The Great Resignation and COVID-19:



Impact on Public Sector Employment and How Employers Can Help

MissionSquare Research Institute has been tracking state and local government employee sentiment since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The latest data from a survey of public employees shows they are increasingly inclined to leave their jobs. But there are practical steps employers can take to stem resignations as we enter the next phase of the pandemic.

Public Sector Employees are Considering Leaving Their Jobs

36%

Changing

jobs

Under age 40

African American

In K-12 education

At high risk of exposure

to COVID-19 at work

52%

of state and local workers are considering leaving their jobs **voluntarily** due to COVID-19 to do **any or all** of the following: change jobs, retire, and/or leave the workforce entirely.

Working during the COVID-19 pandemic has made them consider:



 entirely for the foreseeable future

 These individuals are significantly more likely to be:

 Age 60+
 Under age 40

28%

Leaving the workforce

Age 60+ Earning a household income of \$100,000+ At high risk of exposure

At high risk of exposure to COVID-19 at work Under age 40 African American At high risk of exposure to COVID-19 at work

Trend in Considering Changing Jobs



25% of those considering changing jobs would like to **leave** the government sector entirely.

6 in 10 say their organization has experienced an increase in the number of people



March 13, 2020

U.S. declares national emergency to combat coronavirus.

December 14, 2020	
U.S. announces	
first doses of	
FDA-authorized	
COVID-19 vaccine	
delivered to all	

50 states.

April 17, 2021

Global tally of deaths from COVID-19 surpasses 3 million.

December	1,	2021

First confirmed U.S. case of Omicron identified.

Why Employees Are Leaving

Top 3 Reasons

Employees Are Considering Changing Jobs

52%

Want a higher salary or a better benefits package

47%

Feel burned out from stress of job during pandemic

36%

Need better work-life balance

Top 3 Reasons

Considering Retiring and/or Leaving the Workforce Entirely

42%

Feel burned out from stress of job during pandemic

37%

Want time to do things that bring joy

26%

Tension have faced working with the public (or students' parents)

Top 3 Reasons

Causing Increase In People Leaving Their Jobs Voluntarily

58%

Added stress due to the pandemic

52%

Concern about safety due to COVID-19

47%

People are rethinking what they want to do



Employee Views on How Public Employers Can Curb the Great Resignation

To Reduce Stress

24%

Provide salary increases

15%

Hire more staff or reduce workload

13%

Provide emotional support

To Retain More Employees

62%

Improve salaries

50%

Offer/increase bonuses

38%

Show more appreciation and recognition of employees and the work they do



Showing **more appreciation** and **recognition** of employees **outranked actions** including improving benefits, increasing amount of leave allowed, offering more

flexible scheduling, and offering more opportunities for remote work.

In November/December 2021, MissionSquare Research Institute conducted an online survey of 1,100 state and local government employees, fielded by Greenwald Research, to assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public sector workers (prior surveys were conducted in May 2020, October/ November 2020, and May 2021).

Final data were weighted by gender, age, income, and industry type to reflect the distribution of the state and local government workforce as found in the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and the U.S. Census of Governments.

Visit **mission-sq.org/msriresources** for past infographics and reports and be on the lookout for full results for the November/December 2021 survey in the coming months.

