

## GCHHS 2025 Employee Engagement Survey

### All Staff Results

In September 2025 GCHHS employees were asked to participate in the fourth annual Employee Engagement Survey. The first was completed in June 2022; the second in December 2023; and the third in October 2024.

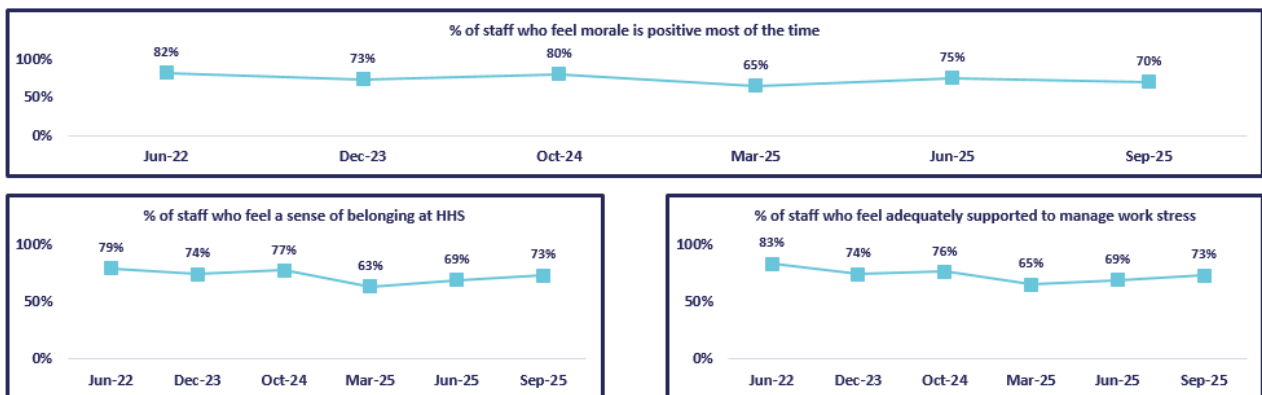
Also note that three measures on the survey are now calculated on a quarterly basis, so these annual results will also be compared with ongoing quarterly measures.

Approximately **87% of GCHHS employees participated in the survey**, which is up from 2024 when 80% and 2023 when 70% participated, and like 2022 with 88%. Directors did not respond to survey.

With four years of data, it is possible to observe some change over time. However, note that there was varying participation in the surveys, timing was different, staff composition is different, and there were outside factors that also may have influenced results. A few percentage points difference is not likely to be considered statistically significant. **Changes of approximately 10% are more likely to be statistically significant.**

### Quarterly Employee Engagement Results

## Employee Engagement



#### What does this tell us?

This quarter's employee engagement measures shows that our three key measures have remained relatively stable compared to last quarter. While we see a slight dip in morale, this is balanced by a small rise in both belonging and work stress. However, a look at the longer-term trend over the past three years reveals a slight downward trajectory across all three measures.

## **Job Satisfaction**

HHS employees were asked to rate their level of agreement with seven statements meant to measure job satisfaction. Overall, there continues to be a strong sense of job satisfaction amongst HHS, and flexibility is highlighted as a major benefit, with 85% of people who Agree or Very Much Agree that they are satisfied with the level of **flexibility**. The results of each question are listed below.

*A huge plus for working in my unit is the flexibility it provides for me. It allows me to work really hard and also know that I can navigate my schedule in a way that also works for my home life*

*Feels good to actually help people and make a huge difference in people's daily lives*

*I feel like the morale is getting stronger and more positive in our unit, and I feel that overall we are working together well, and doing the best that we can do for the families and children we are working with!*

Morale is measured on a quarterly basis (see chart above). While 7 out of 10 people Agree/Very Much Agree that morale is positive most of the time, the percentage people who Disagree/Very Much Disagree has increased to 16% (the percentage was 7% in 2024). Many noted appreciation for their coworkers and flexibility. Some identify specific issues within their units that have an impact on morale, including high workloads, inadequate training, or negativity among staff.

*The flexibility is amazing. Sometimes workloads and unrealistic expectations contribute to decreased morale*

*On call responsibilities make work/ life balance challenging.*

*Better on-board training in the department you work in*

*Flexibility is so important, and we have this in our unit and in the agency. We're a small unit and when one or two are not happy it affects our whole unit.*

The concern about **opportunity for growth** continues.

*I'm happy with my job, but long term I'd like to have my classification split into I's and II's so I could have an opportunity for growth.*

### Morale is positive most of the time

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	82%	73%	80%	70%
Somewhat Agree	14%	19%	13%	14%
Disagree/VM Disagree	4%	8%	7%	16%

### Satisfied with the level of flexibility

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	84%	82%	89%	85%
Somewhat Agree	14%	16%	8%	9%
Disagree/VM Disagree	2%	2%	3%	6%

### Feel that work is meaningful

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	92%	86%	89%	85%
Somewhat Agree	7%	12%	10%	12%
Disagree/VM Disagree	1%	1%	1%	3%

### Satisfied with growth opportunities

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	66%	64%	54%	64%
Somewhat Agree	26%	24%	29%	17%
Disagree/VM Disagree	8%	12%	17%	19%

### Coworkers work well together

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	92%	88%	86%	82%
Somewhat Agree	7%	12%	14%	14%
Disagree/VM Disagree	1%	1%	0%	4%

### Feel a sense of belonging at HHS

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	79%	74%	77%	73%
Somewhat Agree	18%	21%	15%	18%
Disagree/VM Disagree	3%	5%	8%	9%

## Feel that HHS demonstrates agency's values

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	85%	84%	81%	75%
Somewhat Agree	13%	13%	13%	17%
Disagree/VM Disagree	1%	1%	6%	8%

## Wellness and Stress

HHS employees were asked to rate their level of agreement with nine questions meant to measure their level of wellness and the support they receive to manage stress. A higher percentage do not feel adequately supported to manage stress (up to 14% Disagree/VM Disagree), but interestingly the percentage of people who report at least *some* **burnout** has decreased to 43% (51% in 2024). Percentages are also higher for those who have experienced at least *some* **Secondary Traumatic Stress** at 54%. The majority (76%) of the respondents feel supported to **manage work stress**.

Many noted appreciation for the **self-care opportunities** available at work, but a higher percentage of people (up to 17%) have never attended any self-care activities. The most popular self-activities are PAUSE activities (74% attended) and chair massages (42% attended).

*Massages are amazing and love that we do them. Love when people bring in their kids or dogs to share with us. It is nice to not just be about the work but about the whole person and employees feel they can share their personal lives with us.*

*I'm pretty happy with what the agency does to address stress and burnout. The only idea I can think of that would improve my scores further would be to provide support (training?) to help us prioritize our heavy workloads, including postponing or discontinuing some activities.*

*I like the variety. I have tried some of the above and didn't like them and others I have loved. Items like the book read are great and I learn a lot but the impact is from the conversations around the table and getting to know people better. Making personal connections as an adult is hard and it is a nice way to get to know people better and build connection.*

Several shared strategies that would help address burnout such better access to therapy or increased vacation time.

*My suggestion is to take reports of burnout more seriously and simply offer support, follow-up, check-ins, and willingness to explore options for improvement. It would also be nice if we had better coverage for mental health support because the EAP doesn't cover nearly enough and many jobs in this agency are at very high risk for burnout, secondary trauma, PTSD, and more.*

*I would say that a limited amount of vacation makes it difficult to have a work life balance in the first 5 years. If vacation could be given in a lump or increased for newer employees, I think this may help.*

Regarding the intention to seek new employment, 19% Somewhat Agree, Agree or Very Much Agree with the **intention to leave and go to a similar agency** in the next 2 years, which is a decrease from 27% last year. A smaller percentage of 15% Somewhat, Agree, or Very Much Agree that they **intend to leave the field** and move into a different job in the next two years.

### Feel adequately supported to manage work stress

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	83%	74%	76%	73%
Somewhat Agree	15%	16%	19%	13%
Disagree/VM Disagree	2%	10%	5%	14%

### Regularly engage in self-care on own

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	59%	67%	62%	67%
Somewhat Agree	31%	28%	31%	25%
Disagree/VM Disagree	10%	5%	7%	8%

### Regularly engage in workplace wellness activities

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	48%	46%	43%	47%
Somewhat Agree	35%	35%	34%	31%
Disagree/VM Disagree	17%	19%	23%	22%

### Feel safe from physical or emotional harm at work

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	89%	86%	88%	85%
Somewhat Agree	7%	14%	6%	9%
Disagree/VM Disagree	4%	0%	6%	6%

**Intend to leave to work at similar job in 2 years**

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	5%	5%	9%	7%
Somewhat Agree	13%	18%	18%	12%
Disagree/VM Disagree	80%	77%	73%	81%

**Intend to leave my field to work in different field**

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	7%	7%	5%	7%
Somewhat Agree	10%	5%	12%	8%
Disagree/VM Disagree	83%	88%	83%	85%

**Feel burned out in their job**

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	18%	21%	21%	17%
Somewhat Agree	27%	35%	30%	25%
Disagree/VM Disagree	55%	44%	48%	53%

**Feel burned out in responsibilities outside of work**

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	25%	19%	19%	13%
Somewhat Agree	21%	28%	25%	33%
Disagree/VM Disagree	54%	53%	56%	54%

**Have experienced secondary traumatic stress at work**

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	21%	30%	29%	24%
Somewhat Agree	25%	25%	25%	27%
Disagree/VM Disagree	45%	45%	46%	48%

## Workplace wellness activities effective in helping deal with stress

it is notable that there is an increase in people who have not participated in any workplace wellness activities.

	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	39%	34%
Somewhat Agree	47%	43%
Disagree/VM Disagree	4%	6%
Have not attended any	9%	17%

## Leadership

HHS employees were asked to rate their level of agreement with nine questions meant to measure their level of trust and support from leadership.

Overall, there was a strong sense of appreciation and trust for supervisors, and there were also concerns about lack of clear communication, some confusion, and some frustration. Supervisors received the full results from their unit that included specific feedback. Results are found below.

*The positivity and support is so amazing. Just having check ins to have the opportunity to ask questions and hear what's going right or can be improved; and collaboration on work. The emails of reminding us to take time and care is a great reminder and helps the feeling of guilt when things are tough.*

*Very supportive leadership. I feel heard and understood when needing days off and never made to feel guilty or shamed for missing work when needed*

*I think the monthly check-ins are great!*

*I have never felt so welcomed by a supervisor than I do working at Goodhue County. This is by far the best place I have ever worked.*

Specific feedback included several comments about improving training and onboarding and clearer communication.

*Training needs significant improvement and would cut down on staff turnover rates. It would also be very helpful to have the staff's ideas listened to without defensiveness.*

*I think both HHS leaders and my Supervisor communicate a lot but I wouldn't say it's effective communication. Often it leaves more confusion.*

*I would like to see HHS directors and supervisors make an effort to chat/say hello to all employees throughout the building*

### Feel the agency leadership cares about me as a person

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	76%	70%	68%	72%
Somewhat Agree	17%	23%	18%	18%
Disagree/VM Disagree	7%	7%	14%	10%

### Feel free to suggest ideas which are heard

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	80%	73%	73%	75%
Somewhat Agree	11%	21%	17%	14%
Disagree/VM Disagree	9%	6%	10%	11%

### Receive encouragement and feedback from supervisor

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	87%	82%	85%	84%
Somewhat Agree	9%	15%	8%	9%
Disagree/VM Disagree	4%	3%	7%	7%

### Trust the leadership of supervisor

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	85%	83%	79%	79%
Somewhat Agree	9%	12%	12%	10%
Disagree/VM Disagree	6%	5%	9%	11%

### Trust the leadership of HHS Directors

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	81%	83%	74%	79%
Somewhat Agree	15%	10%	12%	11%
Disagree/VM Disagree	2%	7%	14%	10%



### Feel recognized and appreciated at work

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	83%	76%	75%	74%
Somewhat Agree	15%	18%	16%	15%
Disagree/VM Disagree	2%	6%	9%	11%

### Satisfied overall with supervisor

	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	77%	78%
Somewhat Agree	17%	13%
Disagree/VM Disagree	6%	9%

### Supervisor provides clear expectations

	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	77%	75%
Somewhat Agree	13%	14%
Disagree/VM Disagree	10%	11%

### Supervisor communicates effectively with team

	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	74%	73%
Somewhat Agree	15%	15%
Disagree/VM Disagree	11%	12%

## Communication and Agency Involvement

HHS employees were asked their level of agreement about four questions that measured their satisfaction with the level of communication and engagement in the agency. Overall, approximately three fourths of people were satisfied with communication. Answers are found below.

*Looking forward to better/more opportunities with Share Point.*

*Well - I appreciate Nina makes to update us all after board meetings and such. Do better - Use SharePoint and encourage engagement in that. Also, some departments do a good job getting updates in the HHS newsletter every time, and other departments miss quite often and have no reports. I heard feedback from a few who notice this and commented it*

*doesn't show good engagement from those supervisors to not have updates so why read them. I don't feel this way but I do like when everyone has an update.*

*I guess for the whole county, I don't know much about.. The 'What's Good - Employee News & Notes' has been really nice! Keep those coming as there's so much going on; even things like road updates that the county is doing is nice to be informed of as a HHS worker.*

Just over seven out of 10 respondents (71%) Agree or Very Much Agree that they are kept **in the loop on decisions**.

*More communication about the budget as that affects me as an employee but also a GC tax payer.*

*I marked "somewhat" for feeling involved in decisions affecting my job/department only because I don't have much control over what happens. If we had more control, I feel that I could be involved and ideas would be heard.*

*Decisions in our department are not run by everyone before they are made, which I don't mind mostly, unless it directly affects me. Then it would be nice to have a conversation about it.*

### Satisfied with opportunities to engage

	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Agree/VM Agree</b>	94%	80%	85%	86%
<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	4%	19%	13%	11%
<b>Disagree/VM Disagree</b>	2%	1%	2%	3%

### Feel I am kept in the loop

	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>Agree/VM Agree</b>	75%	63%	69%	71%
<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	19%	28%	16%	23%
<b>Disagree/VM Disagree</b>	6%	9%	15%	6%

### Feel involved in decisions that affect my job

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	56%	51%	55%	58%
Somewhat Agree	26%	32%	29%	25%
Disagree/VM Disagree	18%	17%	16%	17%

### Read all or of part of Dept. Notes/HHS Newsletter

	2022	2023	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	87%	79%	74%	80%
Somewhat Agree	9%	14%	19%	16%
Disagree/VM Disagree	4%	4%	7%	4%

### Training

HHS employees were asked about training opportunities overall, as well as their evaluation of specific training sessions that have been offered. Overall, 70% Agree/Very Much Agree that they are satisfied with training opportunities.

### Satisfied with opportunities for training

	2024	2025
Agree/VM Agree	73%	70%
Somewhat Agree	21%	20%
Disagree/VM Disagree	6%	10%

### Suggestions for future training included:

- AI
- Ethics
- Burnout/trauma
- CPR
- Communication with coworkers/addressing conflict
- Workplace safety
- Cultural training for communities we serve
- SharePoint and other technology
- Department specific training: nursing, CornerHouse, motivational interviewing

## Summary and Areas for Improvement

- **Morale/burnout**
  - 2025: Morale is now being measured every three months. Looking at results from 2022 to the present, there has been a slight downward trend. The issue most often cited is workload, along with some concerns about conflict within units.
  - 2024: Morale increased back to 80% Agree or Strongly Agree that morale is positive most of the time, an increase from 73% in 2023.
  - In 2023, morale emerged as a need area. There was a slight but consistent decrease in many areas on the survey, and a more noticeable increase in burnout and secondary traumatic stress. This could be due, in part, to a better understanding of the issues. IT could also be due to the survey being completed during a time of high stress because of the move. Nonetheless, this area should be examined further.
- **Opportunities for Growth**
  - 2025: There continues to be a concern about the lack of growth opportunities, and particularly a desire for positions with a I and II grade—i.e. Case Aide 1 and Case Aide II.
    - GCHHS is due for a pay study review in 2026. One of our top priorities is to have more growth opportunities.
  - 2024: There were several more comments about limited growth opportunities this year. Some mentioned the desire for opportunities such as Care Coordinator 2 or Social Worker 2.
  - 2023: While the percentages in this area remained the same, there were very few comments about growth opportunities.
  - 2022: About one-third of employees state they are Somewhat Dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, or Very Dissatisfied (34%) with growth opportunities.
  - Next steps:
    - Workforce development sub-committee will examine options for growth and advancement, such as more formal ways to shadow and learn about other units; advocate at county level to expand opportunities for training and growth
      - This was completed in 2023 but needs to be discussed and offered more widely
    - Need people to offer suggestions and join sub-committee
    - County is looking at advancement opportunities (i.e. Case Aide I and Case Aide II). These were suggested to the County Board in 2023 during that year's pay study, and they were not adopted. This continues to be a priority in the county but will require Board approval.
- **Training/Onboarding/retention**
  - 2025: A new issue arose this year regarding adequate training and onboarding. Some have asked for more unit specific training, and a concern that new employees are not receiving adequate training.
- **Pay/examining workloads/time off**

- 2025: All comments about pay were positive.
  - Some concerns continue regarding workload, especially in certain units.
  - There were several comments about the difficulty in taking time off and not having enough vacation time, especially in the first few years of employment.
- 2024: Other than a few comments about workload, there were few concerns about workload and no concerns about salary.
- 2023: the only comments about pay this year were in appreciation for the increases on the pay scale
- Flexibility
  - 2025: Again, flexibility was cited as a top benefit.
  - 2024: Flexibility was highlighted as a strong benefit. A few people mentioned the difficulty in taking time off.
  - 2023: Some continued comments on the desire for a 32 hour work week, but flexibility was highlighted as a strong benefit
  - Next steps:
    - Continue to provide as much flexibility as the units can manage.
    - Leadership advocate for more generous time off for new employees
- Decision Making
  - 2025: While there was recognition that some decisions will be made by leadership, there was a desire to be more clearly informed.
  - 2024: There were some ongoing concerns about not being aware of changes, or hearing about changes after they are decided. There were a few comments about change fatigue.
  - 2023: A continued concern is a sense that people want to be more involved in decisions that impact their jobs. .
  - Next steps:
    - Leadership continue to consider opportunities for collaborative decision making.
    - Supervisors encourage team members to join one of the HHS workgroups, and/or committees e.g. strategic plan committee, workforce development committee, QI committee, PAUSE Committee, Safety Committee, Accreditation Committee, Equity Committee, Ethics Committee, and etc.
    - Find ways that all feel comfortable and encouraged to offer suggestions, without being asked.
    - Each team review the current practices how information and decisions are shared with the team including various meetings, committees and workshops, supervisors and directors, and seeking new ways for input, and team discussions and ideas.
    - Other ideas?

## **Best thing**

Feels good to actually help people and make a huge difference in people's daily lives
GCHHS knows how to choose genuinely kind and compassionate people to work here.
Being part of a supportive Leadership team
Flexibility, the clients, the staff, the benefits, the pay raises, activities it is an amazing place to work
Love the clothing store (prices could be a little cheaper), wish we would have sizes of popular products to try on before ordering, I like the population we serve, I feel like I make a difference, the pay is generous, the support we get is great.
The people are the best thing about working for GCHHS. Everyone supports each other and is willing to help.
Work life balance.
The people are kind and such a great team. Also the flexibility and understanding that we have lives and things outside of these walls.
A sense of belonging and of taking care of yourself.
There is a collective altruism throughout the organization that repeatedly bolsters my faith in humanity.
Meaningful and challenging mission driven work with supportive, and skillful coworkers.
Getting to help people who are having a rough time and getting to see their joy and smiles come back when they finally catch a break.
The sense of camaraderie and inclusivity among co-workers and management
Feeling a sense of belonging and knowing my work is meaningful
Torn between great co-workers; going out on client visits -getting out of the office, talking to clients; and then the work hours and flexibility are pretty great!
I feel like a person, not a number. I feel like my work has true propose, and provides a necessary service to our community. I feel pride in my work.
The support from leadership and coworkers. The emphasis from the leadership on the importance of taking care of yourself.