

# State Employees Identify Barriers to Providing Quality Public Services

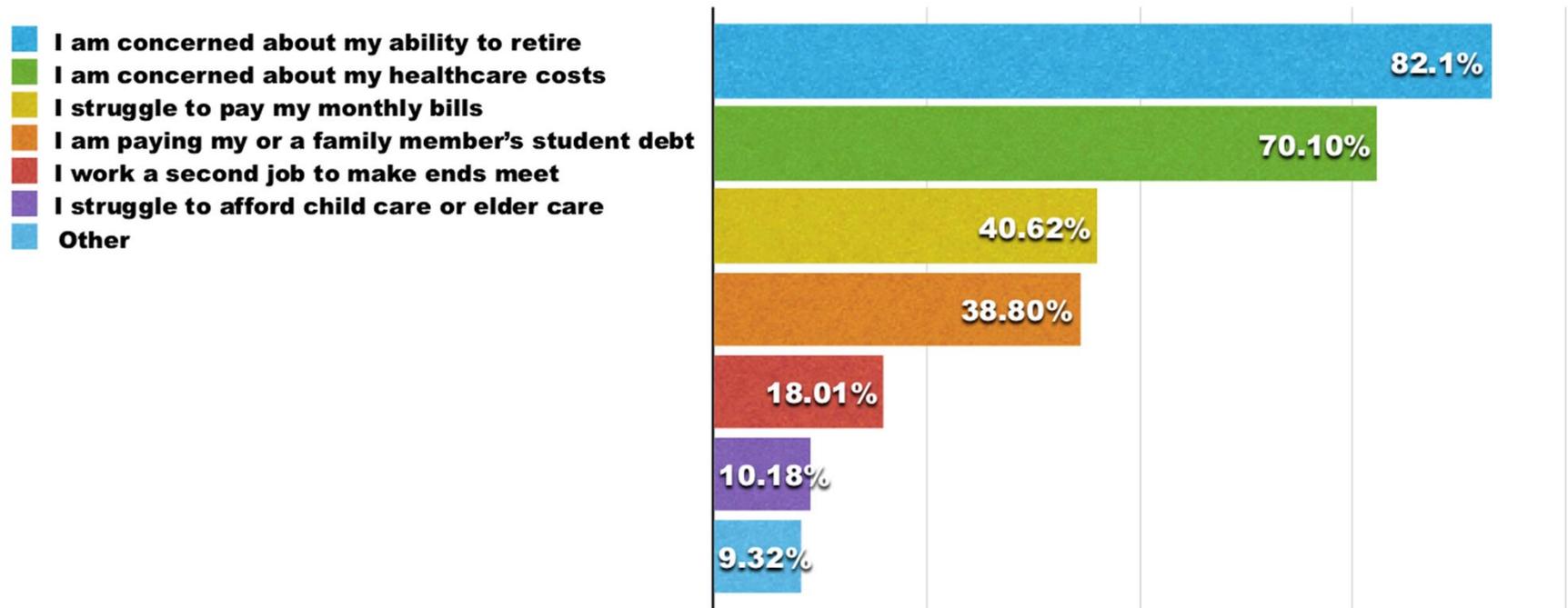


***FIGHT  
FORWARD*** →



From October to December 2018, over 1,000 employees of the State of Maine's Executive Branch agencies responded to a survey about their experiences as State employees. Their responses identified a number of concerning trends about recruitment and retention, effectiveness, staffing and workload, technology and safety.

# Economic Concerns

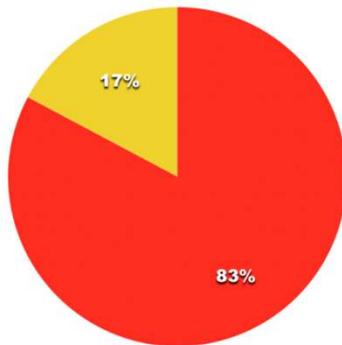


# Economic Concerns

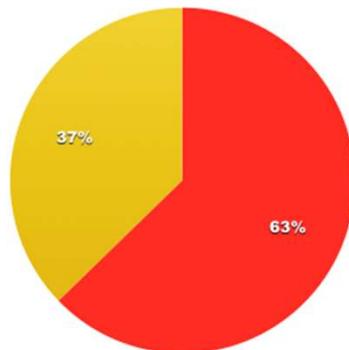
- “I do not believe I will ever be able to actually retire.”
- “I have declined testing for possible cancer due to the cost.”
- “I have worked multiple jobs for over 5 years so I don’t have to move my family out of the state.”
- “I am a single mother who has almost \$100k in student loan debt. I struggle to pay my bills and make ends meet. I now make too much to qualify for help with child care. Making an extra \$1000 a year doesn’t help when I have to come up with \$5000 a year extra for child care.”
- “We need to apply for the sliding scale or charity care [for medical costs] due to our struggle with other bills.”
- “My pay is not enough to cover my household’s needs and it probably never will be if I remain employed with the state. Since 2011, our benefits have decreased and more of the cost sharing has been placed on us. For a healthier work/life balance, I need more support.”
- “Options to afford housing and having a family are limited if I stay with my current position.”

# Staffing Shortages

- There are problems recruiting and retaining staff due to pay and other departmental problems.
- Do not report problems with recruiting and retaining staff in their department.



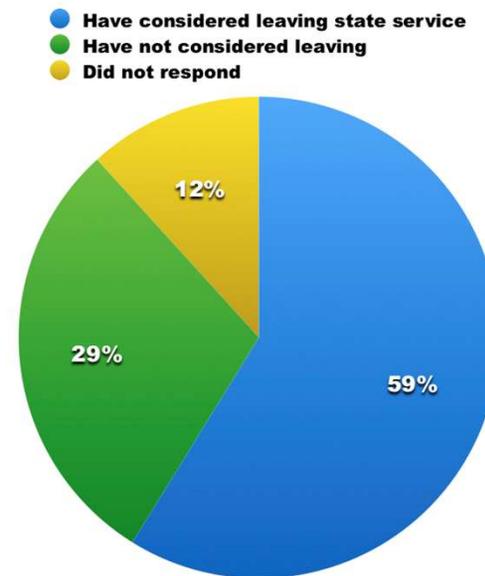
- There is not sufficient staff at their worksite or office
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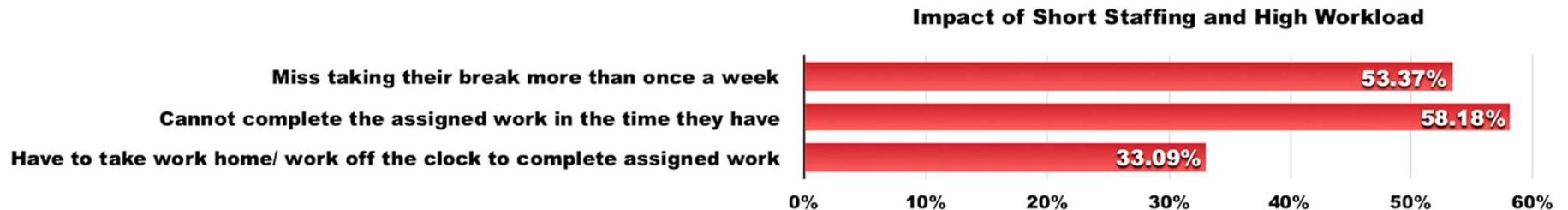
- “Two equal positions in my Department have become vacant and the positions are not being replaced. My team of 7 has now become 5 and we are forced to absorb the additional work.”
- “We have lost so many employees – I believe 15 in 2018 alone. It’s negatively impacting our work and our clients.”
- “If I could, I would leave due to working conditions. We are down seven people and just don’t have enough people left to do the job to our standards.”
- “Crews are getting smaller despite increasing workloads.”
- “The mission of the Department was impaired [over the last 8 years] and many good, experienced staff were lost.”

# Employee Retention

- “We are expected to perform our work tasks without proper training, equipment and respect. We are overworked, underpaid and not appreciated.”
- “Yes, due to management causing stress and low morale.”
- “Yes – lack of IT and other resources to adequately complete tasks.”
- “Yes – too much of a workload and management doesn’t listen.”
- “Yes – struggling to keep up with the workload and most weeks I work over 40 hours without compensation.”
- “Yes - in pursuit of better training and advancement opportunities.”



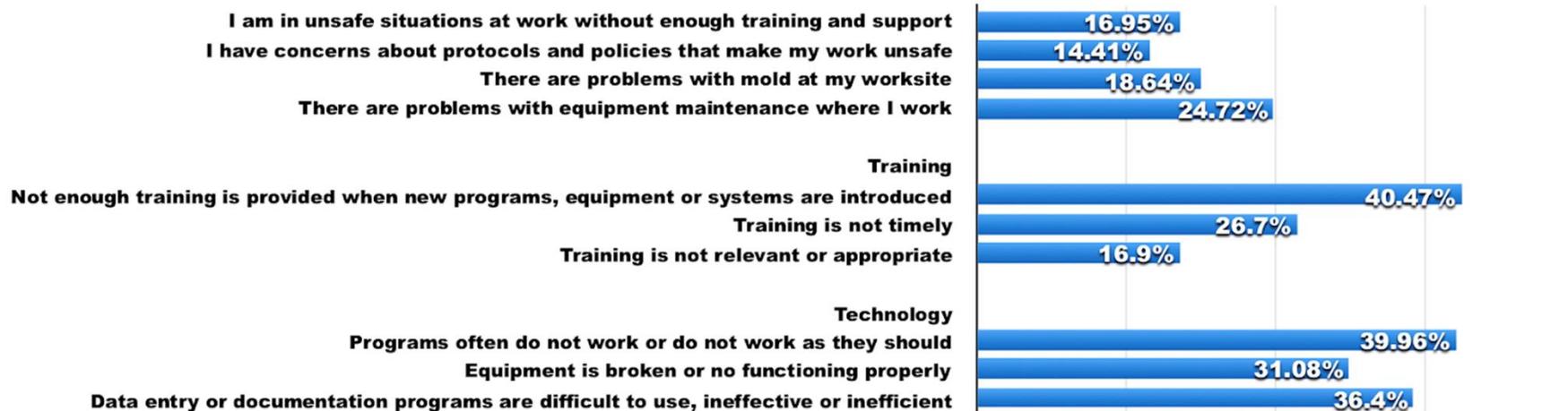
# Workload



- “Overtime is not allowed so work goes undone or I work without pay.”
- “I feel stressed by not being able to provide the best customer service.”
- “I don’t remember the last time I took a 15 minute break.”
- “Unable to work overtime, so work never gets caught up. With constant vacancies, we fall further behind.”
- “It’s very depressing to never be caught up with work.”

# Lack of Resources

## Safety, Training and Technology



- “I have been told there is no time for trainings.”
- “Outdated and painfully slow computer systems don’t talk to each other.”
- “Computers are out of date and take up to 30 minutes to boot up in morning.”
- “Proper and complete trainings on technology programs are ineffective, inefficient, and incomplete.”
- “My supervisor doesn’t have time to train me.”
- “Safety of the public and employees is compromised due to lack of appropriate training.”
- “I usually have to use YouTube to get training in how to use latest programs.”
- “[I am] required to travel during unsafe road conditions.”
- “As an essential 24/7 staffed unit, we do not have simple door security to keep the overnight person safe from someone breaking into the building.”

In addition to sharing their experiences, nearly 70% of respondents indicated that they are willing to stand together with their coworkers, speak about their concerns, and fight to address these issues so that they can provide high quality, effective public services to the people of Maine.