

Anonymous Agency Example of Key Message Usage

- 1. We are acutely aware that agencies have experienced pressures related to the recruitment and retention of staff as well as challenges of stretching a dollar due to inflation. Please describe these and any other trends, issues/challenges, insights, or unexpected outcomes that you have noted in the last 6 months. Please share any strategies you have employed to address these issues.**

Anonymous agency; As the Executive Director, I cannot stress how critical the issue of inflationary impacts coupled with the fact that our contracts and thereby our staff have not received an increase in salaries since 2015. I ask, when did you receive your last indexed salary increase? What advice would you give your 20-something or 30-something family member should they be in similar circumstances of no salary increases for seven years along with the current inflationary impacts?

We are at crisis point with regards to losing staff due to frozen salaries and cost of living increases. Historically, we have been able to attract and retain staff by offering career development opportunities such as training and committee work outside of their job description. This, alongside the ability to honour staff by providing workplace benefits, such as flexible work schedules, hybrid working arrangements, token gifts, celebrations and team development activities has, in the past, aided in our ability to retain staff. Although we continue to provide such opportunities (even through the pandemic), these strategies are no longer the competitive advantage they once were as staff are needing to make decisions regarding family finances over job/career satisfaction.

Over the past two decades, there has always been an ebb and flow of staff leaving our agency for government jobs. Over the past six months, we are experiencing a sharp rise in staff leaving or actively applying for government jobs after not having experienced this trend in a significant way for many years. The majority of staff leaving for government positions are leaving to work at Children’s Services, meaning they are not leaving the sector. It is not lost on our staff that some of the government’s entry-level jobs pay greater wages than even management-level positions. For a comparison with information pulled from the GOA job posting website (both GOA and agency prerequisites, including education and years of service, are nearly identical) below is a table that compares salaries for two GOA job postings to the full range of frontline staff positions at our agency

| | Child Intervention Practitioner – Entry Level HSW3 Provincial | TAP Practitioner Position | frontline positions, includes group care worker, youth worker, frontline caseworkers | % differential of GOA wages over agency wages |
|---------------|--|----------------------------------|---|--|
| Annual Salary | \$58,871 - \$75,876 | \$66,754 - \$86,292 | \$50,250 to \$58,035 | 17% - 49% |

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|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Expressed as hourly wage | \$35.03 - \$45.28/hr* | \$35.28 - \$45.60/hr* | \$21.20** to \$29.75/hr^ | 65%** - 52%^ |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|

*Based on 36.25 hours/week (as posted on GOA website)

** based on 44 hours/week = group home staff, includes wake and sleep shifts

^ based on 37.5 hours/week = community frontline staff with on-call responsibilities.

A brief analysis of the above table clearly demonstrates the massive divide in salaries for frontline and entry level positions between our agency salaries and the GOA for jobs with equitable pre-requisites. The difference is significant for the hourly rate of entry-level positions between GOA's Child Intervention Practitioner and agency group care positions, with a nearly \$14/hour difference in hourly wages. Comparing the top end of the salary ranges with more equitable jobs that involve daytime work and caseload responsibilities, the salary differential is even greater with GOA staff earning \$15.85 per hour more than agency staff. It is important to note that this comparison only looks at publicly posted salaries and does not include other compensation remunerations and costs including, benefits, pension, union, etc.

As further comparison, the salaries of our managers falls within the salary ranges of the above listed GOA entry-level positions. The range for our agency managers, each of whom has on-call responsibilities, supervises program supervisors and is responsible for operations and program facilities, is; **\$71,715 to \$87,000**. Only salaries for our agency directors do not fall within the range posted for the above listed GOA entry-level jobs.