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Maine Association of Nonprofits Releases New Data on Workforce Shortage in Maine
48% of respondents reported vacancies of between 10 and 19 percent

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PORTLAND - Today, during their monthly MANP Connects series, the Maine Association of Nonprofits (MANP) called attention to recent data regarding the nonprofit workforce shortage in Maine. At an event with Department of Economic and Community Development Commissioner Heather Johnson, MANPs Executive Director Jennifer Hutchins outlined the results of a survey done gauging the scope of the problem for charitable organizations in Maine and across the country.

“What we initially considered a challenge has now become a crisis,” said Hutchins. “The impact of these shortages can be seen in virtually every local community across the state as nonprofits are forced to restrict needed services, institute waiting lists, or close operations entirely. Ultimately, because individuals and communities rely so heavily on charitable nonprofits for their wellbeing, the nonprofit workforce shortage impacts everyone.”

In the fall of 2021, the networks of the National Council of Nonprofits posted an online survey to gauge the scope of the workforce shortage problems for charitable organizations and determine the impact on their abilities to advance their missions. The analysis, benefitting from responses from more than 1,000 nonprofits from all 50 states, presents the most up-to-date picture of the adverse consequences of workforce shortages. The analysis utilizes responses and comments from nonprofits nationwide to explain the causes and impacts of the nonprofit workforce shortage and propose 10 solutions to pursue in upcoming legislative sessions.

“Despite the valuable, mission-driven work that they lead, Maine nonprofits have not been spared from the longstanding workforce shortages impacting all sectors of our economy,” said Johnson. “We are grateful for the support and partnership of the Maine Association of Nonprofits.”
Nonprofits and other nonprofit partners as we work to advance long-term solutions that will attract and keep more people in Maine’s workforce.”

The core question the survey sought to explore was, “What is your nonprofit’s current job vacancy rate?” Nearly half (48%) of respondents in Maine reported vacancies of between 10 and 19 percent. One in four Maine nonprofits (26%) shared job vacancy rates of between 0 and 9 percent, and a troubling 21 percent responded that they had job openings for 20% to 29% of their positions. Another 5% reported vacancies greater than 30 percent.

The survey also sought to identify why nonprofits – organizations accustomed to attracting staff dedicated to the missions of the organizations – were having difficulty retaining and attracting employees. The factors reported from Maine survey respondents are:

- Eight out of 10 nonprofits (79%) responding to the survey identified salary competition as a factor preventing them from filling job openings.
- More than sixteen percent of respondents (16.3%) stated that the inability to find child care affected recruitment and retention.
- About one in four respondents (26.3%) reported not being sure what was affecting recruitment and retention.
- Vaccination policies affect approximately one in four (26.3%) respondents.

“It’s clear that we need to focus on solutions to workforce shortages that center the critical work of our nonprofits,” said Hutchins. “As demand for services increases, we have to step up efforts to ensure that nonprofits can offer competitive wages and benefits, access to child care and other employment supports.”