staff retention rates.

(h) The commissioner shall publish annual reports on provider and state-level labor market data, including but not limited to the data obtained under paragraph (g).”

# III. Introduction

People with disabilities rely on direct support professionals (DSP) to help them with daily activities due to physical, cognitive, developmental, behavioral and/or chronic health concerns. DSP do more than caretaking; they require skills in relationship building, resource networking, communication, counseling, conflict resolution and bridge building. Not only are DSP expected to meet health, safety and care needs, but they also are expected to assist their clients in achieving personal goals, including finding and keeping employment, connecting with peers and becoming active community members.

Without competitive wages and benefits, employers risk losing employees to other industries that offer more career advancement opportunities and less demanding work for equal or better pay. This issue is magnified for policymakers because many of the organizations that provide services under these programs receive payment from rates set by the state.

In order to better understand the workforce that supports people served by Minnesota's four home and community-based services disability waivers, the state legislature required the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to collect market-level information about the direct support workforce. Survey findings and personal stories illustrate that direct support professionals in Minnesota have low wages and even lower access to affordable benefits. This report outlines the findings of this data collection.

## A. Information collected

The information collected via the survey focused on typical measures of labor market health, including wages, benefits and staff retention. The survey also collected other information that would aid in the full analysis of the market. The following is the complete list of the information collected by this survey.

- Full-time and part-time employment of direct support professionals
- Direct support professional wages
  - Regular and overtime
  - Service bucket specific
- Benefit access, cost, and enrollment
  - Health insurance
  - Paid time off/sick/vacation
  - Other benefits
- Direct support professional retention and job vacancy rates
- Organizational information
- Number of people served
- Revenues
- Regional location
- Direct support professional supervisor wages, retention and direct care work.

Survey respondents may have had payment rates that were subject to historical banding during the collection period. DWRS banding holds payment rates closer to their historical payment rates and therefore could result in rates that are both higher and lower than the framework rates. The information collected in this effort may have been affected by the variation in the banded rates. All provider organizations are subject to framework rates by January 1, 2021 when rates implementation will be complete.

## B. Definitions

In order to collect consistent data about the direct support labor market, respondents were asked to consider the following definitions to answer the questions in this survey.

### Direct support professional (DSP)

An employee whose primary responsibilities (i.e., more than 50 percent of their role) include providing support, training, supervision and personal assistance to people with disabilities. This does NOT include nurses and other licensed professional staff (e.g., LPN, RNs, licensed social workers, etc.) or staff that does not provide direct support tasks (e.g., cooks, janitors, administrative staff, etc.).

Consumer directed community supports (CDCS) and Consumer Support Grant (CSG) workers are NOT included in the DSP definition.

### Direct support professional supervisor (DSP supervisor)

Employees whose primary responsibility (more than 50 percent of their role) is the supervision of direct support professionals. While these individuals may perform direct support tasks, their primary job duty is to supervise employees and manage programs. These individuals may or may not be licensed.

### Regions

To better understand differences across the state, DHS defined regions that delineate three different types of areas: The metro, regional centers and greater Minnesota. For the purposes of this study, survey results were assigned to the provider organizations based on the county of residence of the people they serve based on billed services.

All of these regions are defined at the county level, so in the case of the regional centers the entire county where the city is located is included. The regions are defined as:

- **Metro:** Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Washington counties
- **Regional centers:** Blue Earth (Mankato), Clay (Moorhead), Olmsted (Rochester), St. Louis (Duluth) and Stearns (St. Cloud) counties
- **Greater Minnesota:** Remaining 65 counties in greater Minnesota.

### Full time/part time

For this survey, full time is defined as anyone who typically works (i.e., more than 50 percent of the time) 30 or more hours per week. Part time is defined as anyone who typically works 29 hours or less per week.

### Benefits

DHS included the following benefits in our definition when asking providers to report costs:

- Health insurance
- Dental insurance
- Vision insurance
- Life insurance
- Short-term disability
- Long-term disability
- Retirement
- Tuition reimbursement
- Wellness programs.

## Disability waiver services

Table 1 lists the services provided via the four home and community-based services (HCBS) disability waivers (CAC, CADI, BI and DD) in Minnesota, and their respective service types for clarification.

**Table 1: DWRS services by service type**

Service type/bucket	Services included
<b>Day services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adult day care services</li> <li>• Adult day care services (FADS)</li> <li>• Day training and habilitation</li> <li>• Prevocational services</li> <li>• Structured day.</li> </ul>
<b>Residential services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customized living</li> <li>• Customized living 24-hour</li> <li>• Customized living 24-hour, corporate</li> <li>• Corporate foster care adult/child</li> <li>• Supported living service, adult/child corporate</li> <li>• Supported living service, family, adult/child</li> <li>• Residential care services.</li> </ul>
<b>Unit-based services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24-hour emergency assistance</li> <li>• Adult companion services</li> <li>• Chore services</li> <li>• Crisis respite</li> <li>• Homemaker/assist personal care</li> <li>• Homemaker/cleaning</li> <li>• Housing access coordinator</li> <li>• In-home family support</li> <li>• Independent living skills training</li> <li>• Independent living skills group therapy</li> <li>• Independent living skills individual therapy</li> <li>• Individualized home support</li> <li>• Individualized home support remote</li> <li>• Night supervision</li> <li>• Personal support</li> <li>• Positive supports</li> <li>• Respite – in home/out of home</li> <li>• Supported employment</li> <li>• Supported living services, adult/child</li> <li>• Supported living services, adult own home</li> <li>• Supported living services, adult/child corporate.</li> </ul>

## IV. Methodology

DHS evaluated the state of the direct support workforce by surveying DWRS providers about their number of employees, wages and benefits. This study was conducted in five steps:

- Survey development
- Population and sample identification
- Survey administration
- Survey respondents and response rate
- Data analysis.

### A. Survey development

DHS reviewed previous surveys related to the direct support labor market. Policy and research areas within DHS collaborated to develop survey questions based on existing survey instruments, lessons learned from previous survey administration and information collected from previous surveys. Additionally, new questions were developed to address emerging policy concerns. The survey was reviewed to verify content validity.

### B. Population and sample identification

In order to identify DWRS providers that employ direct support workers, DHS defined the population as providers who billed DWRS services in CY 2018 and who had at least \$150,000 in DWRS revenue for at least six people who received services.

Some providers deliver both DWRS and non-DWRS Medical Assistance services. DHS based providers' inclusion in the survey sample only on DWRS services and revenues. Because many providers are unable to separate their DWRS-specific revenues and wages, DHS asked respondents to complete the survey based all direct support workers in their organization rather than on workers who provide DWRS services specifically. Thus, the results reflect all direct support workers working for providers that received at least \$150,000 to provide DWRS services to at least six people in CY 2018. Based on these criteria, 862 providers were eligible to take the survey.

Based on the number of identified providers, DHS randomly selected a sample of providers to complete the survey. To achieve a confidence interval of 90 percent, a margin of error of 10 percent and a response distribution of 50 percent, a sample size of 59 providers was required. Based on previous experience, DHS sent the survey to the 79 providers expecting that some providers would not respond to the survey.

The sample was stratified by region and provider size to ensure the sample was representative across those characteristics.

## C. Survey administration

The survey was launched on Sept. 9, 2019, and closed on Oct. 22, 2019. DHS contacted providers via email before the survey start date to inform them they would receive the survey. The survey was administered using Snap Survey, a secure online survey platform. Providers contacted DHS if they needed assistance. During the four-week survey period, providers who had not responded yet were given three reminders to complete the survey via email. Before the survey closed, DHS followed-up with providers two additional times to remind them to complete the survey.

## D. Survey respondents and response rate

Before conducting data analysis, DHS analyzed the survey respondents and the response rate. Seventy-three provider organizations of the pool of 79 responded to the survey, for a response rate of 92 percent. Of the 73 organizations, 67 organizations completed the entire survey. For purposes of the analysis, only responses from the 67 completed surveys were included.

Because some provider organizations deliver services in multiple regions, DHS defined each provider's primary region as the region in which they deliver the majority of services. The primary region was the metro (23 respondents), regional centers (eight respondents) and greater Minnesota (33 respondents).

Nineteen responding provider organizations provided day services, 48 provided residential services and 40 provided unit-based services (Note: These numbers reflect that some organizations provide multiple services).

Total organization annual revenues for responding provider organizations fell as such:

- Four were under \$500,000
- Twelve had revenues from \$500,001-\$1,000,000
- Thirty two had revenues from \$1,000,001-\$5,000,000
- Six had revenues from \$5,000,001-\$10,000,000
- Twelve had revenues from \$10,000,001-\$50,000,000
- One had revenues above \$50,000,000.

## E. Data analysis

DHS analyzed the survey results to determine the size of the workforce, the number of full-and part time employees, the number of vacancies and average wages/benefits. For all averages, DHS reports the weighted median because it is less influenced by outliers than mean.

DHS weighted the median according to provider size so that large organizations (who employ many DSP) contributed more to the average than small organizations (who employ fewer DSP). This allowed us to describe the average DSP experience rather than the average provider organization. For all wages, DHS analyzed the wages reported for hourly awake DSP.

## V. Survey findings

Sixty-seven organizations that provide DWRS services completed all of the questions on the labor market survey. These respondents are representative across geographical regions, service types and provider size, and exceeded the necessary size for a statistically significant results at a 90 percent confidence level with a 10 percent margin of error.

For the DSP who work for these 67 organization, the survey found they have low wages, low access to benefits and very high turnover/vacancy rates. These findings characterize a labor market that does not offer competitive compensation and continues to be in crisis. The following is a discussion of the findings in detail.

### A. Size of the workforce

DHS estimates that there are approximately 93,036 DSP who work for organizations that provide DWRS services in Minnesota. Of this population, 47 percent work in the metro, 10 percent work in regional centers and 43 percent work in greater Minnesota.

### B. Employment type

Of the providers surveyed statewide, 58 percent of direct support workers were employed full time and 42 percent were employed part time. For this survey, full time was defined as working 30 hours or more a week. Traditionally, in many occupations, full-time workers have higher wages and greater access to benefits than part-time workers. Since this workforce is largely part-time, it is likely that are larger disparities for part-time DSP in Minnesota than for those full-time workers.

### C. Direct support wages

Wages are often the driving force behind the health of a workforce. The Minnesota direct support workforce is no different. Without competitive wages, employers likely will lose employees to other industries that offer more career-advancement opportunities and less demanding work for equitable or better, pay. These positions are entry-level and low paying, and require few qualifications other than a high school diploma. This issue is further magnified for policymakers because many of the organizations that provide services under these programs, receive payment from rates set by the state.

## Statewide median wage for full-time workers

At a statewide level, the starting median wage<sup>1</sup> of a full-time, direct support workers is \$12.82 an hour. For DSP who have been with their organization for more than a year, the median wage is \$13.15 an hour. These values include the median wages for all employment types, regional locations of service and types of service.

**Table 2: Full-time, regular hourly wage**

Regular hourly wage paid by an organization	Percent of full-time DSP who worked for organizations in each wage range
Less than \$12	30%
\$12.01-\$13	27%
\$13.01-\$14	22%
\$14.01-\$15	13%
\$15.01-\$16	2%
\$16.01-\$17	1%
\$17.01-\$18	0%
More than \$17	5%

## Statewide median wage for part-time workers

Typically, part-time workers have lower wages than people who work full time. This is the case in the Minnesota direct support workforce, as well. The statewide weighted median starting wage for part-time workers was \$12.26. The statewide weighted median wage for part-time workers who have been with their organization longer than one year was \$12.50.

**Table 3: Part-time, regular hourly wage**

Regular hourly wage paid by an organization	Percent of part-time DSP who worked for organizations in each wage range
Less than \$12	39%
\$12.01-\$13	33%
\$13.01-\$14	8%
\$14.01-\$15	4%
\$15.01-\$16	12%
\$16.01-\$17	1%
\$17.01-\$18.00	0%
More than \$17	1%

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<sup>1</sup> For purposes of this document, all wages reported are for awake direct support workers. The survey also asked about asleep wages, but they are not reported on in this summary.

## Wages by region

Regional differences also influence wages, just as cost of living and workforce availability varies between locations. This survey found that there were regional difference in wages, including variation between starting wages and the wages for long-term employees. See Table 4 for further details.

**Table 4: Full-time starting wages by region**

Primary region	Weighted median, full-time starting wage	Weighted median, full-time > 1 year starting wage
Metro	\$12.74	\$13.62
Regional centers	\$12.82	\$14.75
Greater Minnesota	\$11.92	\$12.77

## Wages by service type

The survey respondents may serve people through multiple service types and programs. Each of the service categories, or collection of similar services, have at least one payment rate for services. The waiver categories may have more than one rate due to different rate methodologies between the disability waivers. These different payment rates as well as different services requirements could result in wage variation for direct support workers across the service types, sometimes resulting in different wages for different direct support workers work within the same organization.

Note that this wage is unweighted because DHS did not ask providers to report the proportion of their business dedicated to each category of services. As a result, provider size within each service type was not determined.

**Table 5: Wages by DWRS service types**

Service type	Unweighted median wage	Wage component in DWRS rate	Approx. hourly DWRS rate
Day services	\$13	\$15.30	\$39.24
Residential services	\$13	\$13.53	\$34.80
Unit-based services <sup>2</sup>	\$12.50	\$12.27-\$18.30	\$27.54-53.85

## Comparing DSP wages

To better understand DSP wages in the state, DHS compared wages to the [Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development's ongoing, statewide cost-of-living analysis](#). This analysis determines the hourly wage a person would need to earn to achieve simple living that meets basic needs for healthy and safety. The statewide basic need wage for 2018 — the same period the DWRS labor market survey covered — was \$15.39/hour for a family of three with two full-time working adults. For a single adult, this statewide wage was \$14.86/hour.

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<sup>2</sup> There are numerous rates for this service group. The wages and rates vary by each service.

Comparing cost-of-living analysis to the statewide full-time and part-time wages found through this survey there is a difference of up to \$3.13 an hour or 26 percent. This difference raises a concern that DSP wages in Minnesota do not meet health and safety basic needs for workers.

**Table 6: DSP Wages to cost of living wages**

DSP wage	Cost-of-living wage	Difference(\$)	Difference (%)
\$12.82	\$15.39	\$2.57	20%
	\$14.86	\$2.04	16%
\$12.26	\$15.39	\$3.13	26%
	\$14.86	\$2.60	21%

## D. Direct support benefits

Available and sufficient benefits have a direct effect on retaining staff in the direct care and support workforce. The benefits available to direct support workers vary across organizations, or may not be offered at all. The survey asked whether organizations offered paid time off, paid sick leave, paid vacation, health insurance and other benefits<sup>3</sup>. The following table summarizes the percentage of direct support professionals (who work both full time and part time) who are offered different types of benefits.

**Table 7: DSP benefits**

Benefit	Percent of full-time DSP working in an organization that offers the benefit	Percent of part-time DSP working in an organization that offers the benefit
Holiday pay	80%	30%
Paid sick time	60%	7%
Paid vacation time	63%	50%
Other PTO	68%	20%
Overtime hours	97%	94%
Health insurance	94%	2%

Overtime hours and health insurance were the most frequent benefits offered to full-time direct support workers. Overtime hours and paid vacation were the most frequent benefits offered to part-time direct support workers. There was high variability in benefits offered to full-time and part-time DSP, which further points to the difference that exists between full-time and part-time employment.

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<sup>3</sup> In order to incorporate the current practices of all provider organizations, the survey included both paid time off, and paid sick/vacation time in the understanding that few to no organizations would be providing both.

## Health insurance

The survey found that 94 percent of full-time and 2 percent of part-time direct support professionals are eligible for employer-sponsored health insurance. This means that just more than half of all direct support professionals have access to health insurance through their employer.

For direct support professionals who are eligible for employer-sponsored health insurance, the cost of the health insurance plan can be a barrier to access. For a workforce that has a statewide median wage of \$12.82 an hour, the cost of premiums can add up quickly. This survey found that the median DSP monthly health insurance premium contribution for workers:

- \$111 for one-person coverage
- \$355 for two-person coverage
- \$672 for family coverage.

For individual coverage, the cost is nearly the equivalent of 8.6 hours of the pre-tax median wage. The family coverage cost is the equivalent of 52.4 hours of work or about 33 percent of the pre-tax monthly income of a full-time direct support worker.

## Other benefits

The survey also asked organizations whether several other benefits were offered. Table 8 summarizes the proportion of responding organizations that offered other benefits that were not differentiated by full-time and part-time employees.

**Table 8: Other benefits for DSP**

<b>Other benefits</b>	<b>Percent of organizations offering</b>
Dental insurance	66%
Vision insurance	39%
Life insurance	64%
Short-term disability	35%
Long-term disability	36%
Retirement benefits	64%
Tuition reimbursement	16%
Wellness programs	21%
Other	43%

## E. Direct support turnover and job vacancies

Workforce stability is critical to adequately support people with disabilities and older adults. Measures that are helpful to understand the stability of the workforce are the proportion of people that leave positions in any given year (i.e., turnover), how many positions are not filled or job vacancies.

## Turnover

Turnover creates a variety of problems for provider organizations. The costs for replacing DSP can be high because of the time it takes to hire and train new employees. As a result, turnover negatively affects company performance and reduces service quality.

Turnover is a measure used to understand the stability of the workforce because it may indicate people are not staying in positions long enough to gain experience to perform their work adequately. High turnover also may indicate a more inexperienced workforce. An unstable, inexperienced workforce that supports people with disabilities and older adults can result in lower service quality, as there is no opportunity to build personal relationships and trust.

During the survey period, the national average [turnover rate for the healthcare and social assistance industry](#), which includes direct support worker-like occupations, was 33 percent. The DWRS labor market survey asked about annual turnover and found the rate for direct support workers in Minnesota was more than 48 percent. If turnover continued at this rate, the entire workforce would be completely replaced within 25 months.

## Vacancy rates

High percentages of job vacancies indicate that there are not enough workers to fulfill the demand in the field, meaning those employed do too much work or have work not being completed. During the same period covered in our survey, the [Minnesota job vacancy rate](#) was 4.9 percent for all positions. Our data shows that the full-time median statewide vacancy rate for direct support workers is more than four times higher at 19.9 percent (of total estimated DSP positions).

The combination of high turnover and job vacancies indicate an unstable workforce that does not have the experience to learn their jobs fully while also taking on more work to make up for unfilled positions. This level of work can lead to burnout and the further loss of direct support workers from an already strained workforce.

## F. DSP supervisors

In addition to direct support professionals, supervisors play an integral role in the success of the service system for people with disabilities and older adults. DSP supervisors provide oversight to DSP work and often step in to fill gaps in availability of staff. The model of supervision varies by provider organization, though broader measures of workforce stability can be applied. DHS determined that the weighted median starting salary for supervisors was \$40,333. The weighted median salary for supervisors who have been with their organization for longer than a year was \$42,196.

In order to better understand how unfilled, direct support shifts are filled with high turnover and vacancy rates for DSP, we also asked provider organizations if supervisors were compensated beyond their salary when required to work any unfilled direct support shift. Of the provider organizations that responded, only 33 percent offered some type of additional compensation for these shifts, meaning that 67 percent of organizations do not. The compensation offered to supervisors in these cases included a one-time bonus, differential pay and the direct support worker wage for the hours worked.

## G. Other findings

Outside of normative labor market measures, the survey asked about other pressing concerns facing the sampled group of providers. One such concern is local minimum-wage and sick-time ordinances that are coming into effect.

### Minimum wage

Both Minneapolis and St. Paul have passed local \$15/hour minimum wage laws in recent years. Between being passed and full implementation of the municipal minimum wage, the hourly wage requirements will be graduated upward. Minneapolis and St. Paul \$15/hour minimum wage for small businesses will be fully implemented respectively by July 1, 2024, and July 1, 2025. For large businesses, the ordinances will be fully implemented effective 2022 and 2023, respectively.

Assuming the metro region's median starting wage of \$12.74 for DSP, large business would be out of compliance with the Minneapolis law as soon as July 1, 2020.

**Table 9: Minneapolis and St. Paul \$15/hour minimum wage implementation timeline**

Time period	Minneapolis large businesses (more than 100 employees)	St. Paul large businesses (100-9,999 employees)	Minneapolis small businesses (100 or fewer employees)	St. Paul small businesses (5-99 employees)	St. Paul micro businesses (fewer than 5 employees)*
July 1, 2019	\$12.25	---	\$11.00	---	---
July 1, 2020	\$13.25	\$11.50	\$11.75	\$10.00	\$9.25
July 1, 2021	\$14.25	\$12.50	\$12.50	\$11.00	\$10.00
July 1, 2022	\$15.00	\$13.50	\$13.50	\$12.00	\$10.75
July 1, 2023	City rate	\$15.00	\$14.50	\$13.00	\$11.50
July 1, 2024	City rate	City rate	\$15.00	\$14.00	\$12.25
July 1, 2025	City rate	City rate	City rate	\$15.00	\$13.25
July 1, 2026	City rate	City rate	City rate	City rate	\$14.25
July 1, 2027	City rate	City rate	City rate	City rate	\$15.00

- **NOTE:** Business size not applicable under Minneapolis wage ordinance

### Sick and safe time

Similar to the minimum wage ordinances, Minneapolis, St. Paul and Duluth have passed rules that require most employers to provide paid time off for employees. These rules have gone into effect between 2018 and 2020. They create another potential issue for the DSP labor market. The survey found 26 percent of DSP worked for an organization that was required by local ordinance to provide sick and safe time. It also found that about a third of all full-time workers and more than half of part-time workers did not have access to paid time off (including sick, vacation or PTO). Businesses subject to these laws could receive fines if they are found to be noncompliant.

## VII. Conclusion

The DWRS Labor Market Survey marks a new phase of data collection for the direct support labor market in Minnesota. With this work, policymakers can track the health of the labor market year-over-year to better understand the effects of further investment or policy changes.

This found that this labor market has notably low wages, lacks access to affordable benefits and is highly unstable due to turnover. These findings will expand conversations about wages and benefit access for DSP, and lend itself to the broader dialogue about the direct support workforce crisis the nation is experiencing.

# VIII. Appendix: Survey language

Please note that the survey was administered on the Snap Survey platform. All resources provided here were for the planning and preparation of respondents. The instructions and survey below include all resources provided to survey participants except for one-on-one technical assistance.

## A. Instructions for survey respondents

The following are the instructions survey respondents received.

### Instructions to complete the DWRS labor market report survey

Minnesota law requires provider agencies that are enrolled to provide services with rates determined by the Disability Waiver Rates System (DWRS) to submit labor market data annually to the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), ([Minn. Stat., §256B.4914, subd. 10a\(g\)](#)). If your organization was randomly selected to participate in a statewide survey, you would have received an email invite on Sept. 9, 2019.

This required survey is intended to better understand wages, benefits, size and scope of the direct support workforce in Minnesota. DHS will use the data gathered from this survey to inform the public and decision-makers in the state about the direct support labor market. DHS will report findings to the legislature in February 2020.

### Section I: Instructions

If selected, your organization has four weeks to complete this survey. All completed surveys must be submitted by Oct. 11, 2019. Failure to meet this deadline could result in a stop of payment for service. If for any reason you are unable to complete the survey via the unique link, email [dsd.fiscal@state.mn.us](mailto:dsd.fiscal@state.mn.us).

#### 1. Time period

This survey asks questions about your organizations practices and employees for the period from Jan. 1, 2018, through Dec. 31, 2018. Please answer questions based on that period of time, unless otherwise specified. We understand that practices or wages may have changed since that time, so please keep the reporting period in mind.

#### 2. What to report

Report information for your entire organization (unless otherwise asked for specific subsets of employees). The organization, for the purpose of this survey, is all business under your legal entity or Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN).

#### 3. Who should complete this survey?

A person in your organization with access to personnel data as well as a person with financial knowledge of the organization should complete this survey. Some parts may require advanced preparation to collect data and/or

may require more than one individual to fill it out. You will be able to save your work and return to the online survey, if you choose to do data entry in multiple sessions.

#### 4. Questions

During the survey period, if you have any questions email [dsd.fiscal@state.mn.us](mailto:dsd.fiscal@state.mn.us) and include “2019 Labor Market Survey” in the subject line. Allow three business days for a response.

### Section II: Definitions

In order to collect consistent data about the direct support labor market, consider the following definitions to answer the questions in this survey.

#### Direct support professional (DSP)

Employees whose primary responsibilities (more than 50 percent of their role) include providing support, training, supervision and personal assistance to people with disabilities.

This does NOT include nurses and other licensed professional staff (e.g. LPN, RNs, licensed social workers, etc.). This also does NOT include staff that does not provide direct support tasks (e.g. cooks, janitors, administrative staff, etc.).

Consumer directed community supports (CDCS) and Consumer Support Grant workers are NOT included in the DSP definition.

#### Direct support professional supervisor (DSP supervisor)

Employees whose primary responsibility (more than 50 percent of their role) is the supervision of DSP. While these individuals may perform direct support tasks, their primary job duty is to supervise employees and manage programs. These individuals may or may not be licensed.

#### Full-time/part-time

For the purposes of this survey full-time is defined as anyone who typically (more than 50 percent of the time) works 30 or more hours per week, and part-time is defined as anyone who typically works 29 hours or less per week.

#### Benefits

Include the following benefits when reporting your costs:

- Health insurance
- Dental insurance
- Vision insurance
- Life insurance
- Short-term disability
- Long-term disability
- Retirement
- Tuition reimbursement
- Wellness programs.

## Disability waiver services

The services provided via the four home and community-based (HCBS) disability waivers (CAC, CADI, BI and DD) in Minnesota. The follow lists the services and their respective service types for clarification.

### SERVICE TYPE/BUCKET: DAY SERVICES

Service names that fall under day services include:

- Adult day care services
- Adult day care services (FADS)
- Day training and habilitation
- Prevocational services
- Structured day.

### SERVICE TYPE/BUCKET: RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Service names that fall under residential services include:

- Customized living
- Customized living 24-hour
- Customized living 24-hour, corporate
- Corporate foster care adult/child
- Supported living service, adult/child corporate
- Supported living service, family, adult/child
- Residential care services.

### SERVICE TYPE/BUCKET: UNIT-BASED SERVICES

Service names that fall under unit-based services include:

- 24-hour emergency assistance
- Adult companion services
- Chore services
- Crisis respite
- Homemaker/assist personal care
- Homemaker/cleaning
- Housing access coordinator
- In-home family support
- Independent living skills training
- Independent living skills group therapy
- Independent living skills individual therapy
- Individualized home support
- Individualized home support remote
- Night supervision
- Personal support
- Positive supports
- Respite – in home/out of home
- Supported employment
- Supported living services, adult/child
- Supported living services, adult own home
- Supported living services, adult/child corporate.

## B. Survey language

The following includes the questions survey respondents encountered. After the introduction and instructions, the survey started at Section III.

### Section III: Provider information

Enter the following on the online form. Update pre-populated information, if necessary.

1. Organization name \_\_\_\_\_
2. FEIN \_\_\_\_\_
3. Name(s) of person(s) completing the survey \_\_\_\_\_
4. Contact phone number (format XXX-XXX-XXXX) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4a. Ext (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Contact email address \_\_\_\_\_
  - 5a. Secondary email address (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

### Section IV: Organization profile

Reminder: Provide information for your entire organization, not a specific site or home.

6. What percent of the services delivered by your organization are in the metro area, regional centers and greater Minnesota? (Note: Numbers should add to 100 percent, do not use decimals).

**Metro:** Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Washington \_\_\_\_\_

**Regional centers:** Blue Earth (Mankato), Clay (Moorhead), Olmsted (Rochester), St. Louis (Duluth) and Stearns (St. Cloud) \_\_\_\_\_

**Greater Minnesota:** Remaining 65 counties in greater Minnesota \_\_\_\_\_

7. How many total people (with or without disabilities) does your organization currently serve? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Of the total number of people you serve, how many use HCBS disability waivers (CAC, CADI, BI and DD)?  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. What were your organization's total revenues for calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What were your organization's total disability-waiver-only revenues for calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

## Section V: Staffing

### 1. Direct support professionals (DSP)

Reminder: This category only includes non-licensed employees that provide direct support to people the majority of the time. See the [DSP definition](#) for more details.

11. What was the total number of people employed at your organization as of Dec. 31, 2018?

\_\_\_\_\_

12. What was the total number of DSP employed at your organization as of Dec. 31, 2018?

\_\_\_\_\_

13. Of the total number of DSP employed as of Dec. 31, 2018, how many were considered full-time and part-time?

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

14. What was the total wages amount paid for all DSP (including all pay types and taxes) for calendar year 2018?

\_\_\_\_\_

15. What was the total overtime wages amount paid for DSP during calendar year 2018 including payroll taxes? (Include the entire wage paid or 150% of the hourly wage) \_\_\_\_\_

16. What was the total benefits amount paid for DSP (including only employer expenses) for calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

17. What was the total number of regular hours (excluding any paid time off) for all DSP during calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

18. What was the total number of overtime hours for all DSP during calendar year 2018?

\_\_\_\_\_

### 2. DSP supervisors

Reminder: This category only includes employees whose primary responsibility is the supervision of DSP. See [DSP supervisor definition](#) for more details.

19. What was the total number of DSP supervisors employed at your organization as of Dec. 31, 2018?

\_\_\_\_\_

20. What was the total salaries amount paid for all supervisors (including all pay types and taxes) for calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

21. What were the total benefits amount paid for supervisors (including only employer expenses) for calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. All other employees

Reminder: This category includes all employees not captured in the previous two categories. See the [definitions](#) for more details.

**22.** What was the total salaries amount paid for all other employees who are not DSP or supervisors already reported (including all pay types and taxes) for calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

**23.** What was the total benefits amount paid for people who are not DSP or supervisors already reported (including only employer expenses) for calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. Other organization questions

**24.** Was your organization subject to any local minimum wage ordinance(s) in 2018?

- Yes
- No (skip to 25)

*If yes to 24, 24a.* What cities had a local minimum wage in 2018?

- Duluth (*If yes, 24a1.* What was Duluth's 2018 minimum wage? \_\_\_\_\_)
- Minneapolis (*If yes, 24a2.* What was Minneapolis 2018 minimum wage? \_\_\_\_\_)
- St. Paul (*If yes, 24a3.* What was St. Paul's 2018 minimum wage? \_\_\_\_\_)
- Other (describe)

*If other, ... 24a4.* What was the other 2018 minimum wage(s) you operated under?

\_\_\_\_\_

**25.** Are you required by local ordinance to provide safe and sick time?

- Yes
- No (skip to 26)

*If yes to 25, 25a.* What city?

- St. Paul
- Minneapolis
- Duluth
- Other

*If other, describe:* \_\_\_\_\_

## Section VI: Wages

### 1. DSP

Reminder: This category only includes non-licensed employees who provide direct support to people the majority of the time. See the [DSP definition](#) for more details.

If you do not breakout DSP wages by employment type, answer the question the same for each.

**26.** What was the average starting wage per hour for DSP who provide awake direct support service for calendar year 2018?

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

**27.** What was the average wage per hour for DSP who have been with your organization for more than one year who provide awake direct support service for calendar year 2018?

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

**28.** What was the average starting wage per hour for DSP providing asleep direct support service for calendar year 2018?

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

**29.** What was the average wage per hour for DSP who have been with your organization for more than one year who provide sleep direct support service for calendar year 2018?

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. DSP supervisors

Reminder: This category only includes employees whose primary responsibility is the supervision of DSP. See the DSP supervisor definition for more details

**30.** What was the average starting salary for supervisors for calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

**31.** What was the average salary for supervisors who have been with your organization for more that one year for calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

## Section VII: Retention

### 1. DSP

Reminder: This category only includes non-licensed employees that provide direct support to people the majority of the time. See the DSP definition for more details.

**32.** How many DSP left your agency during calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, of all the DSP who left your organization:*

**32a.** How many left in the first 0-6 months of employment? \_\_\_\_\_

**32b.** How many left in the first 7-12 months of employment? \_\_\_\_\_

**33.** How many DSP would you have had to hire as of Dec. 31, 2018, to fill all funded, but vacant positions?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 2. DSP supervisors

Reminder: This category only includes employees whose primary responsibility is the supervision of direct support professionals. See the DSP supervisor definition for more details.

**34.** How many supervisors left your agency during calendar year 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, of all the DSP supervisors who left your organization:*

**34a.** How many left in the first 0-6 months of employment? \_\_\_\_\_

**34b.** How many left in the first 7-12 months of employment? \_\_\_\_\_

**34c.** Does your organization compensate frontline supervisors when they have to work a direct support worker shift because they cannot find a replacement direct support worker?

- Yes
- No (If not, skip to 35)

*If yes, 34d.* How do you compensate the supervisor?

- One-time bonus
- Differential pay above and beyond their salary
- DSP wage above and beyond their salary
- Other

*If other, describe :* \_\_\_\_\_

## Section VIII: Other pay types

Reminder: This category applies to your organization's practice during calendar year 2018. The category of DSP only includes non-licensed employees that provide direct support to people the majority of the time. See the definitions section for more details.

If you do not break-out DSP benefits by employment type, answer the question the same for each.

**35.** Does your organization offer holiday pay to any of your employees?

- Yes
- No (skip to 36)

*If yes to 35, 35a.* Are full-time DSP eligible for holiday pay?

- Yes
- No (skip to 35b)

*If yes, 35a-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired full-time DSP are eligible for holiday pay? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 35a-2.* What is the minimum number of hours per week that a full-time DSP must work to be eligible for holiday pay? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 35a-3.* How many full-time DSP were eligible for holiday pay as of Dec. 31, 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 35, 35b.* Are part-time DSP eligible for holiday pay?

- Yes
- No (skip to 36)

*If yes, 35b-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired part-time DSP are eligible for holiday pay? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 35b-2.* What is the minimum number of hours per week that a part-time DSP must work to be eligible for holiday pay? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 35b-3.* How many part-time DSP were eligible for holiday pay as of Dec. 31, 2018?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**36.** Does your organization offer paid sick time to any of your employees?

- Yes
- No (skip to 37)

*If yes to 36, 36a.* Are full-time DSP eligible for paid sick time?

- Yes
- No (skip to 36b)

*If yes, 36a-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired full-time DSP are eligible for paid sick time? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 36a-2.* What is the minimum number of hours per week that a full-time DSP must work to be eligible for paid sick time? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 36a-3.* How many full-time DSP were eligible for paid sick time as of Dec. 31, 2018?  
\_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 36, 36b.* Are part-time DSP eligible for paid sick time?

- Yes
- No (skip to 37)

*If yes, 36b-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired part-time DSP are eligible for paid sick time? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 36b-2. What is the minimum number of hours per week that a part-time DSP must work to be eligible for paid sick time? \_\_\_\_\_*

*If yes, 36b-3. How many part-time DSP were eligible for paid sick time as of Dec. 31, 2018?  
\_\_\_\_\_*

**37. Does your organization offer paid vacation time to any of your employees?**

- Yes
- No (skip to 38)

*If yes to 37, 37a. Are full-time DSP eligible for paid vacation time?*

- Yes
- No (Skip to 37b)

*If yes to 37a, 37a-1. What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired full-time DSP are eligible for paid vacation time? \_\_\_\_\_*

*If yes to 37a, 37a-2. What is the minimum number of hours per week that a full-time DSP must work to be eligible for paid vacation time? \_\_\_\_\_*

*If yes to 37a, 37a-3. How many full-time DSP were eligible for paid vacation time as of Dec. 31, 2018? \_\_\_\_\_*

*If yes to 37, 37b. Are part-time DSP eligible for paid vacation time?*

- Yes
- No

*If yes to 37b, 37b-1. What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired part-time DSP are eligible for paid vacation time? \_\_\_\_\_*

*If yes to 37b, 37b-2. What is the minimum number of hours per week that a part-time DSP must work to be eligible for paid vacation time? \_\_\_\_\_*

*If yes to 37b, 37b-3. How many part-time DSP were eligible for paid vacation time as of Dec. 31, 2018? \_\_\_\_\_*

**38. Does your organization offer paid time off (separate from sick and vacation) to any of your employees?**

- Yes
- No (skip to 39)

*If yes to 38, 38a. Are full-time DSP eligible for non-vacation/sick paid time off?*

- Yes
- No (skip to 38b)

*If yes, 38a-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired full-time DSP are eligible for paid time off? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 38a-2.* What is the minimum number of hours per week that a full-time DSP must work to be eligible for paid time off? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 38a-3.* How many full-time DSP were eligible for paid time off as of Dec. 31, 2018? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 38, 38b.* Are part-time DSP eligible for non-vacation/sick paid time off?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, 38b-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired part-time DSP are eligible for paid time off? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 38b-2.* What is the minimum number of hours per week that a part-time DSP must work to be eligible for paid time off? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 38b-3.* How many part-time DSP were eligible for paid time off as of Dec. 31, 2018?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**39.** Does your organization offer overtime hours to any of your employees?

- Yes
- No (skip to 40)

*If yes to 39, 39a.* Are full-time DSP eligible for overtime hours?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, 39a-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired full-time DSP are eligible for overtime hours? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 39a-2.* What is the minimum number of hours per week that a full-time DSP must work to be eligible for overtime hours? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 39a-3.* How many full-time DSP were eligible for overtime hours as of Dec. 31, 2018?  
\_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 39, 39b.* Are part-time DSP eligible for overtime hours?

- Yes
- No

*If yes, 39b-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired part-time DSP are eligible for overtime hours? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 39b-2.* What is the minimum number of hours per week that a part-time DSP must work to be eligible for overtime hours? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes, 39b-3.* How many part-time DSP were eligible for overtime hours as of Dec. 31, 2018?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Section IX: Benefits

Reminder: This category applies to your organization's practice during calendar year 2018. The category of DSP only includes non-licensed employees who provide direct support to people the majority of the time. See the definitions section for more details.

If you do not break-out DSP benefits by employment type, please answer the question the same for each.

### 1. Health insurance

**40.** Does your organization offer health insurance to any of your employees?

- Yes
- No (skip to 41)

*If yes to 40, 40a.* Are full-time DSP eligible for health insurance?

- Yes
- No (skip to 40b)

*If yes to 40a, 40a-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired full-time DSP are eligible for health insurance? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 40a, 40a-2.* What is the minimum number of hours per week that a full-time DSP must work to be eligible for health insurance? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 40a, 40a-3.* How many full-time DSP were eligible for health insurance as of Dec. 31, 2018?  
\_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 40, 40b.* Are part-time DSP eligible for health insurance?

- Yes
- No

*If yes to 40b, 40b-1.* What is the waiting period (in weeks) before newly hired part-time DSP are eligible for health insurance? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 40b, 40b-2.* What is the minimum number of hours per week that a part-time DSP must work to be eligible for health insurance? \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 40b, 40b-3.* How many part-time DSP were eligible for health insurance as of Dec. 31, 2018?  
\_\_\_\_\_

If yes to 40, **40c.** What type of health insurance do you offer to DSP? (check all that apply)

- High-deductible plan
- Full-coverage plan
- Other

If other, describe: \_\_\_\_\_

If yes to 40, **40d.** How much is your organization's monthly health insurance premium contribution per DSP (i.e., the amount the employer pays)? (no decimals)

Individual coverage \_\_\_\_\_

Two-person coverage \_\_\_\_\_

Family coverage \_\_\_\_\_

If yes to 40, **40e.** How much is the DSP monthly health insurance premium contribution (i.e., the amount the worker pays)? (no decimals)

Individual coverage \_\_\_\_\_

Two-person coverage \_\_\_\_\_

Family coverage \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Other benefits

**41.** Which of these additional benefits do you offer your DSP? (check all that apply.)

- Dental insurance
- Vision insurance
- Life insurance
- Short-term disability
- Long-term disability
- Retirement benefits
- Tuition reimbursement (e.g., college course, certificate programs, etc.)
- Wellness programs
- Other

If other, describe: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section X: Service-specific wages

Reminder: This category only includes non-licensed employees that provide direct support to people the majority of the time. See the definition sections for [day](#), [residential](#) and [unit-based](#) services for more details.

If you do not break-out DSP wages by employment type, answer the question the same for each.

### 1. Day services

**42.** Do you provide day services?

- Yes
- No (skip to 43)

*If yes to 42, **42a.** What was the average starting wage per hour in calendar year 2018 for DSP who provide awake direct support day services?*

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 42, **43b.** What was the average wage per hour in calendar year 2018 for DSP who have been with your organization for more than one year who provide awake direct support day services?*

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Residential services

**43.** Do you provide residential services?

- Yes
- No (skip to 44)

*If yes to 43, **43a.** What was the average starting wage per hour in calendar year 2018 for DSP who provide awake direct support residential services?*

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 43, **44b.** What was the average wage per hour in calendar year 2018 for DSP who have been with your organization for more than one year who provide awake direct support residential services?*

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

## 3. Unit-based services

**44.** Do you provide unit-based services?

- Yes
- No (skip to 45)

*If yes to 44, **45a.** What was the average starting wage per hour in calendar year 2018 for DSP who provide awake direct support unit-based services?*

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

*If yes to 44, **44b.** What was the average wage per hour in calendar year 2018 for DSP who have been with your organization for over one year who provide awake direct support unit-based services?*

Full-time \_\_\_\_\_

Part-time \_\_\_\_\_

## Section XI: Miscellaneous (optional)

45. What is the most significant administrative burden you face in your organization (e.g., time, resources, etc.)?

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46. What way do you prefer to receive information from DHS?

- eList
- Email
- MN.IT mailbox
- Phone
- Online (via DHS websites, i.e., TrainLink, manuals, public website, etc.)
- U.S. mail

47. If additional resources were available, what would you be doing differently in your organization?

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48. Do you provide person-centered training for your staff?

- Yes
- No

*If yes to 48, 48a.* Who provides your person-centered training? (e.g., agency staff, online or other courses, etc.)

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## Submit to DHS

When complete, submit your survey using the submit button on the online form.

If you have questions about filling out the online form, contact [dsd.fiscal@state.mn.us](mailto:dsd.fiscal@state.mn.us).