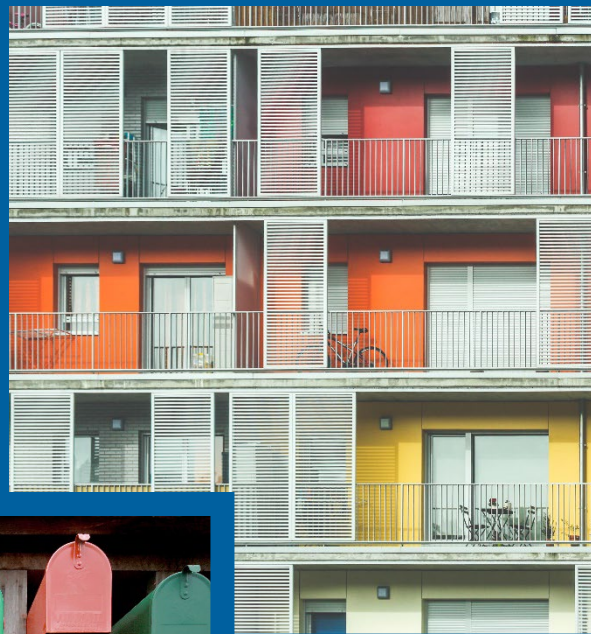




BC Non-Profit Housing Sector Labour Market Challenges and Solutions

Employee Survey Findings

June 30, 2025

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INTRODUCTION

The BC non-profit housing sector is facing a shortage of qualified and skilled workers to operate non-market housing across the province. To address these labour needs, there is a need to support recruitment, retention, and training for employees in roles throughout the sector. These roles include positions and disciplines critical to sustaining and expanding operations, including property management, non-profit administration, health and mental health expertise, and sustainable building management (BC Non-Profit Housing Association, 2025).

To better understand the workforce characteristics and workforce development needs of the sector, the [BC Non-Profit Housing Association \(BCNPHA\)](#) engaged the [Social Research Demonstration Corporation \(SRDC\)](#) to conduct this research study. The project included the development and analysis of a sector survey, supported by a literature review and review of secondary data sets, and aimed to achieve the following goals:

1. Capture a snapshot of employment trends within the non-profit housing sector (e.g., demographics, career pathways, and employment characteristics) and contextualize these findings within provincial employment trends and trends in broader non-profit sector and the for-profit housing sector.
2. Explore factors related to retention and turnover within the sector and identify opportunities to support recruitment and retention of skilled employees.
3. Gather information from workers on their training needs as well as the availability and accessibility of professional development opportunities that can inform recommendations to support the evolving labour market needs of the sector.

This study is funded by BCNPHA to support the organization's broader Labour Market Challenges and Solutions (LMCS) study. The findings from this research will help inform BCNPHA and other relevant parties and training organizations to ensure that professional development and training programs can address the skills gaps and labour needs of sector workers, and more broadly, how the non-profit housing sector can better recruit and retain qualified staff.

METHODS

SURVEY DESIGN

SRDC collaborated with BCNPHA to develop and administer a survey to capture the characteristics, experiences, and organizational needs of workers in the provincial sector. The survey design was informed by SRDC's environmental scan and review of relevant secondary data sources, prior research completed by BCNPHA, as well as feedback from the study's governance committee, to ensure it aligned with current trends, gaps in knowledge, and organizational priorities. This collaborative process also helped ensure that the language used throughout the survey incorporated sector-specific terminology and resonated with those working in the field.

The survey was structured into four main sections. The first section collected demographic and employment-related information, capturing both the characteristics and broader organizational context of workers. The second section explored respondents' career pathways, including their past employment and education, current roles and responsibilities, and aspirations for future career development. The third section focused on identifying current skills gaps and training needs across the workforce. The final section examined issues related to recruitment and retention, including job satisfaction, and perceptions of workplace well-being.

DATA COLLECTION AND LIMITATIONS

BCNPHA disseminated the survey through its network between April 2 and May 1, 2025. BCNPHA primarily distributed the survey link its member newsletters and direct email outreach to affiliated organizations and promoted it through multiple social media platforms. The survey was also disseminated through professional development conferences. Partner organizations were encouraged to share the survey with their employees as well as within their own networks to broaden outreach. The survey targeted individuals working across all levels of BC's non-profit housing sector, including frontline staff, administrative and operation personnel, and executive leadership. Completion of the survey was anonymous and required approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Respondents who completed the survey were also given the option to enter a prize draw for a chance to win one of thirty \$50 gift cards.

While great effort was made to disseminate the survey to as many sector employees as possible, the survey sample should be considered as a snapshot of workers who had the awareness, motivation, and time to complete the survey. As such, it should not be considered to be representative of the entire workforce. Where appropriate, the following analysis will benchmark the survey results against our prior secondary labour force data analysis, as well as

include insights from the BCNPHA literature review and other past research to indicate the representativeness of the survey findings.

DATA ANALYSIS

The research team followed a multi-step process to analyze the survey data. First, descriptive statistics were generated to provide an overview of the survey responses. These initial findings were then used to identify key areas of interest and inform the development of targeted cross-tabulations aligned with BCNPHA's research priorities. The cross-tabulations provided insight into differences across respondent groups, such as role, organization size, or lived experience. An initial draft of the results was shared with BCNPHA to gather feedback and identify additional areas for further exploration. Results were then interpreted in relation to findings from the environmental scan and the secondary data review.

SURVEY RESULTS

The survey results are organized into thematic sections. Each section includes descriptive analysis of the whole respondent sample, as well as crosstabulations to explore the specific experiences of different groups of respondents.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Location and community size

A total of 337 sector workers responded to the survey. The respondents were located across the province, with 44 per cent working in the Lower Mainland, 24 per cent in the Interior, 20 per cent on Vancouver Island, and 11 per cent in Northern BC (see Figure 1). Respondents also reported working in diverse communities. Half of the respondents worked in large urban areas (100,000+ people; see Figure 2), 23 per cent in medium urban areas (30,000-100,000 people), 21 per cent in small population centers (1,000-29,000 people), and 4 per cent in rural areas.

Sample distribution by region (n=337)

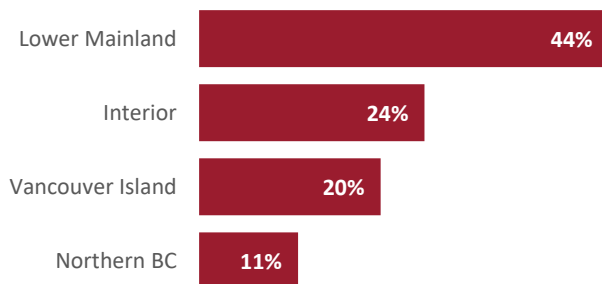
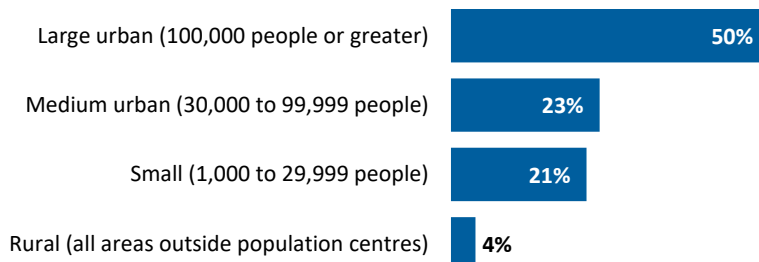


Figure 1 Sample distribution by population centre (n=337)



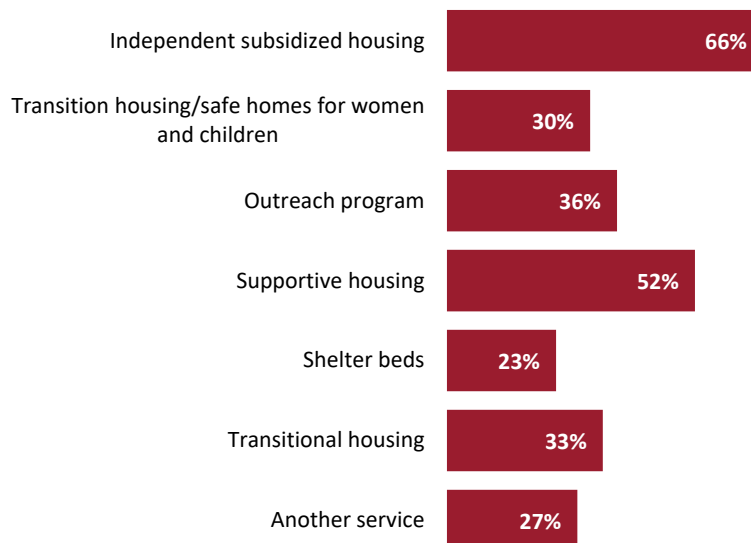
Services and organization size

Respondents worked for organizations that provided a wide range of services. As illustrated in Figure 3, respondents most commonly worked for organizations that provide independent subsidized housing (66%), supportive housing (52%), and outreach programs (36%). However, these service categories were not mutually exclusive, with 64 per cent of respondents reporting that they worked for organizations that provided more than one of the service types listed below. For example, many respondents' employer organizations provided both independent and supportive housing, or supportive housing and outreach programs.

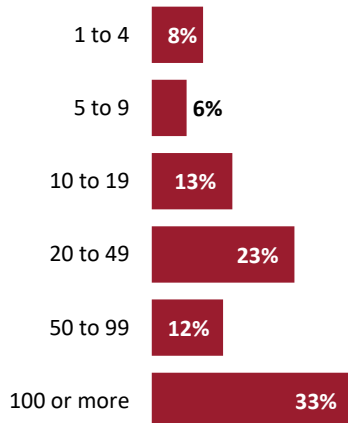
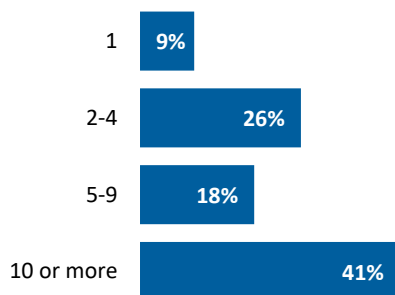
Most respondents worked for larger organizations of at least 20 employees, with one-third (33%) working for very large organizations with over 100 workers (see Figure 4). Nearly all (91%) of respondents worked for organizations that managed multiple buildings, with 41 per cent working for organizations that manage 10 or more buildings (see Figure 5).

Approximately, 12 per cent of respondents indicated that they worked for an Indigenous-led organization. Only 7 per cent of non-Indigenous respondents worked for an Indigenous-led organization, compared to 45 per cent of Indigenous respondents. These organizations were more concentrated in Northern BC (28%) and Vancouver Island (25%), compared to the Interior (11%) and Lower Mainland (5%). Moreover, medium urban areas (30,000-99,999 people) had more Indigenous-led organizations (24%) compared to other areas (9% to 13% respectively).

Figure 2 **Distribution of non-profit housing services provided (n=337)**



Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Figure 3 Number of paid employees (n=336)**Figure 4** Number of buildings managed (n=335)

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Next, we explored the individual characteristics of respondents to get a better understanding of the employees currently working in the sector.

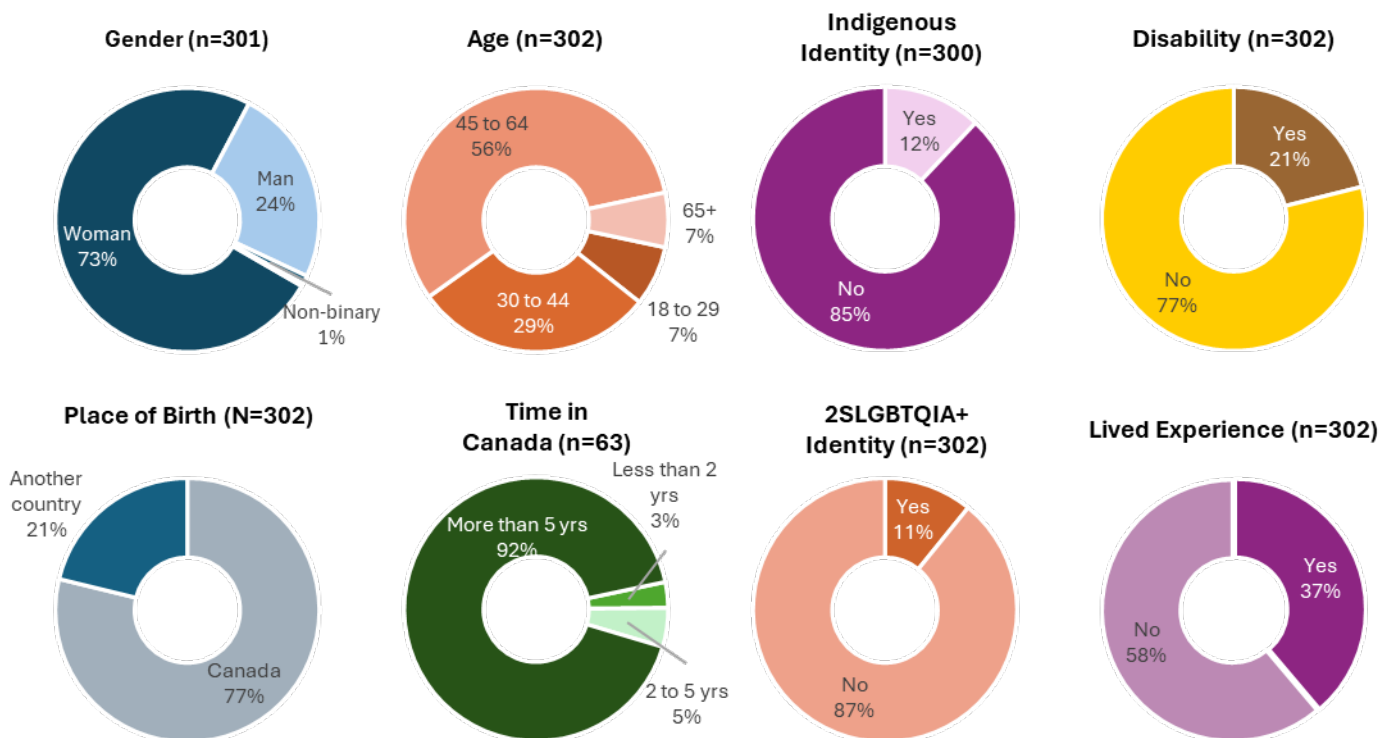
Identity characteristics

Similar to the secondary data analysis report examining industries and occupations related to BC's non-profit housing sector, women were over-represented in our sample. Close to three-quarters of respondents identified as women (73 per cent; see Figure 6). Participants also tended to be in core working age. The age distribution of our survey respondents is older than the similar sample of workers analyzed in the Labour Force Survey (LFS) data. With 63 per cent

aged 45 or older compared to 43 per cent of the LFS sample, and 29 per cent aged 30 to 44 compared to 39% in the LFS sample. The relatively older demographic in this sample is likely related to the fact that the sample has a large proportion of respondents in leadership and management positions.

The majority of respondents self-identified as white (73%; not shown) or Indigenous (12%; see figure 6). The proportion of Indigenous respondents is much higher than the general provincial population (6%), indicating that the survey sample had a strong representation of Indigenous voices. People with disabilities, newcomers¹, and members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community were included in the respondent sample at similar proportions as the provincial population. For example, newcomers made up a fifth of our sample (21%), compared to 29 percent of the provincial population (Statistics Canada, 2021b). The newcomer respondents tended to be well-established, with 92 per cent reporting having lived in Canada for more than 5 years. Just over 10 percent of respondents identified as a member of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community (11%), and 21 per cent reporting having a disability.

Figure 5 Demographic characteristics

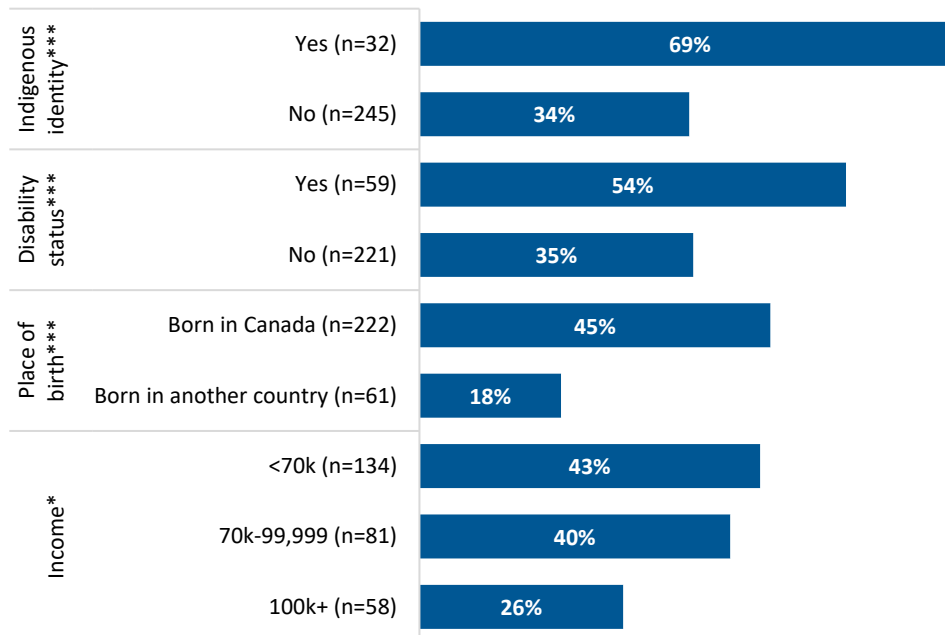


¹ The term “newcomer” is used here to refer broadly to individuals born outside of Canada, including immigrants, refugees, and temporary residents.

Lived experience

In addition to traditional demographic characteristics, the survey included a question about lived experience related to the population that the respondent's employer serves (e.g., living in non-profit housing or experiences of homelessness; see Figure 7). Over a third of respondents (37%) indicated that they had faced housing challenges in their past. Indigenous respondents were more likely to report having this type of lived experience than non-Indigenous respondents (69% compared to 34%, respectively). Respondents with disabilities were more likely to report having past housing challenges than those without disabilities (54% compared to 35%), and Canadian-born respondents were more than twice as likely to report having past housing challenges than newcomers (45% compared to 18%). Respondents with lower annual incomes were also more likely to report having past housing challenges.

Figure 6 Lived experience by demographic characteristics



Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01.

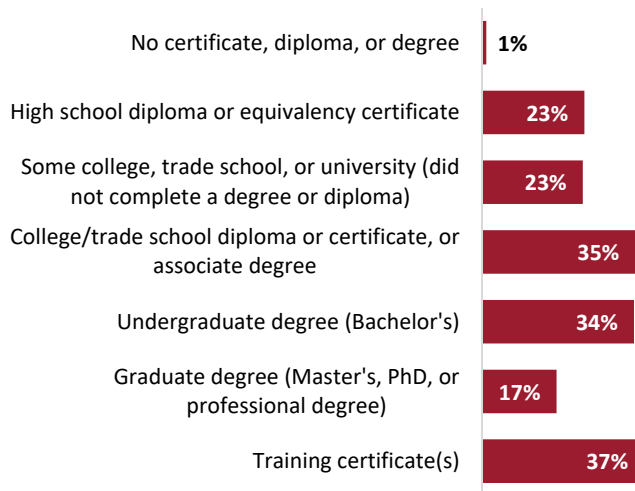
The higher likelihood of having lived experience with housing challenges among demographic groups that face systemic barriers (e.g., Indigenous, disabled, and low-income populations) reflects the challenges these populations continue to face finding and maintaining secure and stable housing. The employees in the sector with this shared experience are therefore an

important source of knowledge and expertise for their employer organization as they can provide important insights and nuanced understandings of the experiences of people who access their services. Finding opportunities for sectoral employees with this experience to provide input is one strategy to continue to support the development and delivery of services and initiatives that are relevant and responsive to community needs.

Education

Survey respondents reported a broad range of educational attainment, as shown in Figure 8. Nearly a quarter (23%) reported having a high school diploma or equivalent certification. Approximately a third had college or trade diplomas (35%) or bachelor's degrees (34%), and another 17 per cent reported completing a graduate degree. The most commonly reported post-secondary degrees were in the social sciences (e.g., social work, psychology, and sociology). Additionally, 37 per cent of respondents reported having training certificates. Participants without a bachelor's degree were more likely to report obtaining training certificates compared to those with a degree (44% compared to 29%), suggesting people without traditional higher education were more likely to pursue certificates. Common certificates included accounting and business management diplomas.

Figure 7 Demographic characteristics, Education (n=302)



Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

The educational attainment of survey respondents differed across demographic groups. Men were more likely than women to hold bachelor's or higher degrees (58% compared to 42%). Among age groups, respondents aged 18 to 34 had the highest rate of bachelor's or higher

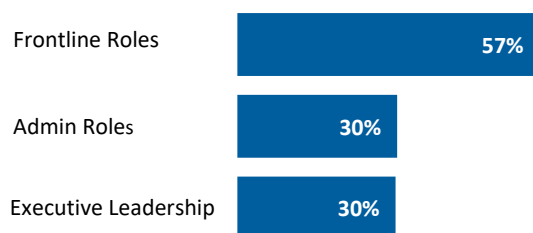
degrees (72%) compared to older respondents (43% and 40% respectively). Educational attainment also varied by cultural background, with newcomers reporting higher rates of bachelor's or higher degrees compared to Canadian-born respondents (68% compared to 32%). These findings align with the secondary data analysis, which also found that men and newcomers were more likely to report having bachelor's degrees or higher.

There were also regional differences in educational attainment. Respondents in the Lower Mainland (57%) and Vancouver Island (51%) had higher rates of bachelor's or higher degrees compared to the Interior (32%) and Northern BC (17%). Non-Indigenous respondents also reported higher rates of receiving undergraduate degrees (or higher) than Indigenous Peoples (47% compared to 31%). Additionally, people without lived experience were more likely to report higher completion rates than people with lived experience (51% compared to 40%).

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

Respondents also shared details about their current employment situation. As shown in Figure 9, more than half of respondents worked in frontline roles² (57%), followed by executive³ and administrative roles⁴ (both 30 per cent). Note that these percentages add up to more than 100%, as more than a third of respondents reported working in multiple roles. This showcases the trend for sector employees to “wear multiple hats” and hold multiple positions and responsibilities, which is common across the broader non-profit sector.

Figure 8 **Distribution of role types (n=337)**



Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

² Frontline roles consist of Tenant support worker, Shelter support worker, Support worker for women and children, Counsellor for women and children, Health support staff, other frontline, Outreach, Management, Property and building managers.

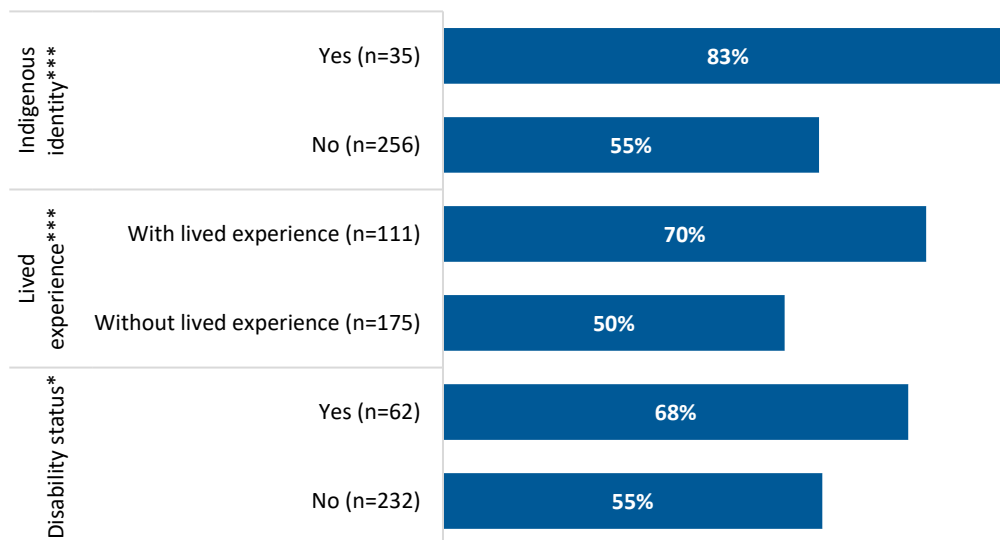
³ Executive roles include Executive Leadership.

⁴ Administrative roles consist of Maintenance, Administrative, Finance Staff, and other roles.

Indigenous respondents, those with disabilities, and those with lived experience with insecure housing were significantly more likely to report working in frontline roles (see Figure 10). This shows that while there is strong representation of these populations within the sector, they are not necessarily represented in leadership or decision-making positions.

Among the small number of respondents with Indigenous identity, a much larger share was concentrated in frontline roles (83% vs. 55% for non-Indigenous workers). Additionally, 70 per cent of respondents with lived experience held frontline positions compared to 50 per cent of their counterparts. A similar pattern emerged for respondents with disabilities, where 68 per cent reported working in frontline positions versus 55 per cent of those without disabilities.

Figure 9 Frontline role by demographic characteristics



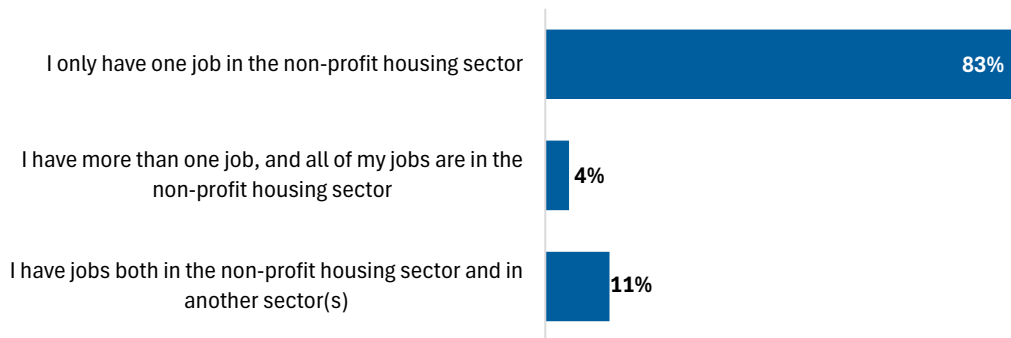
Note: Statistical significance indicated by * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Additionally, a large majority of respondents reported that their employment in the non-profit sector was non-unionized (79%). This contrasts with the LFS secondary data analysis, which found that 52 per cent of individuals in industries and occupations related to the non-profit housing sector are union members, and that union members received higher wages compared to non-union members. However, after controlling for job roles, we did not see an association between union membership and wages in our survey sample. Further research could explore the relationship between unionization rates and incomes in the non-profit housing sector, as well as additional benefits that unionization could offer workers beyond wages, such as job security or workplace supports.

Employment in multiple jobs

Nearly one-fifth (17%) of respondents indicated that they were working in multiple positions. Among those working multiple jobs, 40% held multiple positions within the same. The remaining 60 per cent worked across different organizations, with 11 per cent having a second job in another sector (most commonly healthcare and social assistance) and 4 per cent holding a second job within the non-profit housing sector (see Figure 11).

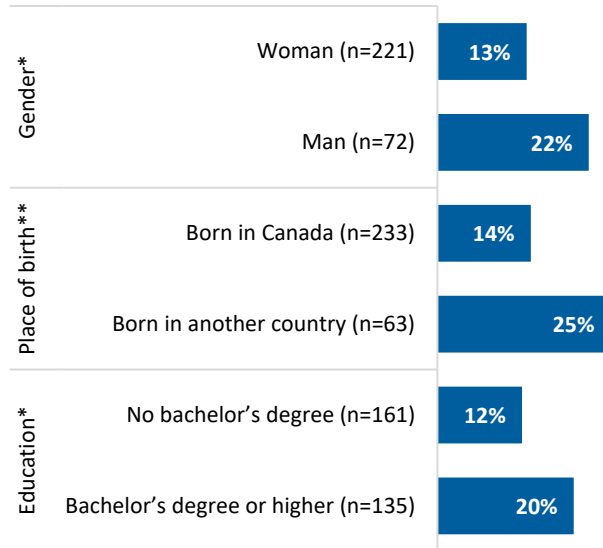
Figure 10 **Number of jobs held (n=337)**



Men, newcomers, and respondents with bachelor's degrees or advanced post-secondary degrees were more likely to report holding multiple jobs compared to those without (see Figure 12). More men held multiple roles than women (22% compared to 13%); more newcomers than Canadian-born respondents (25% compared to 14%), and more respondents with advanced education than those without (20% compared to 12%). While the identity-based differences were not reflected in the secondary data analysis, the secondary data sets did also find that higher levels of education are associated with holding multiple positions.

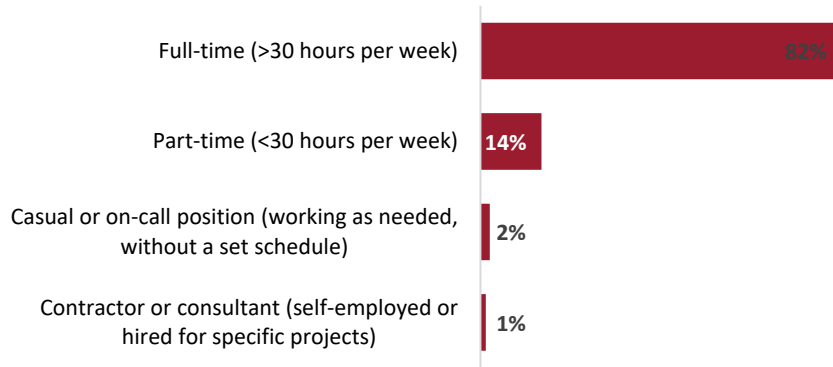
Figure 11 Multiple jobs holder by demographic group

Note: Statistical significance indicated by * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

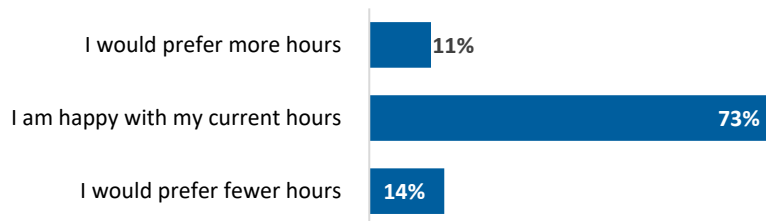
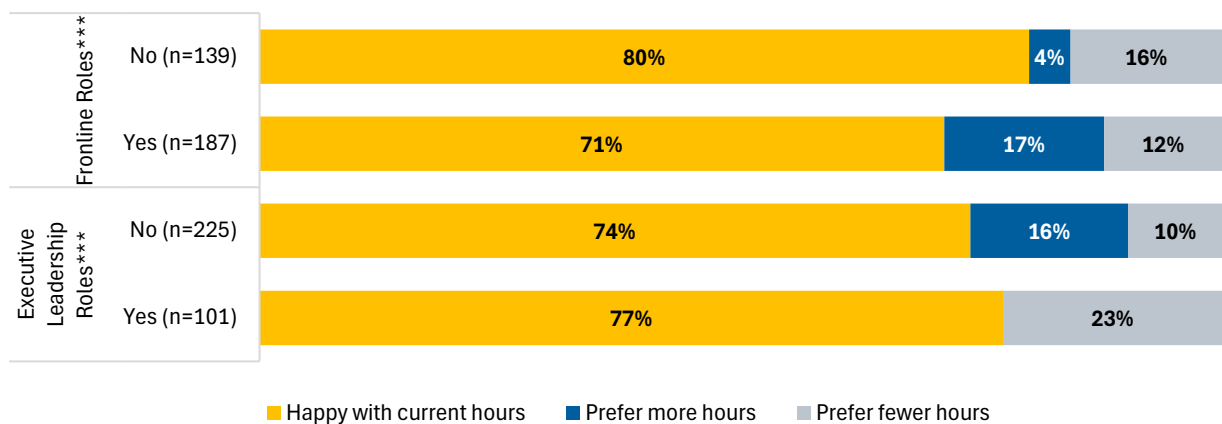


Work arrangement

Nearly all respondents reported working either full-time (82%), or part-time (14%), with just three per cent in contract or casual positions (see Figure 13). People with lived experience were less likely to report having full-time positions compared to those without lived experiences (77% compared to 86%). As shown in Figure 14, most respondents reported being happy with the current number of hours they worked (73%), although some shared that they would prefer working more hours (11%) or fewer hours (14%). Employees in frontline roles were more likely to report they would prefer more hours than those in other positions (17% compared to 4%; see Figure 15). Those in executive leadership roles were more likely to report they would prefer working fewer hours, compared to other employees (23% compared to 10%). This may reflect that some frontline workers, who are more likely to earn less (with nearly half earning less than \$70,000 per year; see Salary and Job Fit section), are seeking additional hours to supplement their income.

Figure 12 **Distribution of employment status (n=334)**

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

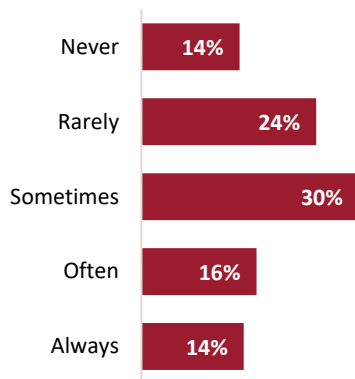
Figure 13 **Respondent preferences regarding current working hours (n=334)****Figure 14** **Work hour preferences by role**

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01.

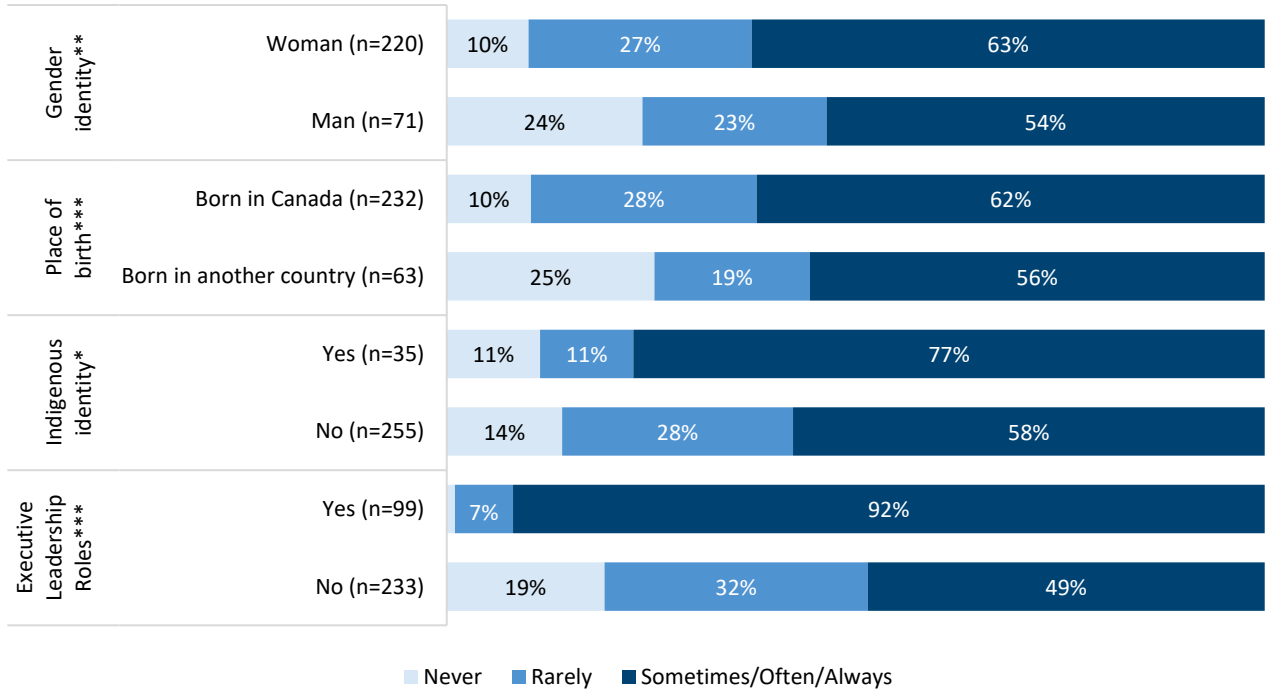
Overtime

The majority of respondents reported that they worked overtime, with 60% reporting working overtime sometimes, often, or always (see Figure 16). In terms of how overtime was compensated, most respondents reported receiving time off in lieu (45%) or overtime pay (24%). However, nearly one-third (29%) reported not receiving any compensation for overtime work.

Figure 15 Frequency of overtime work (n=335)



Indigenous respondents, women, and Canadian-born respondents were more likely to report frequent overtime (defined as sometimes, often, or always working overtime; see Figure 17). Overtime demands also varied by role. The majority of respondents in executive leadership positions (92%) reported that they were required to work overtime at least sometimes, compared to less than half (49%) of those in other roles (see Figure 17). Respondents in leadership roles were more likely to report working overtime without compensation compared to those not in leadership roles (62% compared to 16%).

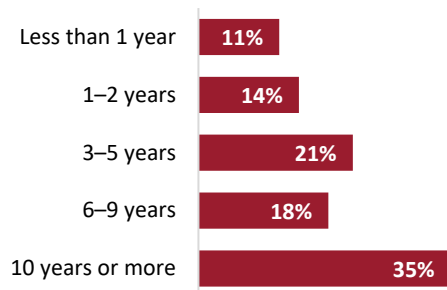
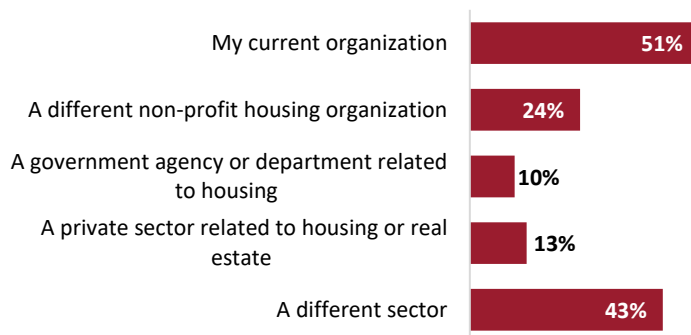
Figure 16 Overtime work by demographic characteristics and role

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01.

CAREER PATHWAYS INTO THE SECTOR

Respondents demonstrated a range of work experience within the non-profit housing sector. A quarter (25%) of respondents had less than two years of experience in the sector; 21 per cent reported 3 to 5 years of experience; and over half (53%) reported more than 5 years of experience. (see Figure 18).

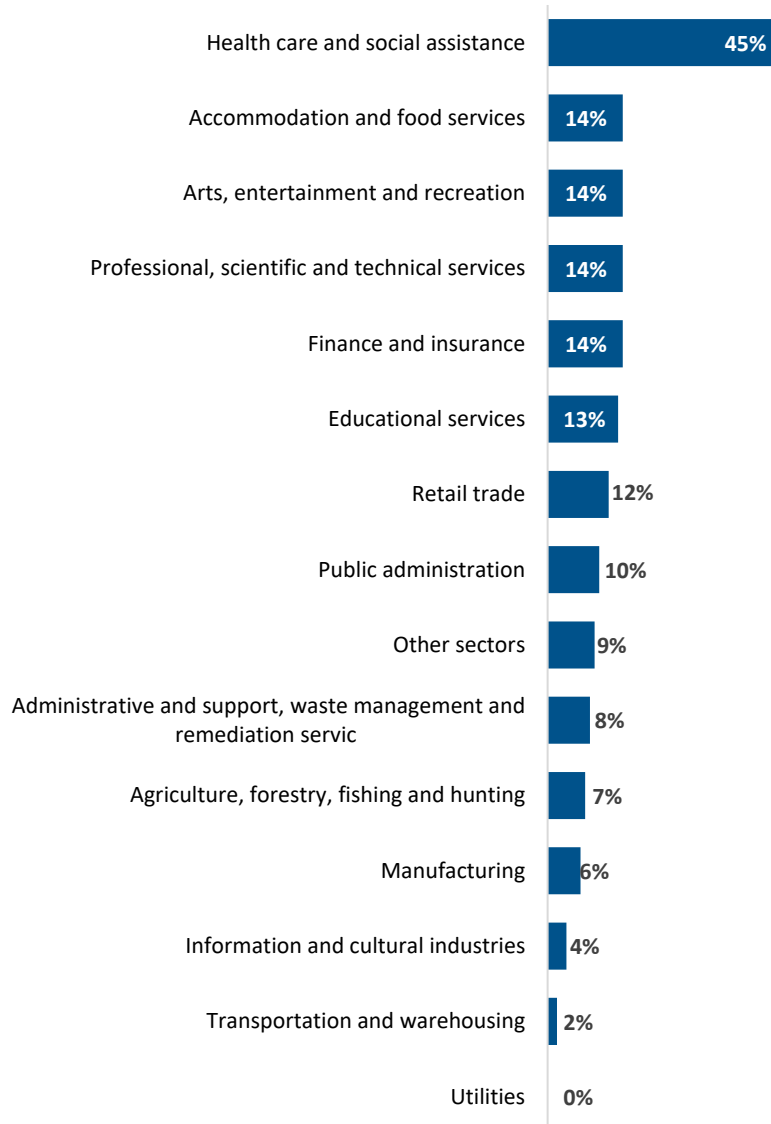
For 20 per cent of respondents, their current job was their first-ever employment position in their career. Among those with previous work experience, three-quarters had work experience within the non-profit housing sector, either in their current organization (51%) or another non-profit organization (24%). Among respondents with work experience outside the sector, 13 per cent worked in the for-profit housing sector, 10 per cent worked for a government agency related to housing, and 43 per cent worked in other sectors unrelated to housing (see Figure 19). The most commonly reported other sectors were healthcare and social assistance (see Figure 20), suggesting an overlap in similar types of opportunities available to workers in these closely related sectors.

Figure 17 Years of experience working in the non-profit housing sector (n=333)**Figure 18** Past work experience (n=262)

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Figure 19 Previous sector experience of respondents (n=112)

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.



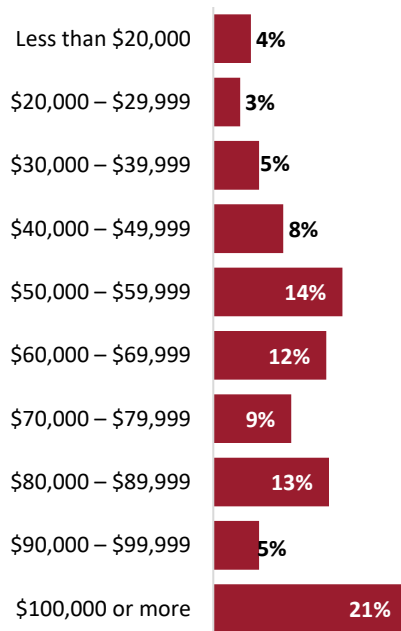
SALARY AND JOB FIT

Salary distribution and perception of fairness

Respondents were asked about their current compensation from their roles in the non-profit housing sector (see Figure 21). Approximately half of respondents (47%) reported a pre-tax annual income of under \$70,000 per year. While not directly comparable due to tax implications,

this suggests close to half of the survey respondents earn around the provincial average (an average after-tax individual income in BC is \$61,800 in 2025; Statistics Canada, 2025). Additionally, one in five of our survey respondents reported earning under \$50,000 per year. 21 per cent of respondents reported earning over \$100,000, which likely reflects the large proportion of the survey sample working in management and leadership positions.

Figure 20 **Distribution of pre-tax annual income level (n=337)**



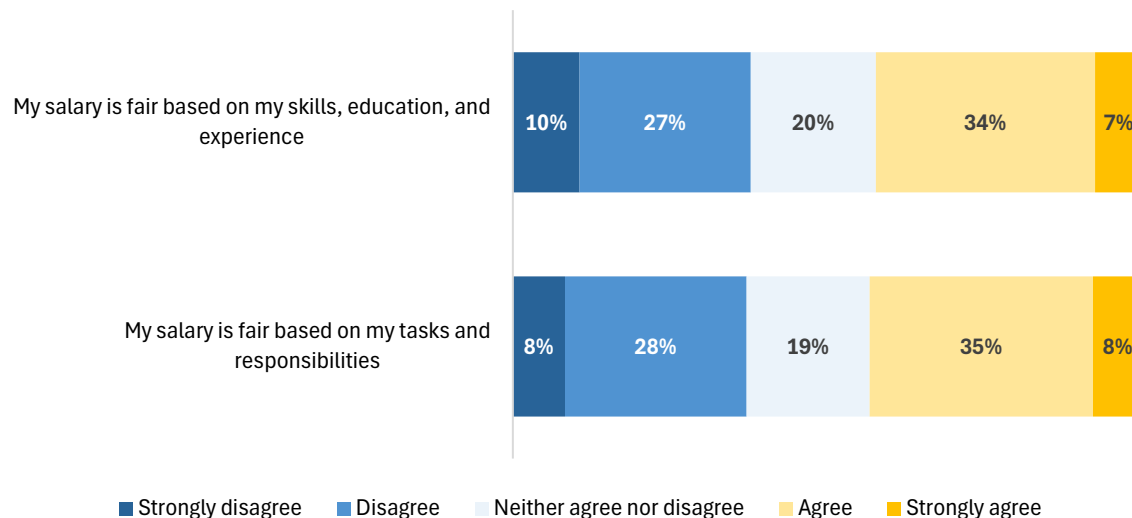
Note. Respondents were instructed to estimate the overall income they receive from all of their positions if they had more than one job in the non-profit housing sector.

The survey asked respondents about whether they felt their salary was fair based on their job tasks and responsibilities as well as their skills, education, and experience (see Figure 22). Nearly half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their salary was fair (43% based on job tasks and responsibilities; 47% based on skills, education, and experience). Just over one-third felt their salary was unfair (36% based on job tasks and responsibilities; 37% based on skills, education, and experience).

The perception of salary fairness was significantly associated with income, respondents with lower income were more likely to view their salary as being unfair (not shown). Specifically, 66 per cent of respondents earning less than \$70,000 did not agree that their salary was fair based on their skills and 63 per cent did not agree that their salary was fair based on job tasks and

responsibilities. This compared to 44% and 57% respectively for those earning \$70,000-\$99,999, and 47% and 44% respectively for those earning \$100,000 or more.

Figure 21 Perceived salary fairness based on job tasks and skills/experiences (n=307)

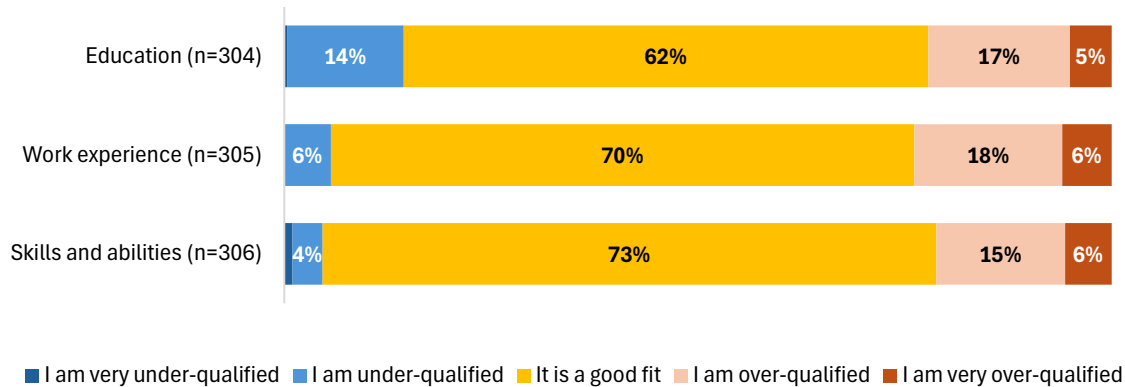


Job fit

Most respondents reported that their education, work experience, and skills were well aligned with their current role (62%, 70%, and 73%, respectively). In all three areas, just over 20 per cent of respondents reported feeling overqualified or very over-qualified for their positions (22%, 24%, and 21%, respectively, see Figure 23).

Those with higher education were more likely to report feeling overqualified. Over one-third (35%) of respondents with a bachelor's degree or higher felt overqualified based on their education level, compared to 13 per cent of those without a bachelor's or higher degrees. Similar patterns were observed for alignment between skills and work experience.

Newcomers were also more likely to report feeling overqualified (26% compared to 21% for Canadian-born employees), which is not surprising given that newcomer workers in the sector are much more likely to hold bachelor's degrees (71%) compared to Canadian-born employees (39%). This suggests that highly educated newcomers may be more likely to be working in frontline roles below their qualification level.

Figure 22 Perceived job fit based on education, work experience, skills and abilities

WORKPLACE WELLBEING

Respondents answered a series of questions about their perceptions of work, job satisfaction, and levels of stress or burnout.

Perceptions of work

Survey respondents were asked to input three words describing how their organization is doing or feeling now. The responses are shown in the word cloud in Figure 24. The word cloud reveals a complex picture of organizations experiencing significant growth and change. The most prominent words are “grow,” “change,” and “transition,” which highlight the evolving nature of the sector. However, respondents were equally likely to share terms that reflect their current challenges at work, including “stress,” “overwhelm,” and “busy”, which suggest that employees are struggling to keep pace with workplace demands and rapid changes in their organizations or the sector more broadly. Despite these pressures, respondents also used positive terms to describe their work environments, such as “supportive,” “positive,” “hopeful,” “learning,” and “optimistic,” indicating underlying organizational strengths and a generally positive workplace culture. Terms like “underfunded” point to systemic resource constraints that workers may be navigating in their roles on a daily basis.



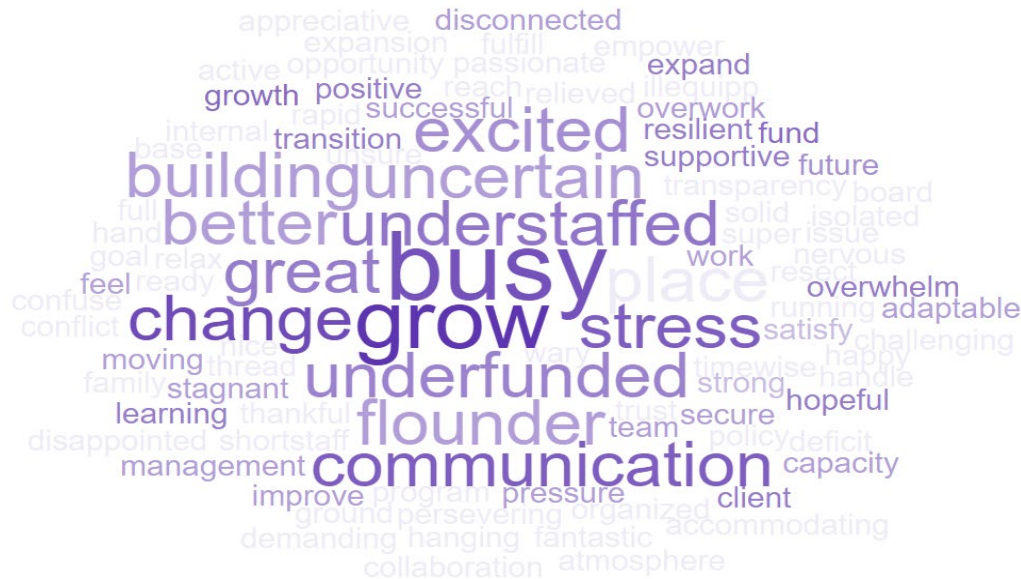
When examining the word cloud among workers in specific roles or demographic groups, it is apparent that terms such as “busy” and “grow” continue to be prominent, and “stress” and “overwork” appear at similar levels across groups (see Figures 24.1 to 24.3). However, there were some variations in sentiment observed. People with lived experience demonstrated more optimistic framing regarding their feelings toward organizations, with words such as “hopeful” and “positive” being more prominent. For frontline workers, terms such as “communication” and “growth” are also more likely to be expressed. For respondents who are new to the sector, terms such as “excited,” “great,” “uncertain,” and “understaffed” are more visible. These differences suggest that respondents with lived experience seem more hopeful, frontline workers emphasize communication and growth, while respondents new to the sector demonstrated excitement mixed with some uncertainty about working in organizations facing challenges due to resource and staffing constraints.

Figure 24.1 Respondents' feelings about their organization, people with lived experiences



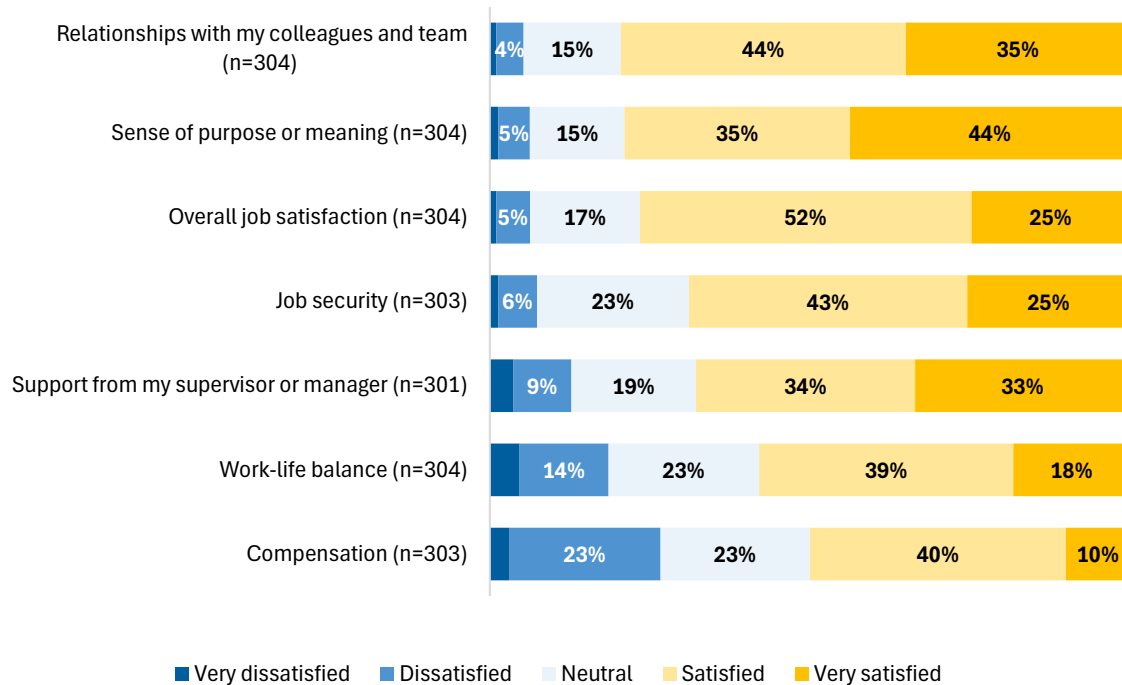
Figure 24. 2 Respondents' feelings about their organization, frontline roles





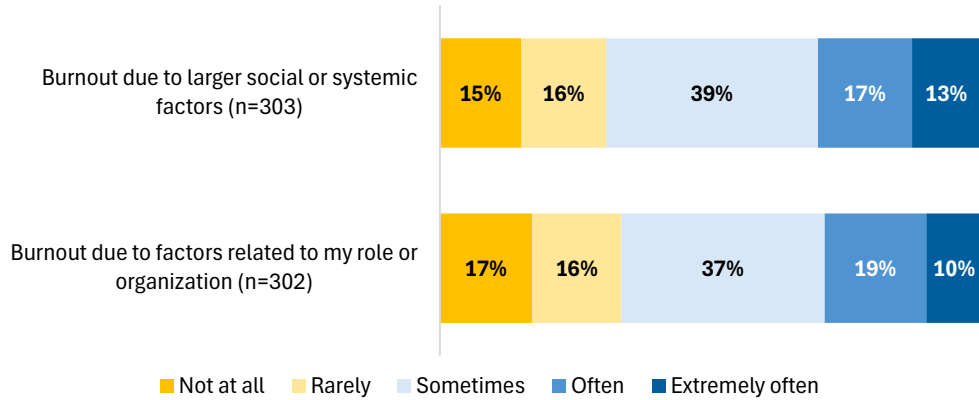
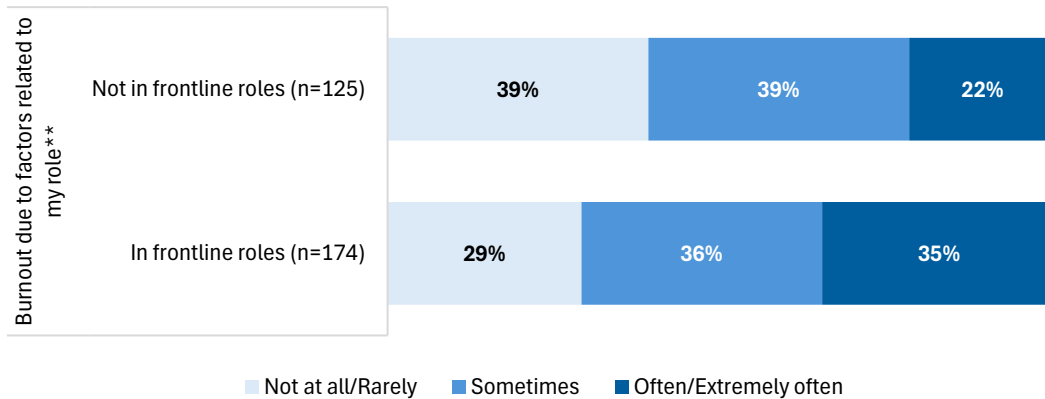
Overall, three-quarters (77%) of respondents reported feeling satisfied or very satisfied with their job (see Figure 25). Respondents were most likely to report job satisfaction related to their relationships with colleagues (79%), their sense of purpose and meaning (79%), job security (68%), and support from supervisors (67%), and they were less likely to report satisfaction with their work-life balance (58%) and compensation (50%).

Although overall job satisfaction was high, the level of satisfaction varied by staff role. Respondents in frontline roles were more likely to report lower levels of overall satisfaction compared to those in other positions (72% compared to 83%). On the other hand, those in executive leadership positions reported higher levels of overall job satisfaction, but significantly lower levels of satisfaction with work-life balance (42%) compared to those who were not in leadership positions (65%). Job satisfaction for frontline staff will be explored further in the following sections as we examine sources of workplace stress, important retention factors, and training needs. Additionally, respondents who are new to the workforce were more likely to report satisfaction with work-life balance compared to those with previous work experience (72% compared to 55%).

Figure 24 Perceived job satisfaction

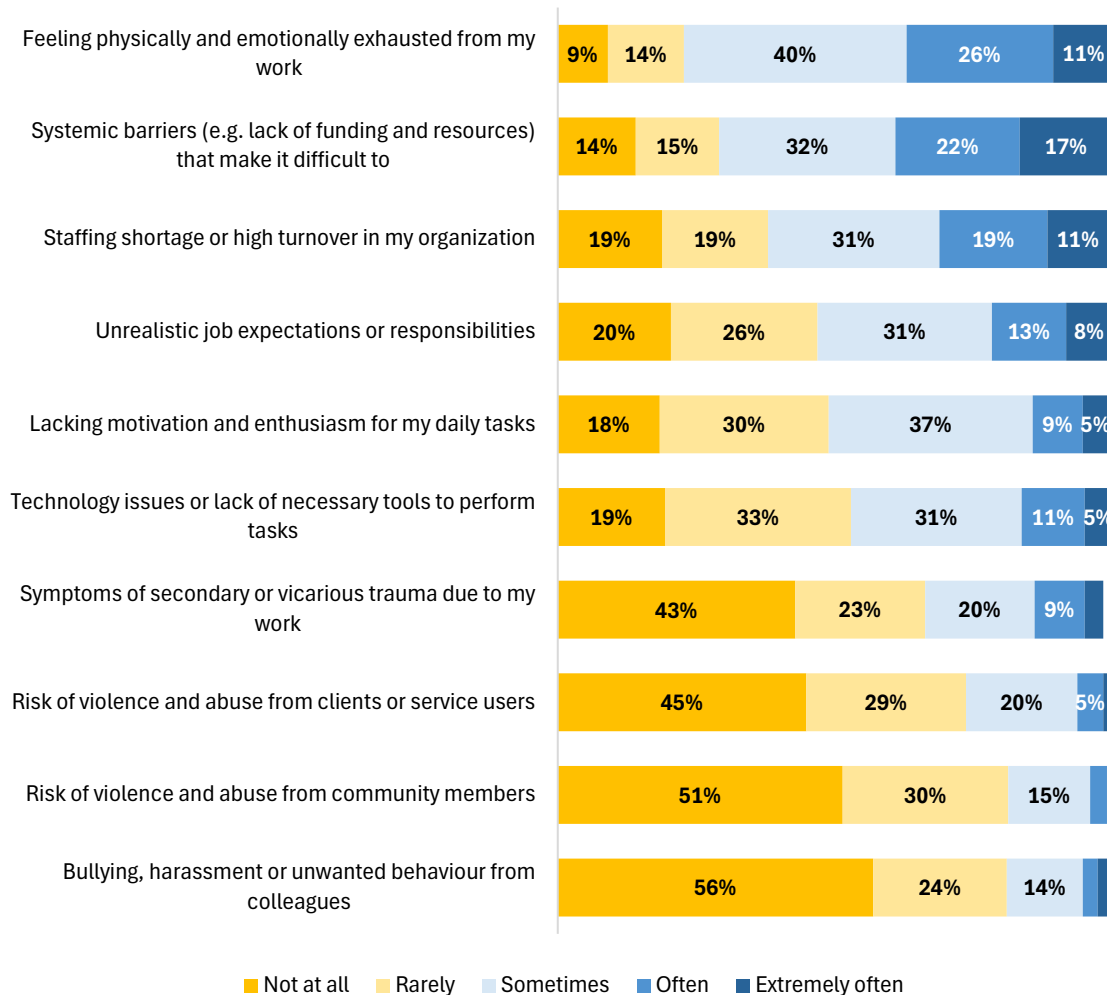
Stress and Burnout

The survey included questions to assess workplace stress and burnout. Burnout was defined in the survey as chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. Over two-thirds of respondents reported being affected by burnout sometimes, often, or extremely often related to their role or organization (66%) and larger social or systemic factors (69%) in the last three months (see Figure 26). Respondents in frontline roles were more likely to report burnout than those in other positions (71% compared to 61%; see Figure 27).

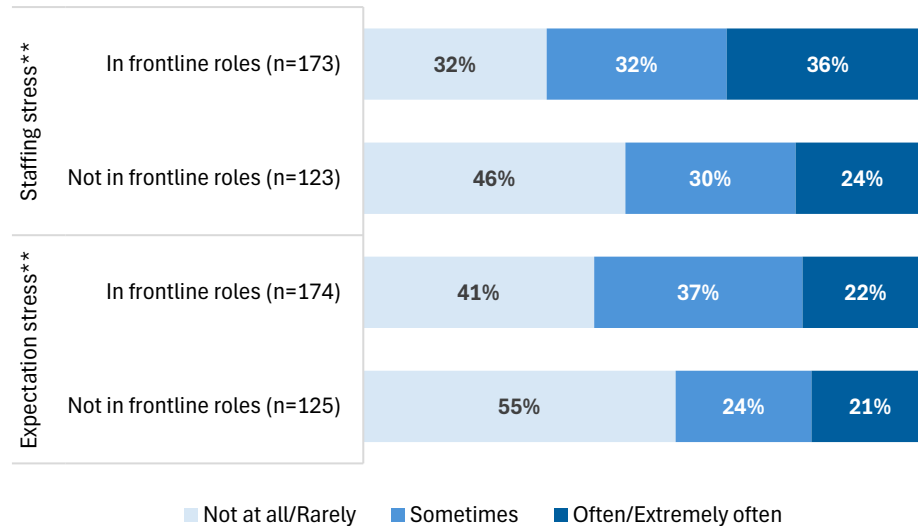
Figure 25 Experiences of burnout in the past three months**Figure 26 Frequency of burnout due to factors related to role and organization by role type**

Note: Statistical significance indicated by * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

To further explore workplace experiences, the survey asked respondents about the causes of stress in the workplace (see Figure 28). The most prevalent stressors reported experiencing often or extremely often were systemic barriers (39%), feeling physically and emotionally exhausted from work (37%), staffing shortages or high turnover at their organization (30%), and unrealistic job expectations (22%). Stressors related to the risk of violence and abuse from community members or service users, and bullying or harassment from colleagues were reported less frequently, with 14 to 20 per cent of respondents reporting that these factors sometimes caused stress.

Figure 27 Experience of stressors in the past three months (n=301)

Frontline workers were significantly more likely to report stress from staffing shortages (59%) and unrealistic expectations (45%), compared to non-frontline workers (see Figure 29). Additionally, 43 per cent of frontline worker reported stress from secondary trauma and 34 per cent also experienced frequent stress due to risks of violence from service users. These results suggest opportunities to better support frontline workers through changes to HR supports and job expectations. It also speaks to opportunities to address frontline workers' needs through the provision of ongoing mental health supports to mitigate secondary trauma, as well as the improvement of workplace safety protocols and training to manage risks of violence. To continue to promote inclusivity within in the sector – and recognizing the high proportion of employees from populations that face multiple barriers – ensuring these supports and services are accessible and culturally responsive would be important.

Figure 28 Key stressors for respondents with frontline roles

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Career plans

To explore the respondents' career goals, the survey included the question: *Thinking ahead, what are your career goals for the next 5 years?* Among 329 respondents, over half (54%) reported that their goal is to continue working in their current role (see Figure 30); another 25 per cent reported wanting to work in a different role in their organization; and 18 per cent reported wanting to work in another organization within the non-profit housing sector. A similar proportion of respondents indicated that they had plans to leave the sector within the next five years in order to pursue further education (20%), to retire (18%), or to work in another sector (15%). Respondents in executive leadership roles were more likely to report retirement as their imminent career goal (26% compared to 14%).

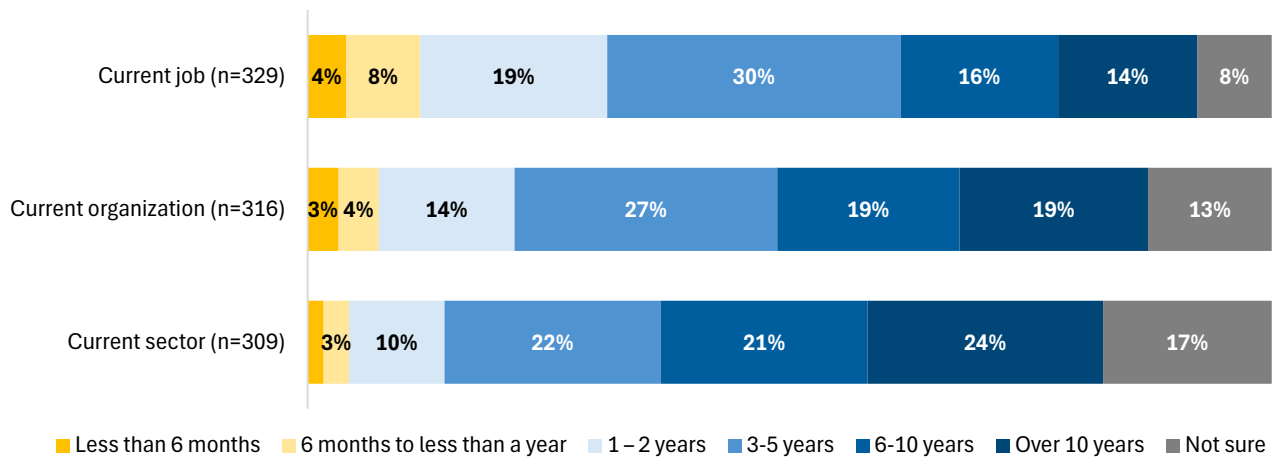
To gain further insights into employee retention at the broader sector level, respondents were asked about how long they plan to stay in their current job, organization, and the sector more broadly. Only a small proportion of respondents indicated that they plan to leave their job (12%), their organization (7%) or the sector (4%) within the next year. Most respondents reported that they intend to remain in the sector for the long term: 45 per cent of employees planned to stay for 5 or more years and another 22 per cent of respondents planned to stay in the sector another

3-5 years. Similarly, 65 per cent of respondents plan to stay at their current organization and 60 per cent plan to stay in their current position for at least another three years (see Figure 31).

Figure 29 Career goals in the next five years (n=330)



Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Figure 30 Projected tenure in current position, organization, and sector

An exploration of demographic characteristics and career goals showed that younger respondents, people with disabilities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ respondents were significantly more likely to consider pursuing future education in the next five years (not shown). Over half of respondents aged 18 to 34 (54%) and people with disabilities (54%) planned to pursue education in the next five years, along with 41 per cent of 2SLGBTQIA+ respondents. This compared to much lower rates among older age groups (<25%), people without disabilities (17%), and people without 2SLGBTQIA+ identities (19%).

Factors contributing to turnover

Next, the survey explored factors that may contribute to employee turnover. Respondents were asked to rate the extent that different factors make them consider leaving or changing their jobs. As shown in Figure 32, the most commonly reported reasons to leave the sector were to seek higher pay (57%), job stress or burnout related to their roles or organizations (53%), career advancement (52%), or to improve their work-life balance (51%). These findings align with the secondary data analysis which showed an increasing proportion of people in related industries pursuing further education for career advancement.

Other common factors that contributed to employee turnover included limited opportunities for career advancement, training, and skill utilization. Over half (52%) of respondents shared that seeking career advancement made them consider leaving their job, while 29 per cent reported that a lack of career advancement opportunities was a factor. Respondents also indicated that their skills were not being utilized (41%) and that they did not receive enough training (24%). Finally, 36 per cent of respondents reported that they were planning to retire, indicating the need to plan for the departure of older employees.

An exploration of how these reasons differ by role shows that frontline workers were more likely to consider changing jobs due to skill utilization and work-life balance compared to workers in administrative and executive leadership roles. For example, respondents in front line positions were more likely to report that their skills were not being fully utilized compared to those in other roles (34% compared to 50%; see Figure 33). Frontline employees were also more likely to report work-life balance as a key factor contributing to their decision to change jobs, compared to those in other roles (59% compared to 47%; see Figure 33). In contrast, retirement was the only critical factor influencing job departure decisions for those in executive leadership roles. This is consistent with previous findings that frontline workers consistently feel underutilized, earn less, and face more stress.

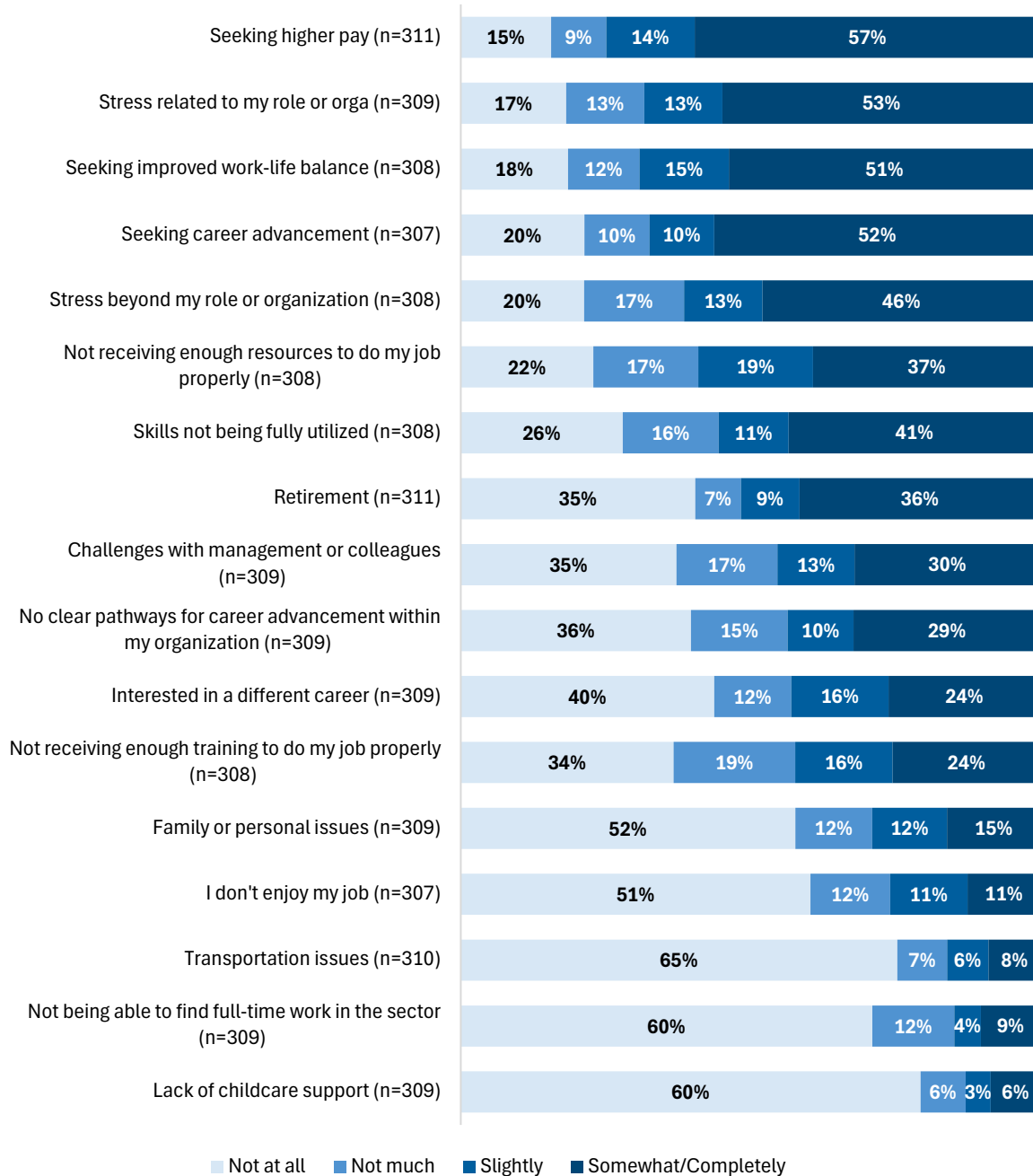
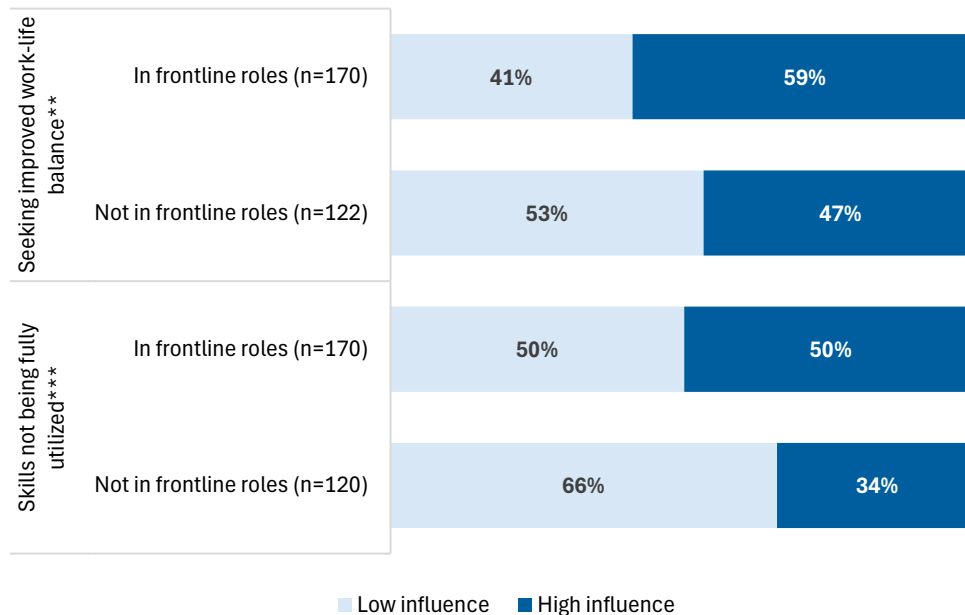
Figure 31 Factors contributing to change job decisions

Figure 32 Key factors influencing job change decision among frontline workers

Note: Statistical significance indicated by * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$. Low influence indicates not at all, not much, and slightly. High influence indicates somewhat and completely.

Factors related to retention

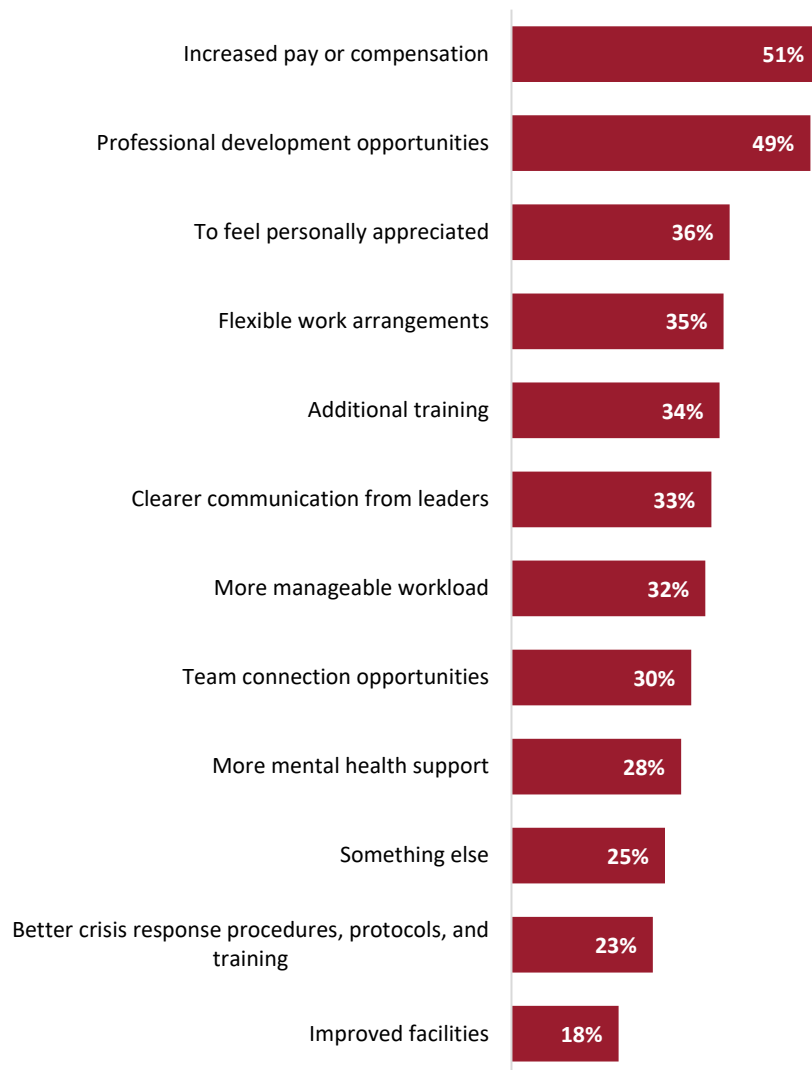
The survey also explored factors related to workplace performance and job retention among sector workers. When asked what supports are needed for employees to do their best at work, respondents most commonly identified increased pay or compensation (51%), professional development opportunities (49%), and additional training (34%).

Some factors reported – including feeling personally appreciated (36%), flexible work arrangements (35%), clearer communication from leaders (33%), and team connection opportunities (30%) – can be addressed through changes to management approaches and workplace culture. Other factors may require more investment at the organization or sector level to address, including the provision of more manageable workloads (32%), enhanced mental health supports (28%), better crisis response procedures, protocols, and training (23%), and improved facilities (18%; see Figure 34). Many respondents' comments highlighted staffing shortages that force employees to wear multiple hats, creating additional stress. As noted by two respondents:

“I think that there should be a tenant relations person, and there should be a program budget for activities. It should also be supportive housing, teaching the youth how to be productive adults. Things like budgeting, setting boundaries, guidance.”

“Having another staff person doing outreach at my organization who would work directly with me”

Figure 33 **Types of support needed at work (n=299)**



Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

TRAINING

Access to training

As noted above, many respondents identified professional development opportunities and training needs as top factors that may influence their decision to stay or leave the non-profit housing sector. Respondents consistently identified at least some need for more training to meet the requirements of their positions, perform more effectively, and advance professionally (see Figure 35).

Indigenous workers and people with disabilities, as well as groups concentrated in frontline roles, expressed greater training needs (not shown). Indigenous workers were more likely to report wanting training to work effectively than non-Indigenous workers (77% compared to 71%). People with disabilities were more likely to report the need for training to advance in their careers compared to those without disabilities (89% compared to 71%). Respondents in frontline roles were also more likely to report the need for training to advance in their careers compared to those not in frontline roles (80% compared to 67%).

While some respondents reported that their organization offers enough training to keep knowledge and skills up to date (56%) and to learn and develop new skills (64%), many did not have access to this training (see Figure 36). Additionally, 84% of respondents reported one or more barrier to accessing training. The most commonly reported barriers to training were related to cost and labour shortages, including budget limitations (50%), staffing replacement/back-up challenges (35%), lack of personal funds (32%), and travel expenses associated with training (26%; see Figure 37). Many respondents highlighted workload and staffing constraints as barriers to training, especially feeling not enough time to take training due to their workload. In the words of one respondent:

Not enough hours in a day to get my job done and would struggle to do it on my own time at home.

Similarly, another respondent stated,

We have not had the time to look into training that will be helpful. Each time I've signed up for a course, I have been pulled away with other priorities.

Another respondent explained,

We are often single staffed and if we want to do training, it must be something that we can do while working.

These comments are consistent with the findings that staffing shortages are a workplace stressor for frontline workers, as shared in earlier sections of this report.

Other responses highlighted that staff need more support to identify training, as one stated,

Not aware of all of the training available, or when I search for the training, I want I can't find any training related to what I'm interested in.

Another respondent provided an example,

VAT training, we don't offer this training in-house and it's been extremely challenging finding a training provider.

Figure 34 Training needs

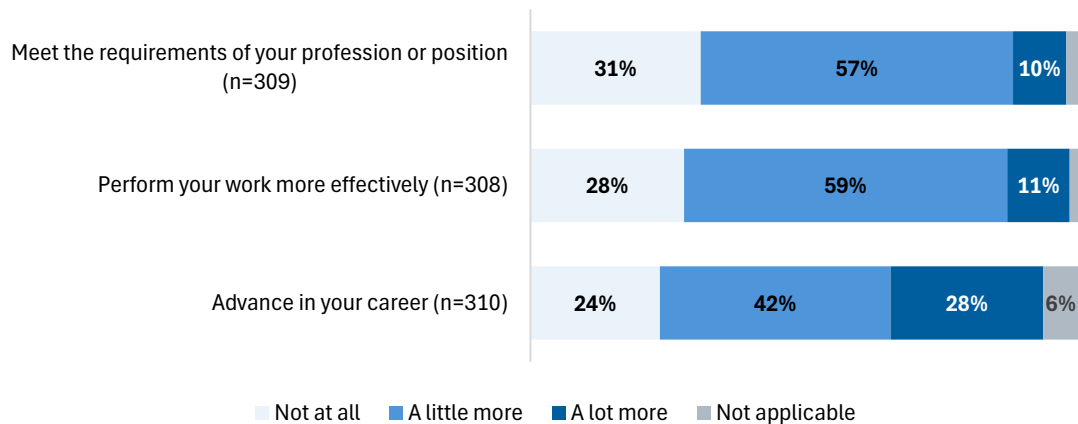


Figure 35 Access to training opportunities (n=311)

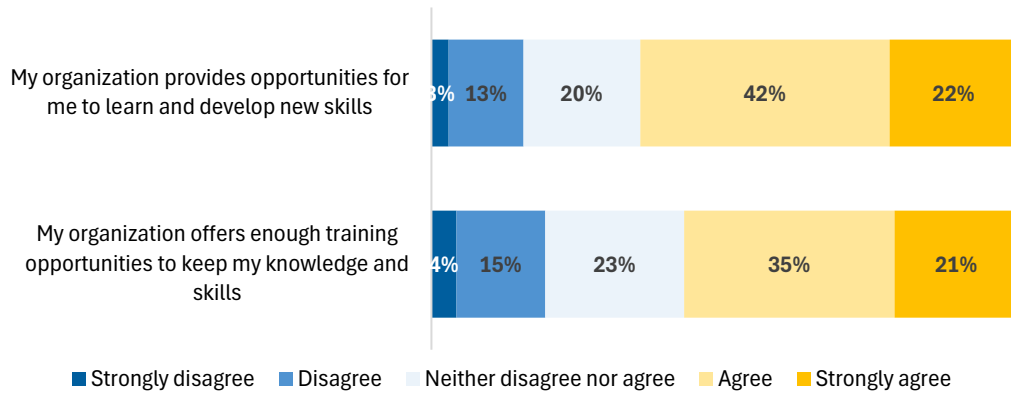
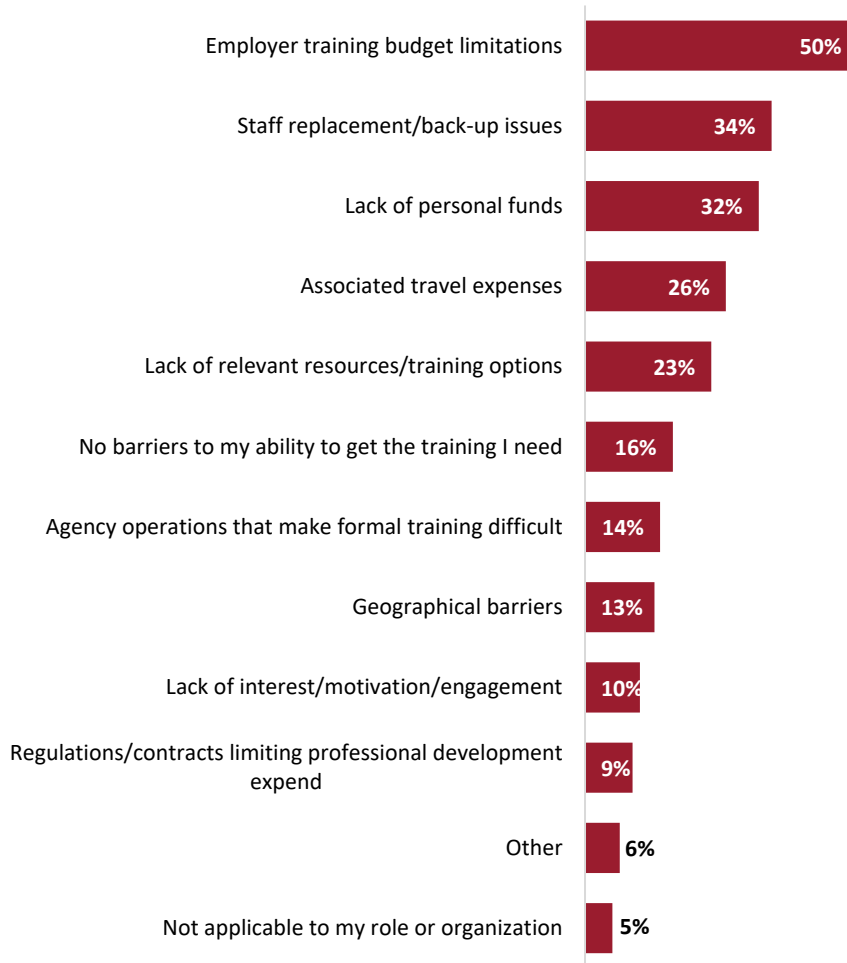


Figure 36 Training barriers (n=299)

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Training needs

When asked about their preferred formats for training, over half of respondents reported a preference for external workshops and seminars (67%), conferences (60%), and workplace-based courses or workshops (54%). Respondents were asked about the specific types of training they need to achieve their work or career goals. Their comments reveal the complexity of housing sector work and are summarized in the themes below.

Training needs for staff with management responsibilities

First, respondents with management responsibilities noted training needs across five distinct but interconnected domains:

- **Project management:** skills related to development projects, redevelopment initiatives, capital planning, and managing complex timelines and reporting requirements.
- **Business management:** skills related to strategic planning, organizational development, board relations, governance, and staying current with growing sector and different funding opportunities. Other training includes, “more understanding of the collective agreement and how it pertains to my job.”
- **Building management:** skills related to facilities maintenance, property operations, compliance with housing standards, laws and policies, and managing physical assets across multiple locations.
- **Staff management:** skills related to human resources related training, and supervising large teams, with one respondent managing 50 staff in a unionized environment, along with conflict resolution skills and addressing staffing constraints.
- **Financial competencies:** finance training, financial acumen for non-profits, and understanding how financial decisions impact all operational areas. Training related to financial management encompasses budgeting, capital planning, payroll management, and everyday financial oversight across multiple properties and programs. Many respondents noted the need for professional credentials such as CPA designation and bookkeeping training to meet financial management demands of their organizations. Other topics include understanding the formulas of RGI units, taxes/income verification training.

Trauma-informed care model and population-specific training

Another training area need that was commonly mentioned related to training in **mental health and trauma-informed care**. Multiple respondents requested trauma-informed practice foundations, with specific emphasis on working with people experiencing homelessness, addiction, and mental health challenges. A closely related training request was motivational interviewing, crisis intervention and safety training. Requested training topics also extended to supporting specific populations, including people with disabilities, seniors in cognitive decline, mothers who have a history of intimate partner violence, women experiencing intimate partner violence, women and children fleeing violence, and Indigenous people.

The need to upskill: Acknowledging the reality of wearing multiple hats

Comments from respondents also highlighted the reality of having “to wear multiple hats”, as one respondent described,

Management training. Looking after the unhoused is only one part of my job. Running a staff of 50 takes up so much time and effort, esp. in a unionized environment

Similarly, another respondent describes challenges related to evolving responsibilities, stating,

Typically, you get into this work to work with people. However, there is a need for substantial financial acumen as you end up being responsible for multiple areas such as budgets, capital planning, payroll etc.

This reflects how professionals enter the field with people-focused motivations but find themselves needing more business management skills to effectively support their organizations.

One detailed response revealed the need for standardized training and resources that smaller organizations can access, suggesting that smaller agencies may be facing challenges due to organizational capacity constraints:

I think that across all non-profits it would be helpful to have a guide that is similar to a rec guide where you can take a look at a region and see the housing providers and kinds of housing available. [...] It's important for larger organizations (such as BC Housing) to set the standard for the sector and allow smaller organizations like mine to access training so that a similar level of service can be offered regardless of the organization providing the subsidies. Lastly, an extremely clear coordinated access system and training around that would be welcome so that we can support individuals efficiently as a sector.

Technology

Finally, the survey explored the emerging use of AI and technology among non-profit housing sector employees. There was a fairly diverse range of AI usage among respondents, as shown in Figure 38. Close to half (49%) of respondents reported using AI daily or a few times a week. Respondents reporting using AI to consolidate information or data (61%), generate ideas (49%), learn new things (33%), and to automate basic tasks (30%; see Figure 39).

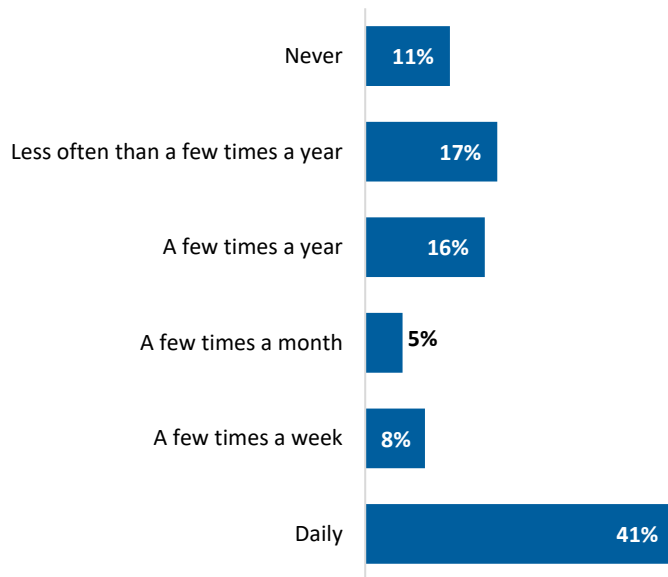
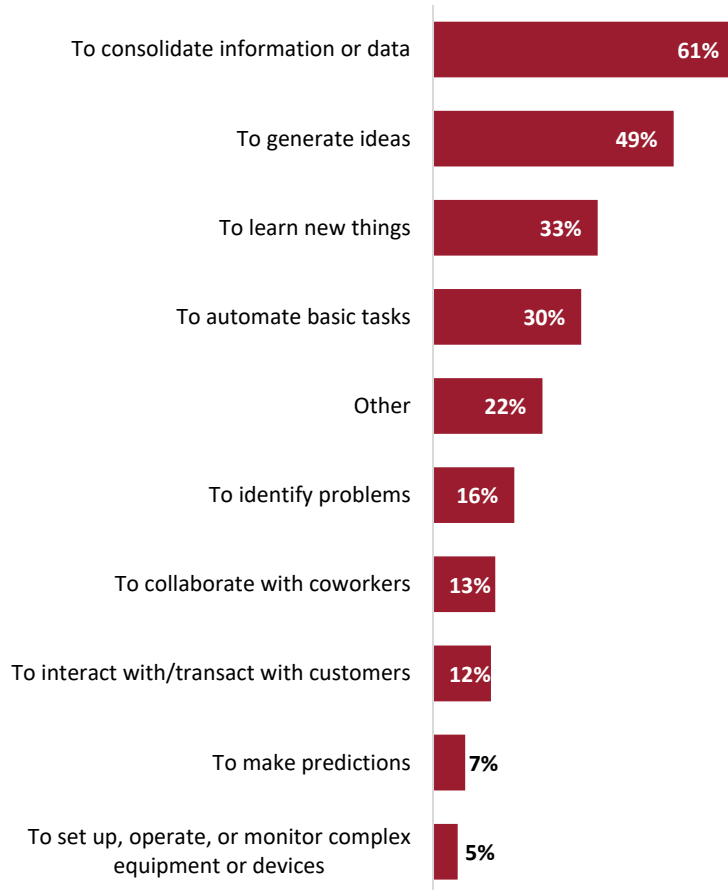
Figure 37 **Frequency on the use of AI (n=306)**

Figure 38 **Reasons of AI use (n=157)**

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

When asked about their technological training needs more broadly, respondents were most likely to indicate a need for training to increase their competency in the areas of digital skills, using Excel, and supporting data-based reporting. For example, one respondent noted,

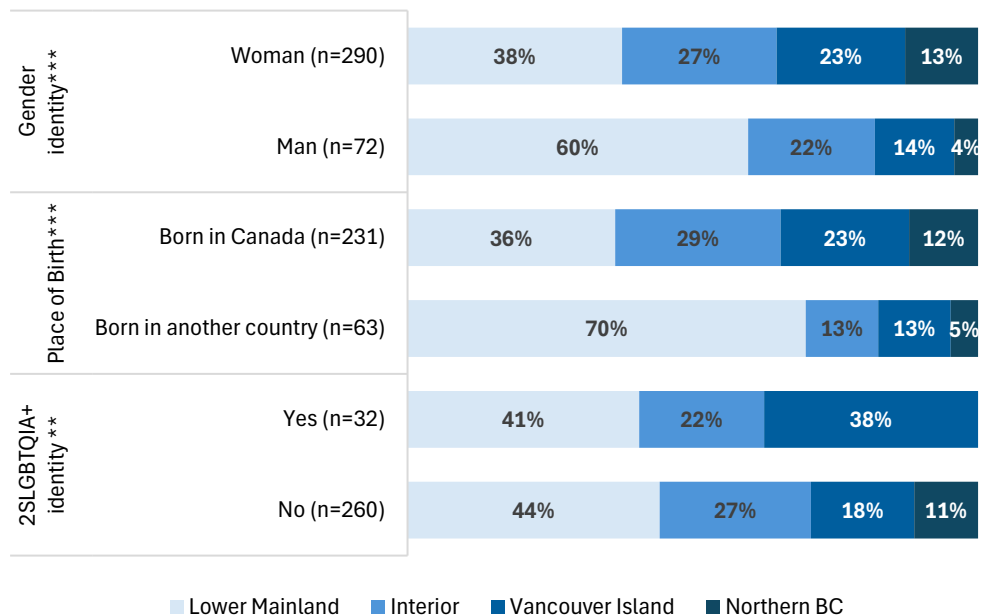
Technology that would support producing data-based reports with less time.

ORGANIZATION LOCATION AND SIZE-SPECIFIC ANALYSIS

Demographic patterns differ by region, community size and organization size

Given that training needs and capacities may differ by organization location, community size, and organization size, the survey explored demographic characteristics and examined top-rated stressors, training needs, and career goals across these factors. While the majority of respondents were based in Lower Mainland and large urban centers, newcomers, men, and highly educated workers were more concentrated in the Lower Mainland compared to other demographic groups (see Figure 40). Similar concentration patterns were observed when analyzing community size.

Figure 39 Distribution of Demographic Characteristics by Region



Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01.

Indigenous respondents were more likely to work in medium urban centers (30,000-99,999 people) than non-Indigenous respondents (43% compared to 21%). Indigenous respondents were less likely to be located in either large urban areas or in small/rural communities. Additionally, there was a stronger representation of 2SLGBTQIA+ employees on Vancouver Island compared to other regions (20% compared to 9-10% respectively).

Regional differences in career motivations and retention

Respondents in Lower Mainland (65%) were more likely to cite career advancement as a significant factor in considering leaving their current job, compared to those in Northern BC (32%). Similarly, respondents in medium urban centres (66%) were more likely to consider career advancement as a factor for leaving, compared to those in small/rural areas (43%). This suggests that different regions need different retention strategies. Lower Mainland and medium urban centres may face particular retention challenges if organizations cannot provide adequate career advancement opportunities.

Stress pattern by location and organization size

Respondents in middle-sized cities and middle-sized organizations were more likely to express higher stress levels compared to their counterparts. Vancouver Island respondents showed notably higher rates of motivation stress, with over one-quarter (27%) reporting frequent lack of motivation and enthusiasm, compared to much lower rates in other regions (8-13%). Medium urban centers also experienced more staffing-related stress, with nearly half of respondents (45%) reporting frequent stress from staffing shortages, compared to about one-quarter in large urban areas and small/rural areas (26-27%). Similarly, medium-sized organizations (20-49 employees) showed the highest staffing stress levels at 44%, compared to 14% in smaller organizations and 35% in larger ones.

Smaller organizations appear to experience different stress patterns than their larger counterparts. While 28% of respondents in organizations with fewer than 20 employees report physical and emotional exhaustion, this increased to 42-44 per cent in mid-sized and larger organizations. At similar rates, systemic barriers affect 41-42 per cent of mid-sized and larger organizations at comparable rates). This suggests that mid-size and larger organizations may be facing similar challenges compared to organizations with fewer than 20 employees.

KEY FINDINGS

The following findings are key findings and insights from the sector worker survey.

SECTORAL WORKFORCE OVERVIEW

- **More than three-quarters of respondents reported feeling satisfied or very satisfied with their job.** While respondents tended to be satisfied with the sense of meaning their work provided, their relationships with colleagues, and their job security, there was less satisfaction with work-life balance and compensation, particularly among employees working in front-line roles.
- BC's non-profit housing sector attracts **workers from diverse backgrounds, with diverse levels of educational attainment, and with a shared lived experience of the people they support.** The survey sample highlights how sector workers, when compared to the broader provincial workforce, includes higher proportions of women, Indigenous people, and people with disabilities.
- However, the survey sample also illustrates how in the sector, **Indigenous employees, people with disabilities and with lived experience of housing insecurity** tend to be concentrated in frontline roles and are underrepresented at the leadership level. They are also more likely to report the desire for training to support their job performance and career advancement.
- People in **executive leadership roles** were more likely to report working overtime and poor work-life balance. Additionally, this group of workers **are aging**, with nearly half of them (46%) aged 55 or above. 26 per cent of all respondents in leadership roles identified retirement as a career goal for the next five years.
- While the majority of respondents were based in Lower Mainland and large urban centers, newcomers, men, and highly educated workers were more likely to be located in the Lower Mainland compared to other demographic groups. Indigenous respondents were more likely to work in medium urban centers. We also saw a stronger representation of 2SLGBTQIA+ employees on Vancouver Island.
- The survey also illustrated how sector workers have varied educational backgrounds. Men, respondents aged 18 to 34, newcomers, non-Indigenous people, and those living in the Lower Mainland and Northern BC have higher rates of bachelor's or higher degrees compared to their counterparts.

CAREER PATHWAYS INTO THE SECTOR

- The sector workforce has a large share of employees who are just beginning their careers. One in five respondents reported that their current job was their first-ever employment position.
- There are also many sector employees with limited experience specific to the non-profit housing sector, with a quarter of respondents reporting less than two years of experience in the sector.
- The sector employs people with a range of educational backgrounds: close to a quarter reported high school as their highest level of education, while half reported having an advanced university degree (e.g., Bachelors, Masters, or PhD).
- Sector workers with higher education were more likely to report feeling overqualified for their roles.

SALARY AND JOB FIT

- The survey sample demonstrates that one in five workers are earning less than \$50,000 per year. As noted in the BCNPHA literature review, compensation is likely a critical factor to retention in the sector.
- Less than half of respondents reported that their salary was fair. The perception of salary fairness was significantly associated with income, as respondents earning less than \$70,000 were less likely to report that their salary was fair.
- Just over 20 per cent of employees reported feeling over-qualified for their current position based on their level of education, work experience, or skills and abilities. Those with higher education were more likely to report feeling overqualified.

WORKPLACE WELLBEING

- The **non-profit housing workforce is stretched thin**: nearly one-third of employees reported juggling multiple roles and responsibilities beyond their job descriptions.
- **Over two-thirds of respondents reported being affected by burnout sometimes, often, or extremely often**. Systemic barriers, feelings of physical and emotional exhaustion, and staffing shortages were the most commonly reported causes of workplace stress.

RETENTION AND SUPPORT

- **Twelve percent of respondents reported planning to leave their current position within the next year.** Over half of respondents reported their career goal is to continue working in their current role, and approximately two-thirds of respondents plan to stay at their current organization for at least another three years.
- **The most commonly reported reasons for respondents to consider leaving the sector were to seek higher pay, reduce job stress or burnout, find career advancement opportunities, or to improve their work-life balance.**
- **Increased pay or compensation, professional development opportunities, and additional training were the most common supports that respondents shared would help them do their best at work.**

TRAINING

- Over half of respondents **indicated a need for training to perform their jobs effectively and to advance in their careers.**
- However, **a very high percentage of respondents noted that they faced barriers to get the training they need.** When asked about the specific barriers to pursuing training, respondents highlighted issues with budget constraints, staffing shortages, and lack of time due to overwhelming workloads.
- Over a third of respondents reported holding some form of training certification (e.g., accounting and business management diplomas), with respondents without post-secondary education being more likely to hold training certificates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ENHANCING WORKPLACE SUPPORTS AND WELLBEING

Ground training development and delivery in culturally appropriate and trauma-informed approaches

Both the non-profit housing sector workforce and the clients they serve represent significant diversity. The housing sector workforce includes workers from various backgrounds, with many bringing lived experience of homelessness, mental health challenges, and coming from historically marginalized communities. At the same time, the client population encompasses people from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, including Indigenous peoples, newcomers, women and children experiencing violence, older adults, people with disabilities, and people experiencing mental health and addiction challenges. This diversity means that training needs to be culturally responsive to staff from different backgrounds while simultaneously preparing all staff to serve clients whose experiences, cultures, and needs span a great range. Additionally, frontline workers may need ongoing mental health support to address secondary trauma, workplace safety protocols and training to manage violence in the workplace, as well as proactive wellbeing programs, such as peer support networks, recognizing the physical and mental demand of the work.

Make meaningful connections between personal experience and professional development

In addition to the wide range of backgrounds and lived experiences among workers, respondents reported a strong sense of meaning and purpose in their work across all roles. This highlights that people may be drawn to the non-profit housing sector as they seek work that allows them to make meaningful connections with the communities they serve. For example, the high rates of lived experience among workers (particularly 69% of Indigenous respondents) may suggest that a personal connection to the sector has motivated many to pursue careers in this field. However, workers with lived experience may face additional stressors, making targeted wellbeing support particularly important.

Organizations can strategically leverage this motivation while providing appropriate support. For example, formalizing how job descriptions and compensation structures could reflect lived experience as professional expertise, or creating career development training that empowers workers to translate their personal experiences into professional skills for improving services, advocating for policy change, or mentoring other staff.

Factors contributing to stress and burnout highlight need for systemic solutions

While the survey demonstrated a relatively high level of job satisfaction and positivity among sector workers, it also points to the need for organizational-level interventions to address worker stresses that stem from systemic factors, workload, and staffing shortages across different roles. A key recommendation is therefore to develop further employee support or training programs that focus on systemic resilience and workload management. Leadership training may emphasize creating sustainable staffing models and developing finance and budget management skills that are relevant to the non-profit housing sector. Additional training could include better workload monitoring and management strategies, improve resource allocation, and create systems to support staff well-being.

CREATING PATHWAYS FOR CAREER PROGRESSION

Training and retention needs differ by worker identities and roles

While the findings generally show a good job fit and training support among sector workers, there are some differences in training and retention needs according to different roles. These findings suggest the need for differentiating training approaches by role, as well as developing career advancement pathways for those seeking executive leadership opportunities, particularly for equity priority groups. For frontline staff, training could emphasize trauma-informed self-care, access to peer support networks, and career advancement planning. For executive leaders, training may focus on how to support the advancement of staff with lived experience and/or people from equity priority groups. Given the small but notable proportion of Indigenous workers in frontline roles, further research with larger samples would help understand potential training and employment barriers for Indigenous staff.

Leadership is facing aging workforce and need to develop strategies to support leadership pipeline

Respondents in leadership roles tended to be older, indicating an impending challenge for the sector when these leaders retire. These leaders are simultaneously managing severe staffing shortages while trying to maintain service quality, often requiring them to take on operational responsibilities beyond their strategic roles. This finding is consistent with the literature review prepared by BCNPHA and the secondary data analysis, which highlighted the need for leadership development programs that can prepare mid-level staff for executive roles, along with knowledge transfer systems to capture institutional wisdom before retirements occur. This challenge presents opportunities to support diversity in these roles through upskilling, creating

career pathways, and providing avenues for internal promotions. Increasing diversity of leadership and representation of folks with lived experiences could help address turnover factors reported by staff.

Frontline staff needs more career advancement support

The survey illustrates how workers in the sector have diverse educational backgrounds (e.g., social science, social work, psychology, business), however, many frontline jobs may not offer clear advancement pathways that build on their educational qualifications or experience. In order for workers to feel that their skills are being fully utilized, training needs to focus on career development, such as leadership training for qualified frontline workers. Supervisors or managers may need to reexamine work tasks and delegate challenging tasks to tap into employees' skills and experiences, while at the same time supporting their career growth by exploring advancement opportunities.

UPSKILLING EMPLOYEES: TRAINING NEEDS AND PREFERENCES

Respondents with management responsibilities need comprehensive training across multiple management domains

Management skills can look quite different from one another, which is often overlooked when people with management responsibilities are expected to “do it all.” The survey findings have highlighted four distinct areas of management training. **Project management** training to focus on development projects, redevelopment initiatives, and regulatory reporting requirements. **Business management** training could address strategic planning, organizational development, board relations, governance, and staying current with growing sector and different funding opportunities. **Building management** training might cover facilities maintenance, property operations, compliance with housing standards, and managing physical assets across multiple locations. **Staff management** training could emphasize on supervising large teams in unionized environments, conflict resolution skills, and addressing staffing constraints.

Enhance technology training and examine the adaptation of AI

Nearly half of respondents noted using AI to support their day-to-day work tasks at least a few times a week, with many emphasizing the need for more training on computer skills for specific role-specific tasks. These findings may again reflect situations where workers are required to perform new tasks that their previous education or training has not prepared them for. As AI continues to advance, sector organizations should consider exploring the potential of

incorporating it as a tool to support staff learning and development while reducing workload burden.

REIMAGINING TRAINING MODEL AND INTEGRATION

The survey findings indicate that workers in the sector may not have the capacity to take part in training due to their current workload, time and funding constraints. It also reveals many employees at all levels are taking on responsibilities beyond their original job descriptions. This means they have less time to spare for training while gaining more responsibilities for which they might not be sufficiently prepared

Respondents showed high interest in intensive training opportunities, with strong preferences for structured formats including external workshops and seminars (67%), conferences (60%), and workplace-based courses (54%). This presents opportunities to identify ways to provide flexible training options that work within tight labour and budget constraints. Leadership could rethink how professional development is delivered in their organizations, such as integrating formal training during the workday. As 1 in 3 respondents (37%) expressed interest in mentorship, other ideas might include establishing mentorship programs, where experienced employees can provide support and guidance during regular work hours.

CONCLUSION

Given the limited information on the non-profit housing sector's workforce in BC, SRDC, in partnership with BCNPHA, conducted an employee survey distributed through non-profit housing networks to capture information about the workforce's training and professional development needs. While the survey sample presents only a limited snapshot of the sector and may not be entirely representative given the nature of its distribution throughout sector organizations, it provides unique and timely insights into the sector's workforce demographics, organizational characteristics, salary and job fit, workplace wellbeing, training needs, and perceived barriers and opportunities for recruitment and retention.

The sample of workforce employees who responded to the survey demonstrated high job satisfaction and strong motivation for professional advancement, with most workers planning long-term employment in the sector. It also illustrated how the sector attracts diverse workers, including higher representation from marginalized groups, creating opportunities to develop pathways for advancement into leadership roles. While compensation and workload remain challenges for sector workers, the majority of respondents reported good job fit with their positions.

Despite its limitations, many of the survey findings align with the earlier results from secondary data analysis and BCNPHA's literature review. The findings identify clear opportunities to enhance worker experience by addressing compensation equity, supporting work-life balance, and creating advancement pathways that leverage the sector's diverse talent pool. This report also provides a series of recommendations for the BCNPHA, training organizations, and organizational leaders to consider when developing professional development opportunities and recruitment and retention strategies for the sector workforce. However, it should be noted that the effectiveness of the proposed solutions remains to be tested in practice, and their scalability across diverse organizational contexts is uncertain. Future research could benefit from longitudinal studies that track the impact of implemented strategies over time, as well as more granular data collection that purposefully captures perspectives from across the sector.

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APPENDIX A: RESULT TABLES

Table 1 Sample distribution by region

	Frequency	Proportion
Lower Mainland	149	44%
Interior	82	24%
Vancouver Island	66	20%
Northern BC	36	11%
Prefer not to answer	4	1%
Total	337	100%

Table 2 Sample distribution by population centre

	Frequency	Proportion
Large urban (100,000 people or greater)	169	50%
Medium urban (30,000 to 99,999 people)	79	23%
Small (1,000 to 29,999 people)	72	21%
Rural (all areas outside population centres)	13	4%
Prefer not to answer	4	1%
Total	337	100%

Table 3 Demographic characteristics, Gender, Age, Indigenous identity, Disability

	Frequency	Proportion
Gender (n=301)		
Woman	221	73%
Man	72	24%
Non-binary	3	1%

Another gender	1	0%
No response	4	1%
Age (n=302)		
18 to 24	3	1%
25 to 29	19	6%
30 to 34	21	7%
35 to 44	67	22%
45 to 54	76	25%
55 to 64	93	31%
65 or above	20	7%
No response	3	1%
Indigenous Identity (n=300)		
Yes	35	12%
No	256	85%
Not sure	4	1%
Prefer not to answer	5	2%
Disability (n=302)		
Yes	62	21%
No	232	77%
Prefer not to answer	8	3%

Table 4 Demographic characteristics, Immigration status, 2SLGBTQIA+, Lived experience

	Frequency	Proportion
Immigrant status (n=302)		
Canada	234	77%

Another country	63	21%
No response	5	2%
Time in Canada (n=63)		
Less than 2 years	2	3%
2 to 5 years	3	5%
More than 5 years	58	92%
2SLGBTQIA+ Identity (n=302)		
Yes	32	11%
No	263	87%
Prefer not to answer	7	2%
Disability (n=302)		
Yes	111	37%
No	175	58%
Not sure	7	2%
Prefer not to answer	9	3%

Table 5 Lived experience by demographic characteristics

		Lived Experience	No Lived Experience	$\chi^2(df)$	p-value
Indigenous identity	Yes	69%	31%	14.23(1)	***
	No	34%	66%		
Disability status	Yes	54%	46%	7.37(1)	***
	No	35%	65%		
Immigrant status	Born in Canada	45%	55%	14.21(1)	***
	Born in another country	18%	82%		

Income	<70k	43%	57%	5.24(2) *
	70k-99,999	40%	61%	
	100k+	26%	74%	

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01. Sample sizes vary by variable: Indigenous identity N = 277; Disability status N = 280; Immigrant status N = 283; Income N = 273.

Table 6 Demographic characteristics, Education

Education (n=302)	Percentage
No certificate, diploma, or degree	1%
High school diploma or equivalency certificate	23%
Some college, trade school, or university (did not complete a degree or diploma)	23%
College/trade school diploma or certificate, or associate degree	35%
Undergraduate degree (Bachelor's)	34%
Graduate degree (Master's, PhD, or professional degree)	17%
Training certificate(s)	37%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Table 7 Distribution of non-profit housing services provided

Service type (n=337)	Percentage
Independent subsidized housing	66%
Transition housing/safe homes for women and children	30%
Outreach program	36%
Supportive housing	52%
Shelter beds	23%
Transitional housing	33%
Another service	27%
Prefer not to answer	0%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Table 8 Number of paid employees

	Frequency	Proportion
1 to 4	28	8%
5 to 9	19	6%
10 to 19	44	13%
20 to 49	78	23%
50 to 99	39	12%
100 or more	110	33%
Don't know	15	4%
Prefer not to answer	3	1%
Total	336	100%

Table 9 Number of building managed

	Frequency	Proportion
1	29	9%
2-4	86	26%
5-9	61	18%
10 or more	139	41%
Not sure	14	4%
Prefer not to answer	6	2%
Total	335	100%

Table 10 Distribution of role types (n=334)

Percentage

Tenant support worker	13%
Outreach worker	4%
Shelter support worker	3%
Support worker for women and children	9%
Counsellor for women and children	3%
Health support staff	2%
Other frontline staff	10%
Property/building managers	20%
Maintenance/facilities staff	8%
Management	27%
Administrative	14%
Finance staff	7%
Executive leadership	30%
Other	8%
Prefer not to answer	1%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Table 11 Frontline role distribution by demographic characteristics

		In frontline roles	Not in frontline roles	$\chi^2(df)$	p-value
Indigenous identity	Yes	83%	17%	10.04(1)	***
	No	55%	45%		
Lived experience	Lived experience	70%	30%	11.76(1)	***
	Without lived experience	50%	50%		
Disability status	Yes	68%	32%	3.17(1)	***

No

55%

45%

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01. Sample sizes vary by variable: Indigenous identity N = 291; Lived experience N = 286; Disability status N = 294.

Table 12 Number of jobs held

	Frequency	Proportion
I only have one job in the non-profit housing sector	281	83%
I have more than one job, and all of my jobs are in the non-profit housing sector	14	4%
I have jobs both in the non-profit housing sector and in another sector(s)	38	11%
Prefer not to answer	4	1%
Total	337	100%

Table 13 Multiple jobs holder by group

		One job	Multiple jobs	$\chi^2(df)$	p-value
Gender	Woman	87%	13%	3.46(1)	*
	Man	78%	22%		
Immigrant	Born in Canada	86%	14%	4.97(1)	**
	Born in another country	75%	25%		
Education	No bachelor's degree	88%	12%	3.17(1)	*
	Bachelor's degree or higher	80%	20%		

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01. Sample sizes vary by variable: Gender N = 293; Immigrant status N = 296; Education N = 296.

Table 14 Distribution of employment status (n=334)

	Percentage
Full-time (>30 hours per week)	82%
Part-time (<30 hours per week)	14%

Casual or on-call position (working as needed, without a set schedule)	2%
Contractor or consultant (self-employed or hired for specific projects)	1%
Other	4%
Prefer not to answer	0%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Table 15 Respondent preferences regarding current working hours

	Frequency	Proportion
I would prefer more hours	37	11%
I am happy with my current hours	244	73%
I would prefer fewer hours	45	14%
Prefer not to answer	7	2%
Total	333	100%

Table 16 Work hour preferences by role

		Happy with current hours	Prefer more hours	Prefer fewer hours	$\chi^2(df)$	p-value
Frontline Roles	Yes	71%	17%	12%	12.09(1)	***
	No	80%	4%	16%		
Executive Leadership Roles	Yes	77%	0%	23%	25.25(1)	***
	No	74%	16%	10%		

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01. 326 respondents in both Frontline roles and executive leadership roles.

Table 17 Frequency of overtime work

	Frequency	Proportion
Never	46	14%

Rarely	82	24%
Sometimes	102	30%
Often	54	16%
Always	48	14%
Prefer not to say	3	1%
Total	335	100%

Table 18 Overtime work by demographic characteristics and role

		Never	Rarely	Sometimes/ Often/ Always	$\chi^2(df)$	p-value
Gender identity	Woman	10%	27%	63%	9(1)	**
	Man	24%	23%	54%		
Immigrant status	Born in Canada	10%	28%	62%	10.02(1)	***
	Born in another country	25%	19%	56%		
Indigenous identity	Yes	11%	11%	77%	5.42(1)	*
	No	14%	28%	58%		
Executive Leadership Roles	Yes	1%	7%	92%	55.87(1)	***
	No	19%	32%	49%		

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01. Sample sizes vary by variable: Gender identity N = 291; Immigrant status N = 295; Indigenous identity N = 290; Executive leadership roles N = 332.

Table 19 Years of experience working in the non-profit housing sector

	Frequency	Proportion
Less than 1 year	33	11%
1–2 years	41	14%
3–5 years	63	21%

6–9 years	53	18%
10 years or more	103	35%
Prefer not to answer	3	1%
Total	296	100%

Table 20 Past work experience (n=262)

	Percentage
My current organization	51%
A different non-profit housing organization	24%
A government agency or department related to housing	10%
A private sector related to housing or real estate	13%
A different sector	43%
Prefer not to answer	0%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Table 21 Previous sector experience of respondents (n=112)

	Percentage
Utilities	0%
Prefer not to answer	0%
Transportation and warehousing	2%
Information and cultural industries	4%
Manufacturing	6%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	7%
Administrative and support, waste management and remediation service	8%
Other sectors	9%
Public administration	10%

Retail trade	12%
Educational services	13%
Finance and insurance	14%
Professional, scientific and technical services	14%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	14%
Accommodation and food services	14%
Health care and social assistance	45%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Table 22 Distribution of income level

	Frequency	Proportion
Less than \$20,000	14	4%
\$20,000 – \$29,999	10	3%
\$30,000 – \$39,999	17	5%
\$40,000 – \$49,999	26	8%
\$50,000 – \$59,999	48	14%
\$60,000 – \$69,999	42	12%
\$70,000 – \$79,999	29	9%
\$80,000 – \$89,999	43	13%
\$90,000 – \$99,999	17	5%
\$100,000 or more	72	21%
Prefer not to answer	19	6%
Total	337	100%

Table 23 Perceived salary fairness based on job tasks and skills/experiences

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Prefer not to answer	Total
My salary is fair based on my tasks and responsibilities	8%	28%	19%	35%	8%	2%	307
My salary is fair based on my skills, education, and experience	10%	27%	20%	34%	7%	2%	307

Table 24 Perceived job fit based on education, work experience, skills and abilities

	I am very under-qualified	I am under-qualified	It is a good fit	I am over-qualified	I am very over-qualified	Prefer not to answer	Total
Skills and abilities	1%	4%	73%	15%	6%	1%	306
Work experience	0%	6%	70%	18%	6%	1%	305
Education	0%	14%	62%	17%	5%	2%	304

Table 25 Perceived job satisfaction

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Prefer not to answer	Total
Compensation	3%	23%	23%	40%	10%	1%	303
Work-life balance	5%	14%	23%	39%	18%	1%	304
Support from my supervisor or manager	4%	9%	19%	34%	33%	1%	301
Job security	1%	6%	23%	43%	25%	1%	303
Overall job satisfaction	1%	5%	17%	52%	25%	0%	304
Sense of purpose or meaning	1%	5%	15%	35%	44%	0%	304
Relationships with my colleagues and team	1%	4%	15%	44%	35%	0%	304

Table 26 Burnout frequency in the past three months

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Extremely often	Prefer not to answer	Total
Burnout due to factors related to my role or organization	17%	16%	37%	19%	10%	1%	302
Burnout due to larger social or systemic factors	15%	16%	39%	17%	13%	1%	303

Table 27 Frequency of burnout due to factors related to role and organization to by frontline role type

	Often/Extremely often	Sometimes	Not at all/Rarely	$\chi^2(df)$	p-value
In frontline roles	35%	36%	29%		**
Not in frontline roles	22%	39%	39%	6.45(1)	

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01. 299 respondents included in this analysis.

Table 28 Experience of stressors in the past three months

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Extremely often	Prefer not to answer	Total
Bullying, harassment or unwanted behaviour from colleagues	56%	24%	14%	3%	2%	1%	301
Risk of violence and abuse from community members	51%	30%	15%	3%	1%	1%	300
Risk of violence and abuse from clients or service users	45%	29%	20%	5%	2%	1%	301
Symptoms of secondary or vicarious trauma due to my work	43%	23%	20%	9%	3%	2%	301
Technology issues or lack of necessary tools to perform tasks	19%	33%	31%	11%	5%	1%	301

Lacking motivation and enthusiasm for my daily tasks	18%	30%	37%	9%	5%	1%	301
Unrealistic job expectations or responsibilities	20%	26%	31%	13%	8%	1%	301
Staffing shortage or high turnover in my organization	19%	19%	31%	19%	11%	1%	300
Systemic barriers (e.g. lack of funding and resources) that make it difficult to	14%	15%	32%	22%	17%	1%	301
Feeling physically and emotionally exhausted from my work	9%	14%	40%	26%	11%	0%	301

Table 29 Key stressors for respondents in frontline roles

		Not at all/Rarely	Sometimes	Often/Extremely often	$\chi^2(df)$	p-value
Staffing shortage or high turnover in my organization	Not in frontline roles	46%	30%	24%	7.26(1)	**
	In frontline roles	32%	32%	36%		
Unrealistic job expectations or responsibilities	Not in frontline roles	55%	24%	21%	7.09(1)	**
	In frontline roles	41%	37%	22%		

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01. Sample sizes vary by variable: Staffing stress N = 296; Expectation stress N = 299.

Table 30 Career goals in the next five years (n=330)

	Percentage
Continue working in my current position	54%
Change to another position in my organization	25%
Pursue further education (e.g., go to school)	20%
Retirement	18%

Change to another organization within the non-profit housing sector	15%
Change to a position in a different sector (i.e., not related to housing)	15%
Another goal	7%
Change to a position in the for-profit housing sector	6%
I don't have any specific goals for my career	3%
Prefer not to answer	1%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Table 31 Projected tenure in current position, organization, and sector

	Less than 6 months	6 months to less than a year	1 – 2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	Over 10 years	Not sure	Prefer not to answer	Total
Current job	4%	8%	19%	30%	16%	14%	8%	1%	329
Current organization	3%	4%	14%	27%	19%	19%	13%	1%	316
Current sector	2%	3%	10%	22%	21%	24%	17%	2%	309

Table 32 Factors contributing to change job decisions

	Not at all	Not much	Slightly	Somewhat/ Completely	Not applicable	Prefer not to answer	Total
Seeking higher pay	15%	9%	14%	57%	4%	1%	311
Job stress or burnout related to issues related to my role or organization	17%	13%	13%	53%	4%	0%	309
Seeking career advancement	20%	10%	10%	52%	6%	1%	307
Seeking improved work-life balance	18%	12%	15%	51%	5%	0%	308
Job stress or burnout related to issues beyond my role or organization	20%	17%	13%	46%	4%	0%	308
Skills not being fully utilized	26%	16%	11%	41%	5%	1%	308

Not receiving enough resources to do my job properly	22%	17%	19%	37%	5%	0%	308
Retirement	35%	7%	9%	36%	13%	2%	311
Challenges with management or colleagues	35%	17%	13%	30%	5%	1%	309
No clear pathways for career advancement within my organization	36%	15%	10%	29%	7%	2%	309
Interested in a different career	40%	12%	16%	24%	7%	1%	309
Not receiving enough training to do my job properly	34%	19%	16%	24%	7%	0%	308
Family or personal issues	52%	12%	12%	15%	8%	1%	309
I don't enjoy my job	51%	12%	11%	11%	13%	2%	307
Not being able to find full-time work in the sector	60%	12%	4%	9%	14%	2%	309
Transportation issues	65%	7%	6%	8%	14%	0%	310
Lack of childcare support	60%	6%	3%	6%	24%	1%	309

Table 33 Key factors influencing job change decision among frontline workers

		High influence	Low influence	$\chi^2(df)$	p-value
Skills not being fully utilized	Not in frontline roles	34%	66%	7.18(1)	***
	In frontline roles	50%	50%		
Seeking improved work-life balance	Not in frontline roles	47%	53%	4.19(1)	**
	In frontline roles	59%	41%		

Note: Statistical significance indicated by *p<0.10, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01. Low influence indicates not at all, not much, and slightly. High influence indicates somewhat and completely. Sample sizes vary by variable: Skills not being fully utilized N = 290; Seeking improved work-life balance N = 267.

Table 34 Types of support needed at work (n=299)

	Percentage
Improved facilities	18%
Better crisis response procedures, protocols, and training	23%
Something else	25%
More mental health support	28%
Team connection opportunities	30%
More manageable workload	32%
Clearer communication from leaders	33%
Additional training	34%
Flexible work arrangements	35%
To feel personally appreciated	36%
Professional development opportunities	49%
Increased pay or compensation	51%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Table 35 Degree of perceived training needs

	Not at all	A little more	A lot more	Not applicable	Prefer not to answer	Total
Meet the requirements of your profession or position	31%	57%	10%	2%	0%	309
Perform your work more effectively	28%	59%	11%	2%	0%	308
Advance in your career	24%	42%	28%	6%	0%	310

Table 36 Perceived adequacy of training opportunities

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable	Total
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My organization offers enough training opportunities to keep my knowledge and skills	4%	15%	23%	35%	21%	2%	311
My organization provides opportunities for me to learn and develop new skills	3%	13%	20%	42%	22%	2%	311

Table 37 Barriers preventing training participation (n=299)

	Percentage
Employer training budget limitations	50%
Lack of personal funds	32%
Staff replacement/back-up issues	34%
Geographical barriers	13%
Associated travel expenses	26%
Regulations/contracts limiting professional development expend	9%
Lack of interest/motivation/engagement	10%
Agency operations that make formal training difficult	14%
Lack of relevant resources/training options	23%
Other	6%
No barriers to my ability to get the training I need	16%
Not applicable to my role or organization	5%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

Table 38 Frequency on the use of AI

	Frequency	Proportion
Daily	124	41%
A few times a week	24	8%
A few times a month	15	5%

A few times a year	48	16%
Less often than a few times a year	53	17%
Never	34	11%
Prefer not to respond	8	3%
Total	306	100%

Table 39 Reasons of AI use (n=157)

	Percentage
To consolidate information or data	61%
To generate ideas	49%
To learn new things	33%
To automate basic tasks	30%
Other	22%
To identify problems	16%
To collaborate with coworkers	13%
To interact with/transact with customers	12%
To make predictions	7%
To set up, operate, or monitor complex equipment or devices	5%

Note: Percentages may sum to more than 100% due to multiple response options.

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