

# ALICE IN THE NONPROFIT WORKFORCE: A Study of Financial Hardship



**ALICE: Asset Limited, Income  
Constrained, Employed**



September 2024 | [UnitedForALICE.org](https://UnitedForALICE.org) | [IndependentSector.org](https://IndependentSector.org)





# ABOUT UNITED FOR ALICE AND INDEPENDENT SECTOR

*ALICE in the Nonprofit Workforce* is brought to you by [Independent Sector](#) in partnership with [United For ALICE](#), a driver of innovative research and action around financial hardship for **ALICE**® (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) households. ALICE households earn above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), but not enough to afford basics in the communities where they live. Despite struggling to make ends meet and being unable to save, these families are often not eligible for public assistance. Combined, ALICE households and those in poverty represented 42% of all households across the U.S. in 2022.

With a commitment to [racial and economic justice](#), United For ALICE and Independent Sector share the ALICE research with foundations, government, corporations, and other nonprofits to inform policy and promote positive change for ALICE households.

The grassroots ALICE movement, developed by United Way of Northern New Jersey, has spread to 33 states and the District of Columbia. Learn more about the ALICE movement [here](#).

To create the ALICE Reports, our [team of researchers](#) works with [Research Advisory Committees](#) composed of experts from our partner states. This work is guided by our rigorous [methodology](#), which is updated biennially with experts from across our Research Advisory Committees.

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Independent Sector is the only national membership organization that brings together a diverse community of changemakers at nonprofits, foundations, and corporate giving programs to ensure all people in the U.S. thrive.



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# LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

Dear Colleagues:

Nonprofit workers are fundamental to the American economy and our society. Our workforce delivers vital services to individuals and communities nationwide, providing resources where they are most needed. We play critical roles in health care, education, social services, advocacy, religious institutions, and other areas of civil society. In countless ways, nonprofit organizations work to make it possible for all people in this nation to thrive. But until now, we did not know enough about whether the 13+ million people doing this work are thriving themselves.

This Report offers a groundbreaking look at nonprofit workers who are **Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed** — or **ALICE**<sup>®</sup>. These workers live in households with incomes below the ALICE Threshold of Financial Survival, which is the income their household needs to afford basic costs. In total, 22% of the nonprofit workforce falls below the ALICE Threshold (17% who are ALICE, and 5% who fall below the Federal Poverty Level).

Though every worker and every family should be able to meet their basic needs, it is particularly troubling that nonprofit workers — many of whom are dedicated to caring for others — need help as well. In the social assistance subsector, 32% of workers earn below the ALICE Threshold. That means nearly one in three nonprofit workers who provide social services are struggling financially themselves.

The nonprofit workforce, like others, faces the ongoing effects of systemic racism, gender bias, and other inequalities. Thirty-five percent of Black nonprofit workers and 34% of Hispanic nonprofit workers earn below the ALICE Threshold. Women have significantly lower incomes than men, despite making up nearly two-thirds of the nonprofit workforce. Additionally, nonprofit workers with disabilities are more likely to fall below the ALICE Threshold than those without disabilities.

This Report is a starting point. Our next step is to publish a fact sheet highlighting the benefits of raising nonprofit workers to the ALICE Threshold. We'll later release an interactive data dashboard on nonprofit workers below the Threshold — helping organizations, activists, and policymakers to tell more nuanced stories at the national and state levels. We will use this data — and provide updated information over time — to advocate for the policies and resources nonprofit organizations and their workers need to support their critical work.

Our excitement in delivering this new data lies not just in the numbers, but in what they enable us to achieve. The aim is to get at the data so we can get at the changes — be they policy reforms or shifts in nonprofits' operations — that lead to a flourishing workforce. The ALICE data gives us a pivotal starting point that we have never had before, guiding us toward meaningful change.



**Akilah Watkins, Ph.D.**  
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# INTRODUCING ALICE

[United For ALICE](#) is a driver of innovative research and action around financial hardship. This national research organization first named the **ALICE** (**A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed) population, then developed data and tools to accurately define their hardship, and now shares that data and narrative to inspire policy and action that can improve life for ALICE and for all – strengthening neighborhoods, communities, businesses, and state and local economies.

**History:** The ALICE measures were first created to answer the pressing need for a more accurate picture of financial hardship. The Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is an outdated instrument, not adjusted for family size or age of family members, nor for the wide variation in cost of living based on geographic location (except for Alaska and Hawai'i). Yet because the FPL is still the basis for definitions of poverty and eligibility for many types of public assistance, millions of households – of all ages and races/ethnicities – are struggling but hidden in plain sight. Founded and fueled by United Way of Northern New Jersey, United For ALICE has become a nationally recognized leader in research on financial hardship. Since United For ALICE's first study of hardship in Morris County, New Jersey in 2009, more than 600 United Ways, corporations, nonprofits, and foundations have joined what has become a grassroots movement across the U.S.

**The ALICE measures provide the most accurate estimates of financial hardship.** A solid methodology, regularly reviewed by state Research Advisory Committees (made up of more than 300 external professionals), defines ALICE households as those that earn above the FPL, but not enough to afford the minimum costs of household necessities (housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology, plus taxes). Rigorous data collection on costs and analysis of incomes for every household type in every county in the U.S. reveal that hardship is far greater than reported by the FPL. Of the 129 million households in the U.S. in 2022, 13% were below the FPL, but another 29% – more than twice as many – were ALICE. Combined, 54 million households – 42% – were below the ALICE Threshold, struggling to make ends meet.

**ALICE households live in every state and every county across the U.S.** They include workers and their families from all demographic groups, across categories of age, sex, gender identity, race/ethnicity, disability status, veteran status,

household composition, country of origin, and language. Some are families with children; some are older adults; some are working-age single adults. United For ALICE produces national and state-level reports, fact sheets, subject briefs, and interactive tools to document the struggles of this population.

**ALICE is a narrative that drives empathy and action.** We all know ALICE – those who work in jobs that keep our economy functioning smoothly every day, including child care providers, food service workers, cashiers, personal care aides, and delivery drivers. Many of us have been ALICE. Many of our grown children are ALICE, struggling to afford rent in areas near their jobs, and viewing the purchase of a first home as unattainable. Many older adults are ALICE, unable to afford basics on Social Security benefits alone. There isn't one ALICE story – there are 54 million, and ALICE is a critical part of every community.

**Now, ALICE is a movement.** The grassroots ALICE movement, developed by United Way of Northern New Jersey, has now spread to 33 states and the District of Columbia. United For ALICE partners convene and collaborate to raise ALICE's voice, inform policy, and ensure that all households have enough income for necessities, as well as ultimately being able to save and invest in their future. When ALICE households can afford the basics, there is a significant positive impact on local communities and the wider economy. The strength of the U.S. economy is inextricably tied to the financial stability of all residents. Learn more about the ALICE movement [here](#).

**How to get the most out of this Report:** This Report shines a light on the 22% of nonprofit workers who devote themselves to helping people build a brighter future, but who are themselves struggling financially. The next few pages will help you become familiar with the ALICE methodology and key terms and learn how we measure hardship in the nonprofit workforce. Then dig into our findings of differences in rates of hardship among nonprofit workers by a range of variables, including demographic groups and industry sectors. If you work for a nonprofit organization, you may also want to find yourself in the data, so that you can tell the ALICE story from a personal perspective. With a strong understanding of this research, you can prioritize which issues are most important to your organization or industry sector, then find others with whom you can partner to bring about change.

# ALICE RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY

This ALICE Report on the nonprofit workforce provides the most comprehensive look at nonprofit employees facing financial hardship. Through a 2022 point-in-time data snapshot, the Report considers the nonprofit worker both as an individual employee and as part of the economic unit of the household in which they live.

The two pillars of this analysis are household costs and income. The **ALICE Household Survival Budget** calculates the cost of household essentials of housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology, plus taxes. These budgets are calculated for all counties, as counties are the smallest jurisdiction for which there is reliable data across the country.

Costs range across the country; for example, the ALICE Household Survival Budget table on page 2 gives costs for a two-person household (a single adult and a school-age child) in three counties that illustrate the cost of basics below the national average (El Paso County, TX, \$40,032), near the average (Franklin County, OH, which includes Columbus, \$46,932), and above the average (Alexandria City, VA,

\$71,436). In all three locations, the Household Survival Budget was considerably higher than the [Federal Poverty Level](#) (FPL) for this household configuration (\$18,310).









To determine a nonprofit worker's financial status, the Household Survival Budget for that worker's county is compared to the worker's total household income as reported in the [U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey's](#) (ACS) [Public Use Microdata Sample](#) (PUMS).

The **ALICE Threshold** is how we refer to the collective of Household Survival Budgets for all households in each county. Nonprofit workers with household income **below the ALICE Threshold** include those who live in households in **poverty** – with total household income at or below the FPL – and those living in **ALICE households** – with income above the FPL but below the cost of basics in their communities.

Learn more about our methodology at [UnitedForALICE.org/Methodology](https://UnitedForALICE.org/Methodology), and see additional budgets at [UnitedForALICE.org](https://UnitedForALICE.org).

## KEY TERMS

- **ALICE: Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed** – people in households that earn above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) but cannot afford the basic cost of living in their county. Despite struggling to make ends meet, ALICE households often do not qualify for public assistance.
- **ALICE Household Survival Budget:** Reflects the minimum costs of household necessities (housing, child care, food, transportation, health care, and technology), plus taxes, adjusted for different counties and household types
- **ALICE Threshold of Financial Survival:** Derived from the Household Survival Budget, the minimum average income that a household needs to afford basic costs, calculated for all U.S. counties
- **Below ALICE Threshold:** Includes people in poverty-level and ALICE households combined
- **Categories of Employment:** Four options from which [American Community Survey](#) respondents choose to describe their area of employment: Nonprofit, Self-Employed, Government, or For-Profit
- **Industry Sectors:** Economic units (e.g., health care, educational services, social assistance) that have similar production processes and are classified in the same industry using the [North American Industry Classification System](#) (NAICS)
- **Industry Subsectors:** Breakdown of industries by common technological similarities of their production using the NAICS

	ALICE Household Survival Budget	Average Monthly Costs, One Adult and One School-Age Child, 2022		
		El Paso County, TX	Franklin County, OH	Alexandria City, VA
	Budget Item Description and Sources			
 <b>Housing</b>	Fair Market Rent (40 <sup>th</sup> percentile) for an efficiency, one-bedroom, or two-bedroom apartment (based on family size), adjusted in metro areas using the American Community Survey (ACS) <b>Sources:</b> ACS metro housing costs; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	\$702	\$974	\$2,158
 <b>Child Care</b>	Cost for registered Family Child Care Homes for infants (0–2 years), preschool-age (3–4), and school-age children (5–12) <b>Source:</b> State agency responsible for child care reporting (e.g., Child Care Aware of Washington, Maryland Family Network)	\$173	\$328	\$484
 <b>Food</b>	USDA Thrifty Food Plan by age, with county variation from Feeding America <b>Sources:</b> Feeding America; U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)	\$701	\$788	\$999
 <b>Transportation</b>	Operating costs for a car (average daily miles by age, cost per mile, license, fees, and insurance), or public transportation where viable <b>Sources:</b> AAA, Federal Highway Administration, The Zebra (car); Consumer Expenditure Survey (CEX) (public transportation)	\$543	\$527	\$332
 <b>Health Care</b>	Health insurance premiums based on employer-sponsored plans plus out-of-pocket costs for households with \$40,000–\$69,999 annual income by age, weighted with the poor-health multiplier. For the ALICE 65+ Budget, cost of Medicare Parts A and B, out-of-pocket costs, plus average out-of-pocket spending for the top five chronic diseases as reported by CMS. <b>Sources:</b> Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS); CEX (health); Medical Expenditure Panel Survey (MEPS)	\$515	\$392	\$455
 <b>Technology</b>	Basic broadband internet at home and a smartphone plan with unlimited data for each adult in a household <b>Source:</b> Consumer Reports	\$86	\$86	\$86
 <b>Miscellaneous</b>	Cost overruns estimated at 10% of the budget, excluding taxes, to cover one-time unanticipated costs within the other categories	\$272	\$310	\$451
 <b>Taxes</b>	Federal, state, and local taxes owed on the amount of income to cover the Survival Budget, as well as tax credits, including the Child Tax Credit (CTC) and the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit (CDCTC) <b>Sources:</b> Internal Revenue Service; Tax Foundation	\$344	\$506	\$988
<b>Monthly Total</b>		\$3,336	\$3,911	\$5,953
<b>Annual Total</b>		\$40,032	\$46,932	\$71,436
<b>Hourly Wage Needed to Support the Household Survival Budget*</b>		<b>\$20.02</b>	<b>\$23.47</b>	<b>\$35.72</b>

\* Full-time hourly wage represents the wage needed at 40 hours per week to support the annual total.



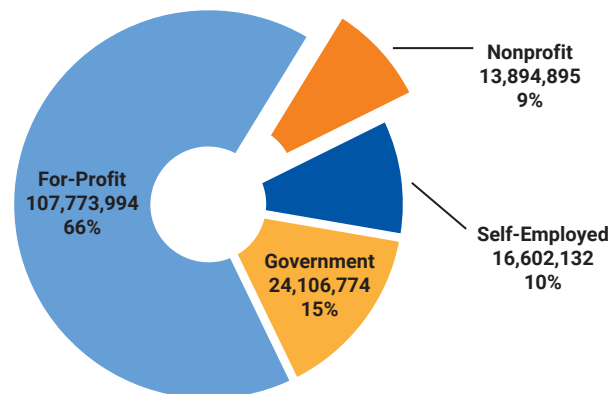
# Defining the Nonprofit Workforce

For this Report, the nonprofit workforce is defined by the American Community Survey’s question on [description of employment](#): “Which one of the following best describes this person’s employment last week or the most recent employment in the past 5 years?” Respondents then have a choice of categories; using the [Public Use Microdata Sample](#), workers are classified within the “Class of Worker” variable into four categories of employment:

- **Nonprofit:** Worked in a private not-for-profit, tax-exempt, or charitable organization (13.9 million employees, 9% of workers)
- **Self-Employed:** Worked in incorporated/not incorporated organizations; includes unpaid workers in for-profit family farms or businesses (16.6 million employees, 10% of workers)
- **Government:** Were government employees, including local, state, and federal government workers and active-duty U.S. Armed Forces or Commissioned Corps (24.1 million employees, 15% of workers)
- **For-Profit:** Worked in a private for-profit organization (107.8 million employees, 66% of workers)

**Identifying nonprofit respondents:** For this analysis based on PUMS data, workers are only able to select one category of employment, one industry sector, and one occupation. In today’s economy, many adults work at more than one job. We are not able to report on whether nonprofit workers are supplementing their income with a second job or gig work. Nor are we able to report on those who work for a nonprofit organization in addition to their primary job, such as a web developer who provides services part time to a nonprofit but also works full time in another category.

**Data Notes:** The income data used in this Report rely on ACS estimates. The ACS is based on a representative sample of housing units and people; therefore, these estimates have a [degree of uncertainty](#) (in addition to uncertainty around self-identification of sectors). Some data points are geographic averages, others are one- or five-year averages depending on population size. Percentages are rounded to whole numbers, sometimes resulting in percentages totaling 99% or 101%. ALICE analysis is based on households, which includes families and roommates but does not include people who are unhoused or living in group quarters (such as college residence halls, skilled nursing facilities, and military barracks).



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022—[Class of Worker](#)

**Nonprofit organizations included in this analysis:** This analysis includes paid workers at all nonprofits, regardless of size. Other analyses often exclude the smallest nonprofits and [religious organizations](#). [BLS data](#) shows that there are almost 300,000 nonprofit organizations in the U.S. with paid employees (there are as many as [1.8 million total registered nonprofits](#) in the U.S., but many have no paid employees). Due to limited data, most nonprofit research is restricted to studying nonprofit organizations that file Form 990 with the IRS. Only nonprofits with gross receipts of [\\$50,000 or more are required to file](#); approximately 65,000 nonprofit organizations file each year.

Including workers at small nonprofits in this analysis is important since they represent a sizeable workforce. Based on a comparison of [BLS](#) and PUMS data, we estimate that approximately one million nonprofit workers in the U.S. are employed by organizations with income of less than \$50,000 and between 1 and 50 employees. (There are many more nonprofit organizations that are run by volunteers and have no paid employees; volunteers are not included in this analysis.)

## Largest Nonprofit Industry Sectors, United States

Sector	Description	Examples
<b>Health Care</b>	General Medical and Surgical Hospitals, Psychiatric and Substance Abuse Hospitals, Offices of Dentists, Offices of Physicians, Residential Care Facilities, Nursing Care Facilities, Home Health Care Services, and Outpatient Care Centers	CommonSpirit Health; Ascension Health; VNS Choice
<b>Educational Services</b>	Colleges and Universities, Elementary and Secondary Schools, Instructional and Educational Support Services, and Business, Technical, and Trade Schools	Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Educational Testing Service; Milton Hershey School
<b>Social Assistance</b>	Individual and Family Services, Child Day Care Services, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, and Community Food, Housing, and Emergency Services	American National Red Cross; Feeding America; The Lighthouse for The Blind; Toward Independent Living and Learning
<b>Religious Organizations</b>	Churches, Religious Temples, and Mosques	Life.Church (Evangelical Covenant, Edmond, OK); Temple Emanu-El (NY); Islamic Center of America (MI)
<b>Civic, Social, Advocacy and Grantmaking Organizations</b>	Health Awareness and Research Fundraising, Human Rights and Environmental, Alumni Associations, Sororities and Fraternities, Parent-Teacher Associations, Scouting, and Veterans Organizations	Nature Conservancy; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Howard Hughes Medical Institute
<b>Management of Companies and Enterprises</b>	Oversee and administer other establishments	Enterprise Community Partners; The Inspirational Network
<b>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</b>	Performing Arts Companies, Sports Teams, Museums and Historical Sites, Nature Parks, Zoos and Botanical Gardens	YMCA of the USA; National Collegiate Athletic Association; Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts; Philadelphia Museum of Art
<b>Finance and Insurance</b>	Credit Unions	Navy Federal Credit Union; State Employees' Credit Union; PenFed Credit Union; Boeing Employees Credit Union
<b>Retail Trade</b>	Thrift Stores	Goodwill Industries International; Habitat for Humanity ReStore

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, [North American Industry Classification System \(NAICS\)](#), 2017

# OVERVIEW: ALICE IN THE NONPROFIT WORKFORCE

In 2022, there were approximately 13.9 million U.S. employees working in a private not-for-profit, tax-exempt, or charitable organization, accounting for 9% of the nation's workforce, according to United For ALICE analysis of American Community Survey data. These workers serve their communities, providing social assistance, health care, education, religious, and other supportive services. Many are filling key gaps in the social safety net, helping both people living in poverty and those who are **ALICE** (**A**sset **L**imited, **I**ncome **C**onstrained, **E**mployed) – earning above the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), and too much to qualify for traditional public assistance, but not enough to afford the basics in their communities.

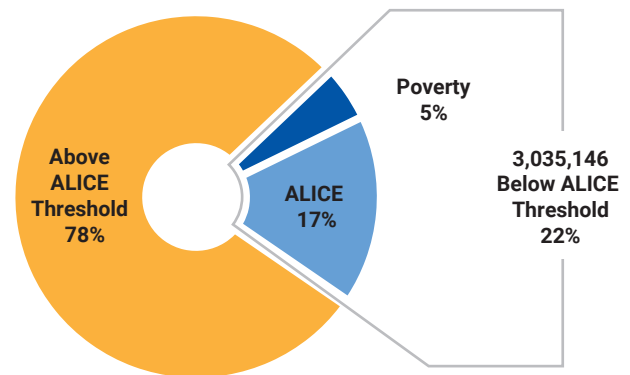
Yet between the high cost of living and wages that often fail to keep up with it, many nonprofit workers are themselves struggling financially, like many of the people they serve.

**This Report aims to more clearly define the nonprofit workforce and to highlight the share of these workers who are living in financially insecure households.** The number of nonprofit workers in financial hardship is underreported by official measures. In 2022, according to the FPL, there were 647,047 nonprofit workers (5% of the nonprofit workforce) living in households in poverty. Yet [United For ALICE](#) data shows that another 17% (2.4 million workers) – more than three times as many – were ALICE.

**In total, out of the 13.9 million nonprofit workers in the U.S., 3 million – 22% – lived in households with income below the ALICE Threshold of Financial Survival in 2022.** These included both workers living in households in poverty and those living in ALICE households.

This Report presents breakouts of the nonprofit workforce by demographic factors including age, sex, race/ethnicity, disability status, and country of origin and language, plus additional variables related to management level, educational

Total Workers in U.S. Nonprofit Category = 13,894,895

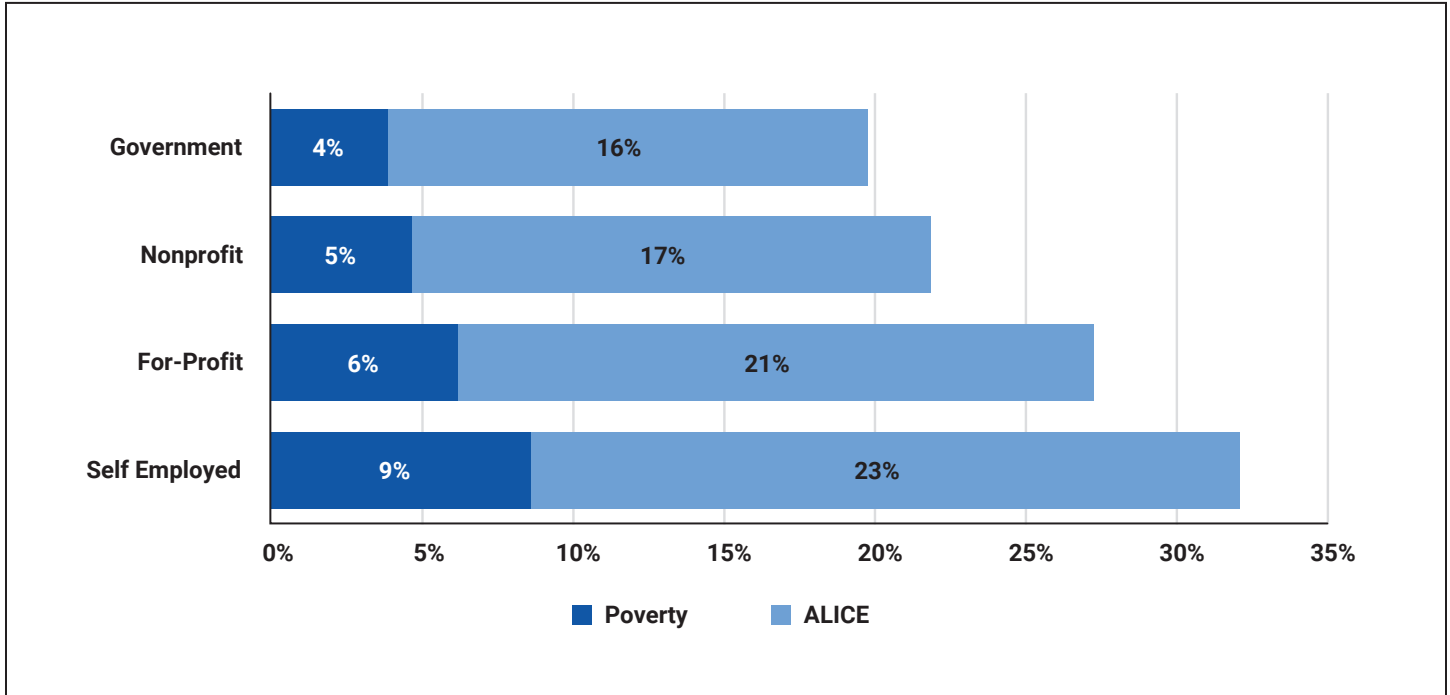


Sources: ALICE Household Survival Budget, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

attainment, work status, and household characteristics. It also provides data on differences by industry sector and occupation and information about these workers' assets, insurance, and use of public assistance.

Workers in all four categories of employment face financial hardship. The lowest rates of financial hardship are in government organizations, where 20% of workers are below the ALICE Threshold, and the highest rates are among workers who are self-employed (32%). Overall, the rate of financial hardship is lower in nonprofit organizations (22%) than in for-profit organizations (27%) (Figure 1). Estimates for these broad categories conceal large variations within each group, as the analysis by industry sector later in this Report reveals. The somewhat surprising finding of a lower rate of financial hardship in nonprofit organizations than in for-profit organizations is driven by the [low median wage in two of the largest for-profit industry sectors](#): retail trade, and leisure and hospitality.

**Figure 1. Worker Household Financial Status by Category of Employment, United States, 2022**

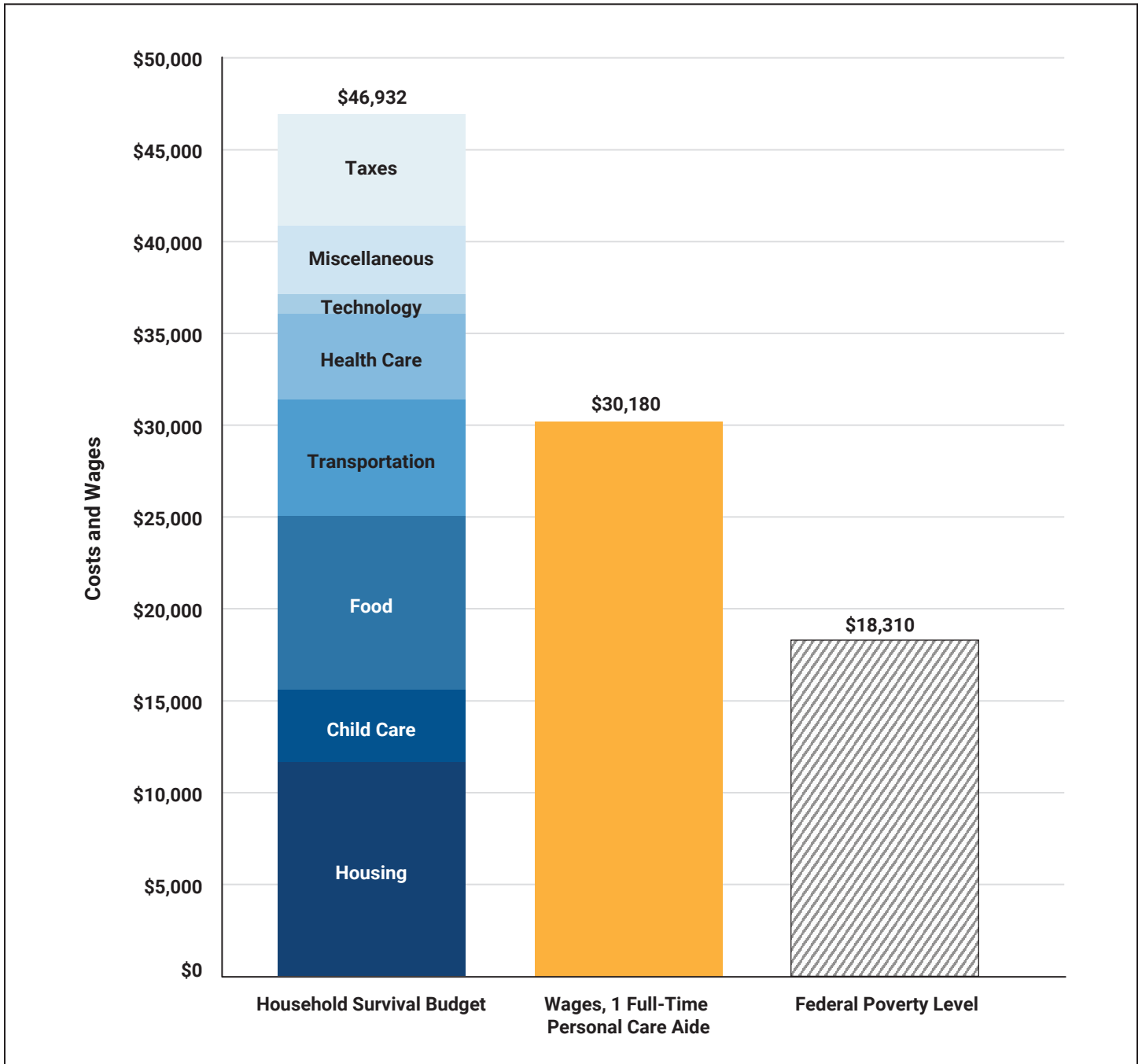


Sources: ALICE Household Survival Budget, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

The reason that there are so many households below the ALICE Threshold is the mismatch between earnings and the cost of basics. The average **ALICE Household Survival Budget** – which uses the minimum costs of household necessities – is well above the FPL. For example, for a family of one adult and one school-age child in 2022, the annual cost of basics was \$46,932 in Franklin County, Ohio (which includes Columbus and is roughly the median Household Survival Budget in the country), well above the FPL of \$18,310. These costs are also more than full-time earnings for many nonprofit jobs, including several of the most common

nonprofit occupations: child care workers and preschool teachers; nursing assistants; and social and human service assistants. For example, in 2022, a personal care aide in the U.S. had a median hourly wage of \$14.51 (\$30,180 annually for full-time work). Even working full time, year-round, this worker fell short of the Household Survival Budget for a family of one adult and one school-age child by almost \$17,000 (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Comparison of Costs and Wages, One Adult and One School-Age Child, Franklin County, OH, 2022**



Note: The Household Survival Budget for Franklin County, Ohio, is approximately the median budget for the U.S.; it is paired with the median U.S. wage for Personal Care Aide. Full-time income is calculated based on 40 hours per week. Visit [UnitedForALICE.org](https://www.unitedforalice.org) and select an ALICE Partner State to see the Household Survival Budget for all counties and household compositions.

Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2022; Bureau of Labor Statistics—Occupational Employment Statistics, 2022

# Key Findings

**Financial hardship in the nonprofit workforce:** Of the 13.9 million nonprofit workers in the U.S., 3 million — 22% — had income below the ALICE Threshold of Financial Survival in 2022.

**Demographics:** In 2022, there were workers below the ALICE Threshold across all demographic groups in the nonprofit workforce. However, certain groups were disproportionately represented due to persistent systemic inequality by [race](#), [age](#), [gender](#), [disability](#), and [geographic barriers](#), which limits many workers' access to resources and opportunities for financial stability:

- **Age:** Financial hardship varied by age, from 17% of nonprofit workers age 45 to 64 living in households with income below the ALICE Threshold, to 37% for those under age 25.
- **Sex:** The nonprofit workforce differs from the overall U.S. workforce in that the majority of workers are female (65%), their full-time median wage is higher, and their rate of financial hardship is lower than for female employees in the total workforce. Within the nonprofit workforce, in 2022, the rate of household-level financial hardship was the same for male and female nonprofit employees, at 22%. Additional analysis of male and female nonprofit employees reveals differences by management level and household dynamics.
- **Race/ethnicity:** Rates of financial hardship varied substantially across groups, from 17% for White nonprofit workers to 34% for Hispanic and 35% for Black nonprofit workers.
- **Disability status:** In 2022, 7% of nonprofit workers reported having a cognitive, hearing, vision, or ambulatory disability, or one that makes self-care or independent living difficult; 33% of these workers were below the ALICE Threshold.
- **Country of origin:** Fourteen percent of nonprofit workers were born outside the U.S., and they were more likely to face financial hardship: 29% of these workers were below the ALICE Threshold in 2022 (compared to 21% of those born in the U.S.).

**Additional worker characteristics:** There were additional characteristics that had an impact on financial hardship, including management level, educational attainment, full- or part-time work status, high-speed internet access, the number of workers in the household, and the presence of children in the household.

**Where ALICE works matters:** Among nonprofit workers, there were substantial differences in financial hardship by industry sector. The largest industry sector in 2022 was health care, with 4.9 million nonprofit employees; most industry sectors had fewer than 400,000 nonprofit employees. Among the nine largest industry sectors, rates of financial hardship for nonprofit employees varied from 16% in both the health care and the finance and insurance industry sectors to 42% in retail trade.

There were also substantial differences in rates of financial hardship within each of the largest industry sectors. For example, in the health care sector in 2022, rates of financial hardship ranged from 13% in General Medical and Surgical Hospitals to one-third or more in Residential Care Facilities (33%) and Home Health Care Services (35%).

**Inflation and nonprofit workers:** For many nonprofit workers, wages have not kept pace with rising costs, which erodes financial stability. In 2010, rehabilitation counselors working in nonprofits earned a median wage of \$15.55 per hour, just enough to cover the annual Household Survival Budget for one adult and one school-age child. By 2022, these workers' median wage had increased by 24% to \$19.23 per hour, but the annual Household Survival Budget also grew, by 46%, leaving these essential workers \$6,942 short of being able to afford basics.

**Assets, insurance, and public assistance:** Assets, financial protections like insurance, and public assistance programs cushion households in emergencies, but many households below the ALICE Threshold lack access to them. Fewer than half (48%) of nonprofit workers below the Threshold owned their own home in 2022, and only 4% reported any investment income. While most nonprofit employees below the Threshold had health insurance coverage, 25% were covered by public insurance, and 10% had no coverage at all. At the same time, nonprofit workers below the Threshold often earned too much to qualify for public assistance programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and disability benefits through SSI.

# CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NONPROFIT WORKFORCE

The population of nonprofit workers includes wide demographic variation by age, sex, race/ethnicity, disability status, and country of origin. For these workers, rates of financial hardship differed by many of these variables in 2022 (Figure 3), but particularly by age, race/ethnicity, and disability status. These disparities are a result of persistent systemic inequality by [race](#), [age](#), [gender](#), [disability](#), and [geographic barriers](#), which limits many workers' access to resources and opportunities for financial stability.

Differences in financial hardship were also noted by worker characteristics including management level, education, work status (full or part time), household composition, and work-related resources. A common misperception is that most nonprofit workers are part-time employees. Only 22% of nonprofit employees worked fewer than 35 hours per week in 2022, slightly above the rate for all categories of employment (20%).

In addition, there were significant wage gaps for individual workers by sex and race/ethnicity, but they did not always mirror household-level financial hardship for those workers.

## Demographics

- **Age:** Almost half (45%) of the nonprofit workforce was age 25 to 44 in 2022, followed by 38% age 45 to 64. These two groups, in their prime working years, had the lowest rates of hardship: 23% of workers age 25 to 44 lived in households with income below the ALICE Threshold, as did 17% of workers age 45 to 64. The youngest nonprofit workers, under age 25, had the highest rate of financial hardship, at 37%. It is also notable that 9% of the nonprofit workforce was 65 years or older, with 22% below the ALICE Threshold.
- **Sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation:** The majority of nonprofit workers were female (65%, versus 47% in the total workforce). Female nonprofit employees fared better than female employees overall, with a higher median wage for full-time work and a lower rate of financial hardship. In addition, the rate of household-level financial hardship was the same for male and female nonprofit workers, at

22%. These findings differ from what one might expect based on the widely studied [wage gap](#) by sex in the overall workforce. Additional details on wage differences for women and men in the nonprofit workforce are presented later in this section.

Data on gender identity and sexual orientation in the nonprofit workforce is limited. The American Community Survey only asks whether a respondent is male or female and only asks about sexual orientation related to married couples (narrowly defined as same-sex or different-sex marriages). Therefore, this analysis is not possible with the current dataset. However, a 2024 Glassdoor analysis of [LGBTQ+ workers](#) in the U.S. suggests that these workers account for 23% of the nonprofit workforce and are paid 5% less than non-LGBTQ+ workers.



- **Race/ethnicity:** The nonprofit workforce includes workers of all races and ethnicities, with varying rates of workforce representation and financial hardship:
  - Black nonprofit workers had a slightly higher representation in the nonprofit workforce (12%) than in the total workforce (11%) and had the highest rate of financial hardship (35%).
  - Hispanic nonprofit workers had a lower representation in the nonprofit workforce (13%) than in the total workforce (19%) and had the second-highest rate of financial hardship (34%).

- White nonprofit workers had a higher representation in the nonprofit workforce (63%) than in the total workforce (59%) and had the lowest rate of financial hardship (17%).
- Workers who were Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, of Some Other Race, of Two or More Races, and Asian were represented in the nonprofit workforce at rates roughly in proportion to their participation in the overall workforce. Rates of financial hardship were slightly higher for Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander workers (30%), American Indian/Alaska Native workers (33%), workers of Two or More Races (24%), and workers of Some Other Race (28%), and slightly lower for Asian workers (20%).
- Nonprofit workers of Some Other Race or Two or More Races were more likely to work part time (less than 35 hours per week), at 24% and 23%, respectively, while Asian workers were the least likely to do so, at 19%.
- Earnings gaps by race/ethnicity among nonprofit workers were in line with those reported for the overall labor force as recently as the [fourth quarter of 2023](#). Among full-time workers in all employment categories, median weekly earnings were \$884 for Hispanic, \$967 for Black, and \$1,157 for White workers.
- **Disability status:** Seven percent of nonprofit workers reported having a cognitive, hearing, vision, or ambulatory

disability, or one that makes self-care or independent living difficult, the same rate as in the overall workforce. Nonprofit workers with disabilities were more likely to face financial hardship, with 33% earning below the ALICE Threshold in 2022. Two-thirds of nonprofit workers with a disability worked full time (67%). Rates of financial hardship differed dramatically based on hours worked: 25% of full-time workers with disabilities were below the Threshold, compared to 49% of their counterparts working part time.

- **Country of origin and language:** In 2022, 14% of nonprofit workers were people born outside the U.S., and they were more likely to face financial hardship: 29% were below the ALICE Threshold in 2022, compared to 21% of those born in the U.S. A small group of nonprofit workers (2%) lived in [limited-English-speaking households](#) (in which all members 14 years old and over have at least some difficulty with English), and half of these workers were below the Threshold. All of this fits with broader findings on income and country of origin: Usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers [born outside the U.S.](#) were 87% of the earnings of their U.S.-born counterparts (\$945 vs. \$1,087). In addition, a [2023 nationally representative survey](#) found that immigrants in the U.S. reported experiencing discrimination, hostility, difficulty making ends meet, being overqualified for their jobs, lack of insurance, and uncertainty about shifting immigration laws.





**Figure 3. Demographics of Nonprofit Employees, United States, 2022**

	Total	Below ALICE Threshold	<span style="color: #0056b3;">■</span> Poverty <span style="color: #4f81bd;">■</span> ALICE <span style="color: #ffc000;">■</span> Above ALICE Threshold		
<b>ALL NONPROFIT EMPLOYEES</b>	13,894,895	3,035,146	5%	17%	78%
<b>AGE</b>					
Under 25 Years	1,207,820	452,235	13%	24%	63%
25 to 44 Years	6,246,565	1,442,685	5%	18%	77%
45 to 64 Years	5,257,830	881,760	3%	14%	83%
65 Years and Over	1,182,680	258,466	2%	19%	78%
<b>SEX</b>					
Male	4,815,330	1,055,364	5%	17%	78%
Female	9,079,565	1,979,782	5%	17%	78%
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY</b>					
American Indian/ Alaska Native	51,826	16,991	6%	27%	67%
Asian	927,384	188,387	4%	16%	80%
Black	1,658,184	581,661	9%	26%	65%
Hispanic	1,857,231	639,094	7%	28%	66%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	18,152	5,483	5%	26%	70%
Some Other Race	78,774	21,912	8%	20%	72%
Two or More Races	520,673	127,221	5%	19%	76%
White	8,782,671	1,454,397	3%	13%	83%
<b>DISABILITY</b>					
With a Disability	1,019,571	335,412	8%	25%	67%
Without a Disability	12,875,324	2,699,734	4%	17%	79%
<b>COUNTRY OF ORIGIN AND LANGUAGE</b>					
Born Outside U.S.	1,975,275	574,626	6%	23%	71%
Limited-English-Speaking Household	13,620,841	2,897,938	12%	38%	50%

Sources: ALICE Household Survival Budget, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022; Bureau of Labor Statistics—Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, 2022

# Additional Worker Characteristics

There were also important differences among nonprofit workers by worker characteristics, including management level, education, work status (full or part time), household composition, and work-related resources (Figure 4).

**Management level:** Wages and financial stability increase with professional position, and rates of financial hardship fall. In 2022, only 148,721 nonprofit workers were chief executives (1.1% of the nonprofit workforce); not surprisingly, only 3% of them lived in a household with income below the ALICE Threshold. The rest of the nonprofit workforce was divided between those who were managers (1.8 million workers, with 12% below the Threshold) and those who were not managers (almost 12 million workers, with a rate of financial hardship of 24%).

**Educational attainment:** Twenty-nine percent of nonprofit workers had only a high school diploma; most had an associate or bachelor's degree (40%), and another 27% had a master's, doctoral, or professional degree. Financial hardship decreases with educational attainment: 46% of nonprofit workers with less than a high school diploma were below the ALICE Threshold in 2022, while the rate dropped to 10% for workers with a master's, doctoral, or professional degree.

**Full- or part-time employment:** While most nonprofit workers were full-time employees (78%), a substantial 22% worked part time. In 2022, part-time nonprofit workers were significantly more likely to be below the ALICE Threshold than full-time workers (37% vs. 18%). Female workers were more likely to work part time (24%, compared to 17% of male workers). Yet the rate of hardship for female part-time workers was slightly lower than for their male counterparts: 36% of female part-time workers were below the ALICE Threshold, compared to 40% of male part-time workers.

**Household composition:** Several aspects of how nonprofit workers' households were structured had ramifications for household-level hardship:

- **Number of workers:** Having more than one worker in a family brings greater income potential. Most nonprofit workers in 2022 lived in a household with two or more

workers (69%), and of those households, 16% were below the ALICE Threshold. Workers in a household with only one worker were substantially more likely to face financial hardship, at 35%.

- **Working parents:** More than one-third (38%) of nonprofit workers lived in a household with children under age 18 in 2022, slightly lower than the rate for the overall workforce (40%). Not surprisingly, with the added expenses involved in raising children, the rate of financial hardship for these households was higher (30%) than for the overall nonprofit workforce. But there was significant variation by parents' marital status: The rate of financial hardship was only 22% for nonprofit workers who were married parents, compared to 53% for nonprofit workers who were the single-parent head of their household. In addition, the rate of hardship was higher for female single-parent employees than for male single-parent employees (57% vs. 39%).
- **Marital status:** Overall, for households with and without children, rates of financial hardship varied by marital status, reflecting an overlap with the two variables above. Almost two-thirds (62%) of nonprofit workers were married in 2022, and these workers had the lowest rate below the ALICE Threshold, at 16%. The highest rates were among those who were separated (40%), widowed (29%), divorced (28%), and never married (26%).

**Work-related resources:** Two key work-related resources influenced rates of household-level hardship for nonprofit workers:

- **Digital access:** With the integration of technology into almost all jobs, and the prevalence of online learning and telemedicine, access to computers and the internet has become a crucial household resource. While almost all nonprofit workers had access to basic internet at home in 2022 (98%), there remained a digital divide: 24% of nonprofit workers below the ALICE Threshold did not have high-speed internet access at home and 11% did not have either a laptop or a tablet, limiting their work options.
- **Remote work:** Since the pandemic, remote work has become more pervasive. For many workers, this has the added benefit of allowing parents to see their children on and off the school bus, and caregivers to check in with their loved ones more frequently. More than a tenth (14%) of nonprofit employees worked from home in 2022;

rates were similar between male and female workers and comparable to the rate in the for-profit sector (15%). The rate of financial hardship was lower for remote nonprofit workers (16%) than for those who travelled to work (23%).

This was in line with on-site service jobs typically being lower paid than [remote work jobs](#), across all categories of employment.

**Figure 4. Characteristics of Nonprofit Employees, United States, 2022**

	Total	Below ALICE Threshold	■ Poverty	■ ALICE	■ Above ALICE Threshold
<b>ALL NONPROFIT EMPLOYEES</b>	<b>13,894,895</b>	<b>3,035,146</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>78%</b>
<b>MANAGEMENT LEVEL</b>					
Chief Executive	148,721	4,747	<b>3%</b>		<b>97%</b>
Manager	1,835,572	217,406	<b>2%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>88%</b>
Non-Manager	11,910,602	2,812,993	<b>5%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>EDUCATION</b>					
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade or Lower	591,181	270,223	<b>11%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>54%</b>
High School Diploma/ GED	3,984,400	1,373,744	<b>8%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>66%</b>
Associate or Bachelor's Degree	5,507,766	997,989	<b>3%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>82%</b>
Master's, Doctoral, or Professional Degree	3,811,548	393,190	<b>2%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>90%</b>
<b>FULL- OR PART-TIME</b>					
Employed Full Time	10,905,596	1,930,692	<b>3%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>82%</b>
Employed Part Time	2,989,299	1,104,454	<b>11%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>63%</b>
<b>WORKERS IN HOUSEHOLD</b>					
One Worker	4,319,081	1,493,461	<b>9%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>65%</b>
Two or More Workers	9,575,814	1,541,685	<b>3%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>84%</b>
<b>WORKING PARENTS</b>					
Married-Couple Household with Children	3,909,098	859,830	<b>2%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>78%</b>
Single-Headed Household with Children	1,335,783	714,091	<b>14%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>DIGITAL ACCESS</b>					
No High-Speed Internet	2,150,258	714,022	<b>9%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>67%</b>
No Laptop or Tablet	757,567	325,913	<b>13%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>TRAVEL TO WORK OR REMOTE</b>					
Travel to Work	11,715,053	2,649,850	<b>5%</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>77%</b>
Work Remotely	1,932,261	301,560	<b>3%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>84%</b>

Sources: ALICE Household Survival Budget, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

**Intersectionality:** Inequities and barriers to financial stability are often magnified when combined. For example, examining management level by sex shows that male nonprofit workers were overrepresented at the chief executive level in 2022, accounting for 48% of chief executives but only 35% of both manager and non-manager positions. This was despite the fact that men make up only 35% of the total nonprofit workforce (Figure 5).

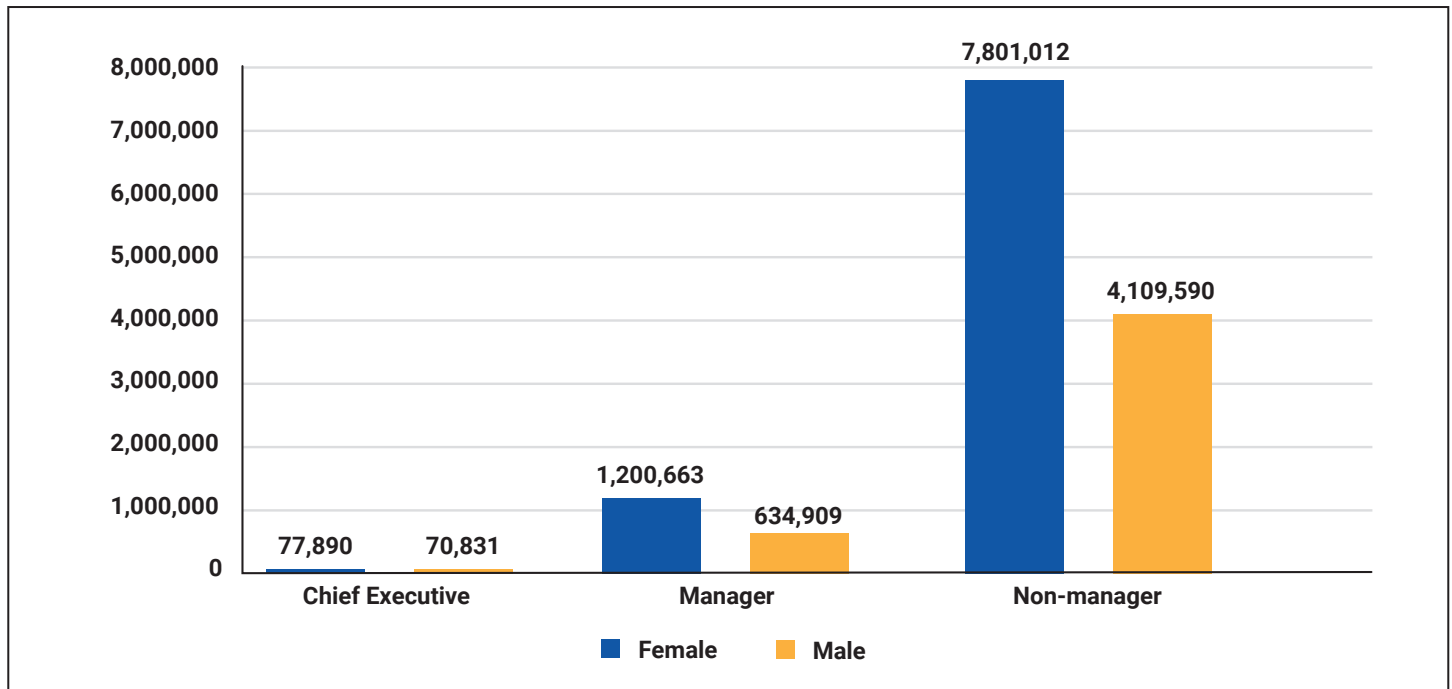
By race/ethnicity, most groups were represented in proportion to their overall population, with three exceptions:

- White workers accounted for 63% of the nonprofit workforce but were overrepresented in leadership

positions, occupying 74% of chief executive positions and 67% of manager positions. This group also accounted for 62% of non-manager positions.

- Asian nonprofit workers were underrepresented in leadership positions, making up 6.7% of the workforce but 3.6% of chief executive positions and 4.5% of manager positions. This group accounted for 7% of non-manager positions.
- Hispanic nonprofit workers were also underrepresented in leadership positions, accounting for 13% of the workforce but 7% of chief executive positions and 12% of manager positions. This group made up 14% of non-manager positions.

**Figure 5. Nonprofit Management Level by Sex, United States, 2022**



Sources: ALICE Household Survival Budget, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

Combining sex with race reveals additional gaps in the nonprofit sector:

- 17% of White male workers were below the ALICE Threshold, compared to 35% of Hispanic male workers and 34% of Hispanic female workers.
- 26% of White workers with disabilities were below the ALICE Threshold, compared to 48% of Black workers with disabilities.

Cross sections of variables also reveal opportunities to reduce hardship in specific areas of the nonprofit workforce. For example, the growth in remote work technology during the pandemic potentially provided new opportunities for workers with disabilities. However, nonprofit workers with a disability were only slightly more likely to have worked from home in 2022 than workers without disabilities (14% vs. 11%). Yet the rate of hardship was substantially lower for remote nonprofit workers with disabilities (24%) than for those who traveled to work (34%).

Cross sections of demographics and worker characteristics by industry sector will be available in the forthcoming ALICE Nonprofit Data Dashboard.

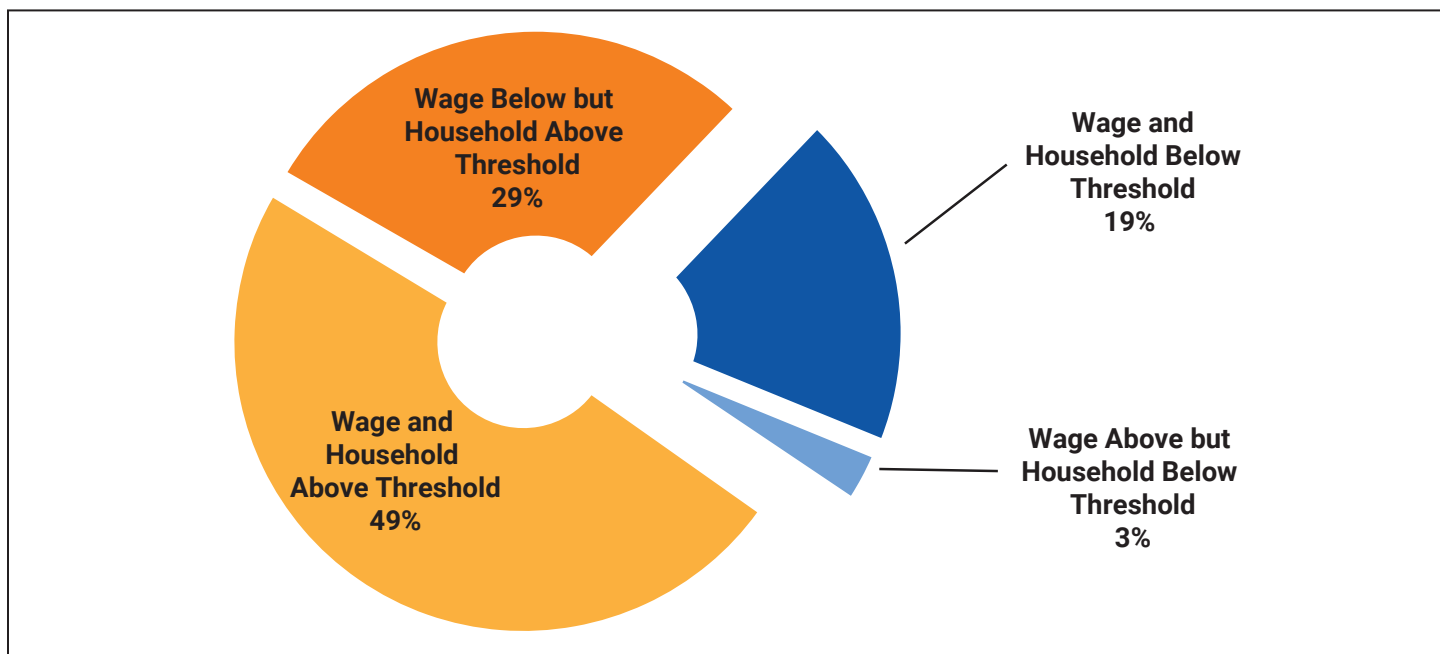
## Demographic Wage Gaps and Household Financial Hardship

Wages for nonprofit workers are often the driver for determining their household's financial status: When a worker's wages are above the Household Survival Budget, their household is usually above the ALICE Threshold. But there is a segment of the nonprofit workforce in which the composition of their household changes that equation.

This section compares ALICE wages and household ALICE status among nonprofit workers. These workers' full-time wages were determined to be above or below the ALICE Threshold by whether they could support the Household Survival Budget for one adult and one school-age child in 2022. The wages were then compared to workers' overall household ALICE status (Figure 6). Findings revealed that:

- **Total household income provided stability for low wage earners:** Nearly one-third (29%) of all nonprofit workers earned a wage that could not support the Household Survival Budget for one adult and one school-age child in 2022, yet their total household income was above the ALICE Threshold. (This is the same proportion as in the for-profit sector.)
- **Wages and household financial status aligned in most cases:** Almost half of nonprofit workers (49%) had a median wage that could support the Survival Budget, and their household was also above the ALICE Threshold. At the other extreme, 19% of nonprofit workers had a wage that could not support the Survival Budget, and their household was below the Threshold.
- **Even higher-wage earners can be ALICE:** A small share of workers (3%) earned a wage that could support the Survival Budget, but their household was below the ALICE Threshold, which suggests that their household was larger than one adult and one school-age child and included no other income earners.

Figure 6. Nonprofit Wages and Household Financial Status, United States, 2022



Sources: ALICE Household Survival Budget, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

**Wages and household financial status by sex:** Overall, women in the nonprofit workforce did better than their counterparts in the overall workforce in terms of earnings: The median wage for full-time female nonprofit workers in 2022 was \$55,000 per year, above the median for all female workers (\$48,000). Even for female workers below the ALICE Threshold, the rate of pay was higher than in the overall workforce (\$30,000 versus \$25,100 per year). With higher wages for females in the nonprofit workforce, it is not surprising that female nonprofit workers had a lower rate of financial hardship than female workers in the overall workforce (22% vs. 28%).

Yet wage gaps persist. In both the nonprofit workforce and the overall workforce, female workers generally earned less than their male counterparts. Nationally, among all full-time, year-round workers, [women earned 84 cents](#) for every dollar paid to men in 2022. In the nonprofit workforce, the median wage for female workers was \$55,000, well below the median wage for male workers (\$64,000) (Figure 7). This fits with [additional research](#) that shows there are proportionately more men in executive positions in nonprofit organizations, and

wages for women in executive positions are 8.9% lower when they do hold them. In addition, [men are more likely to lead large nonprofit organizations](#), with male-led organizations having twice the revenue of organizations led by female CEOs.

With wages for female nonprofit workers lower than for male workers, it is surprising that female nonprofit workers nonetheless had the same rate of household-level financial hardship as male workers, at 22%. Part of the explanation may be household dynamics: A higher proportion of female nonprofit workers earned a wage that could not support the Household Survival Budget in 2022 yet had a total household income above the ALICE Threshold (31%, compared to 25% of male workers). The additional income could have come from another adult in the household working or even receiving public assistance such as SSI or Social Security. In some cases, it could be that the female worker lived alone, and while her wage was not enough to support the Household Survival Budget for one adult and one school-age child, it was enough to support the Survival Budget for a single adult.

**Figure 7. Nonprofit Wages and Household Financial Status by Sex, United States, 2022**

	Median Annual Wage, All	Median Annual Wage, Workers Below ALICE Threshold	% of Households Below ALICE Threshold	% Wage Below Budget, Yet Household Above ALICE Threshold
Female	\$55,000	\$30,000	22%	31%
Male	\$64,000	\$35,000	22%	25%

*Note: The median wage reported is for workers who earn less than the average Household Survival Budget for one adult and one school-age child in the state where they live. The wage is estimated for full-time workers only (35 or more hours per week).*

*Sources: ALICE Household Survival Budget, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022*

**Wages and household financial status by race/ethnicity:**

There were greater wage gaps by race/ethnicity than by sex in the nonprofit workforce. The highest median wage for full-time nonprofit workers was \$73,000 per year, earned by Asian workers (Figure 8). (Note: The median wage for Asian workers conceals great [variation across and within at least 16 major groups](#).) The lowest was \$40,000 per year, earned by American Indian/Alaska Native workers. For full-time nonprofit workers below the Threshold, the highest median wage was \$35,000 per year, earned by Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander workers, and the lowest was \$28,000 per year, earned by

American Indian/Alaska Native workers. These median wages were very similar to those in the for-profit sector with notable exceptions. Among nonprofit workers, Hispanic, Black, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and workers of Two or More Races above the ALICE Threshold earned a median wage that was at least \$5,000 higher than in the for-profit sector.

By race/ethnicity, rates of household financial hardship generally tracked with wages; groups with higher median wages tended to have lower rates below the ALICE Threshold (Figure 8).

However, the role of a worker’s household varied greatly across groups: 22% of Asian nonprofit workers earned a wage that could not support the Household Survival Budget, yet their total household income was above the ALICE Threshold, while the same was true for 39% of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander employees. In almost every racial/ethnic group, female nonprofit workers were slightly more likely than male

nonprofit workers to earn a wage that could not support the Household Survival Budget but to live in a household that was above the Threshold. The only exception was that Black male nonprofit workers were more likely than Black female workers to gain financial stability from their household income rather than their wage alone.

**Figure 8. Nonprofit Wages and Household Financial Status by Race/Ethnicity, United States, 2022**

	Median Annual Wage, All	Median Annual Wage, Workers Below ALICE Threshold	% of Households Below ALICE Threshold	% Wage Below Budget, Yet Household Above ALICE Threshold
American Indian/Alaska Native	\$40,000	\$28,000	33%	32%
Asian	\$73,000	\$33,850	20%	22%
Black	\$47,950	\$30,000	35%	26%
Hispanic	\$48,000	\$30,650	34%	29%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	\$45,000	\$35,000	30%	39%
Some Other Race	\$55,000	\$31,000	28%	28%
Two or More Races	\$57,000	\$31,000	24%	29%
White	\$60,000	\$30,000	17%	30%

*Note: The median wage reported is for workers who earn less than the average Household Survival Budget for one adult and one school-age child in the state where they live. The wage is estimated for full-time workers only (35 or more hours per week).*

*Sources: ALICE Household Survival Budget, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022.*

# WHERE ALICE WORKS MATTERS

Employers and occupations matter for workers, and particularly for ALICE workers. It is well known that some jobs offer greater earning potential and pathways for advancement. But even within one occupation, key features of employment can [differ by employer](#), with a wide variation in wage levels, job security, predictability of schedules, opportunities for advancement, and benefits.

This section looks at nonprofit employment by size of the organization and by industry sector, and then with a breakdown by occupation.

## Employer Size

Comprehensive data on nonprofit workers by organization size is not available, but some high-level statistics are illuminating. In 2022, rates of hardship were lowest for nonprofit workers at the largest organizations (500 employees or more). There were almost 3 million nonprofit employees in the health care sector working in general medical and surgical hospitals, including specialty hospitals (except psychiatric and substance abuse), which on average have more than 500 employees, according to BLS. Only 13% of these employees were below the ALICE Threshold. The rate of financial hardship was nearly twice as high (22%) for all other nonprofit health care employees, who were more likely to work in small and medium-sized organizations.

Recognizing these differences is important because employers of different sizes have significantly different resources. Small businesses have been an important engine for growth in the U.S. economy — driving job creation,

innovation, and wealth. However, [small businesses are more vulnerable](#) to changes in demand, prices of materials, and transportation costs, as well as to cyberattacks and natural disasters. And because small businesses have fewer resources, they are more likely to [pay lower wages](#) overall and [offer fewer benefits](#) — meaning that they are more likely to employ ALICE workers.

## Workers by Industry Sector

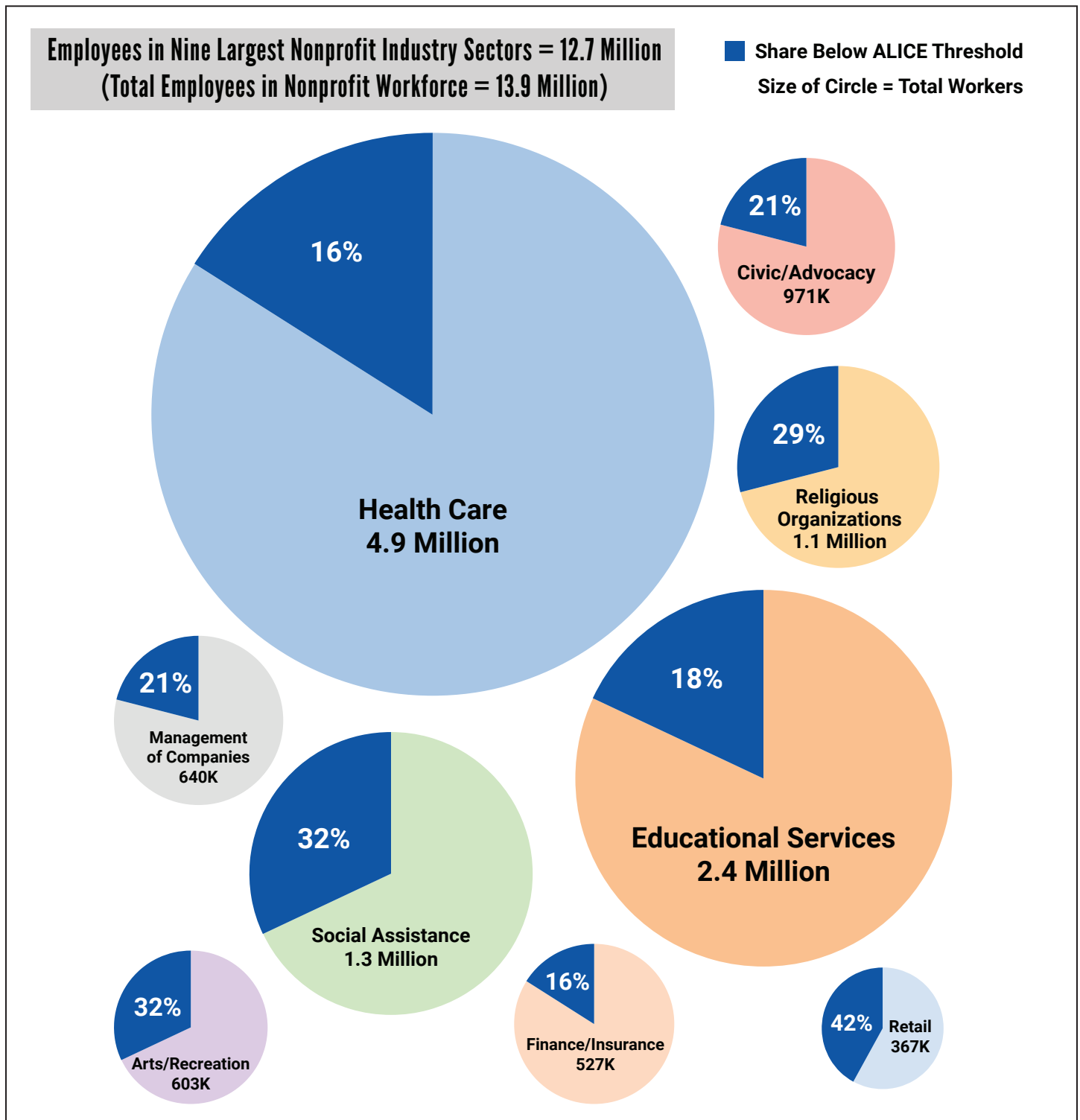
Rates of financial hardship among nonprofit workers varied considerably by industry sector, and even more within some sectors. In this section we highlight some of these differences.

**Between industry sectors:** In 2022, there were 12.7 million nonprofit workers across the nine largest industry sectors, with an additional 1.2 million employees working in another nine smaller sectors. The health care sector was substantially larger than other nonprofit sectors in 2022 with 4.9 million employees, followed by the educational services sector with 2.4 million, social assistance with 1.3 million, and religious organizations with 1.1 million employees. Most sectors, however, had fewer than 400,000 employees.

Among the nine largest industry sectors, rates of financial hardship were highest (above 30%) in social assistance (32%), arts, entertainment, and recreation (32%), and retail trade (42%). Rates of hardship were lowest (less than 20%) in health care (16%), finance and insurance (16%), and educational services (18%) (Figure 9).



**Figure 9. Nonprofit Workforce by Largest Industry Sectors, Total Employment, and Percentage Below ALICE Threshold, United States, 2022**



Note: The circles representing total workers show relative differences in workforce size but are not precisely to scale. Industry sector is derived from respondents' response to this question in the American Community Survey: "What kind of business or industry was this? Include the main activity, product, or service provided at the location where employed. (For example: elementary school, residential construction)." Respondents were then given four options: "Was this mainly manufacturing? wholesale trade? retail trade? Or other (agriculture, construction, service, government, etc.)?"

Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

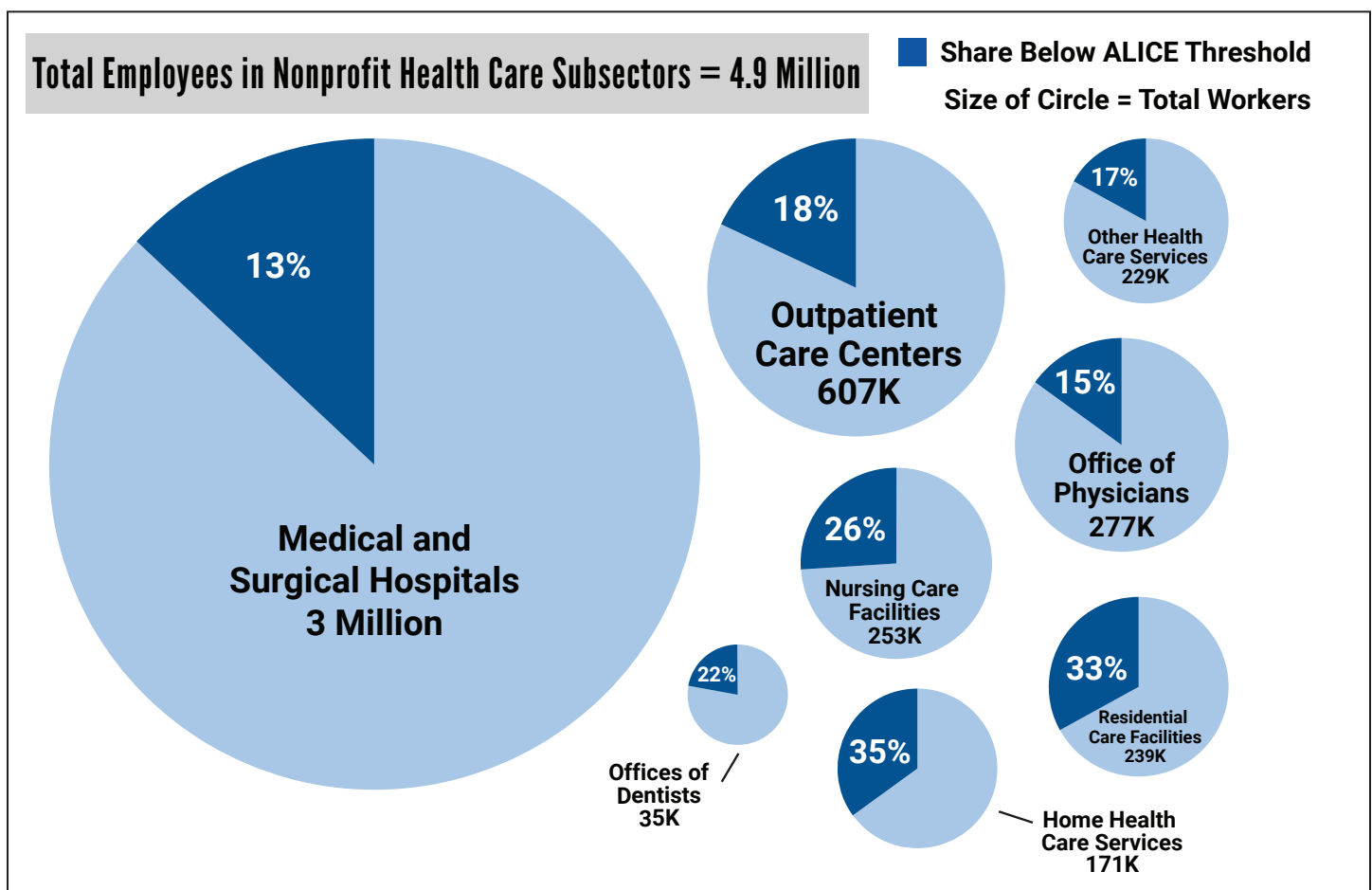
Within each of the largest industry sectors, there was great variation by size of organization, and there were substantial differences in rates of financial hardship for nonprofit employees:

- Health care industry sector:** The industry sector with the largest number of nonprofit employees was health care. Within this industry sector, rates of financial hardship differed by subsector. General Medical and Surgical Hospitals, which includes specialty hospitals, except psychiatric and substance abuse hospitals, was the largest subsector, with almost 3 million employees. The second largest was Outpatient Care Centers with 606,677 employees. The smallest was Offices of Chiropractors with fewer than 2,000 employees.

Rates of financial hardship varied among health care industry subsectors, from 13% in General Medical and Surgical Hospitals to more than one-third in Residential Care Facilities (33%), Offices of Chiropractors (34%), and Home Health Care Services (35%) (Figure 10, showing the 8 largest of the 12 health care industry subsectors).

It is also important to note that many health care establishments contract out services, such as cleaning and food service. Contractors' and vendors' employees are not included in these statistics.

**Figure 10. Nonprofit Health Care Industry Subsectors by Total Employees and Percentage Below ALICE Threshold, United States, 2022**



Note: The circles in this figure represent the eight largest of the twelve health care industry subsectors. The circles representing total workers show relative differences in workforce size but are not precisely to scale.

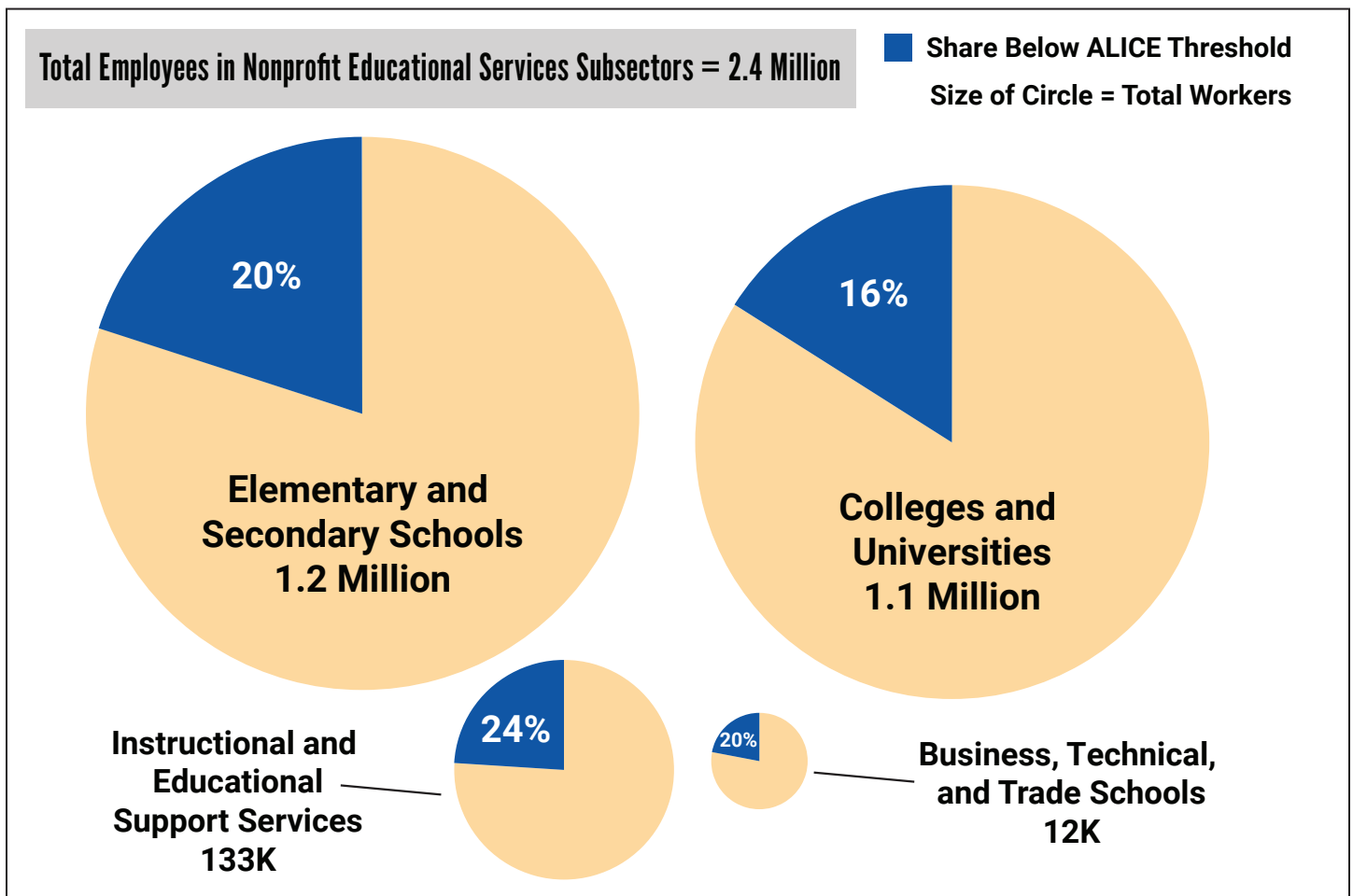
Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

- Educational services sector:** The second-largest nonprofit industry sector, educational services, also had a wide range of subsectors by number of total employees, with varying rates of financial hardship. The largest type of employer was Elementary and Secondary Schools, with 1.2 million employees in 2022. The second-largest type was Colleges and Universities, which includes professional schools and junior colleges, with almost 1.1 million employees. Schools that include Instructional and Educational Support Services employed over 133,000 employees in 2022, and Business, Technical, and Trade Schools employed over 12,000.

Rates of financial hardship varied from 16% at Colleges and Universities to 24% in Instructional and Educational Support Services (Figure 11).

It is also important to note that many educational services establishments contract out services, such as cleaning and food service. Contractors' and vendors' employees are not included in these statistics.

**Figure 11. Nonprofit Educational Services Subsectors by Total Employees and Percentage Below ALICE Threshold, United States, 2022**



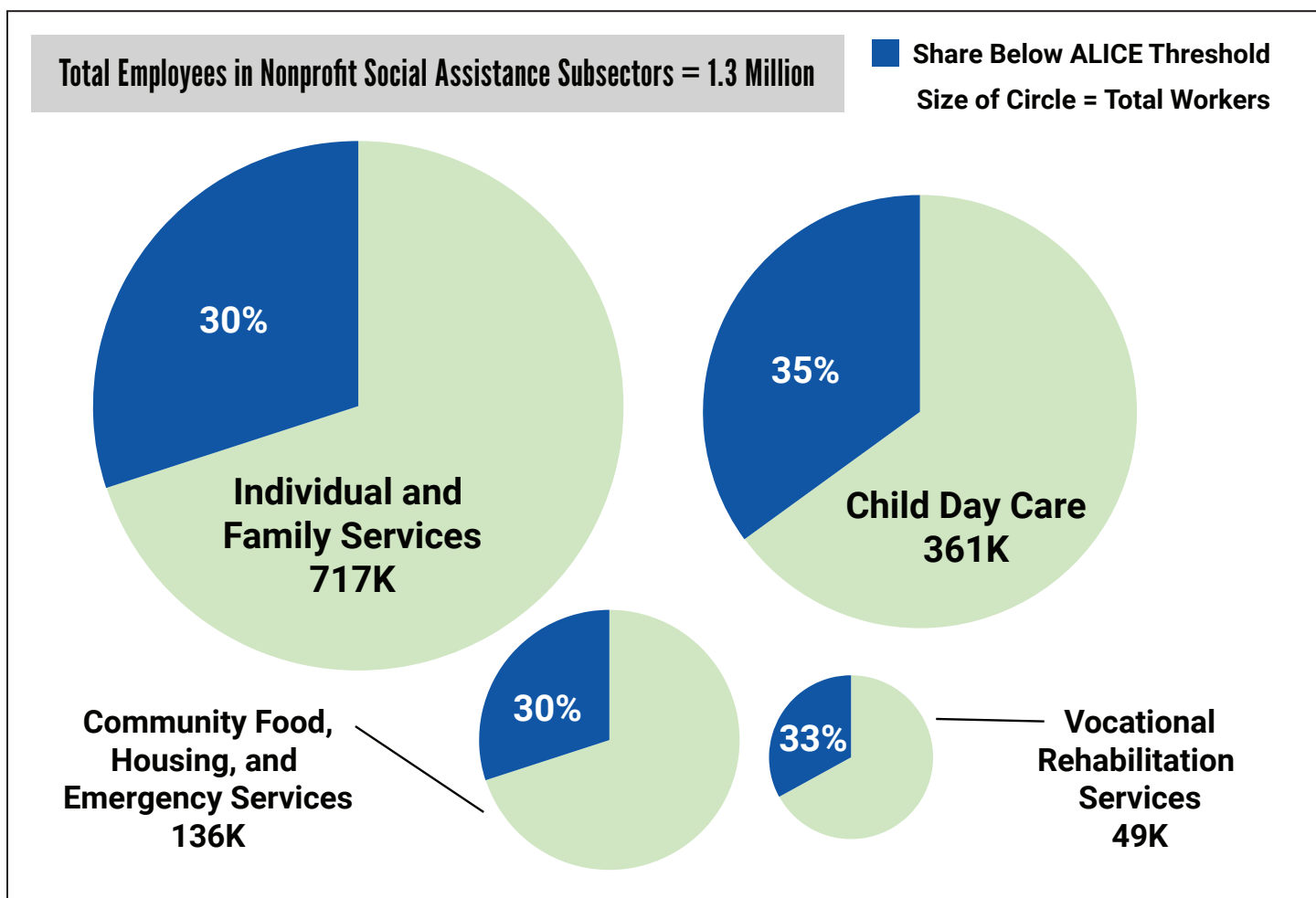
Note: The circles representing total workers show relative differences in workforce size but are not precisely to scale.

Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

- **Social assistance sector:** Rates of financial hardship were generally higher across the third-largest nonprofit sector, social assistance. The largest social assistance subsector was Individual and Family Services, with over 715,000 employees; 30% of these workers were below the ALICE Threshold in 2022. The second-largest subsector, Child Day Care Services, with over 360,000 employees, had the

highest rate of financial hardship in the social assistance sector, at 35%. Smaller subsectors included Community Food and Housing (which also includes Emergency and Other Relief Services), which had over 135,000 employees and a 30% rate of financial hardship, and Vocational Rehabilitation Services, with 49,000 employees and a 33% rate of financial hardship (Figure 12).

**Figure 12. Nonprofit Social Assistance Subsectors by Total Employees and Percentage Below ALICE Threshold, United States, 2022**



Note: The circles representing total workers show relative differences in workforce size but are not precisely to scale.

Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

# Most Common Nonprofit Occupations

This section shifts from industry sectors to occupations. The most common nonprofit occupations cut across many industries; many, such as secretaries and administrative assistants or janitors and building cleaners, also exist in for-profit and government organizations. In 2022, the top two nonprofit occupations were clergy and personal care aides, each with approximately 120,000 employees.

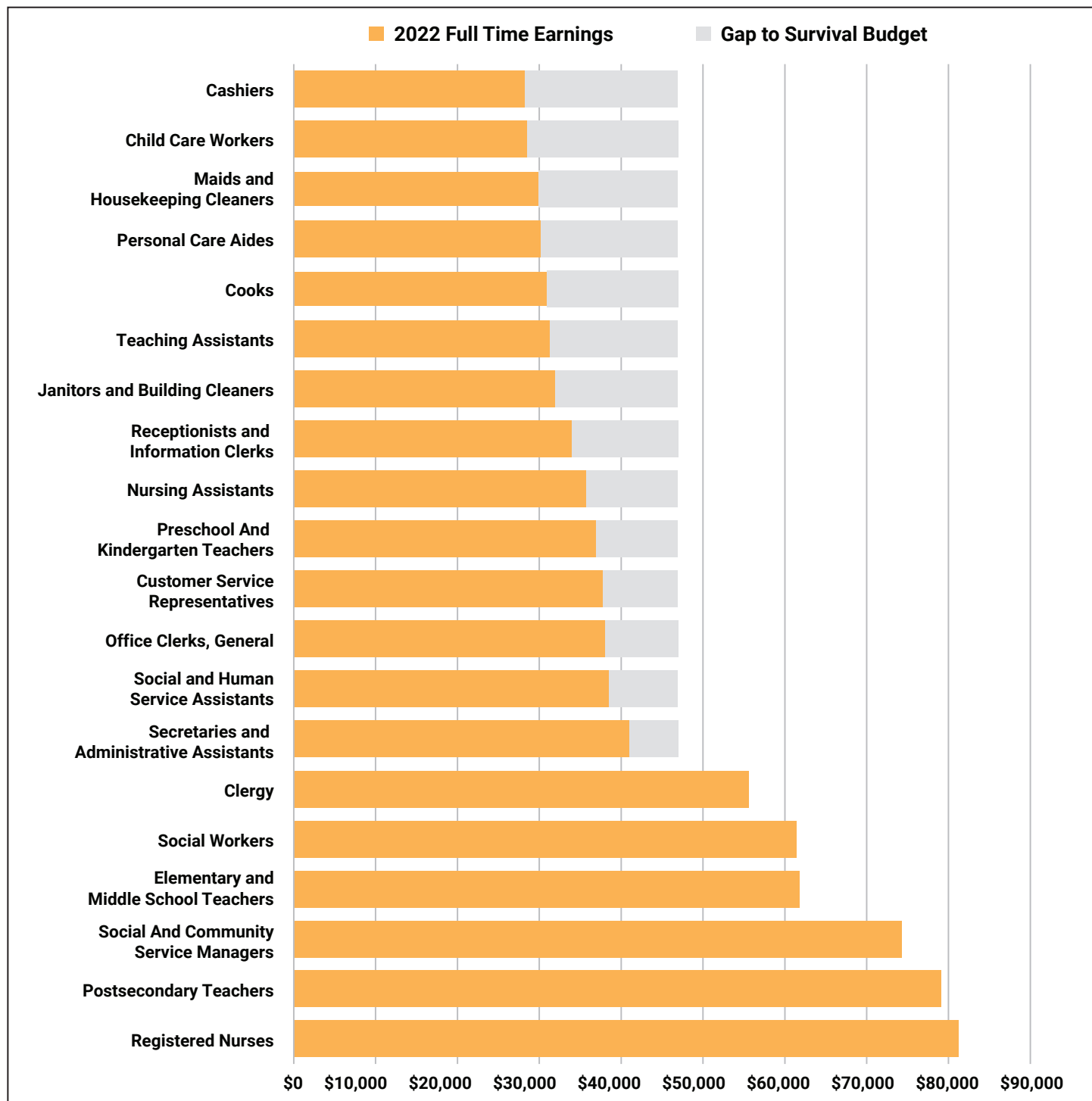
Many common nonprofit jobs pay wages that cannot support the ALICE Household Survival Budget. Of the 20 most common nonprofit jobs, most saw a substantial increase in median wage from 2019 to 2022; yet even working full time, year-round, workers in 14 of these jobs still fell short of earning enough to afford household basics for one adult and one school-age child (Figure 13). Nursing assistants as well as maids and housekeeping cleaners each experienced more than a 20% increase in wages from 2019 to 2022. **But because low-wage workers have been falling behind for years, recent increases have not been enough to allow them to keep up or catch up.**

For example, in 2010, rehabilitation counselors working in nonprofits in the U.S. earned a median wage of \$15.55 per hour (\$32,350 annually for full-time work), which was just enough to cover the annual Household Survival Budget for one adult and one school-age child (\$32,063). By 2022, the median wage for rehabilitation counselors had increased by 24% to \$19.23 per hour (\$39,990 annually, full-time). Yet the annual Household Survival Budget for one adult and one school-age child also grew, by 46%, to \$46,932. These essential workers were \$6,942 short of being able to afford household basics.

Many of the lowest-paid nonprofit employees are human services workers. [Research](#) has shown that these jobs are often undervalued relative to their required levels of skill and difficulty. Occupations in for-profit companies and in other industries with these same requirements receive higher pay, despite nonprofit human services workers sometimes having a higher level of skill and responsibility.



**Figure 13. Median Annual Wages of Common Nonprofit Occupations vs. ALICE Household Survival Budget, United States, 2022**



Note: Annual total ALICE Household Survival Budget is for one adult and one school-age child. Due to data limitations, median annual wage is from BLS for all categories of workers, not just the nonprofit workforce; the wages are similar for nonprofit and all workers based on our comparison of wages where data was available. Occupation is derived from respondents' response to these questions in the American Community Survey: "What was this person's main occupation? (For example: 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, entry-level plumber) and describe this person's most important activities or duties. (For example: instruct and evaluate students and create lesson plans, assemble and install pipe sections and review building plans for work details)."

Sources: ALICE Household Survival Budget, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022; Bureau of Labor Statistics—Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, 2022. For more information, visit [UnitedForALICE.org/Essentials-Index](https://www.unitedforalice.org/essentials-index).

# ASSETS, INSURANCE, AND PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Savings and assets provide a cushion for workers when there is an unexpected emergency — anything from a car repair to a medical crisis — as well as allowing families to save for the future: higher education, homeownership, or retirement.

Due to persistent gaps in access to assets, financial tools, and credit, lower-income households — and households of color in particular — are more likely to be [targeted by predatory lenders](#) and to [incur excessive fees or interest rates on borrowing](#). As a result, ALICE families often do not have the means to build assets, let alone catch up to families who already have assets (especially those who have been building them for generations).

In addition to assets such as homeownership and investment income, financial resources like health insurance and public assistance can help shield families from hardship. Yet ALICE families often encounter barriers to obtaining quality, affordable health insurance coverage, and they often earn too much to qualify for public assistance.

This section reviews access to various assets and forms of financial protection among nonprofit workers, and the relationship of that access to rates of financial hardship within this workforce.

## Homeownership

Housing is the cornerstone of financial stability, providing the foundation for better school and work performance, as well as improved access to health care and healthy food. Yet it is also the most expensive item in many household budgets; and for many ALICE workers, owning a home is out of reach.

There was wide variation in homeownership rates among nonprofit workers in 2022: Fewer than half (48%) of nonprofit workers below the ALICE Threshold owned their own home, while three-quarters (75%) of those above the Threshold were homeowners (Figure 14). Both rates were almost the same as for the overall workforce.

**Housing cost burden:** Renters below the ALICE Threshold were more likely to be housing cost burdened (paying more than 30% of income on housing): 66% were housing cost burdened, compared to only 16% of renters above the Threshold. Almost half of owners below the Threshold were housing cost burdened (45%), compared to 7% above the Threshold.

Housing cost burden not only impacts housing stability, but also has far-reaching health implications for both [renters](#) and [homeowners](#), including increased risk for depression, anxiety, chronic diseases, and premature mortality.

Gaps in homeownership were even wider by race and ethnicity. For data for your community, explore the [ALICE Economic Viability Dashboard](#).

**Fire, hazard, and flood insurance:** Insurance is an important component of protecting what is often a worker's biggest asset, and comprehensive homeowner's insurance is a requirement for most mortgages. Insurance is also an important mechanism to avoid the financial disaster that can result from natural disasters. But in 2022, 10% of nonprofit workers who were homeowners did not have fire, hazard, or flood insurance as part of their coverage. That rate was even higher for nonprofit homeowners below the ALICE Threshold, at 17%.

## Investment Income

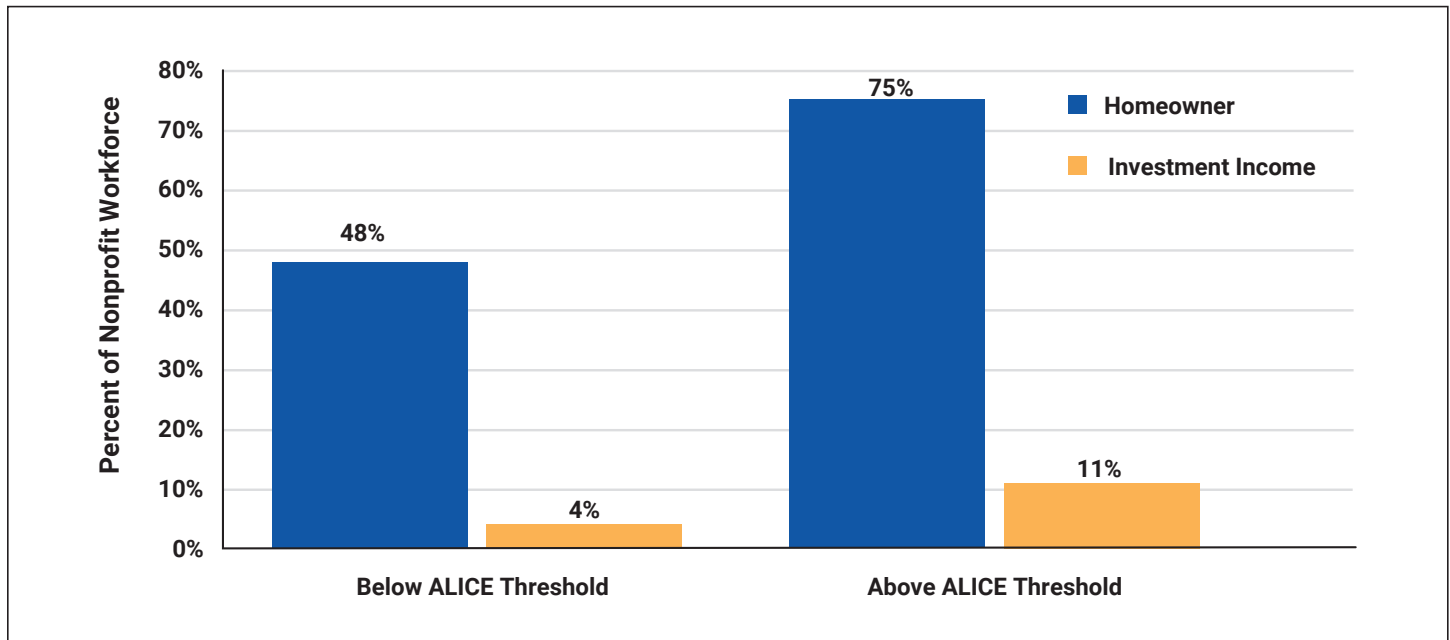
While homeownership rates among nonprofit workers largely matched rates for the overall population in 2022, rates of investment income for nonprofit workers were much lower. Only 4% of nonprofit workers below the ALICE Threshold reported any interest, dividend, or rental income in the prior 12 months, and the rate was only 11% for those above the Threshold (Figure 14).

Although data on rainy day funds is not available specifically for the nonprofit workforce, it provides another indicator of financial stability. One of the best-known questions in the

Federal Reserve Board’s [Survey of Household Economics and Decisionmaking](#) (SHED) asks whether respondents had set aside emergency savings or rainy day funds that would cover their expenses for three months in case of sickness, job loss, economic downturn, or other emergencies. The overall rate of

57% in October 2022 obscured large differences by income: Only 40% of respondents below the ALICE Threshold reported having rainy day funds, compared to 72% of those above the Threshold.

**Figure 14. Assets of Nonprofit Workers by Income Status, United States, 2022**



Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

## Health Insurance

In addition to personal savings and assets, employer and community benefits provide important supports for families that can add to financial stability. In particular, health insurance is critical to maintaining health and avoiding large medical bills that can tip ALICE households into financial crisis.

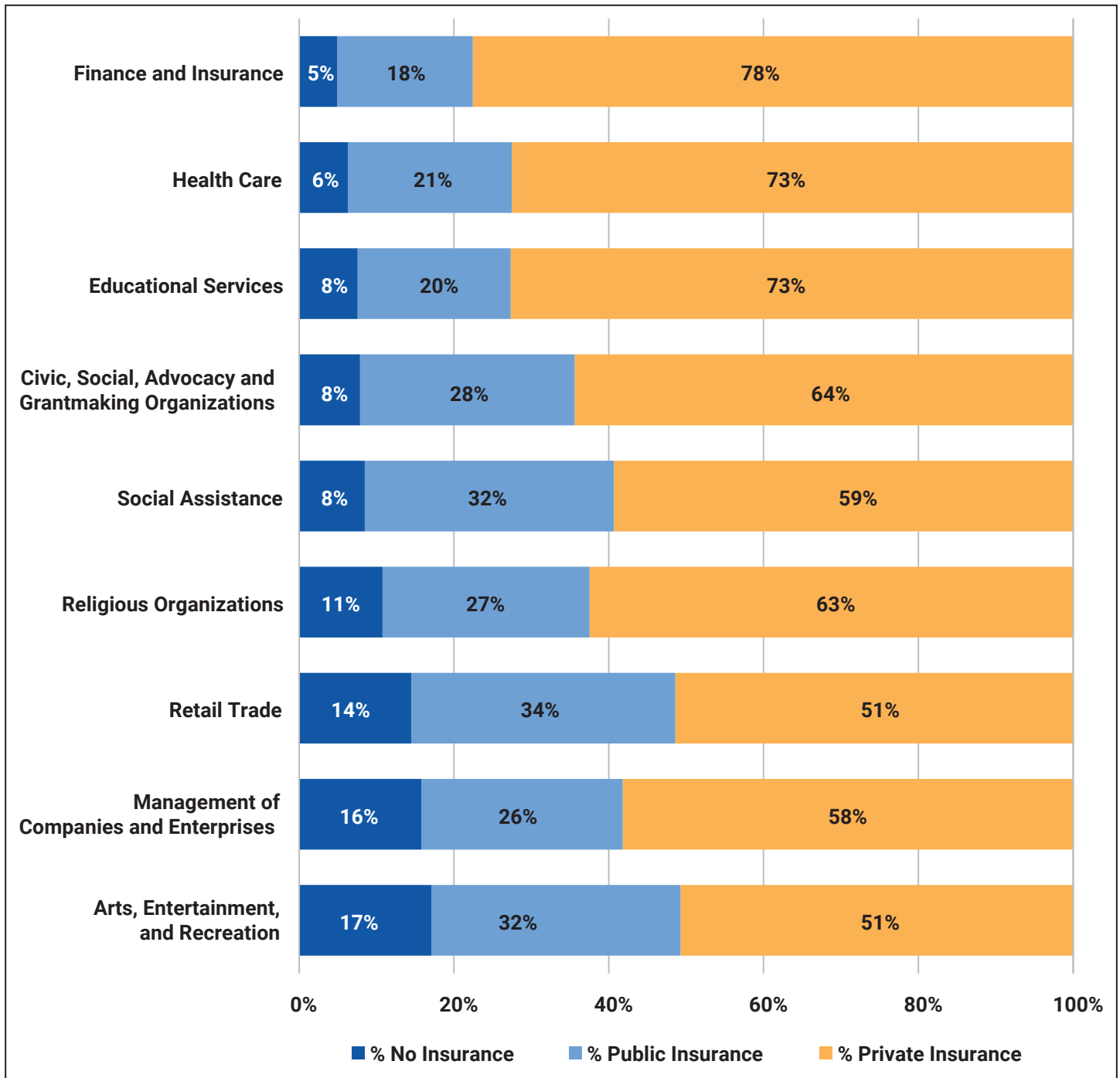
Most nonprofit workers had private health insurance in 2022 (85%), but there were significant differences by financial status and industry sector. Overall, of nonprofit workers below the ALICE Threshold, 65% had private health insurance, 25% received coverage through public health insurance, and 10% did not have health insurance. In contrast, of those above the Threshold, 91% had private insurance, 6% received coverage through public health insurance, and only 3% did not have health insurance.

There were substantial differences in health insurance status across the nine largest nonprofit industry sectors. Workers below the ALICE Threshold were:

- Most likely to receive **private health insurance** in the finance and insurance industry sector (78%) and least likely in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector (51%)
- Most likely to receive **public health insurance** in the retail trade industry sector (34%) and least likely in the finance and insurance sector (18%)
- Most likely to have **no health insurance** in the arts, entertainment, and recreation industry sector (17%) and least likely to be without coverage in the finance and insurance sector (5%) (Figure 15)



**Figure 15. Type of Health Insurance for Nonprofit Workers Below ALICE Threshold by Industry Sector, United States, 2022**



Sources: ALICE Threshold, 2022; American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), 2022

# Public Assistance

Without public assistance, ALICE households would face even greater hardship and many more would be in poverty, especially during economic downturns. Yet traditional public assistance does not reach people in all households that are struggling financially. Due to [income and asset limits](#), most ALICE households are not able to participate in public assistance programs; additional barriers such as strict [program requirements](#) and [stigma](#) prevent even some households in poverty from participating.

**Benefits cliffs:** For many workers, [eligibility for benefits](#) factors heavily into whether to accept a pay raise or apply for a higher-level job. For example, the income eligibility limit for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in many states is 130% of the FPL; for a family of two, that is \$23,803 per year, or \$11.90 per hour if working 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year. If a worker making that wage received a \$1 per hour pay raise, they would earn \$166 more per month, but they would lose [\\$535 in SNAP benefits](#). They would have to gain at least a \$3.25 per hour raise (to more than \$15 per hour) to be better off.

**Food assistance:** SNAP is one of the largest federal social welfare programs designed to help low-income families afford [the nutritious food essential to health and well-being](#). In part due to the income eligibility levels for the program ([ranging from 130% to 200% of the FPL](#)), public food assistance

does not reach all families that are struggling financially. In the nonprofit workforce, only 23% of nonprofit workers in households below the ALICE Threshold participated in SNAP in 2022. Among eligible families, estimated [SNAP participation rates were higher](#).

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI):** This federal program provides monthly cash assistance to people with disabilities, people age 65 and older, and those with low income and limited assets. Nationally, the average SSI monthly payment in 2022 was [\\$622](#). While there were 335,412 nonprofit workers with a disability below the ALICE Threshold in 2022, only 21,700 (6.5%) participated in SSI.

Low participation rates were due primarily to [strict eligibility criteria](#) and [disability determination rules](#), as well as to [administrative burdens](#) that make it difficult for people with disabilities to navigate a system meant to help them cover the costs of necessities. In 2022, workers earning more than \$1,350 a month (\$2,590 if the person was blind) were considered to have substantial gainful activity and could not be considered disabled. SSI also has [strict asset limits](#) for eligibility; resources must not exceed \$2,000 per person (or \$3,000 for couples). Though one car is excluded from asset limits, a second car, which is often needed for work, would disqualify a nonprofit employee with disabilities from receiving SSI benefits. Beneficiaries who go over the asset limits are suspended or even terminated from receiving benefits.



# WIDER CONSEQUENCES OF HARDSHIP AMONG NONPROFIT WORKERS

When nonprofit workers below the ALICE Threshold don't earn enough at their jobs to support their families, there are widespread consequences for them, for their employers, and for the broader community, as detailed in the [Consequences](#) section of the United For ALICE website. Some of the impacts of insufficient income for nonprofit workers are highlighted below:

- **Many workers have family caregiving responsibilities.** Yet without the means to pay for caregivers, they need to cover these duties themselves, which can compete with work hours.
- **Many workers require additional sources of income.** According to a [2022 Lending Tree survey](#), 44% of U.S. workers reported they had at least one side job, with 71% of these workers saying that if they were to lose their side gig, they weren't certain they would still be able to pay all their bills.
- **To find affordable housing, many workers have to live farther away from work.** This adds travel time and expense (particularly in areas where public transportation is scarce or unavailable), which can negatively impact job adherence and productivity.
- **Workers below the ALICE Threshold are more vulnerable to emergencies:**
  - » Workers below the ALICE Threshold are more likely to live in [housing units and communities that are at increased risk](#) for flooding, fire, poor air quality, and other hazards — primarily because those areas are more affordable. At the same time, they have [fewer resources to prepare for, withstand, or recover from damage to their homes](#).
  - » With little access to resources and credit, and few or no savings or assets, ALICE families feel an immediate economic impact when emergencies happen. If hourly paid workers can't work, they lose pay; without insurance, if there is damage to their home or car, there are immediate repair bills; and without a generator,

if the power goes out, they need money to replace spoiled food supplies.

- When a nonprofit worker below the ALICE Threshold is trying to recover personally, they are less available to help their employers and communities recover, whether it be by assisting with debris removal, making housing repairs, or rebuilding basic infrastructure.

**All of these factors contribute to [ongoing distress](#)** that detracts from productivity at work and stability in communities. This is especially an issue in the nonprofit category, where the pandemic introduced new challenges and radically altered workflows. Employees report [being exhausted and overworked](#), with low morale. And for nonprofit workers, whose productivity is measured in improving the lives of others, that stress and exhaustion can decrease the quality of life in entire communities.

**Finally, disparities in the workforce perpetuate wider disparities.** [Funding disparities exist](#) between small community-serving nonprofit organizations and large, national nonprofits, as well as between organizations that are White-led and those led by people of color. This dynamic perpetuates underinvestment in communities of color and the nonprofits that serve them, and it makes it harder for these organizations to recruit and keep strong talent.

While most disparities have their roots in history, current work practices and pay gaps perpetuate these inequalities. And while these are key issues for workers, there are both tangible and intangible benefits to maintaining a thriving nonprofit workforce. Far beyond just increased productivity, there is the value proposition of many nonprofits' missions, and their ability to have impact and bring about meaningful change that strengthens communities across the country.

# DATA FOR ACTION: A VISION FOR THE NONPROFIT WORKFORCE

The strength of the U.S. economy is inextricably tied to the financial stability of all residents. As the pandemic has shown, workers earning below the ALICE Threshold are critical to the smooth running of the economy, during times of crisis and beyond. And, in turn, the stability of these workers' families depends on their being able to fully participate in that economy.

Across the U.S., intervention is needed in all areas — business, government, nonprofit, and educational institutions — to set the groundwork for a more equitable future for ALICE and for all. Nonprofit organizations, armed with the ALICE research and data, are well positioned to lead the way to generate solutions to these problems. With many nonprofits working directly to help households move above the ALICE Threshold and create equity across communities, the ALICE research can further their efforts.

Many nonprofit organizations are also effective policy and advocacy experts. The measures of cost of living and financial hardship, demographic data, and wage and labor force statistics presented in this Report can help them work with all community stakeholders to identify and track financial hardship over time; provide language to raise awareness about the challenges households face when they earn below the ALICE Threshold; frame appropriate questions; and make data-driven decisions. The ALICE data can help policymakers and community organizations identify gaps in community resources. It can also guide employers in finding additional ways to support workers below the Threshold for increased productivity, both in times of economic growth and in periods of economic recovery.

The challenge to nonprofit organizations themselves is to acknowledge the levels of hardship within their own workforce — the fundamental irony of large numbers of employees assisting families living below the ALICE Threshold, but often















finding themselves in the same situation. Having nonprofit organizations be able to pay employees enough to live on will require broader investment in these organizations and in their mission. This investment will enable nonprofits to attract and retain talent — and better achieve their mission.

Our vision is a country where all families not only have sufficient income to afford the basics but can also save and invest in their future. Having enough income for safe and affordable housing, adequate food, reliable transportation, quality child and health care, and sufficient technology not only has the immediate impact of fulfilling essential needs, but also creates a ripple effect: When ALICE employees in nonprofit organizations can afford the basics, they can do their jobs better and contribute to broader change for all ALICE households. And when ALICE workers and families do better, there is a significant positive impact on local communities and the wider economy. This is a vision not only for ALICE, but for the nation as a whole.

# ALICE ONLINE

Visit [UnitedForALICE.org](https://UnitedForALICE.org) to explore interactive data and resources. Click the icons below to get started.

 <p><b>National Overview</b></p> <p>National ALICE data and a comparison of financial hardship across U.S. states</p>	 <p><b>ALICE Essentials Index</b></p> <p>Key data on the increase in the cost of household basics over time</p>	 <p><b>Economic Viability Dashboard</b></p> <p>Key data on the local economic conditions that matter most to ALICE households: Work, Housing, and Community Resources</p>
 <p><b>Legislative District Tool</b></p> <p>ALICE data by legislative district, including state upper and lower chambers and congressional districts</p>	 <p><b>Wage Tool</b></p> <p>Data showing how wage levels impact an ALICE household's ability to afford basic expenses</p>	 <p><b>ALICE Methodology</b></p> <p>Overview of the sources and calculations used in the ALICE research</p>
 <p><b>ALICE in Action</b></p> <p>Programs, practices, and policy changes implemented by partners across the United For ALICE network</p>	 <p><b>ALICE Movement</b></p> <p>Listings of ALICE partner states, local contacts, and state sponsors</p>	 <p><b>Research Advisory Committees</b></p> <p>Information about the members and role of these critical groups</p>
 <p><b>ALICE Voices</b></p> <p>Are you ALICE? Use the ALICE Voices tool to share your story</p>	 <p><b>ALICE Videos</b></p> <p>See videos that highlight the ALICE research and partner network</p>	 <p><b>Equity for ALICE</b></p> <p>Creating equity for ALICE by illustrating how structural racism and systemic barriers limit life outcomes, and working to remove those barriers so that all people can participate fully in all aspects of our social and economic systems</p>

## Additional Data for ALICE Partner States

Including interactive County Reports, Household Budgets, Maps, Demographics, Data Sheets, and more

To access, select a partner state at [UnitedForALICE.org](https://UnitedForALICE.org). Is your state not yet an ALICE partner? [Contact us](#) for more information on how to join the movement.

# NEXT STEPS

Capturing the true extent of financial hardship in the nonprofit workforce is critical for the appropriate allocation of funds for programs in areas such as education, health care, food access, housing, and employment. There is a lot more to be done to change the trajectory for households struggling to make ends meet. How can you help?

**Learn how to invest in your ALICE workforce** by participating in the [ALICE@Work](#) education and certification program

## Connect with stakeholders:

- Connect with members of the Nonprofit Leadership Committee as well as state [Research Advisory Committees](#) that support this work.
- Work with [Independent Sector](#) as they work with their partners to raise the importance of the health of the nonprofit workforce.
- Find your state and federal representatives and see ALICE household data by legislative district with our [ALICE Legislative District Tool](#).
- [Contact your local United Way](#) for support and volunteer opportunities.

## Turn the ALICE data into action in your state, county, or community:

- Armed with the data, advocate for policy change, apply for grant funding, allocate funding for programs and services targeted to ALICE households, etc.
- Learn more on our [ALICE in Action](#) web page about programs, practices, and policies to improve access to affordable housing, high-quality child care and education, healthy food, health care, workforce training, and more.
- Make the case for ALICE with interactive tools from the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta that are based on the Household Survival Budget, including the [Policy Rules Database](#) to model benefits cliffs, and the [Career Ladder Identifier and Financial Forecaster](#) to map changes in benefits along a career path.

## Invest in nonprofits in your community:

- Small nonprofits are more likely to be community-based, frequently in underinvested communities, and they often do not have the resources needed to pay their own staff wages above the ALICE Threshold. Investing in workers in small nonprofits can help them have a bigger impact in the communities experiencing the greatest disparities. Many of these workers are in the industry sectors with the highest rates of financial hardship: home health care (35%) residential care (33%), child care (35%), vocational rehabilitation services (33%), and religious organizations (29%).

## Be an ally and advocate for better data:

- Advocate for more accurate data collection by the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) for people who have been [historically undercounted](#), including (but not limited to) people with disabilities, people experiencing homelessness, people of color, people who identify as LGBTQ+, and people in low-income and hard-to-count geographic areas.
- Join nonprofit advocates in urging legislators to support regular [nonprofit workforce data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics](#). For-profit employers can benchmark their wages and employment trends against new data every quarter. Nonprofit employers currently receive this data once every five years or more.
- Support improvements in how the Census captures demographic data, including:
  - » Combining race and ethnicity. [Research](#) shows asking a single combined question around race and ethnicity will yield a more accurate portrait of how the U.S. population self-identifies, especially for people who self-identify as multiracial or multiethnic.
  - » Expanding questions about sex. To reflect the range of ways people identify, questions should be added about gender identity, sexual orientation, and sex at birth.

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<https://www.UnitedForALICE.org/National-Reports>

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