FRASER CONSULTING

September 2026

Workforce Metrics Survey

Lasting Progress Requires Lasting Commitment

Prepared for

Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers

A MESSAGE FROM ADDP LEADERSHIP

Lasting Progress Requires Lasting Commitment

> **Progress is measured not only by investments made, but by the opportunities they create for people with disabilities. Protecting those opportunities—and the services that make them possible—requires lasting commitment.**

Over the past several years, Massachusetts has made significant investments in strengthening the human services workforce, particularly through Chapter 257, and we have seen that those investments have made a difference. Between 2023 and 2025, workforce vacancy rates among ADDP member organizations declined from 24% to 15%, demonstrating that progress is possible when workforce challenges are met with sustained attention and investment.

The findings of ADDP's 2026 Workforce Metrics Survey, however, signal a concerning reversal in that progress. For the first time since we began tracking these trends, workforce vacancy rates have increased rather than declined. Overall staff vacancies increased to 17%, with more than 4,000 positions unfilled among responding organizations. By comparison, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported a job openings rate of just 4.3% across the Northeast in September 2026, highlighting the significant workforce challenges facing community-based human service providers. These challenges are particularly pronounced among direct support professionals and in community-based day programs, where staffing shortages directly affect providers' ability to meet the needs of individuals seeking services.

The implications extend well beyond workforce statistics and organizational budgets. In community-based disability services, **the workforce is the service.** The ability of people with disabilities to live independently, pursue employment, and participate in their communities depends on a stable, skilled workforce. As one provider observed, **"Vacancies and turnover place additional demands on existing staff and affect continuity of support for individuals and families."** When that workforce is stretched, so too is the system of services that individuals and families rely upon.

Waiting lists for day services have declined significantly since 2023, reflecting meaningful progress. However, with 942 individuals still waiting for these essential services and vacancies rising in community-based day programs, there is reason for concern about providers' ability to sustain these gains and meet the needs of those seeking services.

At the same time, providers are confronting mounting financial pressures, particularly from the rising cost of health insurance. In 2025, ADDP member organizations reported an average premium increase of 11%, exceeding the statewide average. While increases reported in 2026 were more closely aligned with statewide trends, this was not necessarily a sign of relief. Many organizations made significant changes to

their health insurance plans to avoid even steeper increases, often resulting in reduced benefits and higher out-of-pocket costs for employees. As one survey respondent shared, **“We were forced to change our health insurance plan in order to avoid a projected 29% increase in premiums. […] The new plan also comes with additional restrictions and less favorable coverage for employees.”** These difficult trade-offs place additional strain on a workforce that providers are already struggling to recruit and retain. The challenges are further compounded by an increasingly constrained labor market, including changes in federal immigration policies that have further limited the pool of available workers.

With compensation largely determined by state reimbursement rates, providers have limited flexibility to respond. **As one survey respondent explained, "We still do not receive enough funding in order to pay our employees a competitive wage that enables them to work one job."**

Massachusetts has long been a leader in advancing opportunities for people with disabilities to live, work, and belong in their communities. As the needs of those receiving services continue to grow and become more complex, protecting that progress requires a service system capable of adapting and responding. Without a stable workforce and adequate resources, access to community-based supports is at risk, potentially leaving individuals and families with fewer options and increasing reliance on alternatives that may come at a greater cost to the Commonwealth.

We recognize the significant fiscal pressures facing the Commonwealth and the difficult choices confronting policymakers. Yet the findings of this survey reinforce an important lesson: workforce investments are not one-time solutions. The rates set by Chapter 257 must keep pace with the changing costs of delivering services, including the ability to offer competitive wages and affordable benefits. Sustained investment is essential not only to recruit and retain a qualified workforce, but also to preserve individual choice and protect access to the services and supports that people with disabilities and their families rely on every day.

We are grateful to the 98 member organizations that participated in this year's survey and to Fraser Consulting for its continued partnership in analyzing the data that helps to inform these important conversations. We also recognize the Commonwealth's ongoing investment in community-based services and the progress those investments have helped achieve.

The investments of recent years have shown us what is possible. Our shared responsibility now is to protect those gains, respond to emerging challenges, and ensure that Massachusetts continues to lead in expanding opportunities for people with disabilities.

Lasting progress requires lasting commitment.



Stephanie R Costa
President & CEO, ADDP



Mike Hyland
Chair, Board of Directors, ADDP

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Throughout this report, vacant positions are measured as Full-Time Equivalent (FTE).

About the Survey

Since 2023, the Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers (ADDP) has partnered with Fraser Consulting to conduct a unique and comprehensive workforce survey of its member organizations. This survey, from September 2026, continues that series, tracking vacancy rates across programs and job titles. It also includes data about health insurance premiums first captured in 2025 and adds information on the types of health insurance benefits providers offer.

ADDP is a statewide association representing 130 community-based human service organizations that provide a broad range of supports to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), including autism, as well as to individuals with brain injuries. This survey focuses on staffing within the following program areas operated by ADDP member agencies:

- Adult Long-Term Residential (ALTR)
- Day Habilitation (Day Hab)
- Community-Based Day Supports (CBDS)
- Individual and Group Supported Employment
- Shared Living
- Adult Foster Care (AFC)

Summary of Findings

Participation in the 2026 survey remained strong, with 98 organizations responding, or three-quarters of ADDP's 130 members. Together, these organizations employ over 24,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff. Responding organizations reported 4,074 vacant FTEs, up from 3,806 in the prior year.

The overall staff vacancy rate increased from 15% in 2025 to 17% in 2026, reversing some of the improvement seen in recent years. Vacancies had declined steadily from 24% in 2023 and 19% in 2024. Community-Based Day Supports had the highest program vacancy rate, increasing from 14% to 20%. Adult Long-Term Residential vacancies rose from 16% to 18%, while Supported Employment increased from 11% to 14%. Results were more favorable in Shared Living, where vacancies declined from 16% to 9%, and Adult Foster Care, which declined from 6% to 5%. Day Habilitation remained unchanged at 13%.

Vacancies for Direct Support Professionals (DSPs)—by far the largest segment of the workforce—increased from 15% to 18%, with more than 3,500 vacant FTE positions. Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) continued to have the highest overall vacancy rate among job categories, at 26%, although this improved from 28% in 2025. Clinician vacancies declined from 19% to 14%, and Registered Nurse vacancies fell from 12% to 8%. Vacancies for Drivers increased from 12% to 17%, and Community Health Worker vacancies, although a very small population, jumped from 3% to 18%.

Access to day programs has continued to improve, but significant waiting lists remain. Waiting lists for Day Habilitation, Community-Based Day Supports, and Supported Employment declined from 1,759 in 2025 to 942 in 2026, compared with 2,717 in 2023.

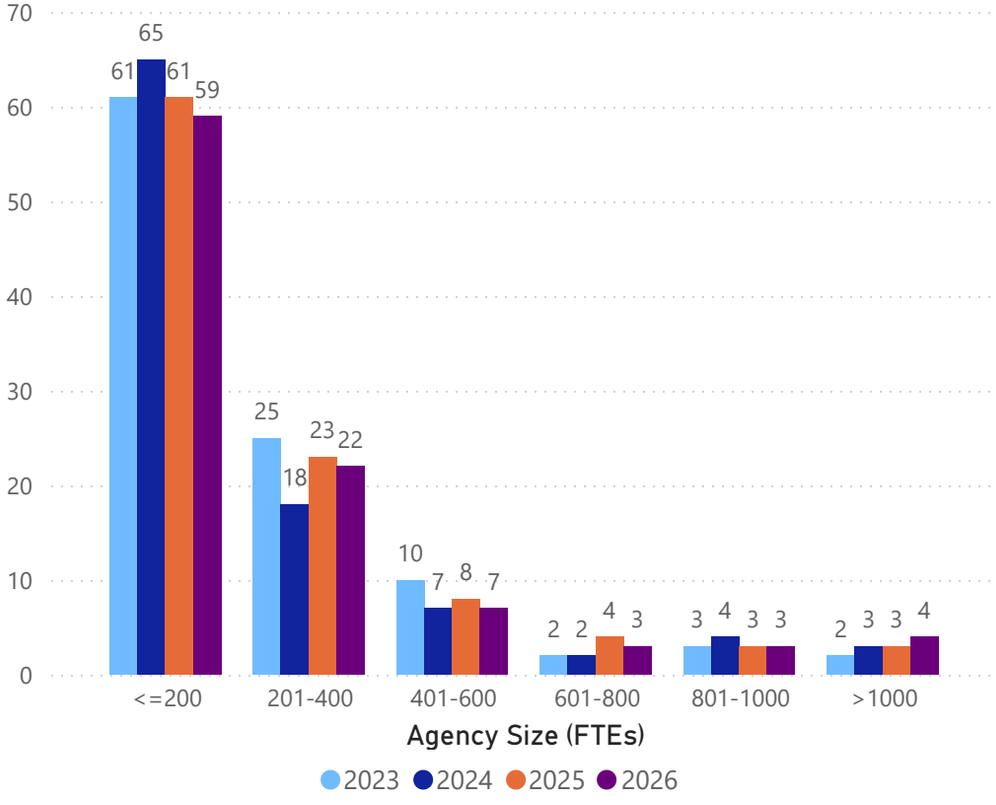
Health insurance costs remain a significant concern. All the agencies surveyed reported providing a health insurance benefit to their employees, with fully insured plans in place at 66% of provider organizations. Another 21% reported self-insured arrangements and 12% offered Individual Coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangements (ICHRAs). Nearly 90% of respondents reported increases after plan adjustments, averaging 10%. Without plan modifications, the average increase would have been 14%, and 16% of providers would have faced increases above 20%.

The following slides provide detailed information by program and job title.

Overall Responses

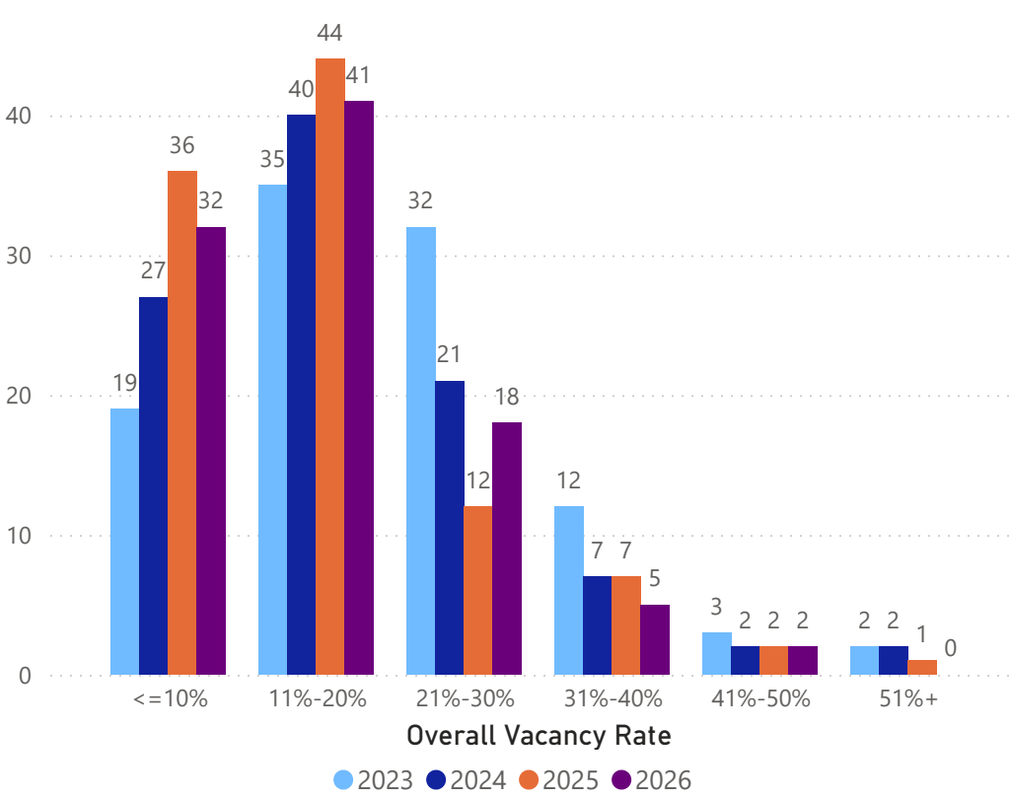
Total Responses Received: 98

Distribution of Agency Size, Based on FTEs



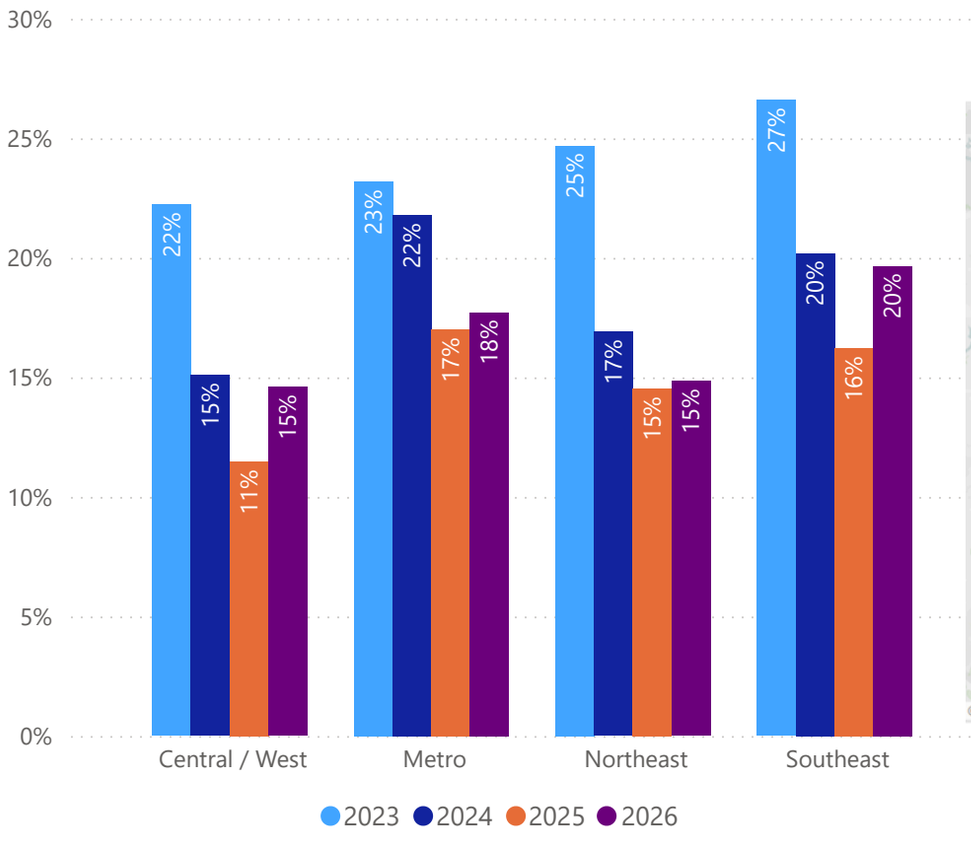
Agency Size (FTEs)	Oct 2023 Percentage	Oct 2024 Percentage	Sep 2025 Percentage	Sep 2026 Percentage
<=200	59%	66%	60%	60%
201-400	24%	18%	23%	22%
401-600	10%	7%	8%	7%
601-800	2%	2%	4%	3%
801-1000	3%	4%	3%	3%
>1000	2%	3%	3%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

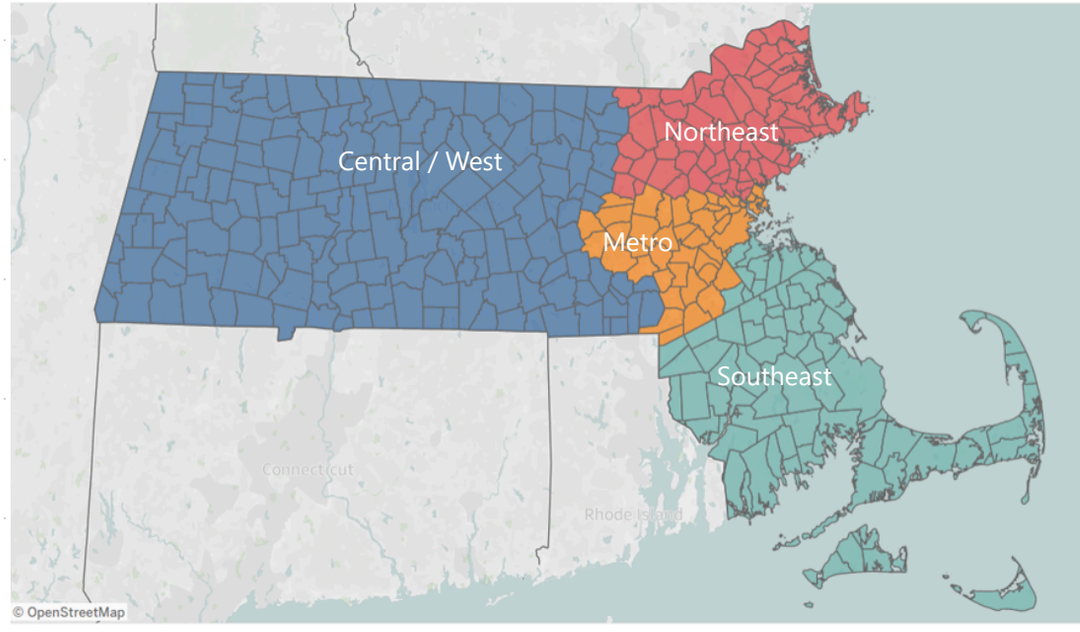
Distribution of Vacancy Rates



Overall Vacancy Rate	Oct 2023 Percentage	Oct 2024 Percentage	Sep 2025 Percentage	Sep 2026 Percentage
<=10%	18%	27%	35%	33%
11%-20%	34%	40%	43%	42%
21%-30%	31%	21%	12%	18%
31%-40%	12%	7%	7%	5%
41%-50%	3%	2%	2%	2%
51%+	2%	2%	1%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

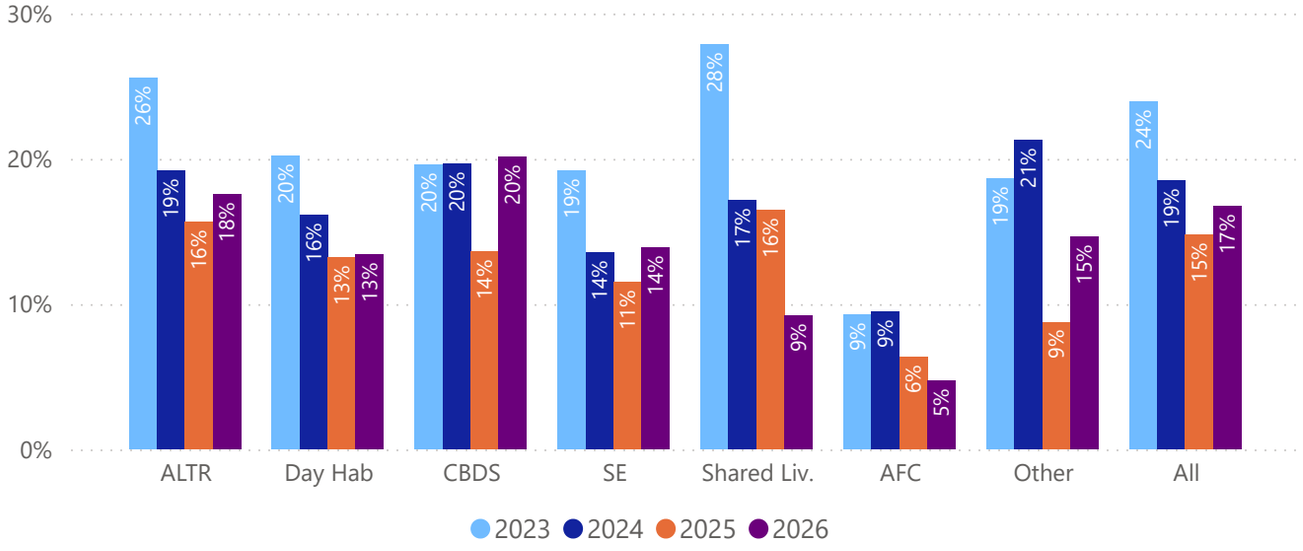
Vacancy Rates by DDS Region





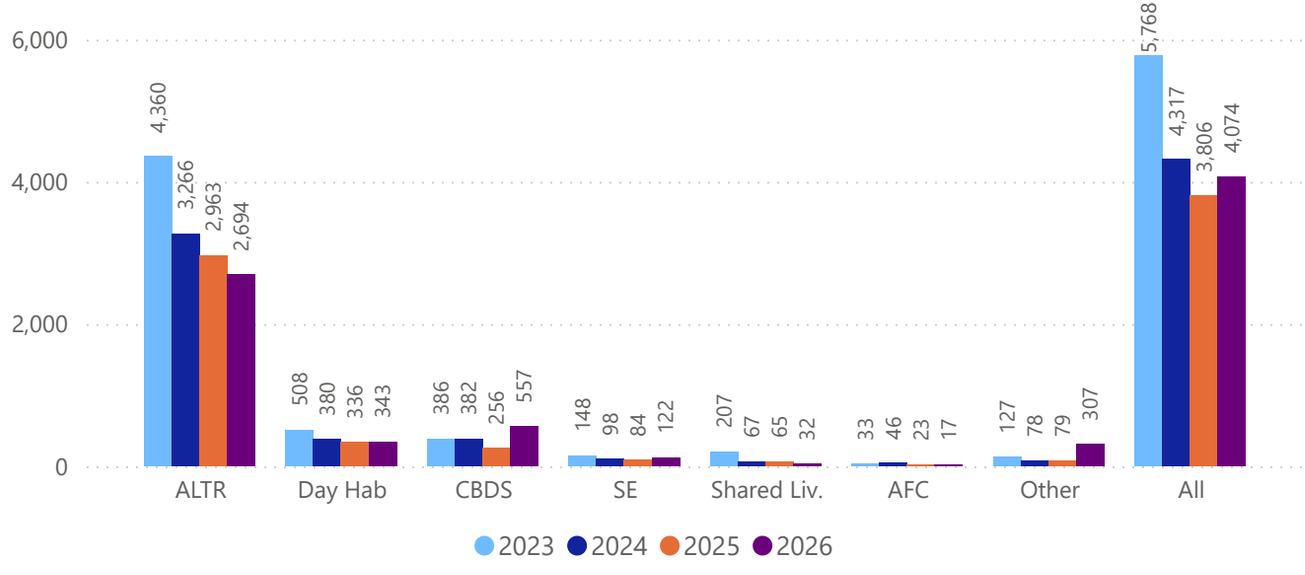
Vacancy Rates by Program

Vacancy Rates by Program



Program	2023	2024	2025	2026
ALTR	26%	19%	16%	18%
Day Hab	20%	16%	13%	13%
CBDS	20%	20%	14%	20%
SE	19%	14%	11%	14%
Shared Liv.	28%	17%	16%	9%
AFC	9%	9%	6%	5%
Other	19%	21%	9%	15%
All	24%	19%	15%	17%

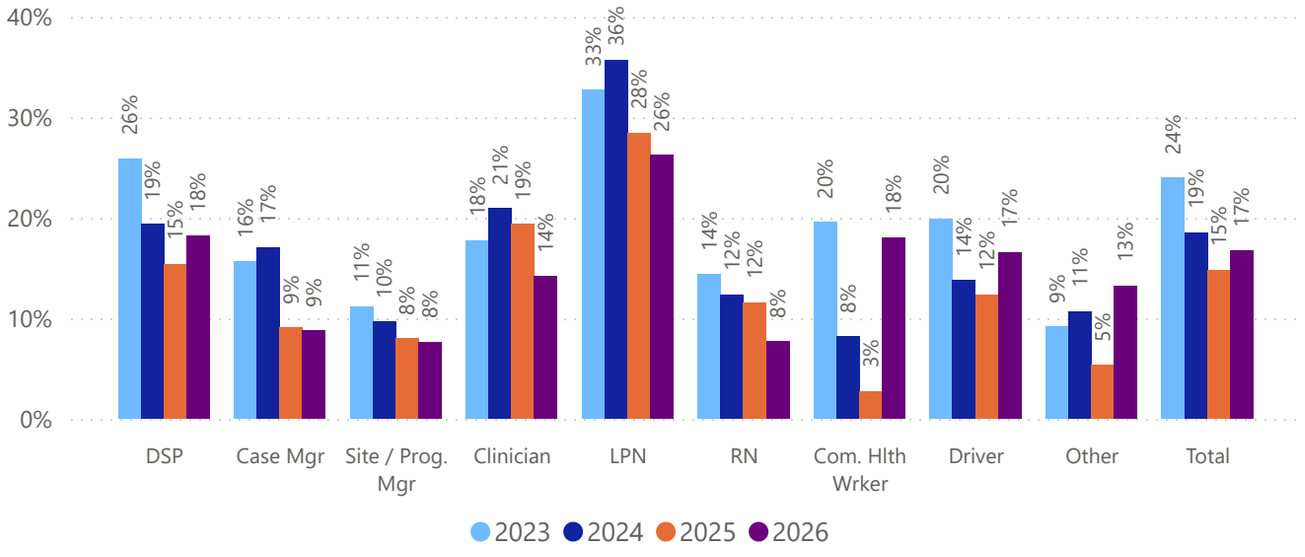
Vacant FTEs by Program



Program	2023	2024	2025	2026
ALTR	4,360	3,266	2,963	2,694
Day Hab	508	380	336	343
CBDS	386	382	256	557
SE	148	98	84	122
Shared Liv.	207	67	65	32
AFC	33	46	23	17
Other	127	78	79	307
All	5,768	4,317	3,806	4,074

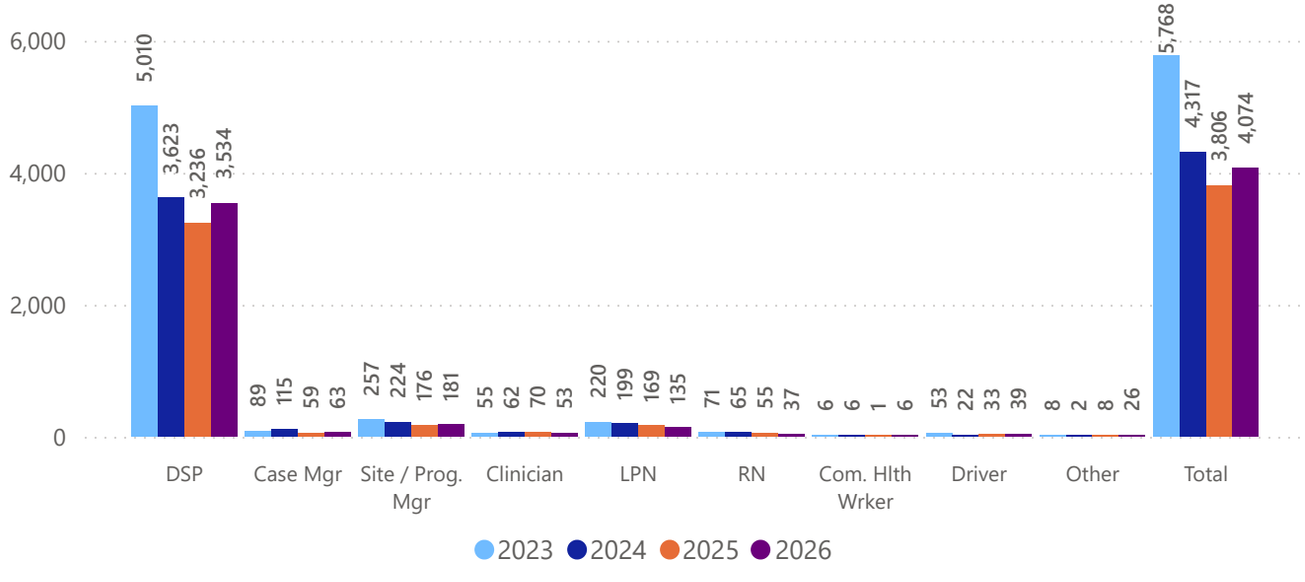
Vacancy Rates by Position - All Programs

Vacancy Rates by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	26%	19%	15%	18%
Case Mgr	16%	17%	9%	9%
Site / Prog. Mgr	11%	10%	8%	8%
Clinician	18%	21%	19%	14%
LPN	33%	36%	28%	26%
RN	14%	12%	12%	8%
Com. Hlth Wrker	20%	8%	3%	18%
Driver	20%	14%	12%	17%
Other	9%	11%	5%	13%
Total	24%	19%	15%	17%

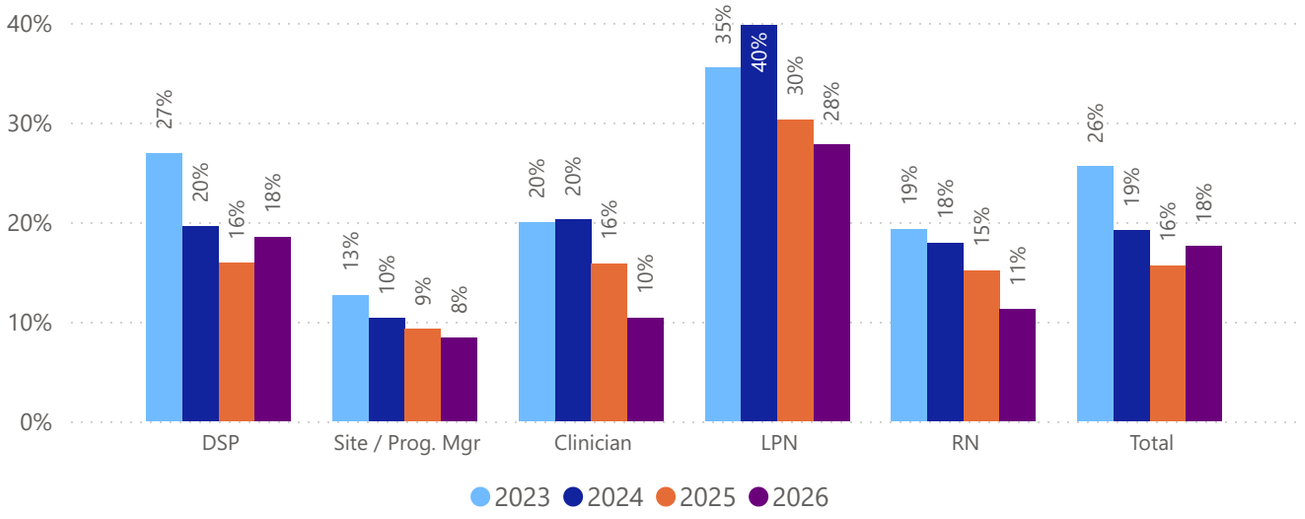
Vacant FTEs by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	5,010	3,623	3,236	3,534
Case Mgr	89	115	59	63
Site / Prog. Mgr	257	224	176	181
Clinician	55	62	70	53
LPN	220	199	169	135
RN	71	65	55	37
Com. Hlth Wrker	6	6	1	6
Driver	53	22	33	39
Other	8	2	8	26
Total	5,768	4,317	3,806	4,074

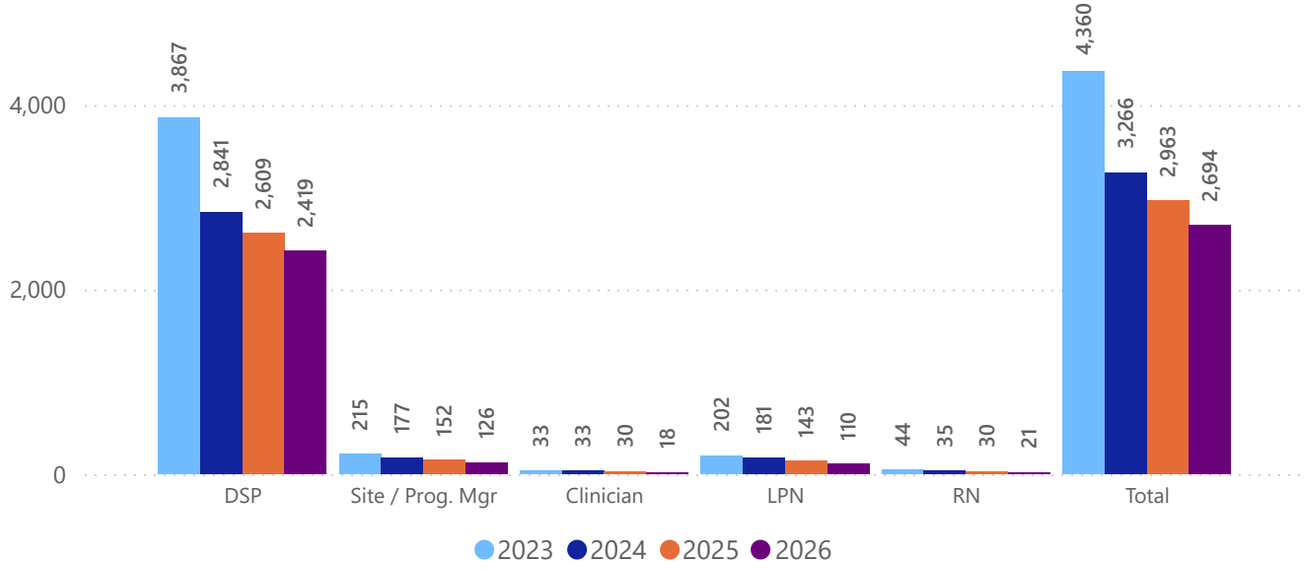
Vacancy Rates by Position - ALTR

Vacancy Rates by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	27%	20%	16%	18%
Site / Prog. Mgr	13%	10%	9%	8%
Clinician	20%	20%	16%	10%
LPN	35%	40%	30%	28%
RN	19%	18%	15%	11%
Total	26%	19%	16%	18%

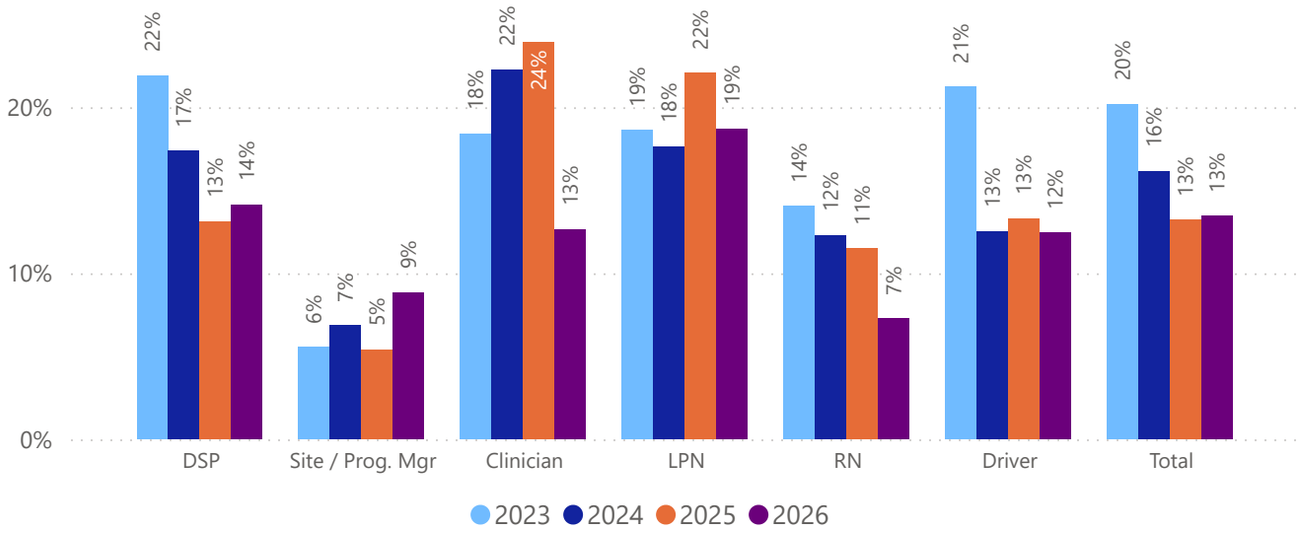
Vacant FTEs by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	3,867	2,841	2,609	2,419
Site / Prog. Mgr	215	177	152	126
Clinician	33	33	30	18
LPN	202	181	143	110
RN	44	35	30	21
Total	4,360	3,266	2,963	2,694

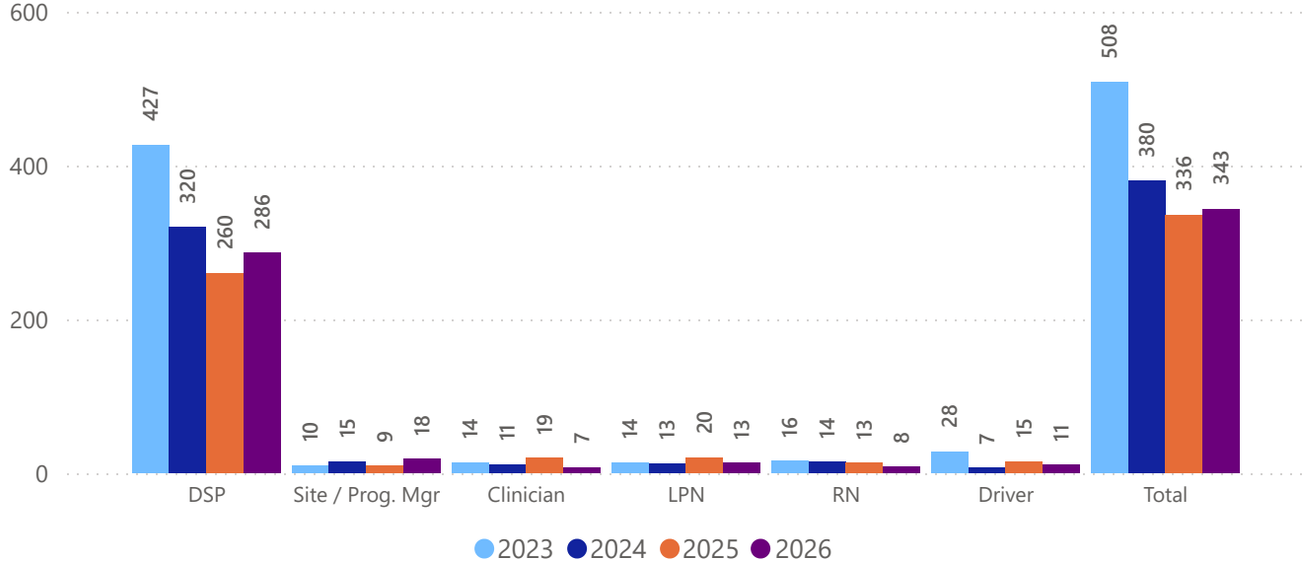
Vacancy Rates by Position - Day Habilitation

Vacancy Rates by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	22%	17%	13%	14%
Site / Prog. Mgr	6%	7%	5%	9%
Clinician	18%	22%	24%	13%
LPN	19%	18%	22%	19%
RN	14%	12%	11%	7%
Driver	21%	13%	13%	12%
Total	20%	16%	13%	13%

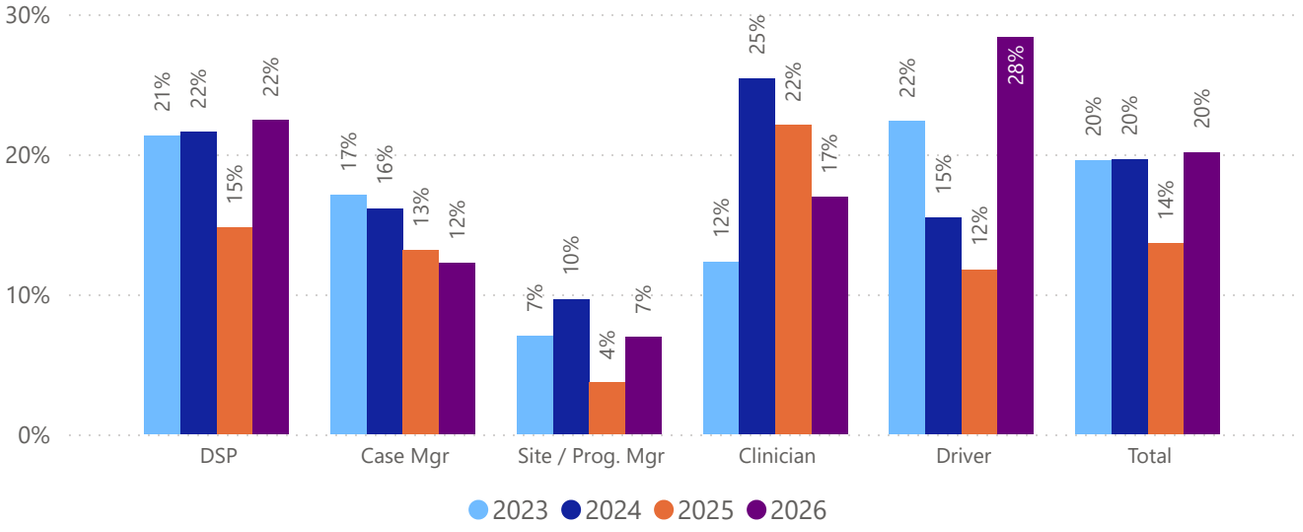
Vacant FTEs by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	427	320	260	286
Site / Prog. Mgr	10	15	9	18
Clinician	14	11	19	7
LPN	14	13	20	13
RN	16	14	13	8
Driver	28	7	15	11
Total	508	380	336	343

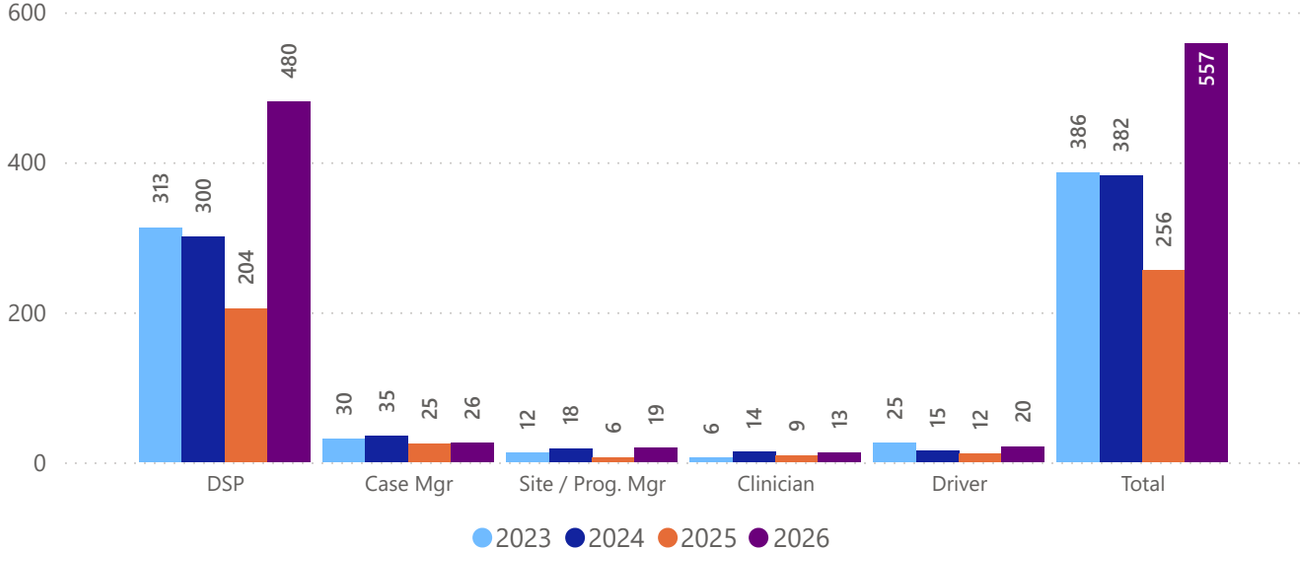
Vacancy Rates by Position - Community-Based Day Supports

Vacancy Rates by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	21%	22%	15%	22%
Case Mgr	17%	16%	13%	12%
Site / Prog. Mgr	7%	10%	4%	7%
Clinician	12%	25%	22%	17%
Driver	22%	15%	12%	28%
Total	20%	20%	14%	20%

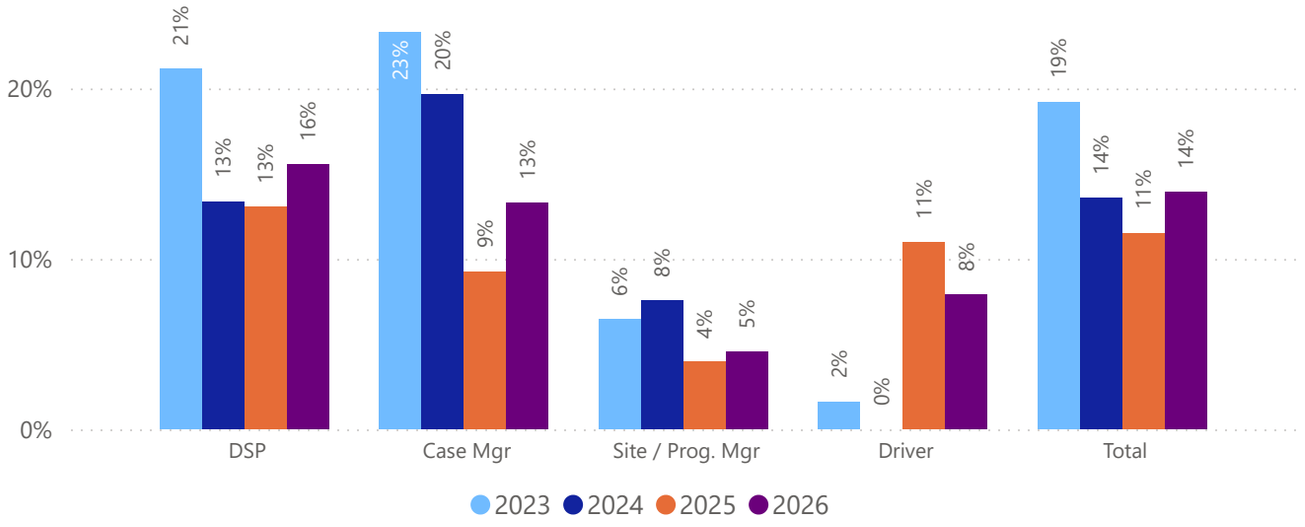
Vacant FTEs by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	313	300	204	480
Case Mgr	30	35	25	26
Site / Prog. Mgr	12	18	6	19
Clinician	6	14	9	13
Driver	25	15	12	20
Total	386	382	256	557

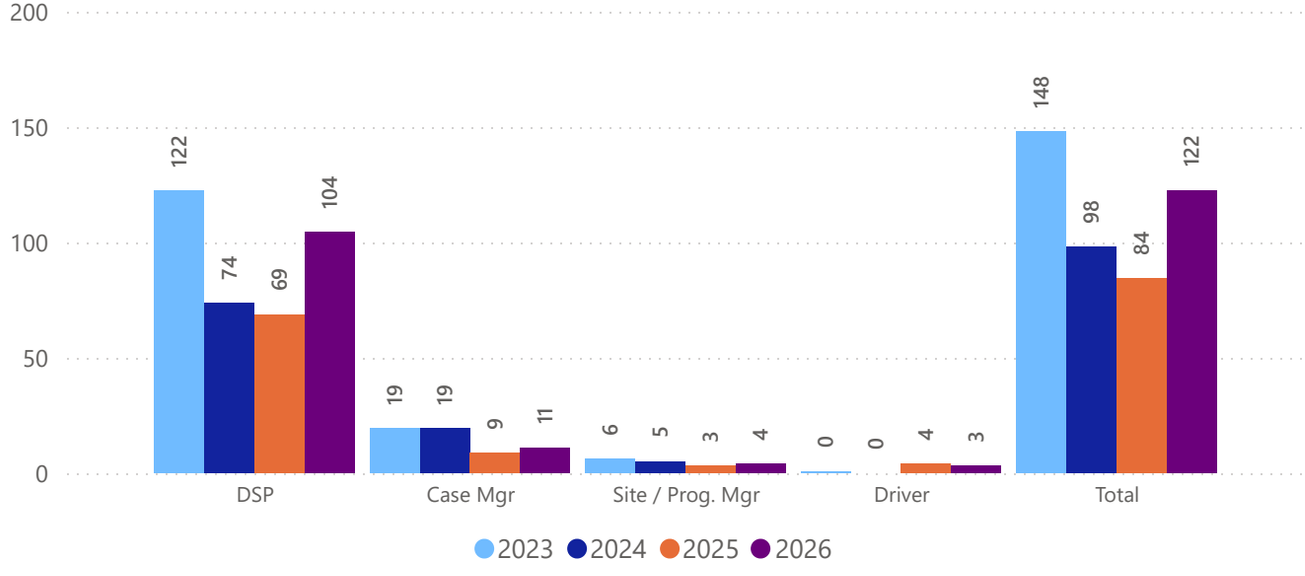
Vacancy Rates by Position - Supported Employment

Vacancy Rates by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	21%	13%	13%	16%
Case Mgr	23%	20%	9%	13%
Site / Prog. Mgr	6%	8%	4%	5%
Driver	2%	0%	11%	8%
Total	19%	14%	11%	14%

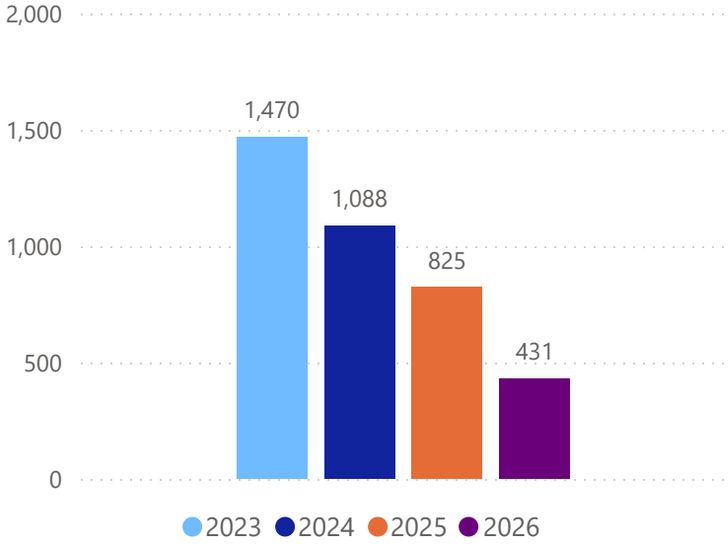
Vacant FTEs by Position Type



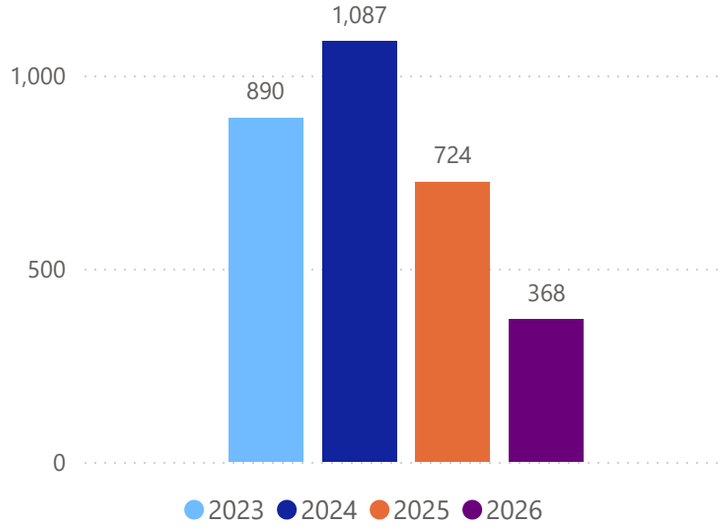
Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	122	74	69	104
Case Mgr	19	19	9	11
Site / Prog. Mgr	6	5	3	4
Driver	0	0	4	3
Total	148	98	84	122

Day Program Wait Lists

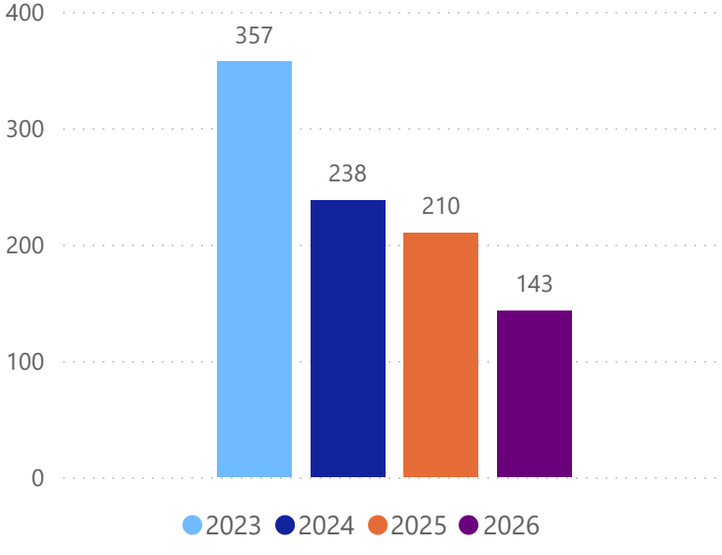
Day Habilitation Wait Lists



CBDS Wait Lists



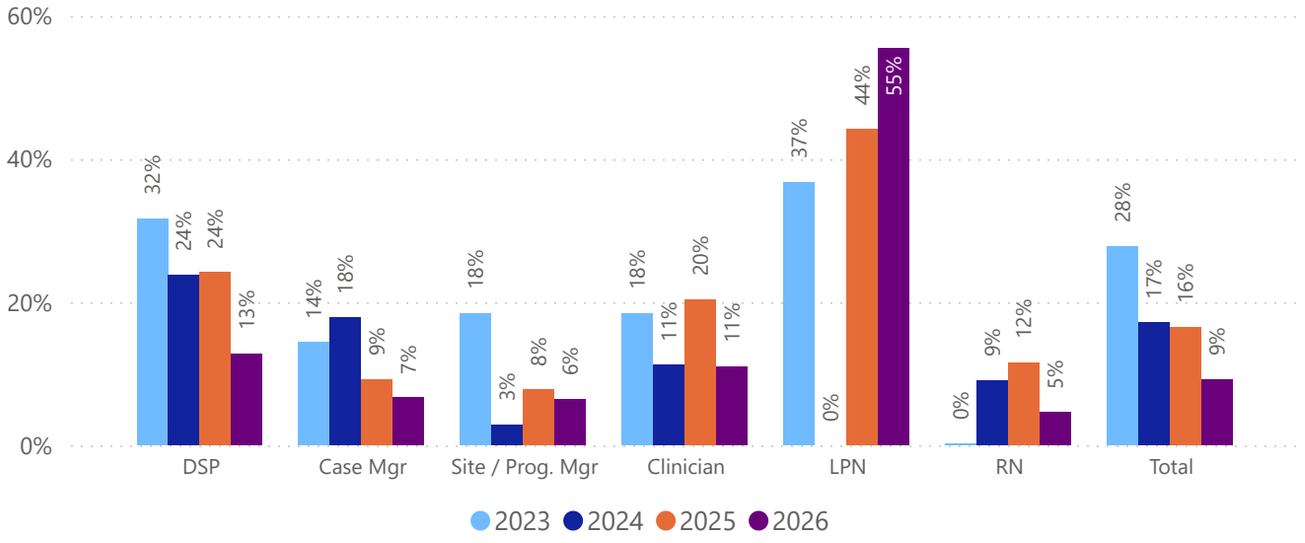
Supported Employment Wait Lists



	Wait List			
Program	**2023**	**2024**	**2025**	**2026**
Day Hab	1,470	1,088	825	431
CBDS	890	1,087	724	368
Supported Employment	357	238	210	143
Total	2,717	2,413	1,759	942

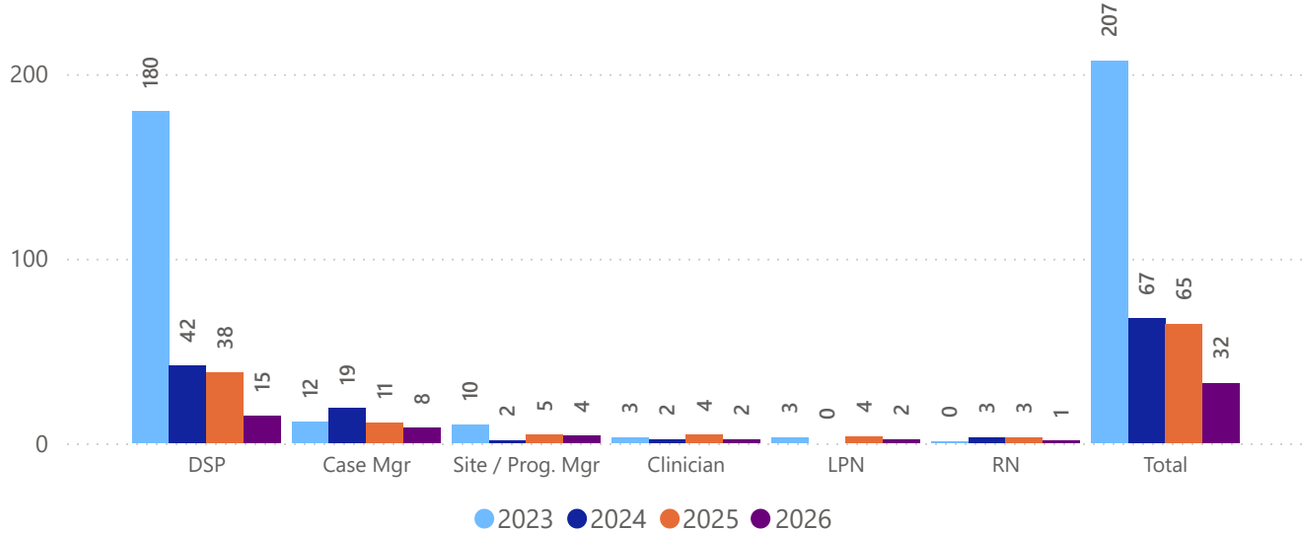
Vacancy Rates by Position - Shared Living

Vacancy Rates by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	32%	24%	24%	13%
Case Mgr	14%	18%	9%	7%
Site / Prog. Mgr	18%	3%	8%	6%
Clinician	18%	11%	20%	11%
LPN	37%	0%	44%	55%
RN	0%	9%	12%	5%
Total	28%	17%	16%	9%

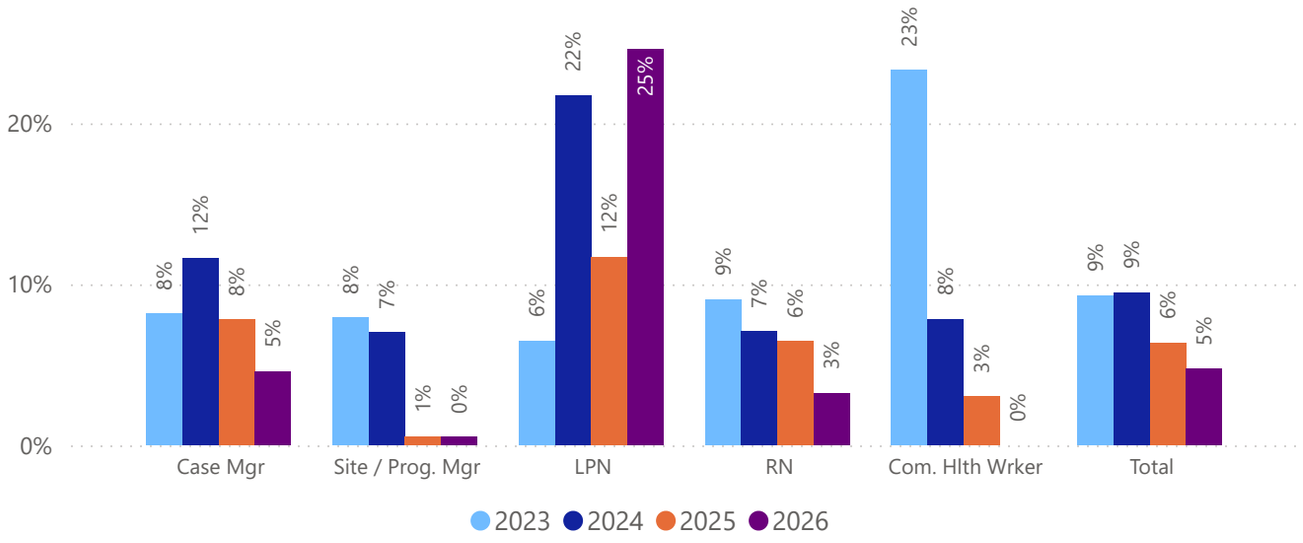
Vacant FTEs by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	180	42	38	15
Case Mgr	12	19	11	8
Site / Prog. Mgr	10	2	5	4
Clinician	3	2	4	2
LPN	3	0	4	2
RN	0	3	3	1
Total	207	67	65	32

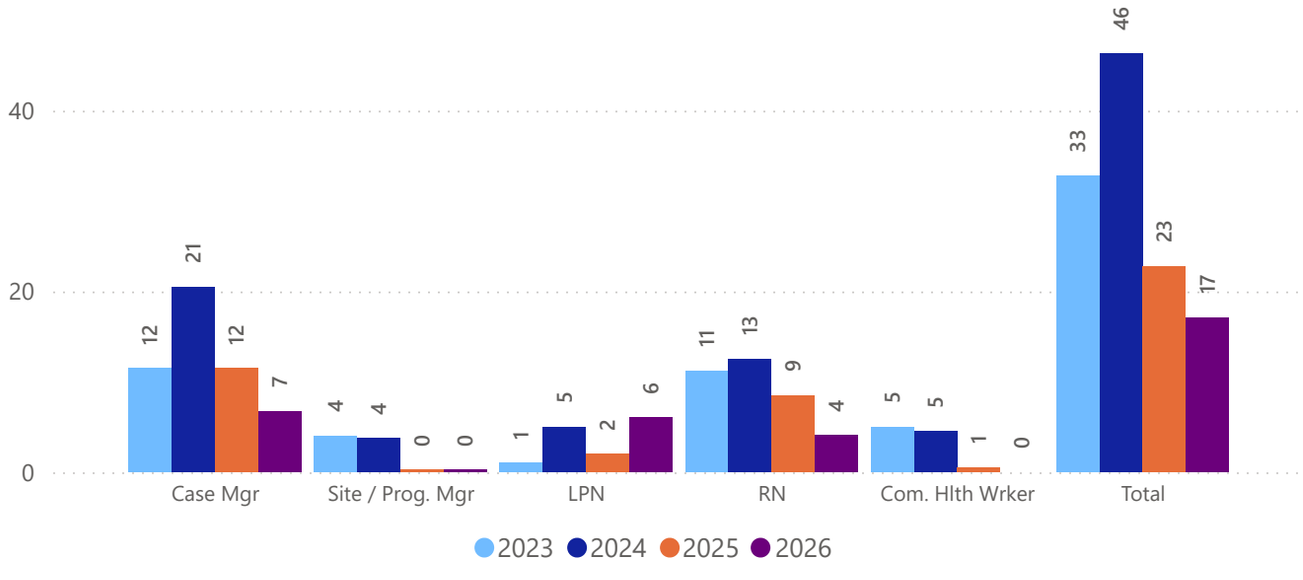
Vacancy Rates by Position - Adult Foster Care

Vacancy Rates by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
Case Mgr	8%	12%	8%	5%
Site / Prog. Mgr	8%	7%	1%	0%
LPN	6%	22%	12%	25%
RN	9%	7%	6%	3%
Com. Hlth Wrker	23%	8%	3%	0%
Total	9%	9%	6%	5%

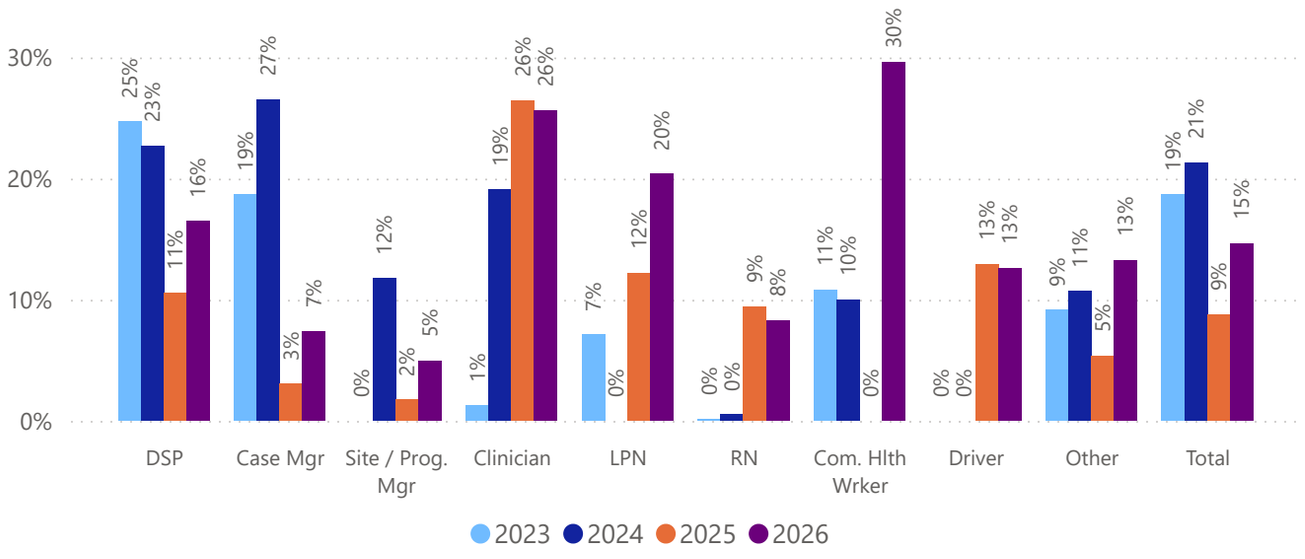
Vacant FTEs by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
Case Mgr	12	21	12	7
Site / Prog. Mgr	4	4	0	0
LPN	1	5	2	6
RN	11	13	9	4
Com. Hlth Wrker	5	5	1	0
Total	33	46	23	17

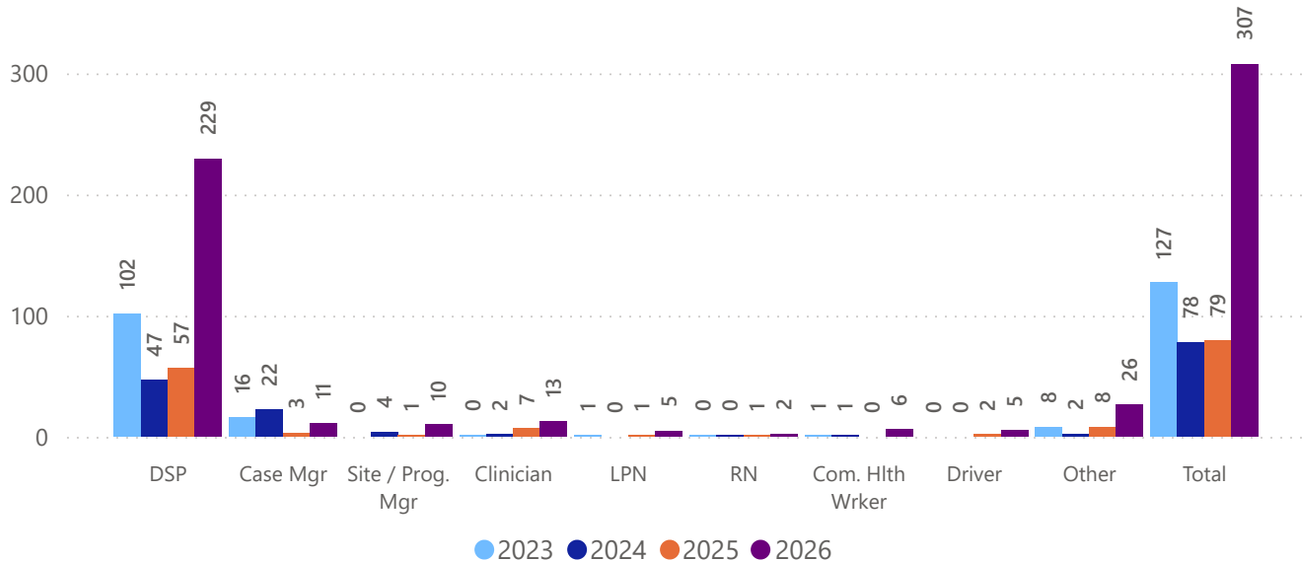
Vacancy Rates by Position - Other Programs

Vacancy Rates by Position Type



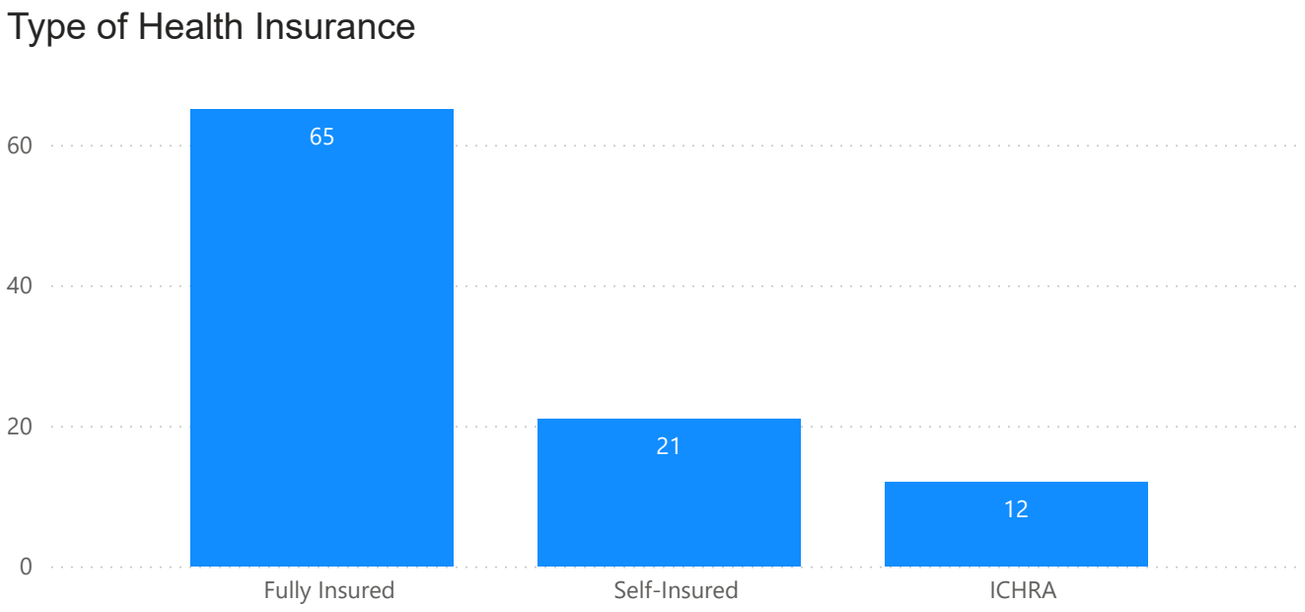
Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	25%	23%	11%	16%
Case Mgr	19%	27%	3%	7%
Site / Prog. Mgr	0%	12%	2%	5%
Clinician	1%	19%	26%	26%
LPN	7%	0%	12%	20%
RN	0%	0%	9%	8%
Com. Hlth Wrker	11%	10%	0%	30%
Driver	0%	0%	13%	13%
Other	9%	11%	5%	13%
Total	19%	21%	9%	15%

Vacant FTEs by Position Type



Job Title	2023	2024	2025	2026
DSP	102	47	57	229
Case Mgr	16	22	3	11
Site / Prog. Mgr	0	4	1	10
Clinician	0	2	7	13
LPN	1	0	1	5
RN	0	0	1	2
Com. Hlth Wrker	1	1	0	6
Driver	0	0	2	5
Other	8	2	8	26
Total	127	78	79	307

Primary Type of Health Insurance Benefit Offered



Primary Insurance Type	2026	Percent
Fully Insured	65	66%
Self-Insured	21	21%
ICHRA	12	12%
Total	**98**	**100%**

Health Insurance Benefit Categories

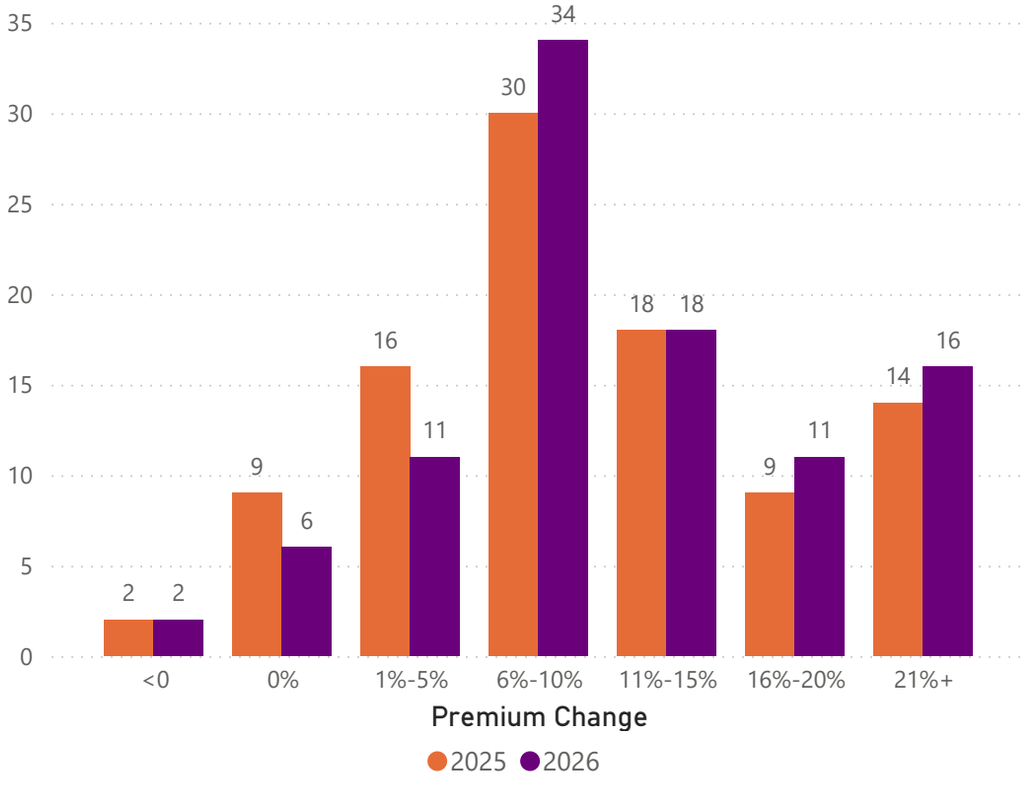
Fully Insured – Employer pays monthly premiums to a carrier, and the carrier assumes all claims risk.

Self-Insured / Self-Funded / Level-Funded / Captive – Employer assumes some claims risk directly, may use stop-loss insurance to limit exposure, and/or pools risk with other employers.

ICHRA (Individual Coverage HRA) – Employer reimburses employees tax-free for premiums on individual marketplace plans instead of sponsoring a group plan.

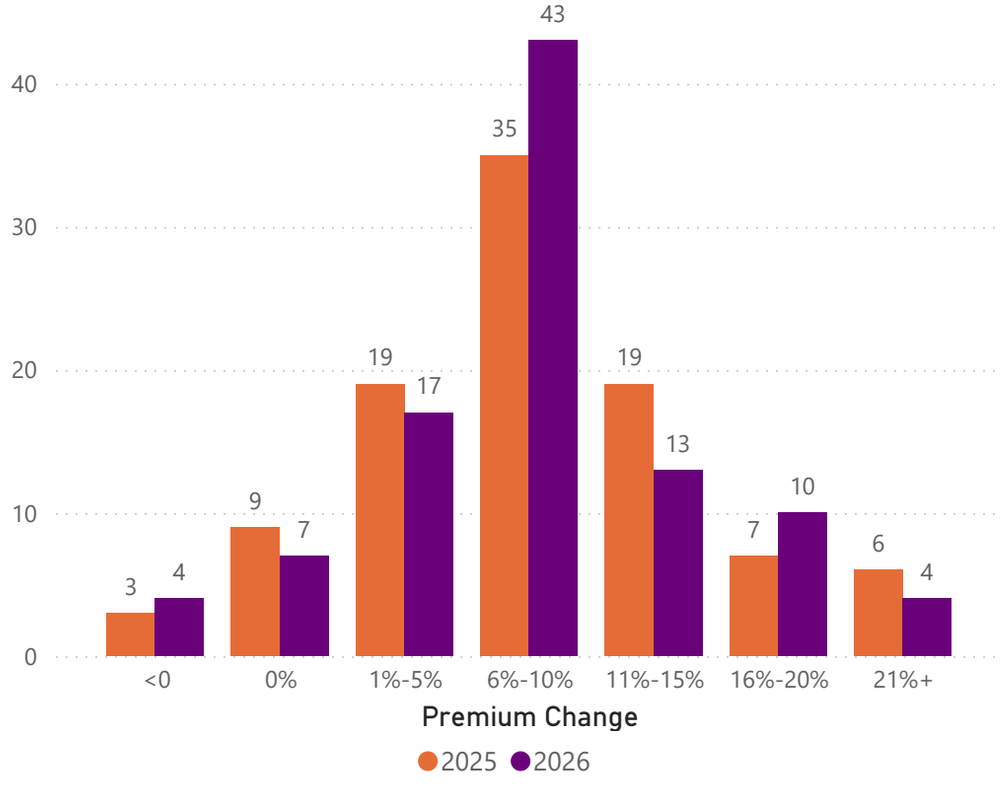
Health Insurance Premium Increases

Proposed Premium Increase Before Plan Adjustments



Proposed Premium Increase Before Adjustments	2025	2026
<0	2	2
0%	9	6
1%-5%	16	11
6%-10%	30	34
11%-15%	18	18
16%-20%	9	11
21%+	14	16
Total	98	98

Actual Premium Increase After Adjustments



Actual Premium Increase After Adjustments	2025	2026
<0	3	4
0%	9	7
1%-5%	19	17
6%-10%	35	43
11%-15%	19	13
16%-20%	7	10
21%+	6	4
Total	98	98

Appendix A: Program Descriptions

Adult Long-Term Residential (ALTR): a program funded by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) that provides overnight housing for an extended period in a residential facility with necessary daily living, physical, social, and clinical and/or medical support.

Day Habilitation (Day Hab): a goal-oriented program funded primarily by MassHealth (Medicaid) that provides activities and therapies to address skill acquisition, retention, socialization, and adaptive skills.

Community-Based Day Supports (CBDS): a person-centered program funded by DDS that develops, enhances, and maintains competency in personal, social, and community activities. Personalized goals can be employment or non-employment related activities that promote integration and inclusion.

Individual and Group Supported Employment: a training and support program funded by DDS to develop and maintain job skills. Person-centered services can include job discovery, development, and coaching.

Shared Living: a residential service option funded by DDS that includes recruitment, placement, training, resources for clinical or behavioral consultative services, and provider oversight of caregivers and living situations for individuals who either live in the home of a designated care provider or live in their own homes.

Adult Foster Care (AFC): a program funded by MassHealth that enables seniors and adults with disabilities to live at home with caregivers of their own choosing. Provider agencies are responsible for recruiting, hiring, and training caregivers; conducting comprehensive assessments; and ensuring that each participant receives consistent care management and nursing oversight.

Appendix B: Participating Organizations

ADDP would like to thank its member organizations for providing the critical data necessary to complete this survey.

Advocates, Inc.
Almadan, Inc.
Amego, Inc.
Autism Services Association, Inc.
Barry L. Price Rehabilitation Center, Inc.
Bay Cove Human Services
Beaverbrook STEP, Inc.
Behavioral Associates of MA (The Halcyon Center)
Behavioral Health Network, Inc.
Berkshire County Arc. Inc.
Berkshire Hills Music Academy, Inc.
Beta Community Partnerships
Better Community Living, Inc.
Boston Higashi School
Bridges Homeward
Bridgewell
Brockton Area Multi Services, Inc. (BAMSI)
Cape Abilities
Cardinal Cushing Centers
Center for Human Development
Charles River Center
Communitas, Inc.
Community Connections, Inc.
Community Resources for Justice
Comprehensive Mental Health Systems, Inc.
Cooperative for Human Services
Eliot Community Human Services
Empower LGA, Inc.
Friendship Home
Gandara Mental Health Center, Inc.
GROW Associates, Inc.
Guidewire Inc.
HopeWell, Inc.
House of Possibilities
Incompass Human Services
Jewish Family & Children's Service
Justice Resource Institute (JRI)
Kennedy-Donovan Center
L'Arche Boston North
Latham Centers
LifeStream, Inc.
Lifeworks
Living Independently Forever, Inc. (LIFE)
MAB Community Services
Massachusetts MENTOR Network
May Institute
Melmark New England, Inc.
Mental Health Association, Inc.
Morgan Memorial Goodwill Industries
Multicultural Community Services
New England Village, Inc.
Nexus, Inc.
NFI Massachusetts
Nonotuck Resource Associates
North East Educational and Developmental Support Center (NEEDS)
Northeast Arc
NuPath, Inc.
Open Sky Community Services
Opportunity Works
Pathway to Possible
People, Inc.
PRIDE, Inc.
REACH Inc.
Resources for Human Development
Riverside Community Care
Riverside Industries
Riverview School, Inc.
Road To Responsibility, Inc.
Seven Hills Foundation
Southeastern MA Educational Collaborative
Sunshine Village
The Arc of Bristol County
The Arc of Greater Brockton
The Arc of Opportunity
The Arc of Plymouth and Upper Cape Cod
The Arc of the South Shore
The Center of Hope Foundation, Inc.
The Devereux Foundation
The Edinburg Center, Inc.
The Guild for Human Services
The Nemasket Group
The PLUS Company, Inc.
The United Arc
Thrive Support & Advocacy
Transition Centers, Inc.
Triangle, Inc.
Turning Point, Inc.
United Cerebral Palsy Association of Western Mass
United Cerebral Palsy of Metro Boston
Valley Collaborative
Venture Community Services
VIABILITY, Inc.
Victory Human Services
Vinfen
Walnut Street Center, Inc.
Waystone Health & Human Services
Work Opportunities Unlimited
WORK, Inc.

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