

# 2023 SALARY SURVEY



## Executive Summary

Service coordinators are a lifeline for hundreds of thousands of low-income older adults and families living in subsidized affordable housing. By making connections to benefits and resources, building community partnerships, and facilitating property programs, service coordinators are making a difference in the health and wellbeing of the residents they serve by encouraging self-sufficiency.

Most of the nation's service coordinators are employed by HUD Section 202 properties and their salaries are funded through property operating budgets or HUD-awarded grants. A notable portion of service coordinators are funded through HUD self-sufficiency program grants as well. As a result, the wages and benefits service coordinators receive are largely determined by federal policy and regulation.

From March 14-April 10, 2023, The American Association of Service Coordinators surveyed service coordinators nationwide on a range of labor and wage topics, including average hourly pay rate, education and time in profession. Respondents represent 49 U.S. States, 2 U.S. Territories and the District of Columbia. No respondents reported working in Guam or Hawaii.

Of the total 1,570 survey respondents, 94% identified as service coordinators, 88% of which serve exclusively older adults in affordable housing. The remaining identified as supervisors (5%) and quality assurance specialists (1%).

The national and state employment data outlined in this report are derived from the survey and intended to serve as a guide for service coordinators, employers, federal agencies and policy makers to better understand the economic conditions of service coordinators and the driving forces behind hiring and retention trends in the industry.

Although AASC has published the results of salary surveys in the past, this report serves as a first-of-its-kind glimpse into the demographics of the service coordinator profession. This in-depth look at the service coordinator workforce seeks to provide context to the compounding social and economic factors impacting their job satisfaction and salary needs.

To accompany this report, AASC has published *Employing Service Coordinators, A State-By-State Guide*, and a dashboard that break down survey findings by each state, U.S. territory and the District of Columbia. These resources can be used together to pinpoint the specific working conditions and salary requirements of service coordinators across the country.

## Survey Findings At-A-Glance



Average hourly pay rate of part and full-time SCs



Are offered benefits, including healthcare and paid time off

## Key Survey Findings

- Reported wages of service coordinators have increased since [AASC's 2019 salary survey](#). However, the additional income represents little change in their collective economic conditions because of inflation.
- The majority (80%) of service coordinators receive annual pay increases, ranging from 1-3%.
- Most commenters said they are underpaid and as a result many reported feeling underappreciated by their organizations, especially relative to the impact of their work.
- Most service coordinators have earned college degrees, but having attained higher education often did not correlate with higher wages.
- Inflation and the lack of affordable housing, particularly in large cities, has some reconsidering the profession and driven others to take on second jobs. More than half of respondents said they work second jobs or do freelance work to supplement their service coordinator income.
- Health-related benefits and paid time off are commonly provided by employers of service coordinators. Although less common, companies are beginning to offer tuition assistance and paid paternity/maternity leave.
- The majority of service coordinators have some type of support through their supervisory structure, including QA or a service coordinator-specific supervisor.

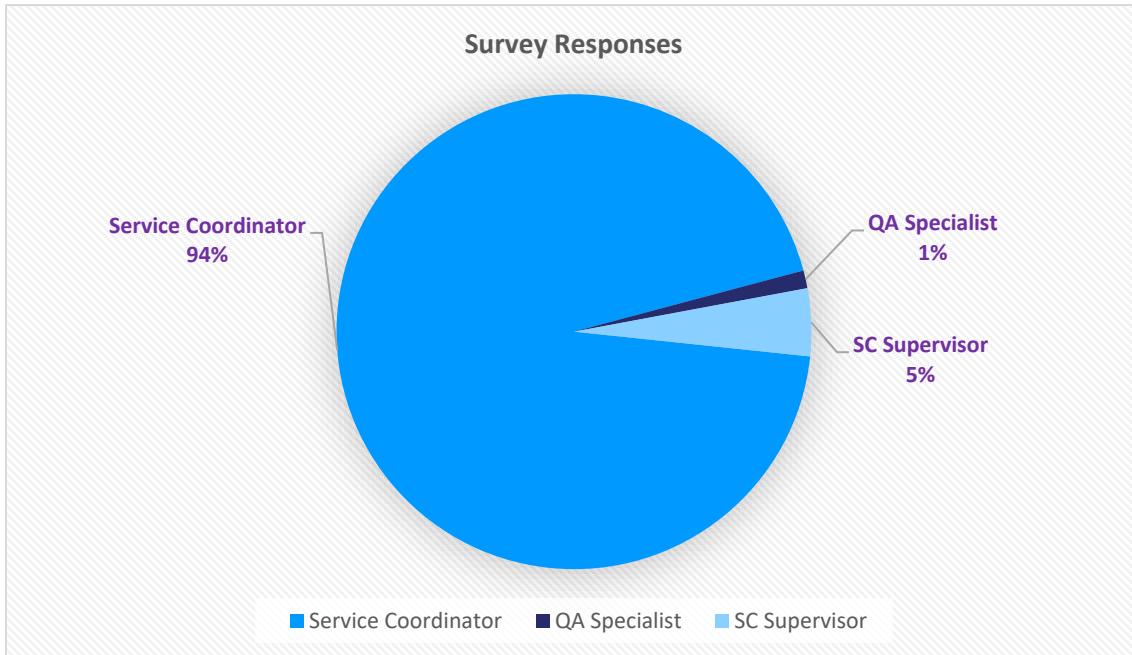
## Survey Implementation and Responses

AASC developed the survey and disseminated it by email to approximately 3,913 of its members, which are mostly service coordinators. The survey was also distributed by partner organizations and through social media. Respondents completed the survey online between March 10, 2023 to April 14, 2023. A total of 1,570 surveys were fully or partially completed.

Respondents represent 49 U.S. States, two U.S. Territories and the District of Columbia. No respondents represented Guam or Hawaii. The largest number of respondents reported living in California (169) and the least reported living in Alaska (1) and Virgin Islands (1).

Ninety-Four Percent of respondents reported being service coordinators. Of those, the vast majority (96%) are traditional service coordinators while a smaller number were Resident Opportunity and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) (3%) or Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) coordinators (1%). Other respondents included service coordinator supervisors (5%) and quality assurance (QA) specialists (1%). (**FIGURE 1**)

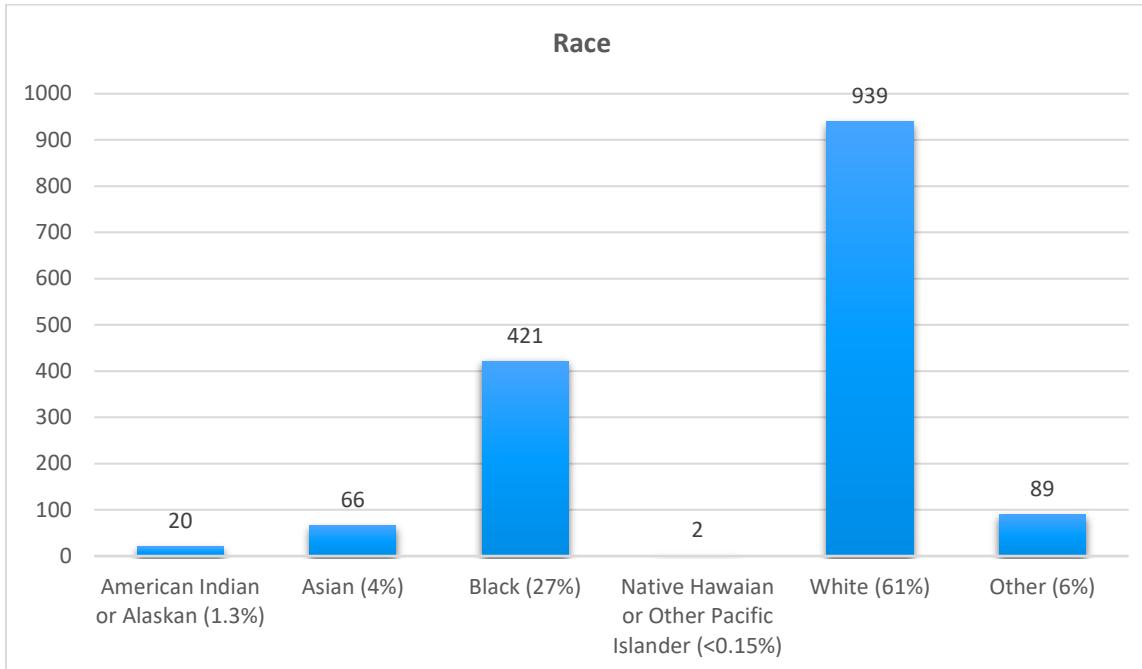
FIGURE 1: Most Respondents Were Service Coordinators



The average age of survey respondents was 55 years and nearly all were female (92%).

Although the largest proportion of respondents were white, they represent a range of racial backgrounds and ethnicities. Of the respondents, 14% identified as Hispanic or Latino. Survey questions about race and ethnicity were based on U.S. Census reporting options. (FIGURE 2)

FIGURE 2: Service Coordinators Represent a Range of Races

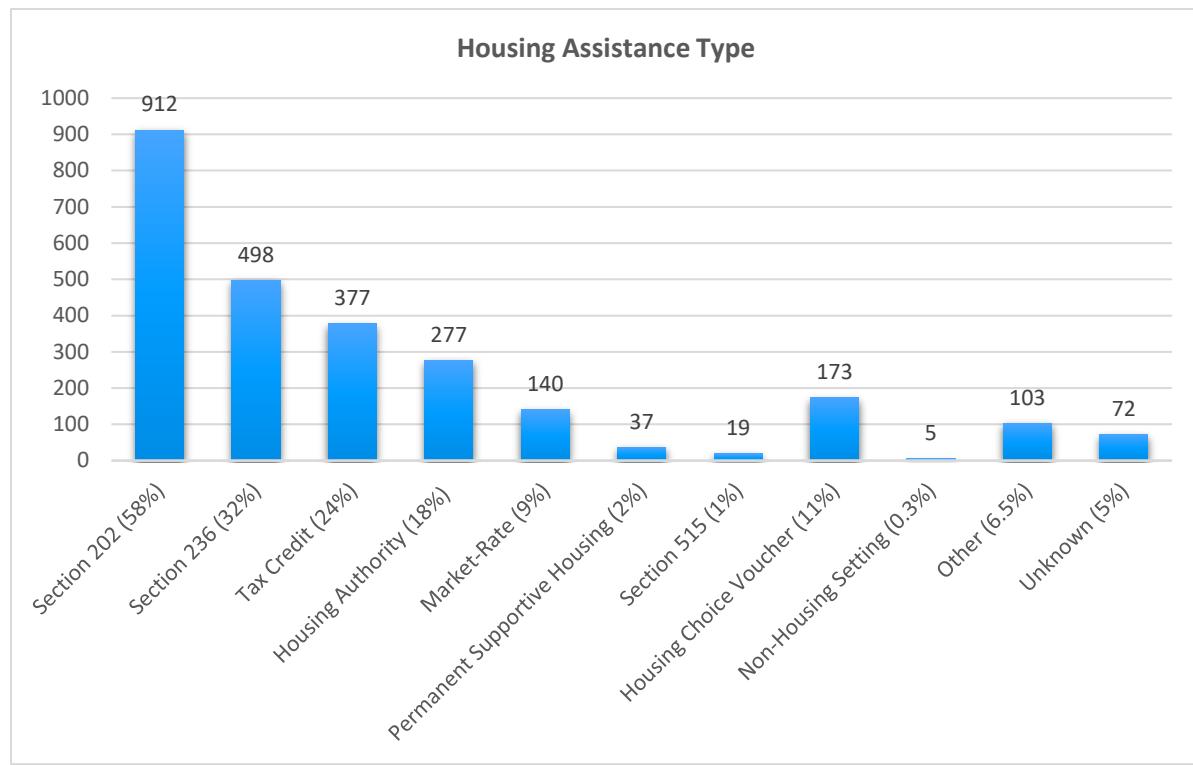


## Picture of a Service Coordinator

To determine how various factors relate to service coordinator salary, AASC collected a range of employment information from survey respondents. Although this report breaks down salaries by these single factors, it's important for employers and funders of service coordinators to consider a range of qualifications and property characteristics when budgeting for wages and benefits.

The most common types of housing assistance programs served by respondents were HUD Section 202 Housing for the Elderly (58%), HUD Section 236 (32%), Tax Credit (24%) and Public Housing Authorities (18%). Because some respondents reported working at multiple properties, they selected all property funding types that applied to their position. (FIGURE 3)

**FIGURE 3: Respondents Predominantly Serve Residents Living in HUD Affordable Housing for Elderly, Disabled**



The primary population served by survey respondents was elderly (86%), which HUD defines as 62 years and older. This is in line with survey responses regarding housing assistance type. (FIGURE 4)

## Picture of a Service Coordinator

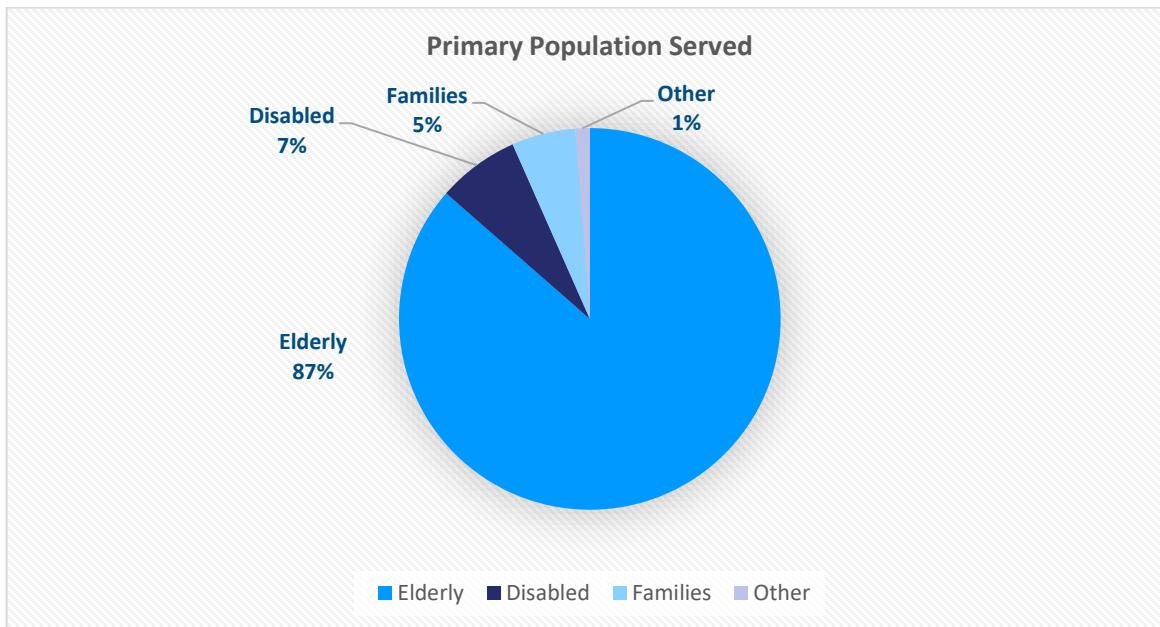
Works Full-Time

Serves Elderly Residents in  
HUD-Subsidized Housing

Has Worked in Current  
Position for 1-3 years

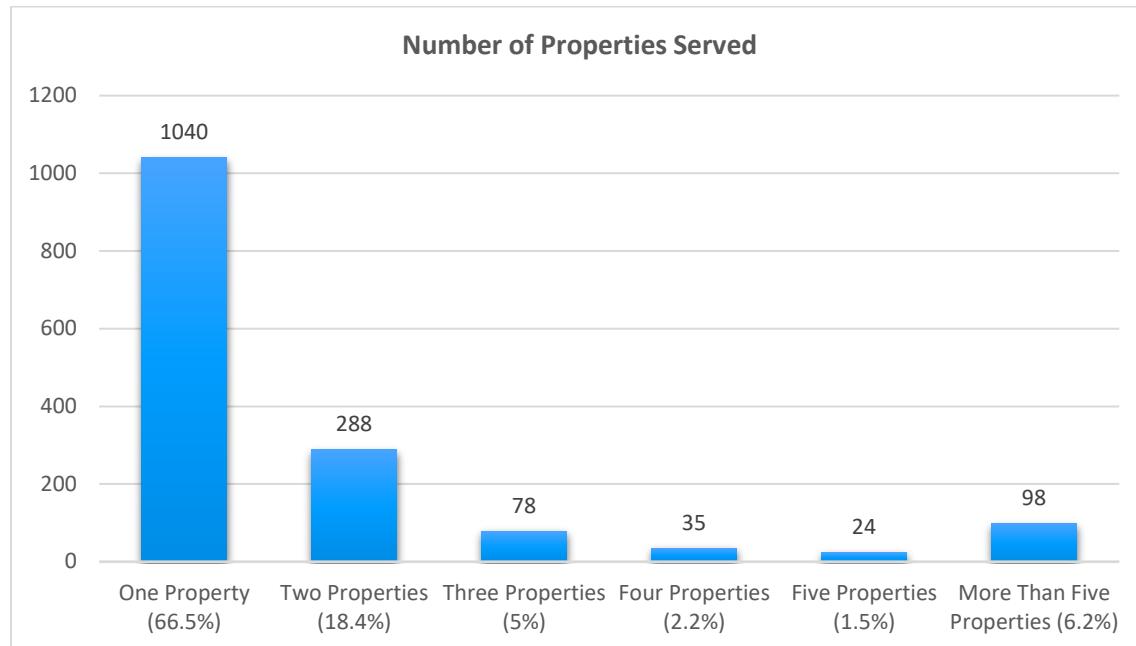


FIGURE 4: Primary Population Served was Elderly Residents



Respondents mostly serve one property (66.3%), with the average number of residents served across all properties being 209. (FIGURE 5) The average caseload is notable because most service coordinators report working in HUD Multifamily Housing properties where the recommended caseload is 50-100 residents per service coordinator. This standard is outlined in Chapter 3 of [HUD's Service Coordinators in Multifamily Housing Program Resource Guide](#).

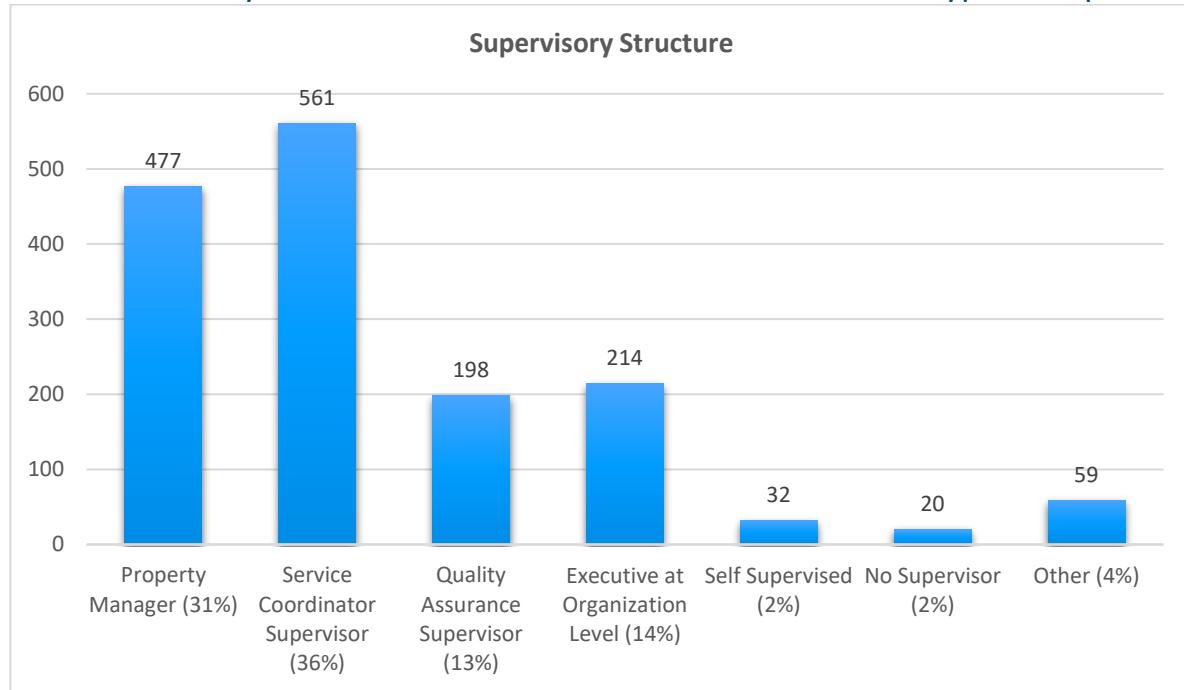
Figure 5: Service Coordinators Support Residents Across Multiple Properties



Many service coordinators report having support systems in the form of quality assurance (QA) components to their programs (70%) and/or supervisors that are specifically dedicated to overseeing the service coordinator program (36%). These structures benefit service coordinators by providing program oversight, guidance, and analysis. (**FIGURE 6**)

Notably, quality assurance is an eligible expense for HUD's Multifamily Service Coordinator Program. Properties may request an amount of up to 10% of the service coordinator budget to cover the costs of quality assurance. As a result, the department ["strongly recommends"](#) all its service coordinator programs to employ quality assurance professionals to provide oversight and support.

**FIGURE 6: Nearly All Service Coordinators Work Under Some Type of Supervision**

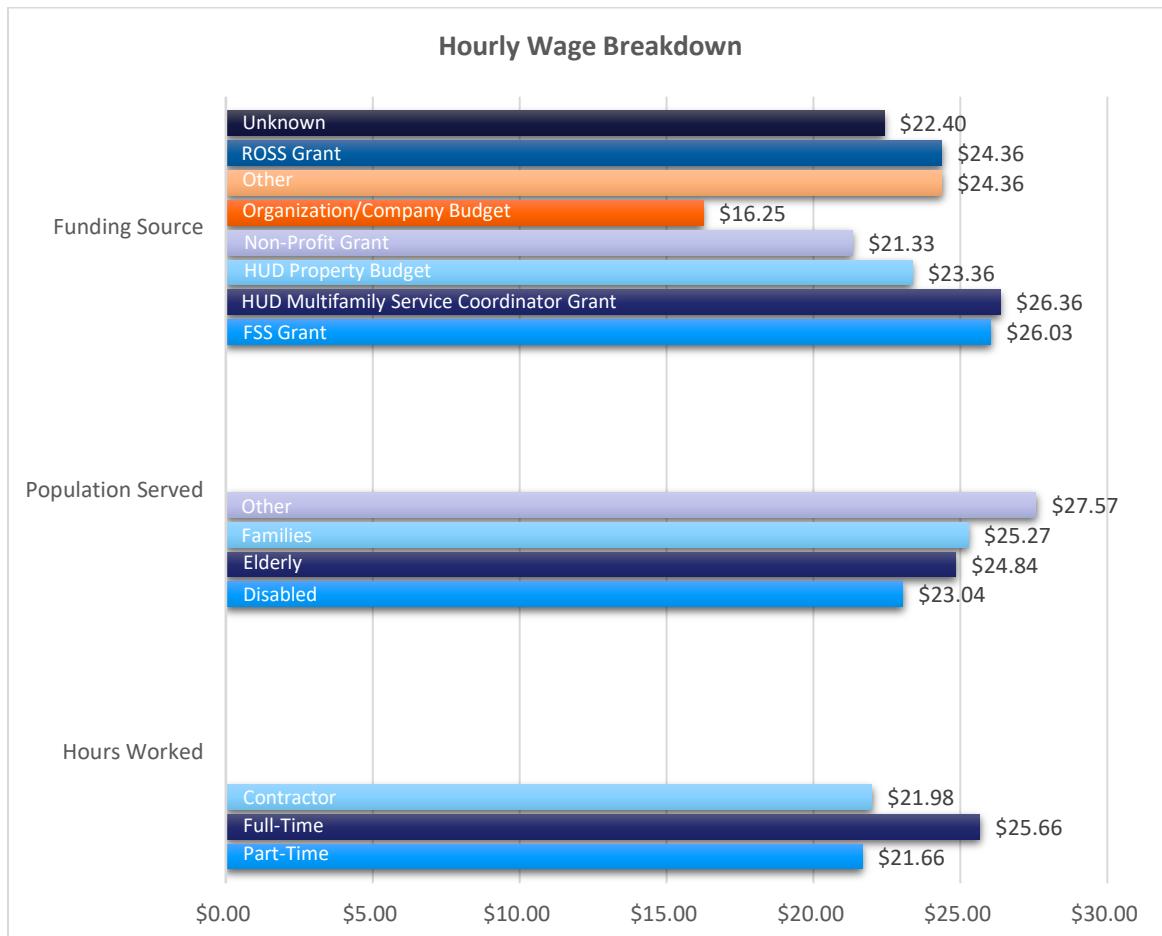


#### **Average Hourly Wage and Benefits**

Across all respondents, hourly wages were variable. The average hourly rate of all respondents was \$24.80/hour, but when broken down by funding source, hours worked (full- or part-time), and population served, the totals fall on either side of that average. (**FIGURE 7**)

Most survey respondents (79%) are full-time employees who are paid for at least 37.5 hours per week.

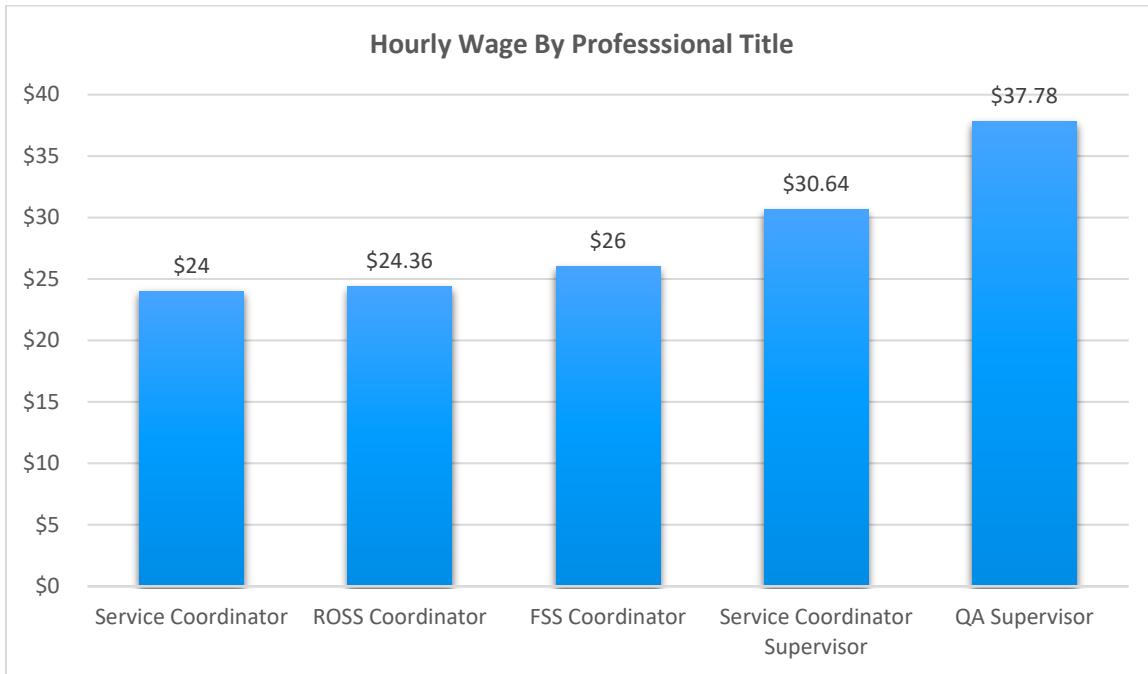
FIGURE 7: Hourly Pay Rate Varies Across Field



Pay increased with the professional titles of respondents. Supervisors made an average of nearly 43% more per hour than the service coordinators they oversee. (FIGURE 8) As a result, service coordinator salaries and hourly pay rates were calculated separately for a number of factors, including the state-by-state analyses.

There is a <3% margin of error when calculating for Average Annual Salary. This was determined by multiplying the total reported hourly wage multiplied by the number of reported hours paid per week by 52 weeks. (Hourly Wage x Hours of Paid Work Per Week = Total X 52 = Annual Salary). This margin of error considers respondents that reported being paid for more than 40 hours per week. The following calculations were made using this formula.

**FIGURE 8: Hourly Pay Rate Increases with Professional Title**



Average Annual Salary for:

- All respondents who provided both hourly rate and number of hours worked per week was \$46,896.33.
  - Of those who were working part-time: \$31,168.82.
  - Of those who were working full-time: \$53,072.90.
- Only service coordinators who provided both hourly rate and the number of hours worked per week is \$45,809.12.
  - of those who were working part-time: \$30,509.00.
  - Of those who were working Full-Time: \$52,165.91.

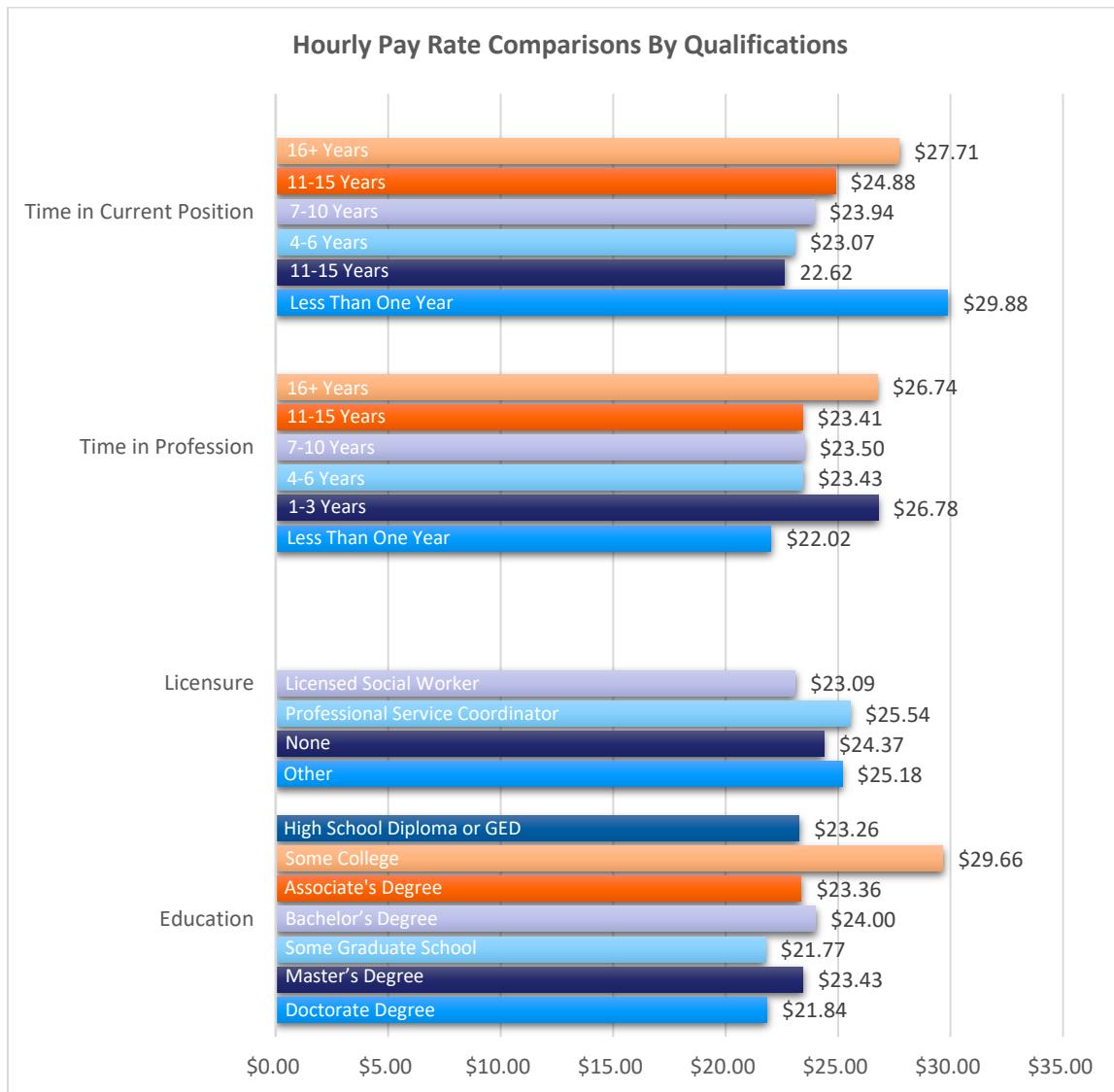
These totals represent an increase over the \$36,001-\$39,000 median annual salary range of only service coordinators (not including ROSS and FSS coordinators) who responded to AASC's 2019 Salary Survey. At that time, all respondents who worked full-time reported an average median salary range of \$39,001 - \$42,000 and part-time employees reported a range of \$18,001-\$21,000.

### **The impact of Tenure, Educational Attainment and Licensure on Salary**

The majority of service coordinators report having earned some type of college degree (84%). While degree attainment is not a profession-wide requirement, a number of respondents noted in comments that a bachelor's degree is a minimum qualification to become employed with their companies. HUD programs also encourage this minimum qualification, but state that relevant experience is acceptable in lieu of a degree.

An analysis of survey responses determined average annual salary is not directly linked to educational attainment. Nor do increased licensure, time in profession or time in current position correlate with salary increases. (FIGURE 9)

FIGURE 9: Average Annual Salary Not Determined by Qualifications Alone



Multiple respondents commented that pay should be determined, in part, by educational background, especially since some said they struggle to pay their student loans on the salary they earn as service coordinators.

"I believe this profession makes it very difficult to live with such a low amount of income. A bachelor's (degree) is required to be able to take on the position, but there are administrators in many properties that don't require a bachelor's degree yet are being paid higher wages," one commenter said.

A commenter who reported having a bachelor's degree in social work said: "I have acquaintances that work at restaurants and make about the same money as I do; they do not have a degree. Some of my colleagues have master's (degrees) and say that the pay is very low for how much money, time and effort they spent on their education."

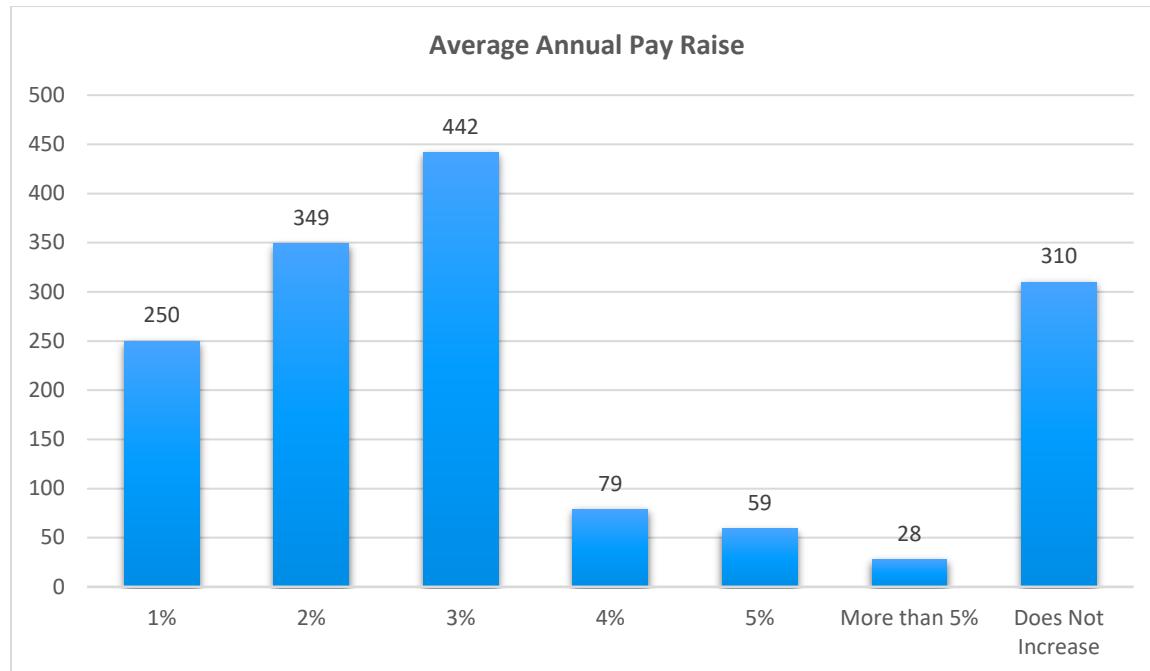
In line with findings from a [2022 Service Coordinator Turnover Survey](#), a respondent who identified as a supervisor said the lack of connection between available wages and required qualifications has led to difficulty recruiting new staff. “It has been extremely difficult to hire individuals with a bachelor’s/master’s degree for the service coordinator position due to the allotted salary given. Applicants want at least \$50k starting out,” the commenter said.

Based on [National Association of Social Workers salary research](#), those who responded to AASC’s salary survey and identified as licensed social workers could earn an average of \$10,000 more annually working in the health sector than they do as service coordinators in affordable housing.

### Majority of Service Coordinators Receive Benefits, Annual Pay Raises

Eight in 10 service coordinators reported receiving annual raises. On average, pay increases range from 1-3% per year, however, a notable portion reported they don’t receive an increase at all (20%). (**FIGURE 10**)

**FIGURE 10: Average Pay Raises Range from 1-3% Annually**



The majority of those who see no increase at all said they are not included in their property’s budgeting processes. As a result, a number of respondents commented that they are distrustful of their employer and the allocation of their program budget funds. This is especially common among service coordinators whose positions are funded through HUD’s Multifamily Service Coordinator grant program. The department typically provides an annual cost-of-living adjustment to the grant total, but grantees are not required to put those additional dollars toward salary increases for service coordinators.

“The salary that HUD is supposed to be giving me is not the correct salary. It is lower,” one commenter said. “I feel the Social Service Coordinator should get the correct salary that HUD gives them on paper.”

“I think the funds allocated to my Service Coordinator Budget are going elsewhere,” another said.

An additional commenter said: "I've seen the budget for me. I do not make the amount HUD has allowed for me. Not even close."

Of all respondents, 83% said they're not involved in the budget process and many commented that they have never seen their program budgets and/or have been told they are not permitted to view them.

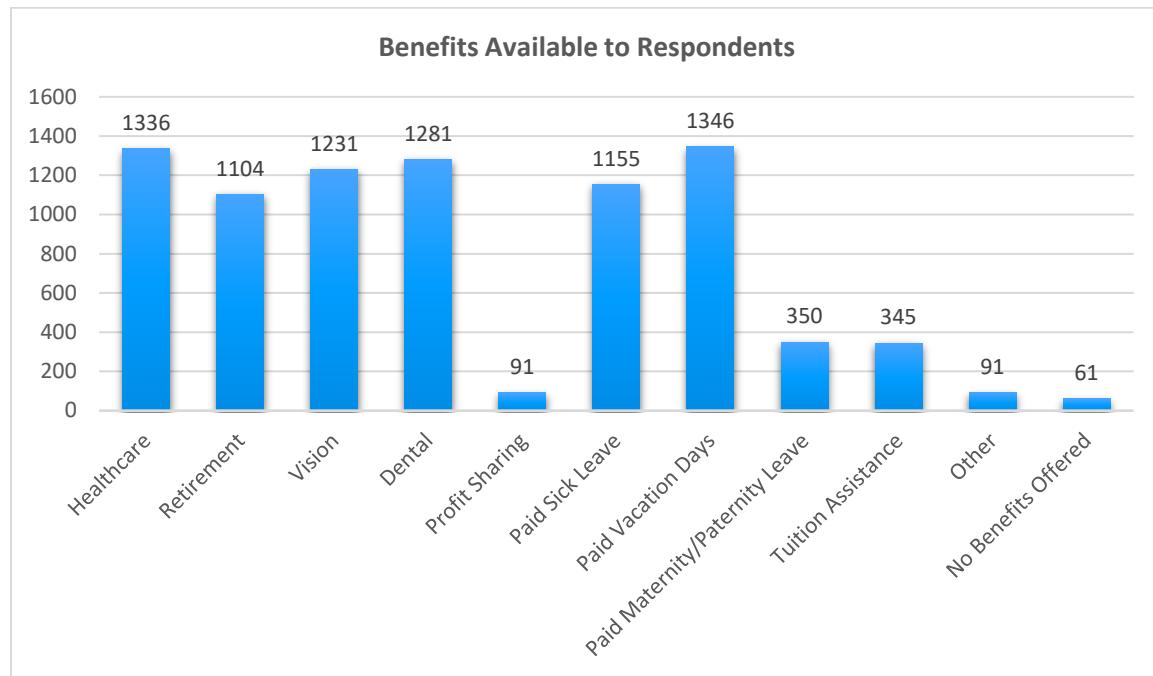
Nearly all service coordinators are offered some benefits through their employers (96%), including those who reported working part-time (less than 37.5 hours per week). Most commonly, employers offer paid vacation days (86%), health care (85%), dental (82%), vision (79%), paid sick leave (74%) and retirement (71%). Less commonly offered benefits include paid parental leave (22%), tuition assistance (22%), profit sharing (6%), and other benefits not listed in the survey (6%). (**FIGURE 11**)

Some respondents commented that while they are offered health insurance and other employee paid benefits, a sizable chunk of their salaries would go toward premiums so they cannot take advantage of them. Others commented that while they pay for offered health insurance coverage, it comes with high deductibles that are prohibitive to seeking and paying for health care.

"My employer has to take out premiums for my health insurance, retirement, etc. and my remaining paycheck isn't very large," one commenter said. "I've been in my current position for 14 years and...enjoy what I do, but recently have been contemplating looking for something else where I could potentially make more money, or at least have my benefits covered so my take home pay is higher."

Another said: "My employer does offer benefits and, on the surface, they look good. But having a \$6,000 deductible for a single person is not much for insurance. That is basically catastrophic insurance."

**FIGURE 11: Nearly All Companies Offer Employee Benefits**



A handful of respondents commented that a benefit they'd like to receive, but was not listed on the survey, is paid mental health days separate from sick and vacation days.

“This is a very demanding and stressful position at times,” one commenter said. “I believe extra vacation time or personal days will benefit the overall wellbeing of RSCs.”

“This position should include at least a monthly or bi-monthly paid mental health day,” another commented.

### **Inflation’s Impact on Service Coordinators’ Economic Conditions**

Although the reported wages of service coordinators have increased since AASC’s 2019 salary survey, the additional income represents little change in their collective economic conditions because of inflation. According to the federal [Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator](#), the majority of respondents who reported an average \$37,500 annual salary in April 2019 had to earn at least \$44,516 in April 2023 to see their paychecks continue covering costs.

Some respondents said they can no longer sustain their families on their current incomes and are considering leaving the profession as a result.

“I love what I do and planned to retire here but the pay is not enough to keep up with inflation,” one commenter said. “Unfortunately, I plan to transition away from SC within the next year.”

“I do not make enough money to cover additional expenses and save up (due to) inflation. I am not trying to blame inflation, even prior to that it was touch and go with household expenses, but now it is even harder,” another commenter wrote.

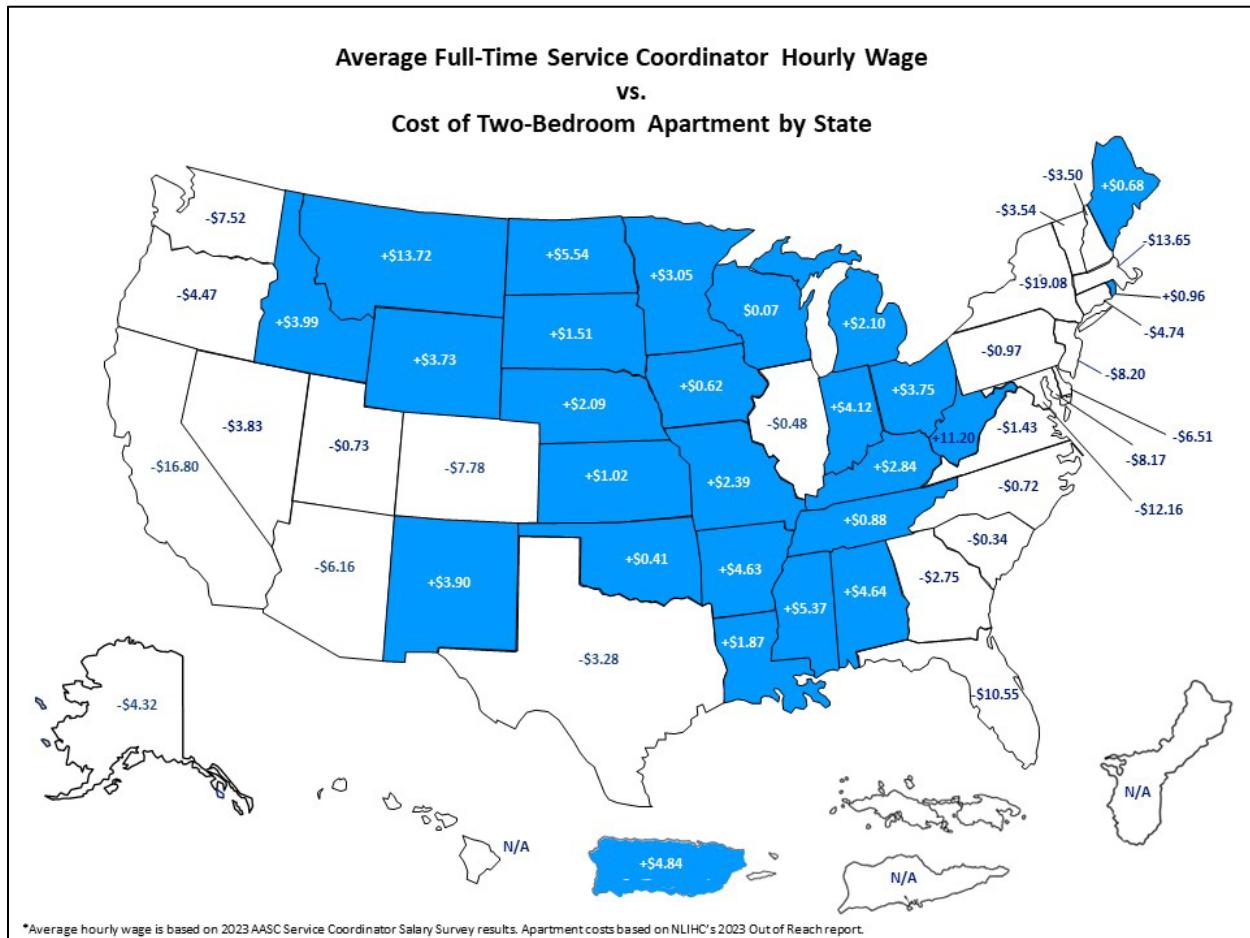
A number of commenters specifically called out the cost of housing in their communities as the reason for their inability to get ahead financially on their service coordinator salaries. An AASC comparison of survey responses to the [National Low Income Housing Coalition’s 2023 Out-of-Reach report](#) finds that the hourly wages of service coordinators living in half of the U.S. states and territories aren’t enough to comfortably afford a two-bedroom apartment. The report takes into account affordability, which the federal government generally considers 30% of one’s income.

The chart below demonstrates how much additional hourly income a service coordinator would need to earn to spend only 30% of their income on a two-bedroom apartment in their state. States that are highlighted and show positive numbers represent the amount above the minimum needed that the average service coordinator in that state reported earning. (**FIGURE 12**) The same comparison made in 2019 produced similar results.

In addition to accounting for state-specific salary needs when reviewing the findings of this report, service coordinators said they would like funders and employers to consider zip-code-specific needs. Affordable housing sites are most often located in urban communities where housing prices are higher than the state-wide average.

“The cost of living is on the rise all over the state especially here in south Florida where I work,” one commenter said. “I will soon have to either move or get a second job to make ends meet.”

**FIGURE 12: Service Coordinators in Half of States Can't Afford Rental Housing Based on Reported Wages**



"I live and work in Seattle/King County. A very expensive area to live in. My salary seems high, but it's not enough to live on; even though my husband also works full-time," another said.

National Low Income Housing Coalition's Out-of-Reach data by zip code reveals an even more concerning picture than painted above for service coordinators working and living in major metro areas. In areas where there are high concentrations of service coordinators, the hourly wages needed to cover rent are significantly higher. This includes in Los Angeles (\$64/hour), San Francisco (\$90/hour), Seattle (\$66/hour), Chicago (\$42/hour), Miami (\$55/hour) and New York City (\$71/hour). Even in smaller metro areas such as Columbus, Ohio and Sioux Falls, South Dakota, the amounts needed to afford housing are notably higher than the state-wide totals at \$27/hour and \$22/hour, respectively.

One commenter said: "I love where I work and the residents I provide services to and build relationships with. I love where I live in Asheville, NC. However, Asheville is 5% higher than the state average on the cost of living. It is also highly trafficked by tourists and many people move here frequently. The median price of homes was up 21.3% year-over-year in 2022 with a median price of \$485,000. I would love to be able to afford my own home, but with my income it is not possible, and I do not see it being possible in the near future. With a higher income, it might be more attainable."

## **Service Coordinators Say Their Value is Higher Than Salaries**

The most commonly shared sentiment in the comments section of the report was that not only are wages too low to cover costs at home, but they're also not commensurate with the type and scope of work service coordinators do. More than 550 respondents left comments, the majority of which addressed this topic.

"I enjoy my job, helping people, making a difference in someone's life," a commenter said. "However, the rate of pay is too low. Getting an increase in wages would help me to maintain my independence, take care of my basic needs, be able to pay my medical bills and other bills."

"I do feel underpaid for the amount of work and impact my job has on individuals' lives. I do not do the job for the money and could not live on my salary alone," another said.

Another commenter said: "This is a mentally fatiguing job and the pay doesn't really reflect that."

Most service coordinator positions are funded by HUD, leaving their salaries in the hands of the property or company staff that submit their budgets, Congressional appropriations, and the HUD staff that review and approve annual budgets. A [2022 AASC survey](#) reviewing the causes and impacts of service coordinator turnover revealed that low pay is the number one reason service coordinators leave their positions and the top cause of inability to attract qualified applicants.

"I started as a service coordinator in 2000 and went on to do other things. I have come back to service coordination and I'm making the same I made in 2000. Always told it's a grant position and raises are not guaranteed," one commenter said.

Several respondents said they are eligible for the same federal benefits programs for low-income families as the residents they serve in some cases.

"Our role is to help assist low income residents, yet with the wages we earn we are also considered low income," one commenter said.

Another shared: "It is sad that after having been working as a service coordinator for all these years, I couldn't make enough to retire. I probably will end (up) living in a subsidized home as well. I discourage people to work in this field."

Multiple commenters also noted that they personally purchase items for their programs because their budgets don't include funds for supplies.

"I do a lot for the residents. I also spend my own money doing a lot of the things that I do with them. It's because I really love my job and I genuinely care about them. Even if my pay doesn't change, I'm still going to serve my residents with all my heart," one commenter said, voicing a common sentiment that the love of the work is what ultimately keeps service coordinators showing up every day.

## **Service Coordinators Rely on Other Income Sources to Make Ends Meet**

More than half (53%) of service coordinator respondents reported taking on second jobs or freelance work to supplement their incomes. Of those respondents, the majority identified as part-time service coordinators. Still, 12% of full-time service coordinators said they're relying on other income.

The average hourly wage of service coordinators who rely on income from outside sources is \$22.99. Despite most respondents who rely on other income identifying themselves as part-time workers (less than 37.5 hours per week) the reported average number of hours worked for these service coordinators was 34 hours per week – very near full-time hours.

“I work a side job to supplement my income, which I don't feel I should have to do. There are many companies that will start workers out at \$18/hour right out of high school. I am almost 44 years old, college educated, and only make a few dollars more per hour. I feel I am worth more than \$22/hour,” one commenter said.

“I absolutely LOVE my job as a Service Coordinator, however, I find it difficult to pay my bills which is why I have a second 30 hour/week job...I would like nothing more than to be able to work only one job and be able to afford a vacation every couple of years!” one commenter said.

Many commenters drew comparisons between their hourly wages and those of other industries, particularly those that notably are not specialized and/or do not have education or experience requirements as service coordination does.

“I do this job out of love for people but can't help feeling bitter when my 21-year-old (child), working as a barista, is making close to my salary,” one respondent wrote.

“I make less money than high school kids at McDonald's or a bank teller,” another commenter shared. “Service Coordinators are asked to do so much and be well educated but our pay is awful. I had to seek outside work to pay my bills.”

[Research on aging workforce professions](#) similar or adjacent to service coordinators finds they are also feeling strain from the tightening of the labor market. This includes case managers and [social workers of all types](#) including those employed by Area Agencies on Aging, community based organizations, and adult protective services agencies. Like service coordinators, these professionals are often working in relatively low-wage, high-stress positions. This is leading to high turnover rates as employees turn to lower-stress positions with similar pay.

Being able to rely on spouses or other adults in their household who can contribute to finances is the only way a number of commenters said they're able to continue the work they love. Some said if they were the sole earners in their households or didn't have another source of income, such as Social Security, they would have to pursue a more lucrative profession.

**53% report relying on income from a second job or freelance work to make ends meet**

Their average hourly wage is  
\$22.99/hour.



**39% report being the sole earners in their households**

Their average hourly wage is  
\$26.61/hour.

“My significant other's income supports my ability to have this position,” a commenter said.

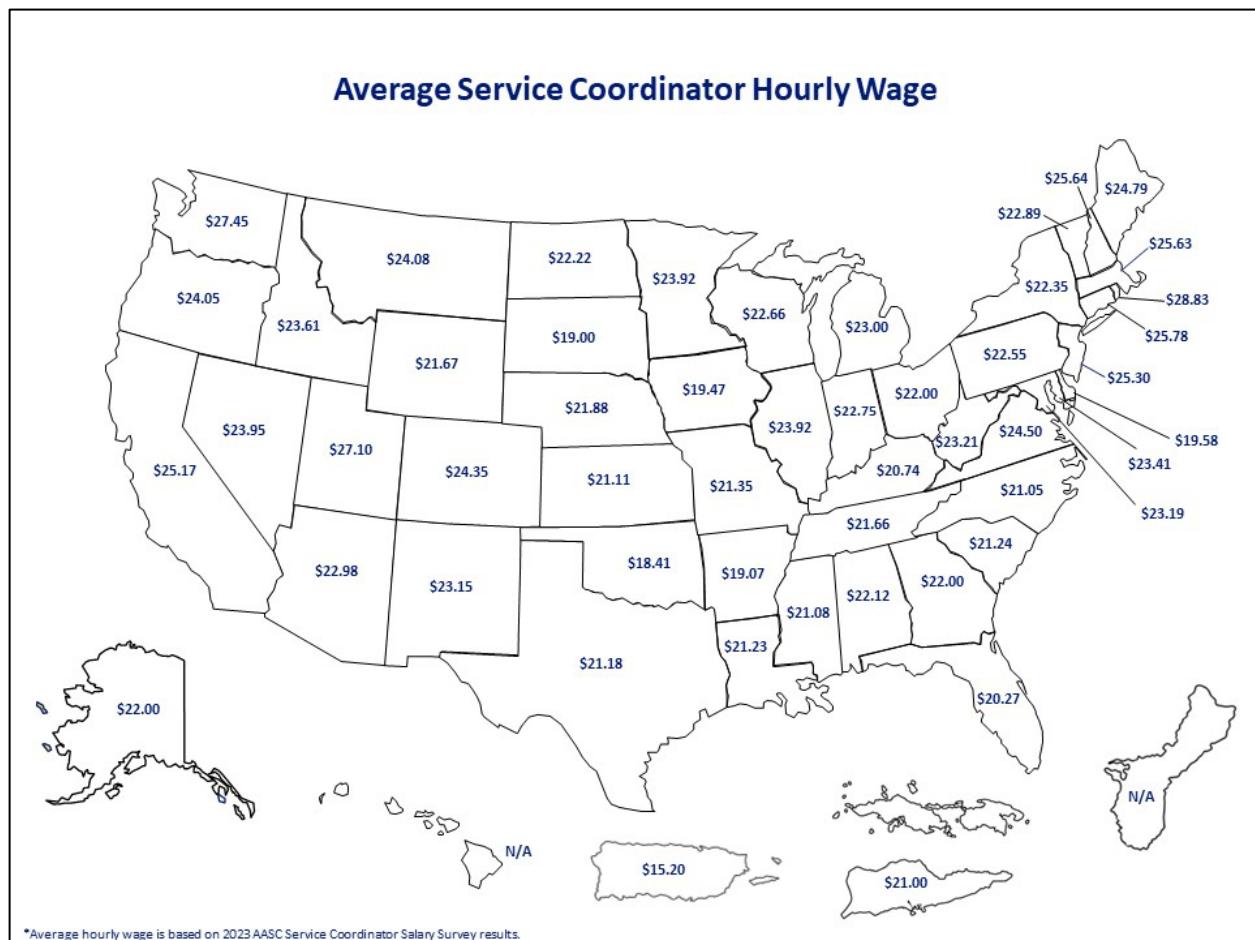
Another commenter shared: "I enjoy this 20-hour a week job in my retirement years. If I were young and had to live on the wage paid, I would not be working this job at this pay level. Because I am retired, I have a pension and social security. This is a great job of someone retired with the skill set needed to be an effective Service Coordinator."

While the majority of respondents reported sharing the responsibility of covering household expenses with at least one other person, a significant portion (39%) of survey respondents are the sole earners in their households. Those who are sole earners report earning an average hourly wage of \$26.61. Because just 20% of respondents reported living alone, it's likely that nearly half of the sole earners are responsible for financially supporting others living in their homes.

## State-By-State Hourly Wage Analysis

AASC has created a supplementary guide to this report that details state-specific salary survey data. **(FIGURE 13)** *Employing Service Coordinators, A State-By-State Guide* and the accompanying dashboard should be used to pinpoint the specific financial needs of service coordinators in each state. Reviewers should also account for zip-code-specific data when determining salary in addition to statewide data for reasons outlined on Pages 13-14 of this report.

FIGURE 13: Service Coordinator Hourly Pay Rates by State



## **Recommendations**

### ***Include Service Coordinators in Annual Budgeting Processes***

Companies should take steps to formally include service coordinators in the annual budgeting process. This will engender goodwill and trust between employers and employees and ensure that needs are met regarding salary, benefits, technology and supplies. HUD program offices should consider updating their service coordinator guidance to specifically state that employers must, at minimum, provide service coordinators a copy of their budgets annually.

### ***Expand Availability of Service Coordinator Program Funding***

HUD and Congress should examine opportunities to provide additional funding to budget-based and grant-funded service coordinator programs. Increased funding availability for service coordinator salaries and benefits could result in longer job tenancy and improved job satisfaction for existing service coordinators. Expanding resources could also result in more properties offering service coordination to the benefit of low-income older adults living in HUD-assisted affordable housing.

### ***Provide Budget Flexibility for HUD-Funded Service Coordinator Programs***

Flexibility to meet labor market demands and HUD-recommended job qualifications is necessary to ensure that service coordinators are appropriately compensated. Employers must be able to follow a simple and quick standardized process to make changes to the salary and benefits line items in their annual HUD budgets, particularly when hiring new service coordinators to fill open positions.

### ***Consider Caseloads When Determining Service Coordinator Program Staffing***

Although industry best practice is to generally estimate a need of one full-time service coordinator for every 50-100 residents, many service coordinators reported having a much larger caseload with the average number of residents served being 209. This may contribute to some of the mental burnout respondents referred to in the comments. If caseloads were considered when staffing service coordinator programs, some part-time service coordinators could be moved to full time and increase their earning potential.

## About AASC

The American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) is a professional membership association and a national resource for service-enriched housing professionals. AASC's more than 4,000 members assist elderly and disabled residents and families living in affordable housing communities to identify, locate, and acquire the services and supports necessary to become and remain self-sufficient. Established in 1999, AASC provides education, advocacy, best practices, leadership, and networking opportunities for its members.



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