

*In 2018, the workforce shortage still remains one of the paramount issues effecting providers. With the increase in turnover rates and the high cost of healthcare benefits and training, it becomes difficult to attract and maintain a quality workforce.*

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| **WAGE STATISTICS** | **2011** | **2013** | **2016** | **2018** |
| Federal Poverty Level1 | $10.75 | $11.31 (5.3%)3 | $11.68 (3.2%)3 | $12.06 (3.3%)3 |
| Direct Support Professionals2 | $9.71 | $9.54 (-1.8%)3 | $10.24 (7%)3 | $11.23 (9.6%)3 |

1Refelcts Federal Poverty Level for family of 4

2OPRA member employees with front line, support responsibilities

3, 4 Percent increase from previous year

In 2018 64% of reporting agencies had DSPs receiving public benefits while 24% of reporting agencies had supervisors receiving public benefits to help with things such as childcare, healthcare and transportation.

**Since 2011, wages for Direct Support Professionals (DSP) have slowly continued to increase, but have failed to meet the federal poverty level.**

The future for increases in DSP staff wages is impacted by several factors:

* Wage compression resulting in the mandated annual increases in minimum wages;
* Increased demands on DSPs in non-direct care areas;
* Workforce shortages caused by 61% turnover rate among the DSP staff (a 18% increase from 2016);
* Rising employee related expenses, such as health care premiums

**OPRA has put the workforce crisis front and center making it a top priority.**

* Creation of **The Community Connections Partnership of Ohio C3P(O)** program as a training ground for high school students. The goal is to certify high school students so that they can begin their career as DSPs.
* Work with programs like **Bridges out of Poverty** to help provide training and understanding to supervisors as well as financial help with low interest loans and Government subsidies are beginning to make headway.
* Develop **statewide marketing and communication initiative** to help attract workforce.
* Help **pass legislation** that will raise the minimum wage for DSPs.
* Study and close the gap in wages and benefits between public and private sectors.