


Schedule F: Agency Workforce Plan

The Health and Human Services System Workforce Plan, found on the following pages, was developed by the Department of Human Resources, Division of System Support Services, Health and Human Services Commission, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 2056.0021.



**Strategic Staffing
Analysis and Workforce
Plan
For the Planning Period
2025-2029**

**As Required by
Texas Government Code
Section 2056.0021**

**Health and Human Services
May 2024**



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

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1. Executive Summary

The Health and Human Services (HHS) Strategic Staffing Analysis and Workforce Plan is an integral part of the HHS staffing plan. Workforce planning is a business necessity due to many factors, including:

- Constraints on funding;
- Increasing demand for HHS services;
- Increasing number of employees reaching retirement age resulting in fewer, less experienced workers available as replacements; and
- Increasing competition for highly skilled employees.

HHS agencies proactively address these challenges by preparing for the future and reducing risks. With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) has made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts to reduce the vacancies in difficult to fill critical positions for eligibility and state hospital workforce. As a result of these funds, the vacancy rate for the eligibility workforce as of May 2024 is 3.55 percent. The vacancy rate for all positions HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Texas Government Code, Section 2056.0021 requires state agencies to develop a workforce plan in accordance with guidelines developed by the State Auditor's Office (SAO) and include it in their strategic plan. To meet these requirements, this HHS Workforce Plan - Schedule F attachment to the HHSC and the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Strategic Plans for the Fiscal Years 2025–2029 - analyzes the following key elements for HHS:

- **Current Workforce Demographics** – Describes HHS workforce demographics, and whether minority groups are underutilized when compared to the state Civilian Labor Force (CLF) for Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) job categories.
- **Expected Workforce Challenges** – Describes anticipated staffing needs based on population trends, projected job growth and other demographic trends.
- **Strategies to Meet Workforce Needs** - Describes recruitment and retention strategies that address expected workforce challenges.

2. Health and Human Services

HHS, as reflected in Article II of the General Appropriations Act, consists of the two agencies described below.

Health and Human Services Commission. HHSC began services in 1991. HHSC manages the day-to-day operations of state supported living centers and state hospitals, and administers programs that deliver benefits and services, including:

- Medicaid for families and children.
- Long-term care for people who are older or who have disabilities.
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food benefits and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance.
- Behavioral health services.
- Services to help keep people who are older or who have disabilities in their homes and communities.
- Services for women.
- Services for people with special health needs.
- Services for people with mental health issues.

The agency also oversees regulatory functions including:

- Licensing and credentialing long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes and assisted living facilities.
- Health care facilities regulation.
- Licensing child-care providers.

Department of State Health Services. DSHS includes programs previously administered by the Texas Department of Health, the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, and the Health Care Information Council. The agency began services on September 1, 2004, and leads the state public health system and provides programs and services at the state, regional, and local levels. DSHS is organized in these programmatic areas, including Public Health Laboratory, Infectious Disease Prevention, Regional and Local Health Operations, Consumer Protection, Community Health Improvement, Chief State Epidemiologist, and the Center for Public Health Policy and Practice that:

- prevent, detect, and respond to infectious diseases;
- lead public health and medical response during disasters and emergencies;
- develop and implement evidence-based public health interventions through data analysis and science;
- reduce health risks and threats by establishing minimum standards for consumer protection; and
- promote healthy living through disease and injury prevention.

HHS Vision

Making a positive difference in the lives of the people we serve.

HHS Mission

We serve Texas.

3. Workforce Demographics

Figure 1 below shows a total of 39,985 full-time and part-time employees across HHS. The HHS workforce has increased by eight percent (3,165 employees) between August 31, 2021 and August 31, 2023. Of these, 36,353 are employed by HHSC and 3,632 are employed by DSHS (please refer to Figure 2).¹

Figure 1: HHS Workforce (FY21 - FY23)

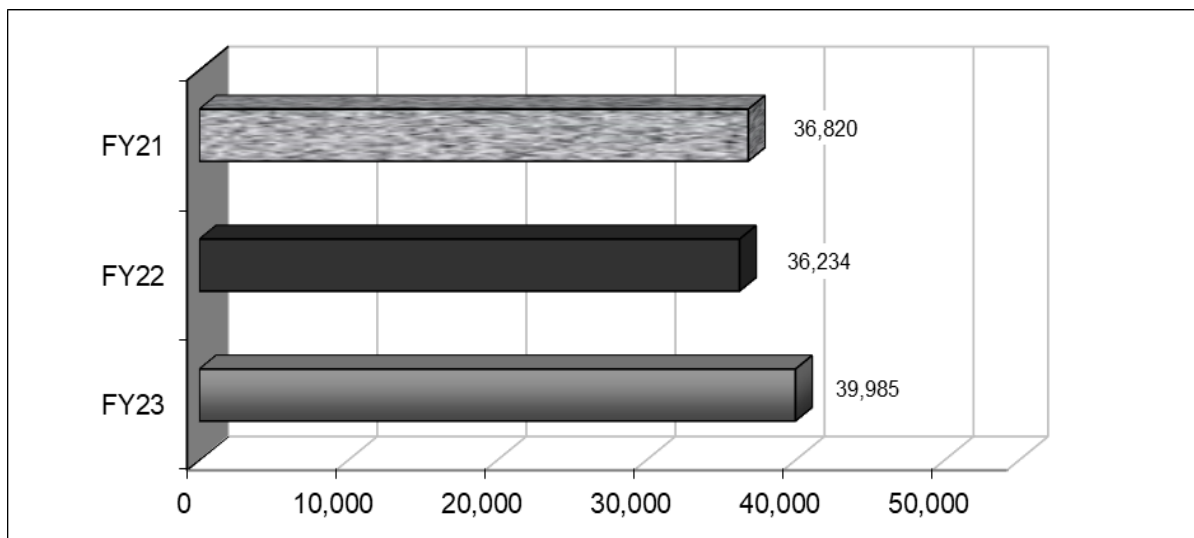
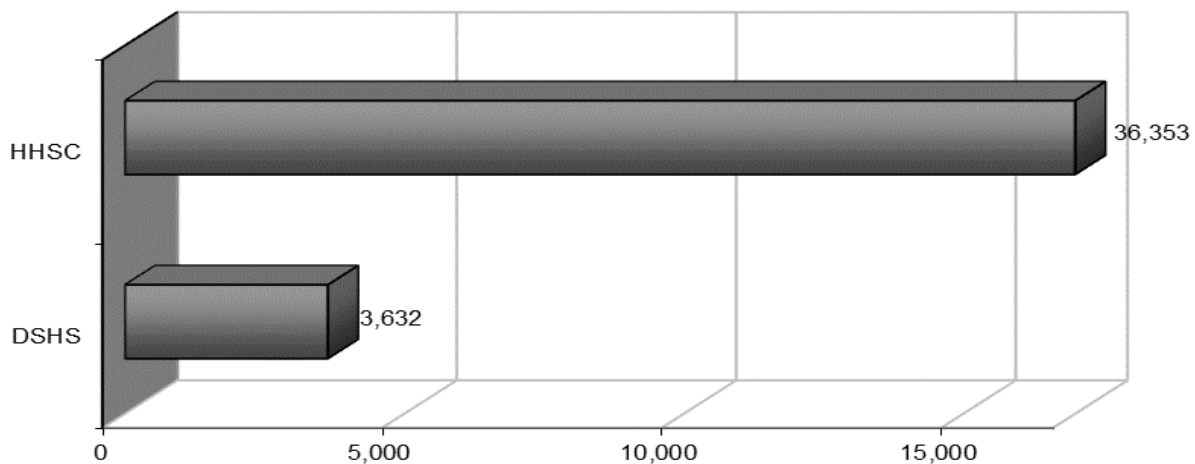


Figure 2: HHS Workforce by Agency for FY23



The data for turnover and vacancy rates included in this report are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023. As such they do not reflect the turnover or vacancy rates as of the date of this publication.

Job Families

Eighty-one percent of HHS employees (32,287 employees) work in 23 job families (please refer to Table 1).

Table 1: HHS Largest Job Families for FY23

Job Family	Number of Employees
Human Services Specialists ²	6,641
Direct Support Professionals	4,878
Clerical Workers ³	2,931
Psychiatric Nursing Assistants	2,449
Program Specialists ⁴	2,280
Registered Nurses (RNs)	1,966
Managers ⁵	1,333
Program Supervisors	931
Rehabilitation Technicians	929
Inspectors ⁶	913
Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs)	883
Food Service Workers ⁷	823
Directors ⁸	738
Custodians ⁹	632
System Analysts ¹⁰	624
Maintenance Workers ¹¹	566
Security Officers	475
Accountants	427
Contract Specialists	417
Public Health Technicians ¹²	394
Investigators	381
Human Resource Developers ¹³	347
Claims Examiners	329

The data for turnover and vacancy rates included in this report are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023. As such they do not reflect the turnover or vacancy rates as of the date of this publication.

Gender

Most HHS employees are female, making up 72 percent of the HHS workforce (please refer to Table 2). This breakdown is consistent across HHS agencies (please refer to Table 3).

Table 2: HHS Workforce Gender (FY21 – FY23)

Gender	FY21	FY22	FY23
Male	27.9%	27.5%	27.6%
Female	72.1%	72.5%	72.4%

Table 3: HHS Agencies by Gender for FY23

Agency	Percentage Male	Percentage Female
HHSC	27.6%	72.4%
DSHS	27.8%	72.2%

Ethnicity

The workforce is diverse, with 35 percent White, 31 percent Hispanic, 27 percent Black, and 7 percent Other Ethnicities (please refer to Tables 4 and 5).

Table 4: HHS Workforce Ethnicity (FY21 – FY23)

Ethnicity	FY21	FY22	FY23
White	37.0%	36.0%	34.5%
Black	26.5%	26.1%	27.3%
Hispanic	30.6%	31.3%	31.2%
Other Ethnicities	5.9%	6.5%	7.0%

Table 5: HHS Agencies by Ethnicity for FY23

Agency	Percentage White	Percentage Black	Percentage Hispanic	Percentage Other Ethnicity
HHSC	33.8%	28.5%	31.0%	6.7%
DSHS	41.6%	15.4%	32.7%	10.2%

Age

The average age of an HHS worker is 45 years. This breakdown is consistent across HHS agencies (please refer to Tables 6 and 7).

Table 6: HHS Workforce Age (FY21 – FY23)

Age	FY21	FY22	FY23
Under 30	12.3%	12.6%	13.9%
30-39	23.4%	22.8%	22.9%
40-49	25.7%	25.7%	25.2%
50-59	25.5%	25.4%	24.6%
60 and Over	13.1%	13.5%	13.4%

Table 7: HHS Agencies by Age for FY23

Agency	Percentage Under 30	Percentage 30-39	Percentage 40-49	Percentage 50-59	Percentage 60 and over
HHSC	13.7%	22.8%	25.4%	24.8%	13.4%
DSHS	15.8%	24.2%	23.7%	23.0%	13.4%

Utilization Analysis

Texas Labor Code, Section 21.501, requires each state agency analyze its workforce and compare the number of Blacks, Hispanics and females employed by the agency to the available state CLF for each job category, as required by Texas Labor Code, Section 21.0035.

A utilization analysis was conducted for each HHS agency using the 80 percent rule developed by the United States Department of Labor under 29 Code of Federal Regulations, Section 1607.4(D), which compares the actual number of employees to the expected number of employees based on the available state CLF for Black, Hispanic, and female employees. For the purposes of this analysis, a group is considered potentially underutilized when the actual representation in the workforce is less than 80 percent of what the expected number would be based on the CLF.

The HHS Civil Rights Office (CRO) conducted analyses for each HHS agency's workforce and identified potential underutilization.

The fiscal year 2023 HHS utilization analysis indicated potential underutilization in both the HHSC and DSHS workforces. Table 8 includes job categories with potential underutilization of a specific group.

NOTE: "N/A" indicates that the number of employees in the category was too small to test for statistical significance.

Table 8: HHS Utilization Analysis Results for FY23^{14 15 16 17}

Job Category	HHS	HHSC	DSHS
Officials/Administrators	--	--	Black
Professionals	--	--	--
Technicians	--	--	--
Protective Service	Black	Black	Female
Administrative Support	--	--	--
Skilled Craft	Black Female	Black Female	N/A N/A
Service Maintenance	Hispanic	Hispanic	Black

Veterans

Four percent of the workforce (1,504 employees) are veterans (please refer to Table 9).

Table 9: HHS Workforce by Veteran Status for FY23

Agency	Number of Veterans	FY23 Percentage
HHSC	1,276	3.5%
DSHS	228	6.3%
HHS	1,504	3.8%

State Service

Thirty-seven percent of the workforce has 10 or more years of state service (please refer to Table 10). Twenty-six percent of the workforce have been with the state for less than two years. This breakdown is consistent across HHS agencies (please refer to Table 11).

Table 10: HHS Workforce Length of State Service (FY21 – FY23)

State Service	FY21	FY22	FY23
less than 2 years	18.8%	20.4%	26.4%
2-4 years	19.8%	19.4%	17.1%
5-9 years	21.9%	20.6%	19.3%
10 years or more	39.6%	39.5%	37.2%

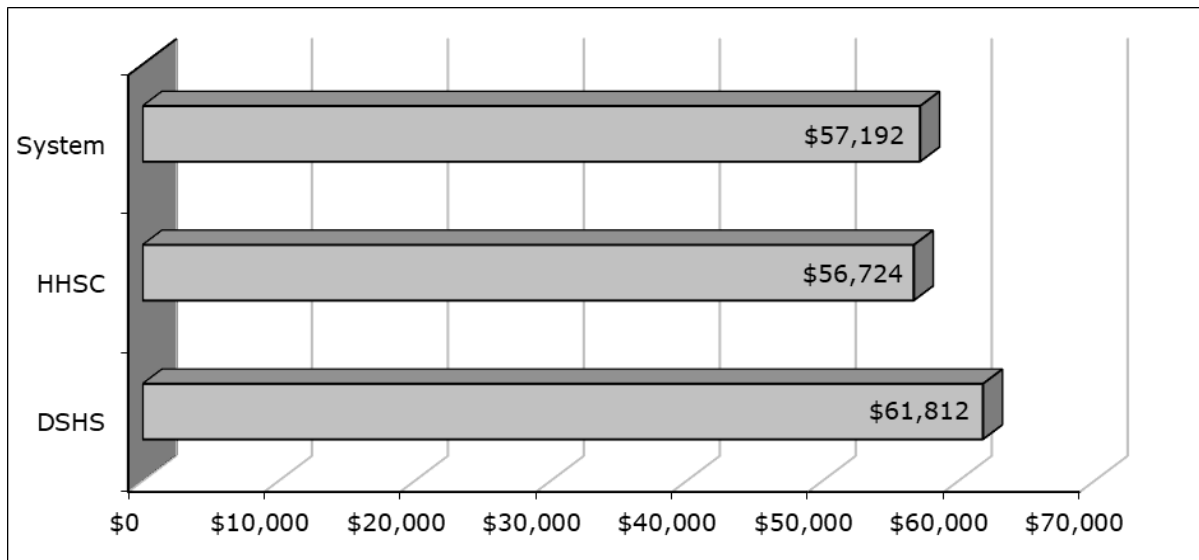
Table 11: HHS Agencies Workforce by Length of State Service for FY23

Agency	Percentage Less than 2 yrs.	Percentage 2-4 yrs.	Percentage 5-9 yrs.	Percentage 10 yrs. or more
HHSC	26.3%	17.5%	19.2%	37.1%
DSHS	26.4%	17.0%	19.3%	37.3%

Average Annual Employee Salary

The average annual salary for an HHS employee is \$57,192 (please refer to Figure 3). The average annual salary for DSHS is \$61,812 and HHSC is \$56,724.

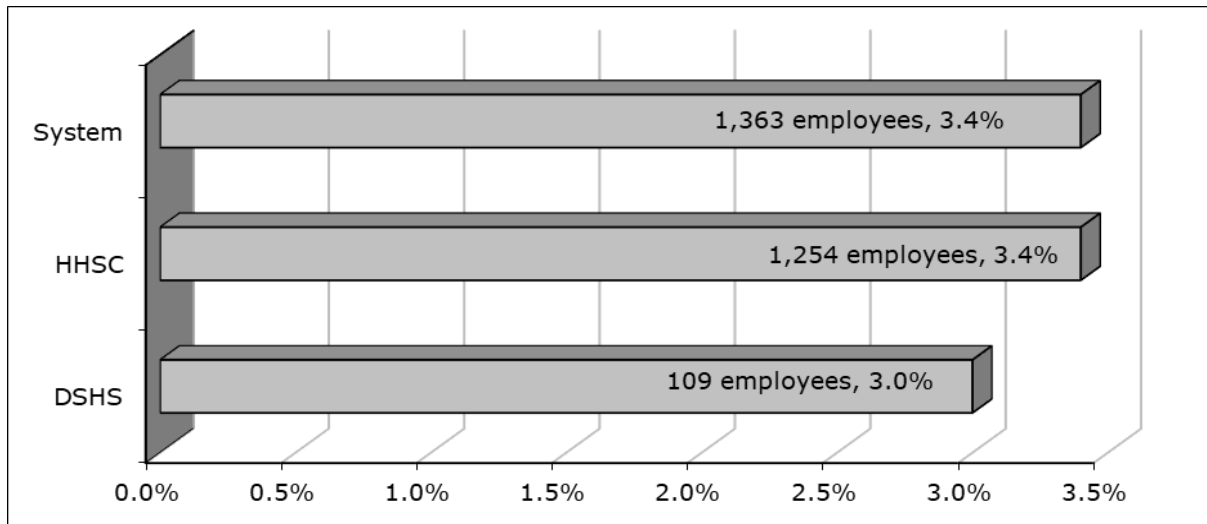
Figure 3: HHS Average Annual Salary by Agency for FY23



Return-to-Work Retirees

Rehired retirees constitute three percent of the total HHS workforce (please refer to Figure 4).

Figure 4: HHS Return-to-Work Retirees by Percent of Workforce for FY23



4. Turnover

The fiscal year 2023 HHS turnover rate was 21.4 percent, three percent higher than the statewide turnover rate of 18.7 percent (please refer to Table 12).^{18 19}

Table 12: HHS Workforce Turnover (FY21 – FY23) (excludes inter-HHS agency transfers)

Agency	FY21	FY22	FY23
HHS	26.1%	28.3%	21.4%
Statewide	21.5%	22.7%	18.7%

Of the two HHS agencies, HHSC experienced a higher turnover rate at 21.7 percent (please refer to Table 13).

Table 13: Turnover by HHS Agency for FY23 (includes inter-HHS agency transfers)

Agency	Average Annual Headcount	Total Separations	Turnover Rate
HHSC	36,521	7,923	21.7%
DSHS	3,639	686	18.9%
HHS	40,160	8,609	21.4%

Turnover at HHS agencies was highest for HHSC males at 21.9 percent and lowest for DSHS males at 16.0 percent (please refer to Table 14). Turnover was highest for Black employees at 27.2 percent and lowest for White employees at 18.7 percent (please refer to Table 15).

Table 14: HHS Agency Turnover by Gender for FY23 (includes inter-HHS agency transfers)

Agency	Gender	Average Annual Headcount	Total Separations	Turnover Rate
HHSC	Female	26,462	5,718	21.6%
	Male	10,059	2,205	21.9%
DSHS	Female	2,650	528	19.9%
	Male	989	158	16.0%
HHS	Female	29,113	6,246	21.5%
	Male	11,047	2,363	21.4%

Table 15: HHS Agency Turnover by Ethnicity for FY23 (includes inter-HHS agency transfers)

Agency	White	Black	Hispanic	Other Ethnicity ²⁰
HHSC	18.8%	27.3%	19.7%	22.2%
DSHS	17.8%	25.9%	16.8%	18.8%
HHS	18.7%	27.2%	19.4%	21.8%

Of the fiscal year 2023 separations, 73 percent were voluntary, and 26 percent were involuntary (please refer to Table 16).²¹ Voluntary separations include personal reasons, transfers to other agencies, and retirements. Involuntary separations include terminations at will, resignations in lieu of termination, and dismissals for cause.

Table 16: HHS Separations by Reason for FY23

Type of Separation	Reason	Separations	Percentage ²²
Voluntary	Personal reasons	5,079	58.93%
	Transfer to another agency	514	5.96%
	Retirement	695	8.06%
Involuntary	Termination at Will	61	0.71%
	Resignation in Lieu of Termination	143	1.66%
	Dismissal for Cause	2,059	23.89%

Certain job families have higher turnover rates including Direct Support Professionals at 40.7 percent, Psychiatric Nursing Assistants at 37.4 percent, and Food Service Workers at 33.7 percent (please refer to Table 17). The data in this table are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023. They do not reflect current turnover or vacancy rates as of the date of this publication.

Table 17: HHS Turnover by Job Family for FY23

Job Family	Average Annual Headcount	Separations	Turnover Rate
Direct Support Professionals	4,981	2,026	40.7%
Psychiatric Nursing Assistants	2,486	931	37.4%
Food Service Workers ²³	834	281	33.7%
Rehabilitation Teachers ²⁴	70	22	31.5%
Custodians ²⁵	638	184	28.9%
Vehicle Drivers	196	55	28.1%
Security Officers	471	123	26.1%
Research Specialists	134	32	24.0%
Human Services Technicians ²⁶	67	16	23.8%
Behavioral Health Specialists ²⁷	227	50	22.1%
Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs)	873	191	21.9%
Human Services Specialists ²⁸	6,611	1,441	21.8%
Purchasers	95	20	21.0%
Medical Technologists ²⁹	86	18	21.0%
Inventory and Store Specialists	141	29	20.6%
Clerical Workers ³⁰	3,048	623	20.4%
Psychiatrists ³¹	118	23	19.5%
Public Health Registered Nurses	116	22	18.9%
Inspectors ³²	816	154	18.9%
Psychologists ³³	101	19	18.8%
Safety Officers	53	10	18.8%
Microbiologists ³⁴	150	28	18.7%
Social Workers	221	40	18.1%
Investigators	503	87	17.3%
Health Physicists	52	9	17.2%
Epidemiologists	146	25	17.2%
Registered Nurses (RNs)	1,931	323	16.7%

The data for turnover and vacancy rates included in this report are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023. As such they do not reflect the turnover or vacancy rates as of the date of this publication.

5. Retirement Projections

As of August 31, 2023, 10 percent of the HHS workforce is potentially eligible to retire and leave state employment. Twenty-two percent of the current workforce could potentially retire in the next five years.³⁵

Tables 18 below shows the turnover rate for retirees.

Table 18: HHS Retirements - Percent of Workforce (FY19 – FY23)

Fiscal Year	Retirement Losses	Retirement Turnover Rate
2019	1,069	2.60%
2020	956	2.30%
2021	1,045	2.60%
2022	975	2.53%
2023	694	1.73%

Table 19 below shows the percent and number of eligible first-time retirees across HHS.

Table 19: HHS First-Time Retirement Eligible Projection (FY23 – FY28)

Agency	FY23		FY24		FY25		FY26		FY27		FY28	
HHSC	556	1.5%	843	2.3%	949	2.6%	1,053	3.0%	1,091	3.0%	1,147	3.2%
DSHS	78	2.2%	83	2.3%	91	2.5%	110	2.9%	111	3.1%	93	2.6%
HHS	634	1.6%	926	2.3%	1,040	2.6%	1,163	2.9%	1,202	3.0%	1,240	3.1%

The potential loss of this portion of the workforce means HHS will lose some of its most knowledgeable workers, including many employees in key positions. Effective succession planning and employee development will be critical in ensuring there are qualified individuals who can replace those leaving state service.

6. Employee Engagement

The Survey of Employee Engagement (SEE) provides agency leadership with insight on how employees perceive their work, workplace, and HHS. Reported data reflect a 2024 SEE response rate of 54 percent for HHSC and 67 percent for DSHS.

Engaged employees lead to higher productivity, a more skilled workforce, and reduced turnover. Factors which foster positive impressions of DSHS and HHSC and contribute to a commitment to stay employed include employee perceptions of their workgroup, understanding of their role within the agency, and satisfaction with their supervisor.

According to the 2024 SEE, 32 percent of HHSC employees are highly engaged, and 38 percent of DSHS employees exhibit similar levels of engagement (please refer to Table 20). Results also indicate HHSC and DSHS employees are concerned with compensation and do not feel compensation packages hold up when compared to similar jobs in other organizations. In both agencies, five percent of respondents indicated they intend to leave within the next 12 months.

Table 20: HHS Agency 2024 SEE Results on Employee Engagement

Agency	Highly Engaged	Engaged	Moderately Engaged	Disengaged
HHSC	32%	25%	31%	11%
DSHS	38%	28%	27%	8%

7. Critical Workforce Skills

The current climate of the information age, advances in technology, increasing state population, consolidation of services, right-sizing, and outsourcing will continue to place increased emphasis on the demand for well-trained and skilled staff.

The outsourcing and self-service automation of major HR functions, such as employee selection, have made it critical for HHS managers and employees to improve and commit to a continual learning of human resources policy, employee development, conflict resolution, time management, project management, and automation skills.

It is important for HHS to employ individuals who have the skills necessary to develop, implement, and evaluate HHS programs. These skills include:

- Analytics, assessment, and data management;
- Policy development and program planning;
- Communications;
- Basic public health sciences;
- Financial planning and management;
- Contract management;
- Technical proficiency; and
- Leadership and systems-thinking.

As HHS loses tenured staff, effective training is necessary to ensure current employees have the necessary skills to succeed in management positions.

To promote staff development and succession planning, HHS must continue to grow the skills and talents of its managers. HHS has demonstrated a leadership development focus by creating a formalized Leadership Development Program. This interagency training and mentoring program provides opportunities to enhance the growth of high-potential managers as they take on greater responsibility. The primary goals of the program are to:

- Prepare managers to take on higher and broader roles and responsibilities;

- Provide opportunities for managers to better understand critical management issues;
- Provide opportunities for managers to participate and contribute while learning; and
- Create a culture of collaborative leaders across HHS.

8. Environmental Assessment

The Texas Economy

Texas continues to sustain years of positive job growth, adding 650,100 jobs in 2022 and 426,900 in 2023.^{36 37} Texas economic growth remains healthy and is expected to gradually return to a more historically normal pace of expansion in 2024 following a strong pandemic recovery.³⁸

The Texas Employment Forecast indicates jobs will increase 2.0 percent with an expected 283,500 additional jobs in 2024. The forecast suggests job growth will continue, with employment reaching 14.4 million by December 2024. Ranking 5th in the nation, Texas had broad based job growth across major sectors, with only the high-tech services sector recording losses in 2023. Robust labor demand resulted in increased hourly wages, which rose nearly six percent last year.³⁹

Poverty in Texas

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defined the poverty level for 2024 according to household/family size as follows:

- \$31,200 or less for a family of four;
- \$25,820 or less for a family of three;
- \$20,440 or less for a family of two; and
- \$15,060 or less for individuals.⁴⁰

It is estimated that 14 percent of Texas residents live in families with annual incomes below the poverty level. This rate is slightly higher than the national poverty rate of 11.5 percent.⁴¹

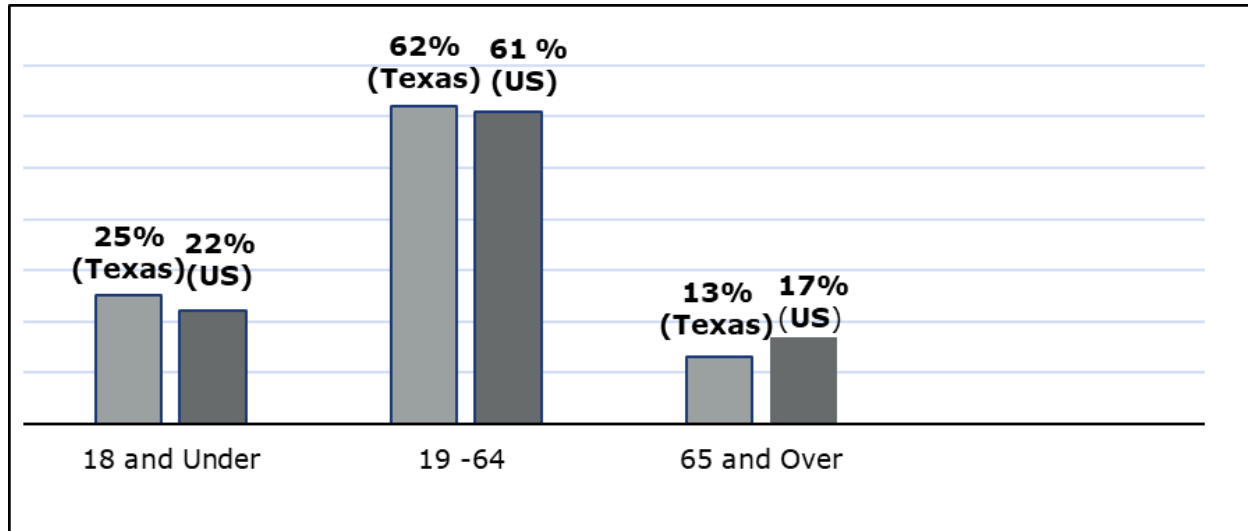
Population Growth

According to the United States Census Bureau, as of July 2023, the estimated population of Texas was over 30 million, which represents a 1.6 percent increase from 2022, and 4.7 percent increase from the census count in 2020.⁴²

The distribution of age groups in Texas closely mirrors the United States, with the largest percentage of Texas residents (62 percent) being between ages 19 to 64,

followed by those 18 and under (25 percent) and those 65 and over (13 percent) (please refer to Figure 5).⁴³

Figure 5: 2023 Texas and United States Population Distribution by Age⁴⁴



According to long-term population projections by the Texas State Data Center, the age category of Texans over 85 years of age is projected to nearly quadruple between 2010 and 2050, approaching 1.5 million. The age category including those 65 to 84 years of age is projected to be the second fastest growing, doubling in size by 2050, to a population of over 6.8 million.⁴⁵

9. Expected Workforce Challenges

HHS will need to continue to recruit and retain health and human services professionals. Certain jobs will continue to be essential to delivering services throughout HHS.

The data used for this analysis are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023. As such, they do not reflect the turnover or vacancy rates as of this publication.

With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC has made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts.^{46 47 48 49}

Direct Care Workers (Direct Support Professionals and Psychiatric Nursing Assistants)

HHS employs 7,327 direct care workers. The direct care worker group is made up of Direct Support Professionals in state supported living centers and Psychiatric Nursing Assistants in the state hospitals. The state supported living centers serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are medically fragile or who have behavioral problems. The centers provide campus-based direct services and support at 13 centers located throughout the state. The state hospitals provide rehabilitative mental health patient services for Texans in need. The Direct Support Professionals and Psychiatric Nursing Assistants require, at a minimum, a high school education or equivalent, or previous work experience necessary to perform the essential job functions.

The overall turnover rate for employees in this group is 40 percent annually. State supported living centers and state hospitals struggle to attract and retain qualified talent who provide direct care services to the residents and patients served.

NOTE: The data for turnover and vacancy rates represented above are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023, or fiscal year 2023. With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these direct-care positions. The vacancy rate for positions all HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Direct Support Professionals at State Supported Living Centers

There are 4,878 Direct Support Professionals in state supported living centers, representing 12 percent of the HHS total workforce. A typical Direct Support Professional is 40 years of age and has six years of state service. These employees provide 24-hour direct care to residents in state supported living centers. The Direct Support Professionals directly support residents by providing services including basic hygiene needs, dressing and bathing, general health care, and dining assistance. They support life-sustaining medical care including feeding residents and lifting individuals with physical challenges. Trained and experienced direct care staff is essential to ensure residents' safety, health, and well-being.

Direct Support Professionals, at a minimum, require a high school diploma or equivalent or previous work experience. The roles require extensive on-the-job training and it takes from six to nine months for a new Direct Support Professional to become proficient in the basic skills necessary to carry out routine job duties.

Turnover for Direct Support Professionals is 41 percent. During fiscal year 2023, there were 2,026 separations in the Direct Support Professionals job family. Within this job family, entry-level positions (Direct Support Professional I) experienced the highest turnover rate at 63 percent. Turnover rates by location ranged from 50 percent at Lubbock State Supported Living Center to almost 70 percent at the El Paso and San Angelo State Supported Living Centers.

The vacancy rate for Direct Support Professionals is 17 percent and it often takes over three months to fill vacant positions.

The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Direct Support Professional Is and IIIs to range from six to 17 percent behind the market rate, contributing to challenges in recruitment.

NOTE: The data for turnover and vacancy rates represented above are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023, or fiscal year 2023. With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these critical positions. The vacancy rate for all positions HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Psychiatric Nursing Assistants at State Hospitals

There are 2,449 Psychiatric Nursing Assistants employed in state hospitals. The average Psychiatric Nursing Assistant is 39 years of age and has an average of six years of service.

Essential job functions include assisting licensed nurses with medication administration or treatment and monitoring patients' vital signs to ensure health and safety. At times, Psychiatric Nursing Assistants are the first to intervene during crisis situations and act as the frontline staff most likely to de-escalate situations to avoid the need for behavioral interventions. These critical positions have a higher potential for on-the-job injuries, both from lifting requirements and intervention during crisis situations. Psychiatric Nursing Assistants provide care 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Psychiatric Nursing Assistant Is and IIIs to be 16 to 19 percent behind the market rate, increasing existing challenges to recruitment.

Turnover for Psychiatric Nursing Assistants is 37 percent, reflecting the loss of 931 employees during fiscal year 2023. Within this job family, Psychiatric Nursing Assistant Is experienced the highest turnover at 91 percent. Turnover rates vary by location, from 25 percent at Kerrville State Hospital to 50 percent at the Waco Center for Youth.

As of August 31, 2023, there are 576 vacancies in this job family. Vacant positions tend to be unfilled for an average of four months.

NOTE: With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these critical positions. The vacancy rate for all positions HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Food Service Workers

HHS employs 823 Food Service Workers.

The average hourly rate paid to Food Service Workers is \$18.61. The turnover rate for Food Service Workers is 34 percent. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Food Service Workers ranged 13 to 19 percent behind the market rate; and Cooks ranged from 14 to 19 percent behind the market rate.

Retention and recruitment of these workers remains a challenge for HHS.

Food Service Workers at State Supported Living Centers

There are 294 Food Service Worker Is and IIs employed in state supported living centers. Within this group, the typical Food Service Worker is 44 years of age and has an average of seven years of service.

Turnover in Food Service Worker positions is 45 percent. By location, turnover rates range from 32 percent at Richmond State Supported Living Center to 77 percent at Lubbock State Supported Living Center.

Food Service Workers at State Hospitals

There are 202 Food Service Worker Is and IIs employed at state hospitals and centers. The typical Food Service Worker is 45 years of age and has an average of six years of service.

Turnover rates vary by location, with higher turnover rates of 46 percent and 50 percent at the North Texas State Hospital and Terrell State Hospital, respectively.

Custodians

Custodians perform moderately complex custodial work to maintain a safe and healthy environment. HHS employs 589 Custodians. These Custodians have, on average, eight years of service, and are on average, 52 years old.

The vacancy rate is 11 percent and positions remain unfilled for an average of three months. The turnover rate for Custodian positions is 31 percent.

Thirty-two percent of these employees will be eligible for retirement in the next five years. Strategies will need to be in place to plan for these potential retirements.

Custodians at State Supported Living Centers

Fifty-three percent (318) of HHS Custodians are employed at state supported living centers. These employees have on average nine years of service and are on average, 54 years old.

The vacancy rate is seven percent, while the turnover rate for this group is 30 percent. Turnover is especially high at the Lubbock State Supported Living Center (66 percent) and the San Antonio State Supported Living Center (64 percent). Thirty-four percent of these employees will be eligible for retirement within the next five years.

Custodians at State Hospitals

Forty-four percent (260) of the HHS Custodians are employed at state hospitals. These employees have on average eight years of service and are on average, 50 years old.

The vacancy and turnover rates for Custodians are 16 percent and 32 percent, respectively. Turnover is especially high at the Kerrville State Hospital (85 percent) and the Big Spring State Hospital (54 percent). Thirty-two percent of Custodians will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Eligibility Services Staff

HHS' Access & Eligibility Services (AES) division employs 6,031 eligibility advisors accounting for 15 percent of the HHS workforce.

Most of these individuals (5,180 employees or 86 percent) are employed as Texas Works Advisors with the remaining made up of Hospital-Based Workers and Medical Eligibility Specialists.

Overall turnover for these eligibility services staff is 21 percent, with entry-level workers experiencing the highest turnover at 43 percent.

Texas Works Advisors

There are 5,180 HHS Texas Works Advisors that make eligibility determinations for SNAP; TANF; Medicaid for children, families, and pregnant women; the Children's

Health Insurance Plan (CHIP); and other programs. The typical Texas Works Advisor is 41 years of age and has an average of six years of service.

Turnover for Texas Works Advisors is 21 percent. Certain regions of Texas experience higher turnover than others, including Brazos Valley at 34 percent, and the Greater Metroplex (Dallas-Fort Worth) at 29 percent. Entry-level Texas Works Advisor Is experience turnover at 43 percent.

NOTE: With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these critical positions. The vacancy rate for eligibility staff is 3.55 percent of May 2024.

Medical Eligibility Specialists

HHS employs 586 Medical Eligibility Specialists who determine financial eligibility for Medicaid for Elderly and People with Disabilities (MEPD). Medical Eligibility Specialists have an average of seven years of service and are on average, 43 years old.

Turnover for Medical Eligibility Specialists is 20 percent. Entry-level Medical Eligibility Specialist Is experienced turnover at 42 percent.

Hospital-Based Workers

HHS employs 265 Hospital-Based Workers stationed in nursing facilities, hospitals, and clinics. These Hospital-Based Workers determine eligibility for the SNAP, TANF, Medicaid, and CHIP programs for individuals receiving treatment in these facilities.

These tenured Hospital-Based Workers have an average of 11 years of service and over 49 percent of these employees have 10 or more years of service and are on average, 46 years old. Turnover for these employees is currently slightly below the state average at 17 percent.

Community Care Workers

HHS employs 376 Community Care Workers. These workers conduct home visits, determine needs for services, develop service plans, and refer individuals to appropriate services. The typical Community Care Worker is 47 years old and has an average of 10 years of service.

Community Care Workers make an average salary of \$35,616, which is below both the national average wage of \$41,600 and Texas average wage of \$40,190.

The turnover rate for Community Care Workers is 33 percent, representing the loss of 139 employees, with entry-level Community Care Worker Is experiencing the highest turnover at 64 percent, representing the loss of 74 employees. The vacancy rate for these positions is 13 percent.

Community Care Services Eligibility (CCSE) Unit Supervisors

There are 47 Community Care Services Eligibility (CCSE) Unit Supervisor Is and IIs in HHS Community Service regions. Fifty-one percent of these supervisors are CCSE Unit Supervisors IIs. These CCSE Unit Supervisors perform highly complex administrative and supervisory eligibility program work. CCSE Unit Supervisors are, on average, 52 years old and have an average of 20 years of service.

The turnover rate for these tenured employees is slightly below the state average at 17 percent. In addition, 55 percent of these employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Guardianship Staff

HHS employs 82 Guardianship Specialists and Guardianship Supervisors responsible for providing guardianship services to eligible clients. Staff continuously assess and determine whether guardianship is the most appropriate and least restrictive alternative necessary to ensure a consumer's health and safety.

Retention continues to be a challenge since these positions require specialized skills and salaries are not comparable with pay at other agencies and the private sector.

Guardianship Specialists

There are 70 HHS Guardianship Specialists. HHS Guardianship Specialists are on average, 47 years of age and have an average of 10 years of service.

The turnover rate for Guardianship Specialists is 10 percent, with 23 percent of these tenured employees eligible to retire in the next five years.

Guardianship Supervisors

There are 12 Guardianship Supervisors working for HHS. HHS Guardianship Supervisors are on average, 50 years of age and have an average of 17 years of service. The turnover rate for Guardianship Supervisors is eight percent.

HHS may face recruitment challenges in the next few years to replace tenured employees who are eligible for retirement. Thirty-three percent of Guardian Supervisors are currently eligible to retire. This rate is expected to increase to 58 percent in the next five years.

Inspectors

There are 913 Inspectors employed at HHS, with the majority (95 percent) housed in the HHSC Regulatory Services Division and DSHS Division for Consumer Protection. Inspectors are on average 43 years of age and have an average of nine years of service. The average annual salary for an Inspector is \$52,836.

Turnover for Inspectors is slightly above the state average at 19 percent. This turnover may be affected by salary. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for inspectors ranged from eight to 12 percent behind the market rate.

Child Care Regulation and Residential Child Care Regulation Inspectors

The HHSC Regulatory Services Division employs 359 Child Care Regulation and Residential Child Care Regulation Inspectors who inspect child day-care facilities and homes, residential child-care facilities, child-placing agencies, and foster homes. These Inspectors are on average, 42 years of age and have an average of eight years of service. The average turnover rate is 22 percent.

HCR and LTCR Inspectors

The HHSC Regulatory Services Division employs 262 Health Care Regulation (HCR) and Long-Term Care Regulation (LTCR) inspectors. On average, LTCR and HCR Inspectors are 44 years of age and have an average of nine years of service.

HCR Inspectors are responsible for the regulatory oversight of health care facilities to protect consumer and patient health and safety by ensuring compliance with state laws and rules. LTCR inspectors conduct inspections to ensure long-term care providers are complying with state and federal health and safety regulations.

LTCR and HCR are experiencing retention and recruitment issues. The overall turnover rate for these inspectors is 15 percent. The vacancy rate is 16 percent. Positions often remain unfilled for an average of three months.

Consumer Protection Inspectors

DSHS' Division for Consumer Protection employs 90 Inspector IIIs in the Meat Safety Program. These Inspectors are on average, 42 years of age and have an average of seven years of service. Turnover for these Inspectors is 22 percent, with positions often remaining unfilled for an average of over seven months.

Investigators

HHS employs 381 Investigators. On average, HHS Investigators are 48 years old and have an average of 11 years of service. Turnover for HHS Investigators is slightly below the state average at 17 percent.

This turnover may be affected by salary. The average annual salary for Investigators is \$60,804. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Investigator IVs was eight percent behind the market rate, while the average state salary for Investigator Vs was 11 percent behind the market rate.

OIG Investigators

Of the 381 Investigators working for HHS agencies, 179 of them (47 percent) work within the Office of Inspector General (OIG). These employees perform investigations to detect fraud, waste, and abuse in HHS programs. They ensure investigations are conducted and reported in compliance with law, agency policy, and professional standards.

The typical OIG Investigator is 49 years of age and has an average of 13 years of service. Over 60 percent of these tenured employees have 10 or more years of service.

Turnover for OIG Investigators is 12 percent, with over 35 percent of these tenured employees eligible to retire in five years.

HCR and LTCR Investigators

In the HHSC Regulatory Services Division, there are 172 HCR and LTCR Investigator V, VI, and Vs. These Investigators are on average, 48 years old and have eight years of service.

These Investigators conduct complaint and incident investigations to determine health care and long-term care facility compliance with state and federal laws, regulations, and rules. The overall turnover rate for these positions is 21 percent.

QIDP Surveyors

In the HHSC Regulatory Services Division, there are 35 Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professional (QIDP) Surveyors employed in LTCR. These employees serve as members of an interdisciplinary team to assess active treatments, health issues, and other required areas during surveys and inspections of Intermediate Care Facilities/Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities/Related Conditions (ICF/IID/RC) facilities, to determine compliance with federal and state regulations.

The typical QIDP Surveyor is 50 years of age and has an average of 11 years of service. Forty-three percent of these professionals have 10 or more years of service.

The program is experiencing retention and recruitment issues. Turnover for QIDP Surveyors is 23 percent. In addition, 34 percent of these Surveyors will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Architects

HHS employs 18 Architects IIs and IVs within the HHSC Regulatory Services Division. These Architects have on average, 10 years of service, with an average age of 60 years. Eighty-nine percent of these employees have five or more years of service.

Architects perform architectural plan reviews and conduct initial and annual surveys and complaint/incident investigations on state licensure, and (when applicable) federal certification requirements for nursing, assisted living, Day Activity and Health Services, ICF/IDD, and in-patient Hospice facilities.

The average salary for Architect IIs and IVs is \$92,820. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Architects to be 10 percent behind the market rate. Over 50 percent will be eligible to retire in the next five years. The turnover rate for Architects is 19 percent. In addition, positions often go unfilled for seven months due to a shortage of qualified applicants available for work. Over 50 percent will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

HHS will need to expand recruitment strategies to replace these highly skilled professionals.

License and Permit Specialists

There are 82 HHS License and Permit Specialists. Sixty-seven percent of License and Permit Specialists work in the HHSC Regulatory Services Division, performing complex, journey-level, licensing and permitting work related to the licensing of mental health professionals.

The typical License and Permit Specialist is 45 years of age and has 11 years of state service. Forty-three percent of these employees have 10 or more years of state service.

Turnover for these Specialists is slightly below the state average at 17 percent. Vacant positions often go unfilled for four months due to a shortage of qualified applicants available for work.

License and Permit Specialists earn an average annual salary of \$47,340. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for License and Permit Specialist Is to be eight percent behind the market rate. This disparity may be affecting HHS' ability to recruit qualified applicants for open positions.

Recruitment of these employees is an ongoing challenge.

Safety Officers

HHS employs 31 Safety Officer IIs in the HHSC Regulatory Services Division. Safety Officers are, on average, 51 years old and have an average of 12 years of service. Fifty-two percent of these employees have 10 years or more years of service. Safety Officers protect residents receiving long-term care by assessing facilities' compliance with state and federal life safety code requirements.

Safety Officers currently earn an average yearly salary of \$50,028. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Safety Officer IIs to be 11 percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these positions is 20 percent and the vacancy rate is 22 percent. Positions typically remain vacant for more than three months.

In addition to these recruitment and retention issues, 42 percent of these employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Attorneys

The HHS Office of Chief Counsel (OCC) employs 123 Attorney IIIs and IVs. These Attorneys are, on average, 49 years of age and have an average of 12 years of service. Twenty-nine percent of these highly skilled professionals will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

OCC Attorneys currently earn an average yearly salary of \$98,256. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for attorneys to be 16 to 17 percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these employees is 12 percent, with positions remaining vacant for an average of more than six months.

Recruitment remains a challenge as the specific expertise needed for these roles, related to open records, data governance, and privacy is in high demand.

OIG Auditors

HHS employs 48 Auditors within OIG, with 54 percent (26 employees) working as Auditor IVs and Auditor Vs. OIG Auditor IVs and Vs perform operational and performance audits of programs, processes, and systems across HHS agencies. OIG Auditors are responsible for performing contractor and medical provider audits and reviews to help ensure compliance with state and federal laws, rules and regulations and to identify potential overpayments. Employees in these classifications prepare audit reports that make recommendations for increasing operational efficiency, strengthening management controls, mitigating business risks, and improving compliance.

The typical OIG Auditor IV and V is 43 years old and has an average of 10 years of state service. Forty-six percent of these employees have more than 10 years of service.

OIG Auditor IVs and Vs earn an average annual salary of \$81,528, which is below both the state and national average. The average annual wage for accountants and auditors in 2022 was \$86,740 nationally, and \$87,300 in Texas. In addition, the SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Auditor IVs was 17 percent behind the market rate, and Auditor Vs was 15 percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these OIG Auditors is 12 percent, and the vacancy rate for these positions is 19 percent.

OIG Data Analysts

There are 20 Data Analysts within OIG, with 85 percent (17 employees) working as Data Analyst IIIs and IV. These OIG data analysts provide key data research, analytics, and reporting functions to support Medicaid provider investigations related to suspected fraud, waste, and abuse. These employees conduct advanced data research and analysis to support investigative efforts related to Medicaid and other HHS programs.

The typical OIG Data Analyst III and IV is 38 years old and has five years of state service. Fifty-three percent of these employees have less than two years of service.

Turnover for these OIG Data Analysts is 25 percent.

OIG Data Analyst IIIs and IVs earn an average salary of \$70,056, which is below the national average wage of \$115,240 and Texas average wage of \$102,230, contributing to challenges in retention. In addition, the SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Data Analyst IVs to be four percent behind the market rate.

Contract Specialists

HHS employs 417 Contract Specialists. These Contract Specialists use various levels of technical expertise related to procurement, contract development, contract management, and program performance to meet agency needs for goods and services. Contract Specialists may also consult and communicate with various community stakeholders and state and local authorities to evaluate the

effectiveness of programs to meet the agency's needs. In addition, Contract Specialists may be responsible for monitoring contract performance, administering billing and tracking expenditures, and facilitate meetings between HHS and vendors.

HHS Contract Specialists are, on average, 48 years of age and have an average of 13 years of service. Over 54 percent of these employees have 10 or more years of service.

The average salary for Contract Specialists is \$59,609 a year. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found that state Contract Specialist IIs earn 17 percent below the market rate, and Contract Specialist IIIs and IVs earn seven to 13 percent less than the market rate.

Turnover for Contract Specialists is 13 percent, with vacant positions often going unfilled for four months due to a shortage of qualified applicants available for work.

Contract Specialists in Procurement and Contracting Services

HHSC Procurement and Contracting Services (PCS) employs 35 Contract Specialist IVs and Vs. The average Contract Specialist in this group is 45 years of age and has an average of 12 years of service.

The turnover rate for these Contract Specialists is 16 percent, and it typically takes four months to fill vacancies with qualified candidates.

Contract Specialists in Behavioral Health Services

HHSC Behavioral Health Services employs 27 Contract Specialist Vs. These Contract Specialists have an average of 14 years of service and are on average, 50 years of age. Fifty-six percent of this group has more than 10 years of service.

The turnover rate for these Contract Specialists is eight percent, which is well below the state average at 18.7 percent. The vacancy rate is 18 percent and it can take four months to fill vacancies. Within the next three years, 41 percent of these employees will be eligible for retirement.

Purchasers

HHSC PCS employs 92 Purchasers. With 32 employees, Purchaser IVs make up a large segment of the group. These Purchasers assist with procurements, receive and track vendor responses, and distribute responses to assigned buyers. They may also assist with identifying provider resources and evaluating information supplied by bidders. Advanced employees, such as Purchaser VIs, identify purchasing-related issues and work with management, requesters, subject matter experts, and outside stakeholders. Finding qualified candidates and availability of funding to be competitive with the external market has been an ongoing workforce challenge for this group.

The average salary for PCS Purchasers is \$56,181. The SAO market report index for fiscal year 2022, state Purchaser IVs earn 15 percent below the state market index rate. These tenured Purchasers are, on average, 47 years of age and have an average of 11 years of service. Within five years, over 32 percent of these employees will be eligible for retirement.

The turnover rate for this group is 21 percent. The vacancy rate is five percent. On average, it can take over a month to fill these vacancies.

Financial Analysts

HHS employs 154 Financial Analysts. Financial Analysts perform advanced financial analysis, examine and investigate accounting records, and conduct regulatory work related to revenue collections and budget appropriations. Financial Analysts are on average, 46 years of age and have an average of 12 years of service. Twenty-seven percent of these highly skilled professionals will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Financial Analysts currently earn an average yearly salary of \$74,808. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Financial Analyst Is, IIIs, and IVs ranged from six to 12 percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these positions is 13 percent, with positions remaining vacant for an average of more than four months. Twenty-seven percent of these highly skilled professionals will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Recruitment remains a challenge as the specific expertise needed for these roles is in high demand.

Financial Analysts in the DSHS Program Operations

The DSHS Program Operations (PO) Division employs 24 Financial Analyst Is, IIs, IIIs and IVs. These Financial Analyst are on average, 38 years of age and have an average of three years of service. Turnover for these positions is 39 percent.

Financial Examiners

The HHSC Chief Financial Office employs 39 Financial Examiner IIIs. Financial Examiner IIIs conduct moderately complex financial, non-audit desk reviews and cost reports. These employees are on average, 53 years of age and have an average of 16 years of service.

Financial Examiner IIIs currently earn an average yearly salary of \$66,648. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Financial Examiner IIIs to be seven percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these employees is 12 percent. Retention may soon be a concern, as 51 percent of these professionals will be eligible to retire in the next five years. Due to salary competition for these highly skilled professionals, recruiting will remain a challenge.

Registered Nurses (RNs)

RNs make up one of the largest health care occupations. With over three million jobs in the U.S., opportunities for RNs are expected to grow six percent from 2022 to 2032, about as fast as the average for all occupations. About 193,100 openings for registered nurses are projected each year, on average, over the decade.^{50 51}

HHS employs 1,966 RNs.⁵² As the demand for nursing services increases, the recruitment and retention of nurses will continue to be a challenge, and the need for competitive salaries will be critical.

Currently, the average annual salary for HHS RNs is \$85,416. This salary is slightly above the state of Texas average of \$84,320 for these occupations but falls below the national average of \$89,010 for these occupations. Nationally, the average annual earnings for RNs in 2022 was \$82,750. In Texas, the average annual earnings for RNs in 2022 was \$84,320. In addition, the SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Nurse II-IVs ranged from eight to 14

percent behind the market rate and 18 percent behind the market rate for Public Health Nurse IIs. Posted vacant positions are currently taking five months to fill.

Registered Nurses at State Supported Living Centers

Thirty-five percent of HHS RN IIs and IIIs (691) work at state supported living centers. RNs at state supported living centers are generally required to work varied shifts and weekends. The typical state supported living center RN is 48 years of age and has eight years of service.

The turnover rate for these RNs is 15 percent. Turnover is especially high at the El Paso State Supported Living Center at 46 percent and the Rio Grande State Supported Living Center at 27 percent.

The vacancy rate is six percent. In addition, RN positions often remain open for five months before being filled. Some facilities are experiencing even longer vacancy durations. At the San Antonio, Denton, Lubbock, Brenham, and Rio Grande state supported living centers, it takes six months to fill a vacancy.

NOTE: The data for turnover and vacancy rates represented above are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023, or fiscal year 2023. With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these critical positions. The vacancy rate for all positions HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Registered Nurses at State Hospitals

Thirty-six percent of HHS RN IIs and IIIs (711) work at state hospitals, providing frontline medical care of patients. They provide medications, primary health care and oversee psychiatric treatment. The typical RN at an HHS state hospital is 49 years of age and has nine years of service.

HHS nurses at state hospitals are generally required to work varied shifts and weekends. The work requires special skills and staff often work long hours with minimal staffing. The work is also physically demanding, making it increasingly more difficult for the workforce to keep up with these work demands. Considering

these job factors, the average turnover rate for these RNs is 14 percent. Turnover is over 27 percent at the El Paso Psychiatric Center, and 24 percent the Waco Center for Youth.

At state hospitals, there are always vacant nursing positions that need to be filled. RN positions often remain open for five months before being filled. Some hospitals are experiencing longer vacancy durations. At the Big Spring State Hospital, the Kerrville State Hospital, the Rio Grande State Center, and the Waco Center for Youth, it takes over six months to fill a position.

NOTE: The data for turnover and vacancy rates represented above are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023, or fiscal year 2023. With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these critical positions. The vacancy rate for all positions HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Public Health Registered Nurses

There are 110 HHS Public Health RNs who provide direct care and population-based services in counties without local health departments, or where state support is needed. These Public Health RNs are often the individuals who are on the frontline in the delivery of public health services to rural communities throughout the state. Public Health RNs serve as consultants and advisors to county, local, and stakeholder groups, and educate community partners. Public Health RNs assist in communicable disease investigation, control and prevention, and are critical to successful public health preparedness and response. Market competition and budget limitations constrain the program area's ability to compete for available talent.

Public Health RNs have an average of seven years of service and are on average, 48 years of age. Overall turnover for Public Health RNs is 19 percent. Certain public health regions experienced higher turnover than others, including those in the Austin area at 31 percent and the El Paso area at 36 percent.

Licensed Vocational Nurses

HHS employs 874 LVNs. The majority of these employees (97 percent) work at state hospitals and state supported living centers. On average, LVNs are 48 years of age and have nine years of service.

Three percent work in Public Health Regions and central office program support, assisting in communicable disease prevention and control and the delivery of population-based services to individuals, families, and communities.

As with RNs, the nursing shortage is impacting HHS' ability to attract and retain LVNs. Turnover for LVNs is 22 percent.

The average annual salary for LVNs in fiscal year 2023 was \$59,220. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for LVN was 19 percent behind the market rate, and the salary for LVN IIs was 18 percent behind the market rate. Recruitment and retention of these highly skilled employees remains a challenge.

Licensed Vocational Nurses at State Supported Living Centers

There are 497 LVNs employed at state supported living centers. These LVNs are on average, 48 years of age and have an average of nine years of service.

Turnover for LVNs at state supported living centers is 22 percent. Turnover is highest at the El Paso State Supported Living Center at 78 percent and the Lubbock State Supported Living Center at 32 percent.

The vacancy rate for these LVNs is 27 percent. In addition, vacant positions often go unfilled for over seven months. Some centers are experiencing even longer vacancy durations. At the Austin and Lubbock state supported living centers it takes nine months and 10 months, respectively to fill a position.

NOTE: The data for turnover and vacancy rates represented above are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023, or fiscal year 2023. With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these critical positions. The vacancy rate for all

positions HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Licensed Vocational Nurses at State Hospitals

There are 348 LVNs employed at state hospitals and centers. On average, these LVNs are 48 years of age and have nine years of service.

Turnover for these LVNs is 21 percent. Turnover is highest at Rusk State Hospital and the Rio Grande State Center (both at 29 percent) and the Terrell State Hospital at 32 percent.

State hospitals continue to experience difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff which can be attributed to a shortage in the qualified labor pool. Market competition and budget limitations significantly constrain the ability of state hospitals to compete for available talent.

NOTE: The data for turnover and vacancy rates represented above are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023, or fiscal year 2023. With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these critical positions. The vacancy rate for all positions HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Physicians

There are currently 305,260 active Physicians across the country.⁵³

HHS employs 101 Physicians, with 67 percent employed in state supported living centers and state hospitals as Physician I-IVs.

These highly skilled employees have an average of nine years of service and are on average, 56 years old.

HHS Physicians currently earn an average annual salary of \$228,084. This salary is below the average national wage of \$238,700 and lower than the Texas average wage of \$274,650. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Physician Is to be six to 11 percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these Physicians is 11 percent, with a vacancy rate of 16 percent. Positions are vacant for an average of more than ten months.

Thirteen percent of these highly skilled and tenured employees are currently eligible to retire, with this number increasing to 37 percent in the next five years.

Physicians at State Supported Living Centers

HHS employs 40 Physicians at state supported living centers. Full staffing of these positions is critical to direct-care services.

These Physicians have an average of seven years of service and are on average, 58 years old. Local Physicians who have established long-term private practices often apply to work as a staff Physician at state supported living centers late in their career to secure retirement and insurance benefits, thus explaining the reason for the high average age.

To meet the health needs of individuals residing in state supported living centers, it is critical that HHS recruit and retain qualified Physicians. However, due to the short supply and large demand, state supported living centers have difficulty hiring Physicians, with some positions remaining unfilled for an average of almost one year.

NOTE: The data for turnover and vacancy rates represented above are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023, or fiscal year 2023. With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these critical positions. The vacancy rate for all positions HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Physicians at State Hospitals

HHS employs 24 Physicians who provide essential medical care in state hospitals. They take the lead role in diagnosing, determining a course of treatment, making referrals to outside medical hospitals, prescribing medications and monitoring the patients' progress toward discharge. Physician services in state hospitals are essential to the monitoring and management of an increasing number of complex chronic medical conditions, such as diabetes, seizure disorders, hypertension and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

These Physicians have an average of 13 years of service and are on average, 59 years old. Similar to state supported living centers, local Physicians who have established long-term private practices often apply to work as Physicians at state hospitals late in their working career to secure retirement and insurance benefits, contributing to the high overall age. Seventy-five percent of the full-time Physicians are 50 years of age or older.

Turnover for these Physicians is 15 percent, and it takes five months to fill a state hospital Physician position with someone who has appropriate skills and expertise.

HHS may face challenges in the next few years to replace employees eligible for retirement. Almost 30 percent of these highly skilled and tenured employees are currently eligible to retire. Within five years, 42 percent will be eligible to retire. If these employees choose to retire, HHS will lose some of the most experienced medical personnel – those with institutional knowledge and skills that will be difficult to match and even harder to recruit.

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Psychiatrists

There are currently about 26,500 Psychiatrists nationwide.⁵⁴ A 2.1 percent decrease is projected in the state government sector by 2032.⁵⁵

HHS employs 109 Psychiatrists, with 81 percent employed in state hospitals. These highly skilled and tenured employees have an average of 12 years of service and are on average, 53 years old.

Psychiatrists currently earn an average annual salary of \$269,436. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Psychiatrist IVs and IIs ranged from 10 to 14 percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for Psychiatrists is 19 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 20 percent. In addition, positions are remaining vacant for an average of eight months.

Twenty-three percent of these highly skilled and tenured employees are currently eligible to retire, with this number increasing to 34 percent in the next five years.

Psychiatrists at State Supported Living Centers

HHS employs 18 Psychiatrists at state supported living centers. Full staffing of these positions is critical to providing psychiatric services needed by residents. These Psychiatrists have an average of 11 years of service, with an average age of 56. Vacant positions in state supported living centers go unfilled for an average of eight months.

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Psychiatrists at State Hospitals

HHS employs 89 Psychiatrists providing essential medical and psychiatric care in state hospitals. These highly skilled employees take the lead role in diagnosing, determining a course of treatment, prescribing medications, and monitoring patient progress. Recruiting and retaining Psychiatrists at the state hospitals has been especially difficult for HHS. These Psychiatrists have an average of 13 years of service and are on average, 52 years old.

Annual turnover for these Psychiatrists is 19 percent, although much higher rates were reported for Kerrville State Hospital at 64 percent and Big Spring State Hospital at 50.

The vacancy rate for these positions is 20 percent. In addition, most vacant Psychiatrist positions go unfilled for over seven months. These challenges are expected to continue, as 23 percent of these highly skilled and tenured employees are eligible to retire and may leave at any time. Within five years, this number will increase to 35 percent.

State hospitals continue to face increasing difficulty in recruiting qualified Psychiatrists as salaries are not competitive with the private sector, and there is a general shortage of a qualified labor pool.

Due to the complex medical and mental challenges that individuals residing in state hospitals exhibit, it is critical that HHS effectively recruit and retain qualified Psychiatrists.

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Psychologists

HHS employs 32 Psychologists, with 75 percent employed at state hospitals.

Psychologists earn an average annual salary of \$107,392. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Psychologist Is to be 13 percent behind the market rate and Psychologist IIIs to be nine percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these Psychologists is 19 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 26 percent. In addition, these Psychologist positions often remain unfilled for over 10 months.

Psychologists at State Hospitals

HHS employs 24 Psychologists at state hospitals. Full staffing of these positions is critical to providing needed psychological services to patients. These highly skilled and tenured employees have an average of 11 years of service and are on average, 52 years old.

State hospital Psychologists play a key role in developing treatment programs for individual patients and groups of patients. Their evaluations are critical to the ongoing management and discharge of patients receiving competency restoration services, an ever-growing patient population in the state hospitals. They also

provide testing and evaluation services important to ongoing treatment, such as the administration of IQ, mood, and neurological testing instruments.

Turnover for these Psychologists is 17 percent. Austin State Hospital experienced the highest turnover at 57 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 14 percent. In addition, positions often remain unfilled for over nine months.

HHS may face recruitment challenges in the next few years, as 21 percent of these highly skilled and tenured employees are currently eligible for retirement and may leave HHS at any time.

NOTE: The data for turnover and vacancy rates represented above are a point-in-time estimate from August 31, 2023, or fiscal year 2023. With the support of funds appropriated by the 88th Legislature, HHSC made significant investments in recruitment and retention efforts in the current fiscal year toward improving the recruitment and retention of these critical positions. The vacancy rate for all positions HHSC is authorized to fill in state hospitals and state supported living centers as of May 2024 is 6.16 percent and 5.72 percent respectively.

Epidemiologists

HHS employs 144 Epidemiologists who provide services in the areas of infectious disease and injury control, chronic disease control, emergency and disaster preparedness, disease surveillance and other public health areas. They provide critical functions during disasters and pandemics and other preparedness and response planning. On average, Epidemiologists have five years of service and are 35 years old.

As of September 2023, there were approximately 10,000 Epidemiologist jobs in the U.S., with a projected job growth rate of 27 percent by 2032.⁵⁶ Turnover for Epidemiologists is 17 percent. This rate is much higher for experienced Epidemiologist IIIs, at 28 percent.

Low pay is a contributing factor in the inability to attract qualified Epidemiologist applicants. Epidemiologists are currently earning an average annual salary of \$65,832. This salary is below the average national wage of \$85,880, and also lower than the Texas average wage of \$80,600. In addition, the SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Epidemiologist was 10 percent behind the market rate.

Surveillance functions involving preparedness, response and monitoring will need more qualified public health professionals i.e., Epidemiologists. Emerging threats will require continuous and agile learning for Epidemiologists in areas such as disease prevention and population health. HHS will need to closely monitor this occupation due to the nationally non-competitive salaries and a general shortage of professionals performing this work.

Health Physicists

Within DSHS, there are 49 Health Physicists, all employed within the Division for Consumer Protection. These employees plan and conduct complex and highly advanced technical inspections and license application review of radioactive material, nuclear medicine, industrial x-ray units, general medical diagnostic x-ray units, fluoroscopic units, mammographic units, C-Arm units, radiation therapy equipment, laser equipment, and industrial and medical radioactive materials to assure user's compliance with applicable State and Federal regulations. Health Physicists are instrumental in emergency planning for the offsite response of nuclear power plants and are the the first line of defense for radiological disaster response.

Health Physicists have on average, 12 years of service, with an average age of 50 years. Fifty-three percent of these employees have 10 or more years of service.

Health Physicists earn an average annual salary of \$74,712 which is higher than both the average national wage of \$63,230 and the Texas average wage of \$63,090.

Turnover for Health Physicists is 17 percent, slightly below the state average rate of 18.7 percent.

Disease Intervention Specialists

HHS employs 38 Disease Intervention Specialists. These Disease Intervention Specialists are employed within DSHS' Regional and Local Health Operations, conducting comprehensive prevention, intervention, and surveillance activities. They conduct interviews and investigations, complete epidemiologic and non-epidemiologic paperwork, and establish and maintain relationships with local health care agencies, health care providers, laboratories, correctional facilities, and other organizations.

Disease Intervention Specialists are on average, 38 years old and have an average of five years of service. Half of these employees have less than two years of service.

The turnover rate for Disease Intervention Specialists is 22 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 21 percent. In addition, vacant positions often go unfilled for 10 months.

Public Health and Prevention Specialists

There are 231 Public Health and Prevention Specialists employed within the DSHS' Community Health Improvement (CHI) and the Regional and Local Operations divisions. These employees provide technical consultation to local health departments, human and animal health care professionals, government officials, community action groups, and others on several public health areas, including disease epidemiology and surveillance to treat, prevent and control infectious diseases, sexually transmitted diseases, and zoonotic diseases; provision of vaccines and life-saving HIV medications; and newborn screening testing.

These Public Health and Prevention Specialists have on average, eight years of service, with an average age of 44 years.

The overall turnover for these Public Health and Prevention Specialists is 15 percent, with a higher turnover rate of 22 percent for specialists in the DSHS CHI division.

DSHS CHI finds it difficult to fill these vacant Public Health and Prevention Specialist positions, which often remain open for almost six months before being filled.

Retention is expected to remain an issue as these employees approach retirement. Thirteen percent of these Public Health and Prevention Specialists are currently eligible to retire, and 22 percent will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Laboratory Staff

DSHS operates a state laboratory in Austin and two regional laboratories, one in San Antonio and the other in Harlingen. In addition, the Austin State Hospital provides laboratory services for the other state hospitals and state supported living centers.

While laboratory staff is made up of several highly skilled employees, there are three job groups that are essential to laboratory operations: Chemists, Microbiologists, and Medical Technologists.

Chemists

HHS employs 51 Chemists in the DSHS Division for Laboratory and Infectious Disease Services (LIDS), all located in Austin. Chemists are on average, 42 years of age and have an average of nine years of service. Most of the employees have 10 years or more of service.

The turnover rate for DSHS LIDS Chemists is 13 percent, which is below the state average turnover rate of 18.7 percent.

Vacant DSHS LIDS Chemist positions often go unfilled for more than four months due to a shortage of qualified applicants available for work. These vacancy problems are expected to worsen as employees approach retirement. Seventeen percent of these tenured and highly skilled employees are currently eligible to retire within the next five years.

Low pay is a factor in the inability to attract qualified Chemist applicants. DSHS LIDS Chemists earn an average annual salary of \$62,412. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Chemists ranged from five to 14 percent behind the market rate. The salary of \$62,412 is lower than the average national wage of \$90,530, and the Texas average wage of \$88,310.

Health Informatics Specialists

HHS employs 28 Health Informatics Specialist IIs, IIIs, and IVs in the DSHS LIDS division, all located in Austin. These highly skilled individuals perform complex health informatics work such as conducting program evaluation utilizing multiple methods of data collection and analyses. This group works with large data sets, health-related data, and various programming languages. Recruiting and retaining qualified staff remains a challenge.

These Health Informatics Specialists are on average, 39 years of age and have an average of eight years of service. The average salary of a DSHS LIDS Health Informatics Specialist is \$79,085, which is below the Texas average salary of \$106,720 as well as the national average salary of \$107,530.

The turnover rate for this group is 23 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 33 percent. In addition, these vacant positions often go unfilled for more than seven months due to a shortage of qualified applicants available for work.

Microbiologists

HHS employs 79 Microbiologists in the DSHS LIDS division. The employees have an average of six years of service and are on average, 37 years old.

The turnover rate for these Microbiologists is 15 percent, which is below the state average rate of 18.7 percent.

DSHS LIDS Microbiologists earn an average annual salary of \$56,592. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Microbiologist IIs was 18 percent behind the market rate and twenty percent behind the market rate for Microbiologists IVs. This average annual salary also falls below the national and statewide market rates for this occupation. The average annual national wage is \$88,950, and the Texas wage is \$64,530. This disparity in earnings is affecting HHS' ability to recruit qualified applicants for open positions. DSHS LIDS Microbiologist positions often remain unfilled for over seven months.

Molecular Biologists

HHS employs 54 Molecular Biologist IIIs, IVs, and Vs in the DSHS LIDS division. These Molecular Biologists have on average, eight years of service, with an average age of 37 years.

The turnover rate for these Molecular Biologists is 21 percent, which is above the state average rate of 18.7 percent.

DSHS LIDS Molecular Biologists earn an average annual salary of \$67,296. This average annual salary also falls below the national and statewide market rates for this occupation. The average annual national wage is \$99,250, and the Texas wage is \$83,000. This disparity in earnings continues to affect HHS recruiting and retention efforts.

Laboratory Technologists (Medical Technologists)

HHS employs 40 Medical Technologist II-IVs in the DSHS LIDS division. These individuals perform complex clinical laboratory work and are critical to providing efficient and quality health care. DSHS LIDS Medical Technologists have on average, seven years of service. Twenty-seven percent of these employees are eligible for retirement within the next five years.

The vacancy rate for these positions is 15 percent. In addition, these positions typically go unfilled for more than five months due to a shortage of qualified applicants. The turnover rate for these Medical Technologists is 17 percent.

Low pay is a factor in the inability to attract qualified Medical Technologist applicants. DSHS LIDS Medical Technologists earn an average annual salary of \$56,880. The average national wage is \$59,130, and the Texas wage is \$54,790. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Medical Technologists IIs to IVs ranged from 12 to 17 percent behind the market rate. This disparity is affecting HHS' ability to recruit qualified applicants for open positions.

These problems are expected to worsen as employees approach retirement. Twenty-seven percent of these tenured employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Social Workers

HHS employs 226 Social Workers, with the majority (60 percent) housed in state hospitals.

Turnover for these Social Workers is 18 percent. This turnover may be due to the disparity between private sector and HHS salaries. The average annual salary for Social Worker I through IV is \$64,920, which falls below the market rate. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Social Worker Is, IIs and IIIs ranged from 14 to 17 percent behind the market rate.

The vacancy rate for these positions is 19 percent. In addition, positions are remaining unfilled for an average of over six months. These problems are expected to worsen as tenured employees approach retirement. Though only 12 percent of these employees are currently eligible to retire, this number is expected to increase to 25 percent in the next five years.

Social Workers at State Supported Living Centers

Twelve percent of HHS Social Workers (26 employees) work at state supported living centers. These employees serve as liaisons between the resident's legally authorized representative and others to assure ongoing care, treatment, and support using person-centered practices. They gather information to assess a resident's support systems and service needs, support the assessment of the resident's rights and capacity to make decisions, and assist with the coordination of admissions, transfers, transitions, and discharges.

The typical Social Worker in the state supported living centers is 53 years of age and has 14 years of service.

The average turnover rate for these Social Workers is 28 percent, higher than the state average rate of 18.7 percent, with positions often remaining vacant for an average of nearly nine months before being filled.

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Social Workers at State Hospitals

There are 135 Social Workers at state hospitals. These employees are critical to managing patient flow in state hospitals and taking the lead role in communicating with patient families and community resources. Social Workers provide essential functions within state hospitals that include conducting psychosocial assessments, therapeutic treatment and case coordination for individuals receiving services from HHS in-patient psychiatric hospitals and the Waco Center for Youth.

State hospital Social Workers are on average, 43 years of age and have an average of nine years of service.

The overall turnover rate for these Social Workers is 11 percent, though some hospitals are experiencing much higher turnover. The Waco Center for Youth is

experiencing 36 percent turnover, while the North Texas State Hospital is experiencing turnover of 20 percent.

The vacancy rate for these positions is 15 percent. In addition, positions often remain unfilled for an average of six months.

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Public Health Social Workers

There are 59 Public Health Social Workers. These Public Health Social Workers provide case management consultation for families with children who have health risks, conditions, or special health care needs.

The typical Public Health Social Worker is 48 years of age and has 11 years of service.

The average turnover rate for Public Health Social Workers is 17 percent, slightly below the state average rate of 18.7 percent. Of the regions with two or more employees, the Arlington area experienced the highest rate at 40 percent.

With a vacancy rate of 22 percent, and 31 percent of these employees being eligible for retirement within the next five years, recruitment and retention of these workers remains a challenge.

IT Business Analysts

Within the HHS Information Technology (IT) Division, there are 71 IT Business Analyst IIs and IIIs. This group of IT Business Analysts provide critical support to the agency and some of their responsibilities include the gathering, assessment and validation of business requirements, while providing assistance to development team members and support to application users.

IT Business Analysts have an average of 13 years of service and are on average, 48 years old. Fifty-five percent of these employees have 10 or more years of service.

IT Business Analyst IIs and IIIs earn an average annual salary of \$77,160. This is below the national average wage of \$107,530 and Texas average wage of \$106,720. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for IT Business Analysts ranges from six percent for IT Business Analyst IIs to 18 percent for IT Business Analyst IIIs behind the market rate. This disparity may be affecting HHS' ability to recruit qualified applicants for open positions.

The turnover rate for IT Business Analysts is seven percent.

HHS will need to focus on creative recruiting and retention strategies, since over 30 percent of these employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

IT System Support Specialists

HHS employs 170 System Support Specialists within the IT Division. These workers perform various functions, such as software installations, troubleshooting/ diagnosing complex hardware, software, and network performance problems, in addition to interpreting technical documents for users. This group of employees provide essential technical support to the agency.

IT System Support Specialists have an average of 11 years of service and are on average, 44 years old. Forty-four percent of these employees have 10 or more years of service.

The turnover rate for IT System Support Specialists is below the state average at 13 percent.

IT System Support Specialists earn an average annual salary of \$51,624. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for System Support Specialist IIs, IVs, and Vs range from three to 15 percent behind the market rate, contributing to challenges in retention.

Currently, 16 percent of these employees are eligible to retire, and 25 percent will be eligible within the next five years.

Research Specialists

HHS employs 127 Research Specialists. These Research Specialists are responsible for providing statistical and programming work critical to supporting the services the agencies provide. Research Specialists have an average of eight years of service and are on average, 41 years old.

Research Specialists earn an average annual salary of \$62,748. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Research Specialists ranged from 11 to 16 percent behind the market rate for Research Specialists I - III. Recruitment and retention of research specialists continue to be challenging for HHS, who is also competing with other public and private sector salaries.

The turnover rate for Research Specialists is 24 percent. The vacancy rate for Research Specialist positions is 13 percent. These positions often remain unfilled for over four months.

Six percent of Research Specialists are currently eligible to retire, with this number increasing to 17 percent in the next five years.

Research Specialists in LIDS

HHS employs 14 Research Specialists in the DSHS LIDS division. The average Research Specialist working in this division is 36 years of age with four years of service.

The turnover rate for these Research Specialists is 64 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 13 percent. In addition, it can take almost eight months to fill these vacancies.

Research Specialists in Community Health Improvement

HHS employs 12 Research Specialists in the DSHS CHI division. The average Research Specialist working in this division is 32 years of age and has three years of service. Ninety-two percent of these employees have less than five years of service.

The turnover rate for these employees is 16 percent. The vacancy rate is 14 percent.

Research Specialists in Regulatory Services

HHSC Regulatory Services Division employs 11 Research Specialists in HCR and LTCR. The average Research Specialist in these program areas is 49 years of age with 12 years of service. Over half of these employees have 10 or more years of service.

The turnover rate for these Research Specialists is 19 percent.

Program Specialists

HHS employs 2,197 Program Specialists. On average, Program Specialists are 45 years of age and have 12 years of service. Forty-eight percent of Program Specialists have 10 or more years of service.

The turnover rate for these tenured Program Specialists is 14 percent. The overall vacancy rate for these positions is 11 percent. In addition, positions are remaining unfilled for five months.

Though only 13 percent of these employees are currently eligible to retire, this rate is expected to increase to 25 percent within the next five years.

Civil Rights Program Specialists

The HHS CRO has 56 employees, with 41 percent (23 employees) being Program Specialist IVs. These employees are on average, 46 years of age, with an average of 10 years of service. Forty percent of these employees have 10 or more years of state service.

With a turnover rate of 36 percent, CRO is experiencing retention issues. The vacancy rate for these positions is 26 percent. In addition, positions are remaining unfilled for an average of three months.

Eligibility Services Program Specialists

HHS employs 27 Program Specialist VI and VIIs within AES. The typical AES Program Specialist VI and VII is 46 years of age and has 16 years of service. Nearly 80 percent of these tenured employees have 10 or more years of service.

The average turnover for Program Specialists is eight percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 16 percent. In addition, positions remain unfilled for an average of six months.

With 37 percent of these program specialists eligible to retire in five years, special attention to recruitment and retention will be needed.

CHI Program Specialists

DSHS' CHI division employs 151 Program Specialists. These Program Specialists are on average, 44 years of age and have an average of 10 years of service.

Turnover for these Program Specialists is 20 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 16 percent. In addition, positions are remaining unfilled for an average of five months.

LIDS Program Specialists

DSHS' LIDS division employs 222 Program Specialists. The typical DSHS LIDS Program Specialist is 39 years of age, with six years of service.

Both recruitment and retention are a concern. The turnover rate for these employees is 25 percent. The vacancy rate for these assistants is 15 percent. In addition, positions are remaining unfilled for an average of five months.

Project Managers

HHS's Office of Audit and Compliance employs 12 Project Manager IVs. These Project Managers are on average, 45 years of age and have an average of 14 years of service. Seventy-five percent of these employees have 10 years or more of service.

These Project Manager IVs earn an average yearly salary of \$95,220. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Project Managers to be 13 percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these positions is 16 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 14 percent. In addition, unfilled positions are remaining vacant for an average of more than six months.

The shortage of available senior staff with the level of expertise needed to fill these positions will continue to challenge recruitment efforts.

Managers

Managers perform a variety of high-level tasks throughout HHS. HHS employs 1,039 Managers. Turnover is nine percent. Nearly 40 percent of these Managers are eligible to leave HHS in the next five years.

In DSHS' CHI division, there are 33 Manager Is, IIs, IIIs and IVs. These Managers have on average, 13 years of service, with an average age of 49 years. Eighty-two percent of these employees have five or more years of service.

DSHS CHI Managers earn an average annual salary of \$67,908. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Managers ranges from nine percent for Manager IIs to 11 percent for Manager IVs behind the market rate. This disparity may be affecting HHS' ability to recruit qualified applicants for open positions.

The turnover rate for these DSHS CHI Managers is 18 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 11 percent, though much higher for Manager Is, at 21 percent.

Vehicle Drivers

HHS System Support Services (SSS) employs 35 Vehicle Driver IIIs. These Vehicle Driver IIIs are on average, 44 years of age and have an average of five years of service. Fifty-one percent of these employees have less than two years of service.

Vehicle Driver IIIs currently earn an average yearly salary of \$32,796. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Vehicle Driver IIIs to be 15 percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these positions is 39 percent. In addition, the vacancy rate for these positions is 15 percent. Recruiting will continue to be a challenge competing with other public and private sector salaries.

Customer Service Representatives

DSHS' CHI division employs 90 Customer Service Representatives. These Customer Service Representatives are responsible for the production and management of requests for vital records, interpreting program policies and procedures and the coordination of quality assurance reviews. These representatives have on average, seven years of service, with an average age of 48 years. Nearly half of these employees have less than two years of service.

These Customer Service Representatives earn an average annual salary of \$38,940. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Customer Service Representatives ranges from nine percent for Customer Service Representative IIs to 15 percent for Customer Service Representative Is behind the

market rate. This disparity may be affecting HHS' ability to recruit qualified applicants for open positions.

The turnover rate for these DSHS CHI Customer Service Representatives is 41 percent.

The vacancy rate for these positions is 34 percent. In addition, positions are remaining unfilled for an average of over six months.

Administrative Assistants

HHS employs 1,339 Administrative Assistants who provide office support services to the various HHS program areas. On average, Administrative Assistants have 12 years of service and are 48 years old.

The turnover rate for Administrative Assistants is 15 percent. In addition, these positions are remaining unfilled for over four months.

Administrative Assistants are currently earning an average annual salary of \$41,052. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Administrative Assistants range from four percent for Administrative Assistant VIs to 16 percent for Administrative Assistant IIIs behind the market rate.

Seventeen percent of these employees are currently eligible to retire. This rate is expected to double to 31 percent within the next five years.

SSS Administrative Assistants

HHS SSS division employs 41 Administrative Assistant Is and IIs. These Administrative Assistants are on average, 48 years of age, with an average of nine years of service.

With a turnover rate of 30 percent, SSS is experiencing retention issues. In addition, 20 percent of these employees are currently eligible to retire, with that percentage increasing in the next five years to 32 percent.

SSS is also experiencing recruitment issues. The vacancy rate for these positions is 13 percent. In addition, these positions are remaining unfilled for an average of three months.

Child Care Regulation and Residential Child Care Regulation Administrative Assistants

HHSC Regulatory Services Division employs 37 Child Care Regulation and Residential Child Care Regulation Administrative Assistant IIIs.

These Administrative Assistants are on average, 45 years of age and have an average of eight years of service. The average turnover for these employees is 16 percent.

HCR and LTCR Administrative Assistants

HHSC Regulatory Services Division employs 13 Administrative Assistant Is in HCR and LTCR. These Administrative Assistants are on average, 47 years of age, with an average of seven years of state service.

With an average turnover rate of 21 percent, retention is an ongoing issue.

LIDS Administrative Assistants

DSHS' LIDS division employs 15 Administrative Assistant IIs as data entry operators. The average DSHS LIDS Administrative Assistant II is 44 years of age, with seven years of state service.

Both recruitment and retention are a concern. The turnover rate for the DSHS LIDS Administrative Assistants is 34 percent. The vacancy rate for these Administrative Assistants is 42 percent. Positions are remaining unfilled for an average of nine months.

SSS Document Services Technicians

HHS employs 17 Documents Services Technicians IIIs, IVs and Vs within the SSS division. These Document Services Technicians are on average, 57 years of age and have an average of 25 years of service.

Document Services Technicians currently earn an average annual salary of \$42,492. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Document Services Technicians to be 11 to 14 percent behind the market rate.

Seventy percent of these employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Clerks

HHS employs 15 Clerk IIs and IIIs within the SSS division. Ninety-three percent of these employees are Clerk IIs. These Clerk IIs and IIIs are on average, 53 years of age and have an average of 15 years of service.

Turnover for Clerks is 19 percent. The vacancy rate for these positions is 21 percent. Forty percent of Clerks will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

Inventory and Store Specialist

HHS employs 32 Inventory and Store Specialist IIs and IIIs within the SSS division. These Inventory and Store Specialists provide administrative support to the Warehouse Managers and assist with warehouse inventory control and records.

These Inventory and Store Specialists are on average, 50 years of age and have an average of eight years of service.

These Inventory and Store Specialists currently earn an average yearly salary of \$36,744. The SAO 2022 market index analysis found the average state salary for Inventory and Store Specialists to be 12 percent behind the market rate.

Turnover for these positions is 15 percent, and positions remain vacant for an average of more than five months. Twenty-five percent of these employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years.

As pay remains a challenge, recruitment efforts may need to be more strategic.

Strategies to Meet Workforce Challenges

Below are the current and future targeted HHS and program area strategies to address identified workforce challenges.

Shared Recruitment Strategies Across Program Areas

- Use social media, Human Resources (HR) hiring platforms, and electronic job boards. Including industry specific and professional association job boards.
- Develop targeted outreach to diverse talent pools, including Spanish speakers.
- Promote telework, hybrid work, and compressed work schedules.
- Attend career fairs, including industry specific job fairs and events.
- Leverage network of internal and external stakeholder relationships.
- Create partnerships with educational institutions.
- Identify emerging talent through internships, Early Career Programs, and mentorships.
- Develop promotional materials for hard-to-fill job openings.
- Update initial applicant screening criteria.
- Generate applicants through the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Veterans Services and part-time workers.
- Promote, post, and hire from within.
- Use public engagement and offline marketing tools targeting specific job openings.
- Create a job fair toolkit supporting the ability to interview on-the-spot.
- Promote and share the benefits of state employment.
- Develop systems that track time to fill and turnover rates.
- Use digital ad campaigns and search engine marketing.
- Survey new staff in orientation to gather feedback to refine recruiting tactics.
- Leverage a positive work culture to promote and incentivize employee referrals.

- Increase industry visibility to skilled professionals by allowing department leaders to speak at state and industry conferences.
- Use career ladders showing clear steps to advancement and use the Career Pipeline Program.
- Seek applicants statewide and recruit outside of Texas and distribute notifications of jobs through state and national outlets.
- Continually review and revise job postings for clarity and benefits.
- Collaborate with the HR Talent Acquisition Office to have job openings spotlighted at job fairs.
- Train hiring managers in the interview process, applicant selection and onboarding.
- Develop and expand the use of realistic job previews.
- During recruitment, share examples where training, professional certifications and conference attendance are paid.
- Conduct market salary data analysis to establish salaries at market rates and continue to look at reclassification to better align job roles with pay.
- Consider the size and structure of HHS to develop a unique approach to compensation.
- Promote work life balance.
- Streamline interviews for proper applicant feedback and to reduce hiring time.
- Use a tracking system to monitor open positions and vacancy rates on a weekly basis and track recruitment efforts at each step in the hiring process.
- Audit vacant positions to more clearly reflect the job duties and reclassify positions to higher pay to remain competitive and attract higher numbers of applicants.
- Explore “return-ships,” professionals with significant work history who want to re-enter the workforce.
- Outline clear onboarding processes and actions.

Shared Retention Strategies Across Program Areas

- Promote flexible work arrangements including remote work, flexible scheduling and alternative officing. Expand telework opportunities as job duties allow.
- Continue robust employee appreciation events, recognition, and awards programs.
- Build regular feedback and communication channels for employees to voice ideas to managers and vice versa. Including manager lead quarterly staff meetings.
- Use employee surveys and hold feedback sessions to communicate results.
- Use salary equity adjustments where appropriate.
- Administer stay interviews and surveys.
- Promote workplace wellness initiatives, including mental health.
- Provide leadership development to strengthen the leadership bench through Manager Bootcamps, Book Clubs, Leadership YoU, and other HHS leadership programs.
- Focus on internal promotions as an avenue for career advancement.
- Develop employee newsletters, podcasts, and webpages to promote employee connection and engagement.
- Educate staff on the Student Loan Forgiveness program.
- Hold division, regional and department All-Staff meetings, Town Halls and Lunch and Learn sessions to promote staff communication and team building.
- Use the biennial Survey of Employee Engagement as a tool for continuous feedback and to define new opportunities for improvement.
- Encourage leadership to conduct weekly or bi-weekly one-on-ones with direct reports.
- Use timely job audits to prevent employee work overload.
- Conduct regular performance evaluations with the opportunity to provide feedback to managers.
- Generate development plans for staff outlining areas for growth.
- Continue to award administrative leave for outstanding performance.

- Consider stipends for Spanish speakers.
- Consider retention bonuses.
- Pay for employee conference attendance, training, professional licensing, certifications, and professional organization memberships.
- Use a succession planning framework.
- Develop mentoring, coaching, and job shadowing programs.
- Cross train staff to help prepare them for future roles and ensure continuity of effort.
- Provide targeted training to address individual employee skill gaps.
- Continue team building and collaboration efforts that include coordinating teams across cities, regular work group meet ups, and cross department work groups.
- Continue positive work culture activities such as social connections and regular manager check-ins.
- Conduct quarterly leadership meetings for knowledge sharing and leadership development.
- Continue to monitor staff salaries, provide merit awards, and provide equity adjustments where needed.
- Use job shadowing programs allowing team members interested in other roles to explore the skills needed for success.

Recruitment Strategies: Program Specific

Chief Program Services Office (CPSO)

- **Health and Specialty Care Services**
 - ▶ Provide facility open houses and tours.
 - ▶ Create realistic job preview videos.
 - ▶ Create a state application tutorial video. Develop a measurement with HR of incomplete state applications versus complete state applications.
 - ▶ Create a Compensation Plan Calculator.
- **Access and Eligibility Services**

- ▶ Partner with TWC to offer paid volunteering opportunities for a specified duration at local offices.
- ▶ Provide an incentive to current employees who refer candidates that are hired into an entry-level eligibility advisor position.
- **Behavioral Health Services**
 - ▶ Improve the naming convention of job titles on postings by including the working title, rather than a generic one.

Chief Operating Officer (COO)

- **Emergency and Risk Management**
 - ▶ Implement a Disaster Volunteer Management Program to introduce volunteers to the department and the job opportunities available.

Chief Medicaid and CHIP Services Officer (CMCSO)

- Hire fellows as full-time team members.

Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

- **Laboratory and Infectious Disease Services**
 - ▶ Update qualifications to focus on experience in lieu of education to attract more applicants with relevant employment history.
- **Chief State Epidemiologist**
 - ▶ Consider fellowships to bring in talented individuals who could be retained in the future.
 - ▶ Consider involving Public Health and other college students in volunteering, completing their practicum experience, and designing a capstone, thesis, or dissertation project under a DSHS staffer. This initiative could potentially groom them as future employees.
- **Consumer Protection Division**

- ▶ Communicate with Texas university meat science programs about a potential switch to state inspection (currently under federal inspection). Having a CPD inspector on campus may increase visibility of division programs and promote state inspections as a potential career choice for students.

Retention Strategies: Program Specific

Chief Medicaid and CHIP Services Officer (CMCSO)

- Create an Essentials for Leaders SharePoint page with tools, and best practices for managers and directors.
- Host social events for new hires several times a year to promote connections.
- Start a volunteer group for staff to assist in planning and hosting quarterly engagement opportunities, with a particular focus on enabling regional staff to connect and engage.

Office of Audit and Compliance (OAC)

- Offer 40 hours of paid training each fiscal year.

Chief Policy and Regulatory Officer (CPRO)

- Develop a plan to monitor positions that received funds for salary increases from the 88th Legislative Session. This monitoring will provide information on whether the salary increases attracted more applicants and aided in retaining employees.

Chief Operating Officer (COO)

- **Human Resources**
 - ▶ Solicit process-improvement ideas from team members and create opportunities to collaborate in work groups to develop and implement process-improvement initiatives.

Chief Program Services Office (CPSO)

- **Health Specialty Care Services**

- ▶ Submit photos with descriptions from various facilities to all staff. The photos provide a sense of unity, and insight into everyday activities at the hospitals and state assisted living centers.
- ▶ Use the Creative Ideas Portal to allow staff members to submit process improvements ideas.
- ▶ Use the Associate Commissioner's texting service as a platform for open communication, allowing staff to send information. Leadership can respond, and staff can text anonymously if desired.

- **Behavioral Health Services**

- ▶ Use the shared Microsoft Teams channel titled "Kudos" to facilitate recognition among staff members.

References

- ¹ Data source for Section 3, Workforce Demographics: HHS Centralized Accounting and Payroll/Personnel System - Human Capital Management (CAPPS-HCM) as of 8/31/21, 8/21/22, and 8/31/23. Note: Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.
- ² Job family includes Community Care Workers, Hospital Based Workers, Human Services Specialists, Medical Eligibility Specialists, Social Services Case Analysts and Texas Works Advisors.
- ³ Job family includes Administrative Assistants, Clerks, Customer Service Representatives, Data Entry Operators and Receptionists.
- ⁴ Job family includes Disease Intervention Specialists, HIV/STD Team Leads, Portfolio Project Managers, Program Consultants, Program Specialists, and Project Management Specialists.
- ⁵ Job family includes Food Service Directors, Laboratory Managers, Life Safety Code Managers, Managers, Program Managers, and Regulatory Services Improvement Coordinators.
- ⁶ Job family includes Compliance Reviewers and Inspectors.
- ⁷ Job family includes Cooks, Food Service Managers, and Food Service Workers.
- ⁸ Job family includes Assistant Superintendents and Directors.
- ⁹ Job family includes Custodial Managers and Custodians.
- ¹⁰ Job family includes Business Analyst IIIs, Criminal Intelligence Analyst IIIs, Cybersecurity Analysts, Geographic Information Specialists, Information Security Analysts, Information Technology (IT) Business Analysts, IT Security Analyst IIIs, System Administrators, and Systems Analysts.
- ¹¹ Job family includes Air Conditioning and Boiler Operators, Electricians, Electronics Technicians, HVAC Mechanics, Machinist Is, Maintenance Specialists, Maintenance Supervisors, and Motor Vehicle Technicians.
- ¹² Job family includes Community Health Specialists, Public Health and Prevention Specialists, and Surveillance and Reporting Specialists.
- ¹³ Job family includes E-Learning Developers and Training and Development Specialists.
- ¹⁴ CLF data for underutilization percentages comes from the "Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Hiring Practices Report Fiscal Years 2019-2020" published by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). Note: CLF data from TWC did not include Para-Professionals as a job category and did not indicate if members of that category were counted as part of any other categories - as a result, it is not included in the table below.
- ¹⁵ "N/A" indicates that the number of employees in this category was too small (less than thirty) to test any differences for statistical significance.
- ¹⁶ "No" indicates no underutilization for this job category.
- ¹⁷ The State category "Para-Professional" was not included because it is not possible to derive a "Para-Professional" category from the available American Community Survey data. The other job categories showing potential underutilization are Officials/Administrators and Service Maintenance.
- ¹⁸ Data source for Section 4, Turnover: HHS CAPPS-HCM for FY 2021-2023. Note: Legislative transfers are not considered separations.
- ¹⁹ State Auditor's Office, State Auditor's Office, "Classified Employee Turnover for Fiscal Year 2023," January 2024 Report No. 24-702 web page <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/24-702.pdf>, last accessed 3/03/24. Note: The State Auditor's Office does not consider transfers between state agencies as a loss to the state and therefore does not include this turnover in their calculations.
- ²⁰ Ethnicity "Other" includes American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Other Pacific Islander and two or more races.
- ²¹ Death accounted for .83% of separations.
- ²² Death accounted for .78% of separations (67 separations).
- ²³ Job family includes Cooks, Food Service Managers, and Food Service Workers.
- ²⁴ Job family includes Blind Children Specialists and Rehabilitation Teachers.

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- ²⁵ Job family includes Custodial Managers and Custodians.
- ²⁶ Job family includes Human Services Technicians and Long Term Care Screeners.
- ²⁷ Job family includes Behavioral Health Specialists, Health Informatics Specialists, Health Specialists, and Mental Health Specialists.
- ²⁸ Job family includes Community Care Workers, Hospital Based Workers, Human Services Specialists, Medical Eligibility Specialists, Social Services Case Analysts and Texas Works Advisors.
- ²⁹ Job family includes Medical Technicians and Medical Technologists.
- ³⁰ Job family includes Administrative Assistants, Clerks, Customer Service Representatives, Data Entry Operators and Receptionists.
- ³¹ Job family includes Assistant Medical Directors and Psychiatrists.
- ³² Job family includes Compliance Reviewers and Inspectors.
- ³³ Job family includes Behavior Analysts and Psychologists.
- ³⁴ Job family includes Microbiologists and Molecular Biologists.
- ³⁵ Data source for Section 5, Retirement Projections: HHS CAPPs-HCM as of 8/31/19, 8/31/20, 8/31/21, 8/21/22, and 8/31/23. Note: Retirement estimations include return-to-work retirees.
- ³⁶ "Texas Outpaces the Nation, Adding the Most Jobs in 2022," (2023, January 24). [twc.texas.gov](https://www.twc.texas.gov). Retrieved January 26, 2024, from <https://www.twc.texas.gov/news/texas-outpaces-nation-adding-most-jobs-2022>.
- ³⁷ "Texas Employment Update" (2024, January 19) [dallasfed.org](https://www.dallasfed.org). Retrieved January 26, 2024, from <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/forecast/2024/emp240119update>.
- ³⁸ "Texas economy moderates toward more normal growth in 2024" (2024, February 6). www.dallasfed.org. Retrieved February 16, 2024, from <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/economics/2024/0206>.
- ³⁹ Texas Employment Forecast (2024, February 9). www.dallasfed.org. Retrieved February 10, 2024, from <https://www.dallasfed.org/research/events/2024/24outlook>.
- ⁴⁰ 2024 Poverty Guidelines. ASPE. Retrieved January 26, 2024, from <https://aspe.hhs.gov/topics/poverty-economic-mobility/poverty-guidelines>.
- ⁴¹ U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Texas. Census Bureau QuickFacts. Retrieved January 26, 2024, from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/TX>.
- ⁴² Ibid.
- ⁴³ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴ U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Texas. Census Bureau QuickFacts. Retrieved January 26, 2024, from <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/TX>.
- ⁴⁵ Texas Population Projections, 2010 to 2050," Office of the State Demographer, January 2019, web page [20190128_PopProjectionsBrief.pdf \(texas.gov\)](https://demographics.texas.gov). Retrieved January 26, 2024, from <https://demographics.texas.gov/>.
- ⁴⁶ Primary data source in Section 9, Expected Workforce Challenges: HHS CAPPs-HCM as of 8/31/23. Note: Five-year retirement estimations include return-to-work retirees.
- ⁴⁷ Data source for turnover data for Section 9, Expected Workforce Challenges: For HHS turnover - HHS CAPPs-HCM for FY 2023. For state-wide turnover: State Auditor's Office, "Classified Employee Turnover for Fiscal Year 2023," January 2024 Report No. 24-702 web page <https://sao.texas.gov/reports/main/24-702.pdf>, last accessed 3/03/24.
- ⁴⁸ Data source for market data in Section 9, Expected Workforce Challenges: State Auditor's Office, "A Biennial Report on the State's Position Classification Plan," September 2022 Report No. 23-701 web page <https://sao.texas.gov/SAOReports/ReportNumber?id=23-701>, last accessed 03/03/24.
- ⁴⁹ Data source for national and Texas average wages for Section 9, Expected Workforce Challenges: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Selected Occupational Projections Data, web page <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>. Last accessed on 3/4/24.
- ⁵⁰ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, web page <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/registered-nurses.htm>, last accessed on 3/6/2024.

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- ⁵¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Selected Occupational Projections Data. Period: May 2020; <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/registered-nurses.htm#tab-6>, last accessed on 3/6/2024.
- ⁵² RNs include public health nurses.
- ⁵³ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Last accessed on 3/5/23.
- ⁵⁴ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Selected Occupational Projections Data, web page <https://www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm>. Last accessed on 3/1/2024.
- ⁵⁵ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Selected Occupational Projections Data, web page <https://data.bls.gov/projections/nationalMatrix?queryParams=622202&ioType=i> Period: May 2022; last accessed on 3/5/2024.
- ⁵⁶ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Chemists and Materials Scientists, at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/epidemiologists.htm>. Last accessed on 3/6/2024.