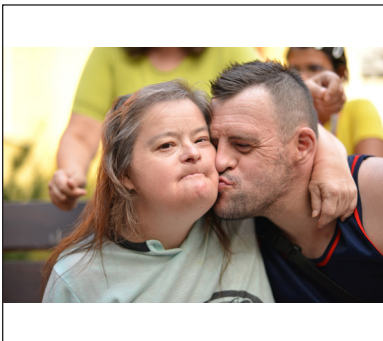


# Build and Strengthen Ohio's Direct Service Workforce

The harsh reality for too many workers is that a job doesn't always mean a living. While Ohio's families are bringing in less money, the cost of the basics – like food, housing, child care, health care, and transportation – have gone up. Direct care staff earn low wages with the average wage below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level for a family of 3. A sustainable wage for Ohio's direct service workers is needed to decrease high staff turnover and support better outcomes of care, improved health of the general population, and more efficient use of resources.

## Helping Ohioans Toward Independence



Direct care workers are in a wide range of settings supporting Ohioans with a variety of needs, including disabilities, aging and behavioral health. Their duties may include assisting with personal care, homemaking, healthcare tasks, finding and maintaining employment, developing community membership, and ultimately helping people achieve a quality life. The direct service workforce is expected to grow more than any other sector in the next five years, outpacing retail, teachers and fast food workers. According to the US Department of Labor, direct care jobs are the #1 (personal care aides) and #3 (home health aides) jobs in demand, with almost 800,000 jobs to be filled by 2024. Staff turnover averaging between 51% (developmental disabilities) and 61% (private duty home care) leads to inefficiencies and poor health outcomes. Ohioans will continue to face a shortage of direct care workers unless we significantly improve the compensation, training, and work conditions of these workers. To learn more, visit [www.opra.org](http://www.opra.org).

**A three-pronged approach is needed to achieve a sustainable, high quality direct care workforce.**

- Increase wages for direct care workers. Achieve a sustainable average wage at 200% of FPL for the average family size in Ohio (with an average household size of 2.46, now \$15.62/hour).
- System reform that shifts the focus from activities to outcomes with savings from efficiencies reinvested in the direct care workforce.
- Improve worker satisfaction and lower turnover rates.



## When Ohioans have good jobs everybody benefits.