

Report on Nonprofit Wages + Benefits

Maine Snapshot 2026



Nonprofits are the backbone of our communities.

Nonprofits advance innovative solutions to address challenges, connect people to opportunities, and strengthen our social fabric through broader civic engagement.

→ People power nonprofits.

Every day, nonprofit staff and volunteers are at work educating our children, protecting our environment, nurturing our spirits through the arts, creating affordable housing, encouraging community connections and recreation, caring for vulnerable neighbors, and much, much more.

Our communities need a healthy nonprofit workforce. ←

Every two years, Maine Association of Nonprofits conducts this study to provide reliable, local data about nonprofit wages, benefits, and workforce trends that can inform conversations about how we are caring for our most important resources: people.

This report is for:

Workers

Nonprofit employees deserve fair pay for their work. Nonprofits have a responsibility to provide equitable compensation aligned with organizational values and the real costs of living in our communities.

Employers

A competitive compensation strategy is integral to attracting and retaining talented individuals to the important work of making Maine a better place to live, work, and visit.

Funders

Nonprofits need people who care deeply about our communities--including donors, foundations, and corporate partners--to understand and invest in what it takes to sustain a healthy nonprofit workforce.

Policymakers

Nonprofits employ 1 in 6 Maine workers and are key partners in our state's workforce development goals; understanding nonprofit staffing and compensation can inform better state strategy and policy.

Key Findings: Workforce Trends

- ▶ Workforce growth has slowed, with only about a third of organizations expecting to add staff next year, which is down from 43% of organizations in 2024 and 51% in 2022.
- ▶ Generally, job vacancy rates have decreased since 2022: only 1 in 10 organizations now have job vacancy rates of 10% or more, down from 1 in 4 in 2022.
- ▶ **There is a strong correlation between labor shortages and low compensation. Job vacancies are heavily concentrated on direct care work, an area with high demand for services and some of the lowest wages.**
- ▶ Wage competition remains the biggest barrier to hiring—more than half of organizations (55%) named it as a factor. Employers also pointed to benefits package competition (26% of organizations) and lack of affordable housing (26% of organizations) as concerns.
- ▶ There have been incremental increases in the prevalence of practices shown to mitigate bias in hiring and staff management, with pay equity analysis and eliminating unnecessary job qualification requirements seeing the biggest gains.
- ▶ More than half of nonprofit staff (55%) work from home some or all of the time, and employers are not anticipating that will change anytime soon. At this point, these arrangements can be assumed to be a durable workforce structure rather than a temporary effect of the pandemic.

Key Findings: Wages

- ▶ **Wage growth is outpacing inflation, but only narrowly.** The Maine Benchmark Hourly Wage (the average hourly wage for full-time job categories that have been included in the survey since it began) rose from \$31.17 in 2024 to \$33.52 in 2026, an increase of 7.5%, compared to the Consumer Price Index change from 2024-2026 of 7.2%.
- ▶ Employers are wise to consider compensation decisions in the context of what it costs individuals and families in their area to meet basic needs. Eighty percent (80%) of positions in the 2026 data sample included at least some reported wages that fall short of the MIT Living Wage Calculator's estimate of a living wage for a single, childless adult in Maine. Seven job categories (Child Day Care Teacher, Cook, Driver, Receptionist, Part-Time Administrative Coordinator, Janitor/Custodian, and Direct Care Worker) had *average* wages that do not meet this threshold.
- ▶ This year's survey reflects a continued disparity in average pay between female and male executive directors of nonprofits in our region. In Maine, female nonprofit executive directors make, on average, 92 cents to every dollar earned by their male counterparts.

Gross Average Maine Annual Wages by Budget Size for Select Positions

	Under \$250K	\$250K-\$500K	\$500K-\$1M	\$1M-\$5M	\$5M-\$10M	Over \$10M
<i>Executive Director</i>	\$73,549	\$86,382	\$96,824	\$123,989	\$169,312	\$224,307
<i>Development Director</i>	*	\$62,088	\$76,190	\$81,723	\$118,186	\$124,862
<i>Program/Division Director</i>	*	\$60,466	\$65,229	\$82,389	\$91,250	\$96,304
<i>Program/Project Manager</i>	*	\$59,862	\$60,091	\$66,206	\$75,754	\$77,938
<i>Administrative Coordinator</i>	*	\$0	\$48,298	\$53,706	\$53,498	\$52,270

**Fewer than four responses.*

Key Findings: Benefits

- ▶ Almost all Maine organizations that offer health insurance reported an increase in health insurance premiums during their last renewal period: 94% of organizations in 2026, which is a significant jump up from 82% in 2024 and 76% in 2022.
- ▶ Retirement benefits represent the report's strongest long-term positive trend: 74% of organizations reported contributing to employee retirement savings, compared to about half (49%) back in 2018.
- ▶ The number of organizations providing access to Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) rose from 32% to 40%. We expect this number to grow, given that both MANP and New Hampshire Center for Nonprofits launched programs in 2026 to expand access to this type of service for smaller organizations as one way to address widespread stress, mental health challenges, and burnout.
- ▶ When asked to look to the future, **organizations anticipate a struggle to balance two competing priorities: offering values-aligned benefits that support recruitment and retention while responding to rising healthcare costs** that are further straining already tight budgets. Only 20% of employers reported they plan to enhance their benefits package next year.

Key Findings: Regional Comparison

The 2026 survey was conducted in partnership with New Hampshire Center for Nonprofits and Common Good Vermont. The following chart offers a snapshot of some key data points.

		Maine	New Hampshire	Vermont
Survey Population	Per Capita Personal Income Rank Among States (2023)	27	8	20
	# Organizations Included in 2026 Survey	290	201	175
	Average Budget Size of Responding Nonprofits	\$6,297,150	\$6,083,237	\$4,466,358
	% of Female Executive Directors	66.7%	65.1%	64.1%
Wages	# of Employees for Whom Wages Were Reported	6,258	4,526	2,816
	Average Full-time Executive Director Wage	\$128,507	\$127,610	\$107,020
	Benchmark Hourly Wage	\$33.52	\$33.78	\$33.49
	Female Executive Director Wages as a % of Male Wages	92.2%	97.3%	91.6%
Benefits	Benefits as a Percentage of Wages	18.5%	18.4%	20.4%
	% of Nonprofits Offering a Group Health Plan	77.3%	73.2%	67.8%
	Employers Paying 100% of Employee Health Insurance Premiums (of those that offer coverage)	43.4%	25.4%	33.1%

Order the Full Report

The full report includes more than 30 pages of details on nonprofit wages and benefits in Maine and across northern New England, including:

Employment + Hiring Trends	Wages	Benefits
• Staffing Levels and Vacancies • Recruitment Practices • Staff Diversity • Remote Work	• Wage Trends • Wage Details by Budget Size • Northern New England Comparisons • Executive Director Salaries by Gender, Mission, Region, Education, and Experience	• Popularity of Various Benefits • Insurance Trends and Payment Arrangements • Retirement Trends and Contribution Arrangements • Paid Time Off

To order the report, visit www.NonprofitMaine.org/Compensation. MANP members receive 50% off the cover price, and participating organizations receive additional discounts. Survey participants were sent an email with a code to claim their discount and can contact MANP at MANP@NonprofitMaine.org for support.

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