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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### SUMMARY

Idaho's nonprofit workforce, responsible for essential community services across the state, is increasingly strained, according to new findings from the Idaho Nonprofit Compensation and Benefits Report. With nonprofits representing Idaho's fourth-largest private workforce and delivering critical services, the report reveals urgent challenges in hiring, retention, and wage competitiveness. One in five organizations cannot fill open positions, turnover remains high, and many nonprofits struggle to offer competitive pay and benefits in a tight labor market. These trends pose growing risks for Idaho communities that rely on nonprofit programs every day.

### ***New Report Warns Idaho's Nonprofit Workforce is Under Strain, Putting Critical Services at Risk***

**BOISE** – A new Idaho Nonprofit Compensation and Benefits Report reveals that nonprofit organizations across the state are struggling to hire and retain the people who deliver essential community services, from food assistance and housing stability to mental health, arts, and education.

Nonprofits now make up **Idaho's fourth largest private workforce**, employing an estimated 79,000 people, even though most organizations have fewer than 20 full-time staff. Yet the report shows that in a tight labor market, many organizations can't compete on pay and benefits, leaving critical roles unfilled and increasing pressure on existing staff.

"People are the programs," said **Kevin Bailey**, Vice President of Impact & Nonprofit Center at The Idaho Community Foundation. "When a nonprofit can't hire a case manager, there's a family that doesn't get housing support. When a youth mentor leaves and can't be replaced, there's a teenager who loses a lifeline. This report is a warning signal that the workforce we rely on to keep our communities strong is under significant strain."



## **Nonprofits are Idaho’s community safety net—and they’re struggling to staff up**

Idaho nonprofits provide the human infrastructure that keeps communities functioning:

- Safety-net services like food assistance, housing support, and crisis response
- Community spaces including museums, libraries, and cultural centers
- Youth programs, education, and afterschool support
- Arts and events that drive local economies and quality of life
- Mental health support, services for seniors and veterans, and animal welfare

The report’s findings indicate that the very people who deliver these services are increasingly difficult to hire and retain:

- 21% of Idaho nonprofits report having open positions they cannot fill, most often mid-level and program staff—roles that keep day-to-day services running.
- Average turnover is 27% for full-time staff and 37% for part-time staff, creating instability for organizations and the people they serve.
- Nearly half (48%) of organizations rely on contractors, most commonly for bookkeeping and IT, often because they cannot sustain additional staff positions.

“These numbers translate into real impacts in communities,” Bailey added. “When nonprofits are consistently short-staffed, waitlists get longer, burnout gets worse, and it’s harder for Idahoans to access the programs they count on.”

## **Pay, benefits, and flexibility are now essential to keeping services running**

The report, developed in partnership with Boise State University’s Idaho Policy Institute and nonprofit associations across the Northwest, provides detailed benchmark data on wages, benefits, and workforce trends for Idaho nonprofits.

Key findings include:

- **Pay is moving, but not fast enough:** Among organizations facing hiring challenges, 73% increased compensation, but average increases ranged from just 5% for executives to 9% for operational support staff, leaving many still struggling to match other sectors.
- **Benefits are a significant cost:**
  - 71% of organizations offer medical benefits.



- Total benefits cost averages 16% of payroll, a substantial burden for smaller nonprofits.
- **Flexibility has become a critical tool:** In response to hiring and retention challenges, many organizations reported expanding flexible work schedules, enhancing medical and dental benefits, and increasing professional development opportunities.
- **Time off matters:** New employees receive an average of 15 days of paid time off, increasing to 23 days for long-tenured staff, reflecting efforts to support rest and prevent burnout in high-stress roles.

### **A workforce issue with community-wide consequences**

The Idaho Nonprofit Compensation and Benefits Report includes responses from 180 Idaho organizations, representing a wide range of missions, budget sizes, and regions. Education, human services, and arts and culture were among the most common focus areas, underscoring the breadth of community life supported by nonprofit workers.

“Nonprofit staff are often the first phone call when someone loses housing, needs mental health support, or is searching for care for an aging parent,” said Bailey. “It is not acceptable for the people holding our safety net together to be one paycheck away from needing those same services themselves. Idaho’s communities are stronger when the people doing this work are paid fairly and have access to solid benefits.”

### **What this means for funders, donors, and community leaders**

The report is designed as a practical tool to help nonprofit boards, executives, funders, and donors make informed decisions about compensation and benefits.

Key implications include:

- **For nonprofit boards:** Use the benchmarks to assess whether compensation is competitive enough to attract and retain qualified staff, especially in mission-critical program roles.
- **For funders and donors:** Recognize that strong programs require strong organizational foundations, including fair pay, benefits, and sustainable staffing levels. Investments in operations and talent are investments in impact.



- **For policymakers and civic leaders:** Understand that Idaho’s nonprofit workforce is a major employer and a critical partner in delivering services that government and the private sector cannot provide alone.

### **Accessing the Idaho Nonprofit Compensation and Benefits Report**

The full dataset is available through an interactive online dashboard, which includes Idaho-specific data and comparisons across other participating states, allowing leaders to explore regional compensation trends (for example, Boise vs. Spokane or Moscow vs. Pullman). The full report is available for purchase through The Nonprofit Center, an Idaho Community Foundation program.

Learn more and access the report at: [Nonprofit Compensation Report dashboard](#)

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### **About The Nonprofit Center**

The Nonprofit Center, an Idaho Community Foundation program, supports nonprofits statewide through education, research, advocacy, and capacity-building resources that help organizations strengthen their leadership and impact.

### **About The Idaho Community Foundation**

For nearly 40 years, The Idaho Community Foundation has helped generous Idahoans invest in the people, places, and causes they care about. Through our statewide programs, including The Nonprofit Center, an Idaho Community Foundation program, we strengthen communities by growing philanthropy, elevating nonprofit impact, and connecting Idahoans to opportunities to give back. Learn more at [idahocf.org](http://idahocf.org) or contact us at [info@idahocf.org](mailto:info@idahocf.org).