

May 2024

FLSA

Straw Poll Results

Prepared by
Tori Negash, ACUHO-I Research Initiatives Manager

acuho-i
Making Campus Home

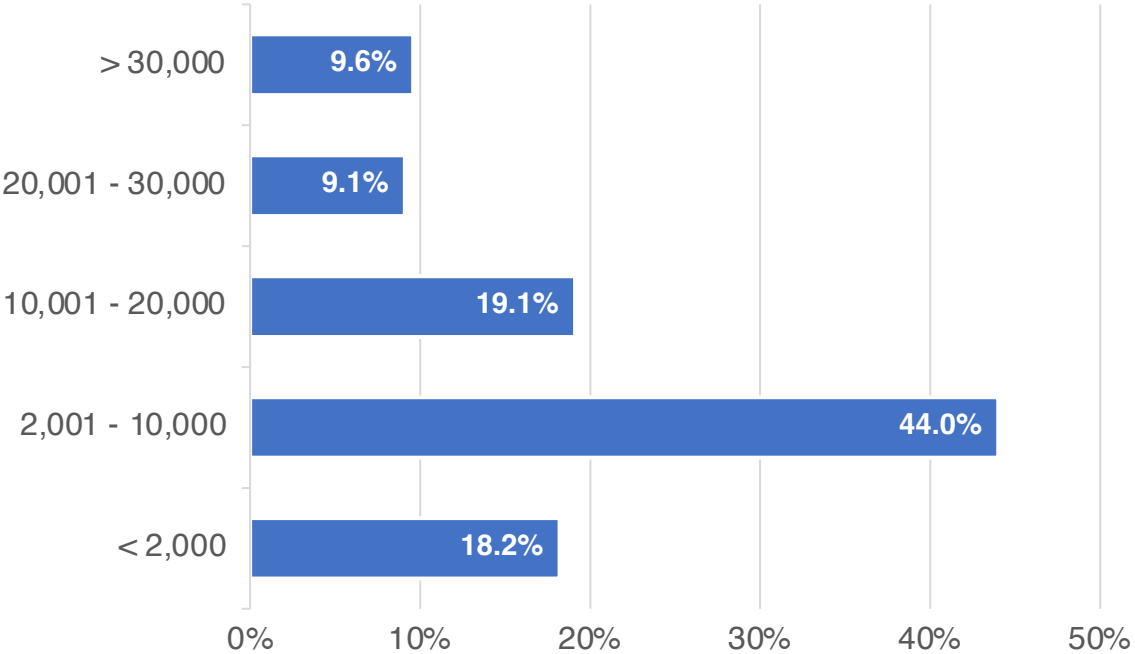
Introduction

The FLSA straw poll was administered between May 8-10, 2024. The survey invitation was sent to senior housing officers at U.S. institutions. A total of 209 institutions participated.

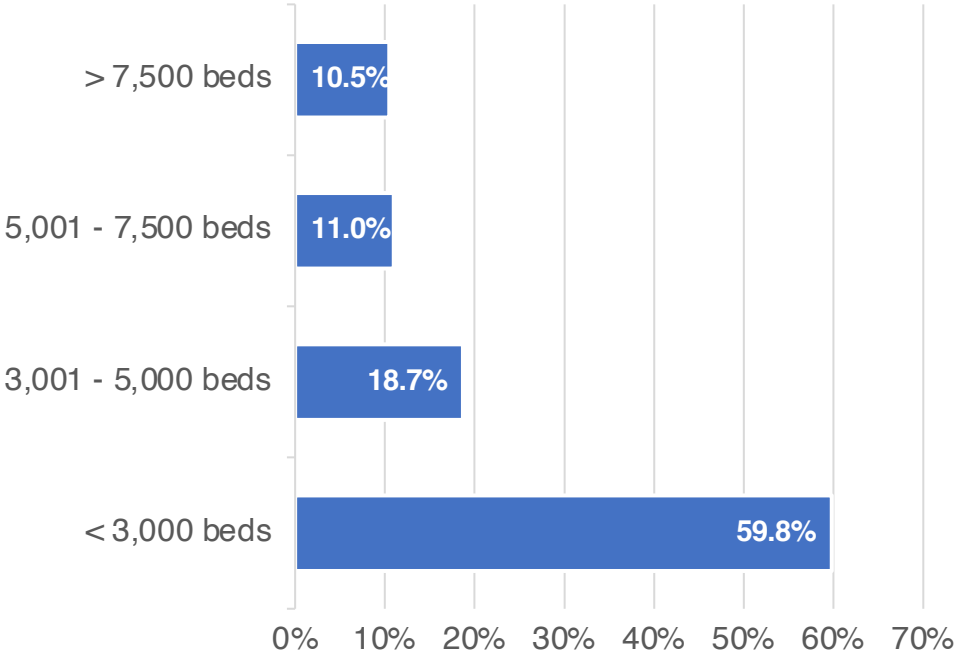
Thank you to members of the ACUHO-I Public Policy Advisory Committee (PPAC) for their assistance in developing and revising the straw poll questions.

Institutional Characteristics

Undergraduate Enrollment

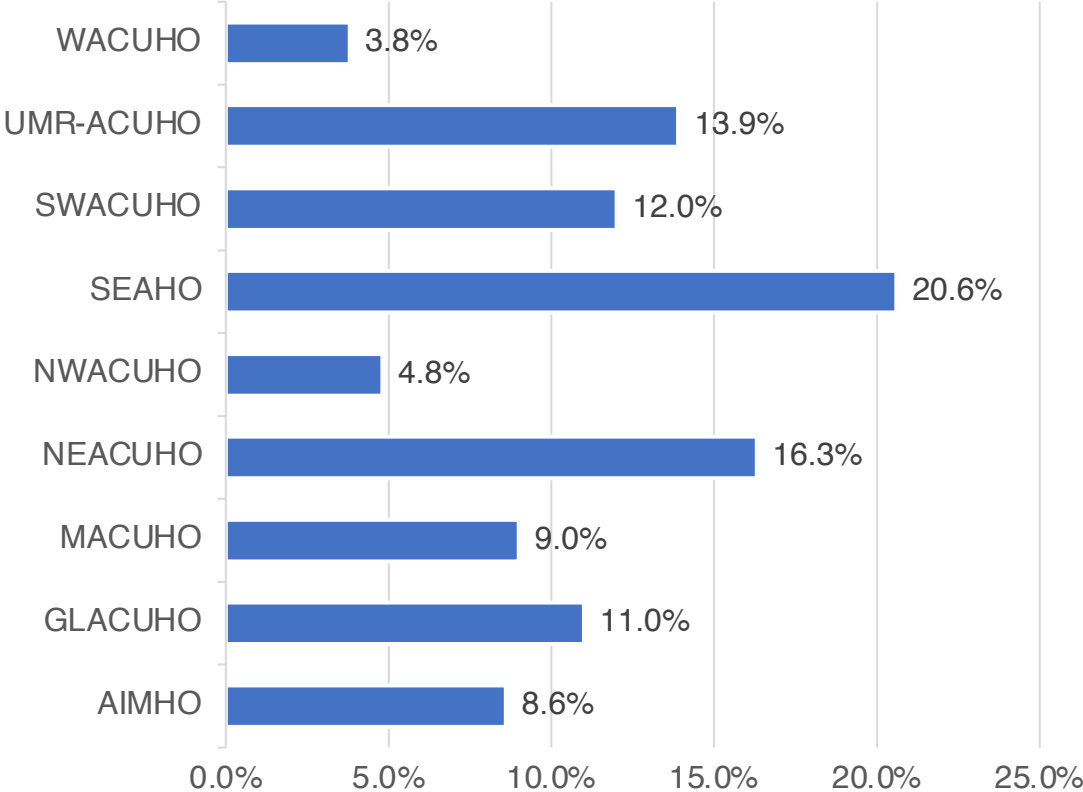


Bed Capacity

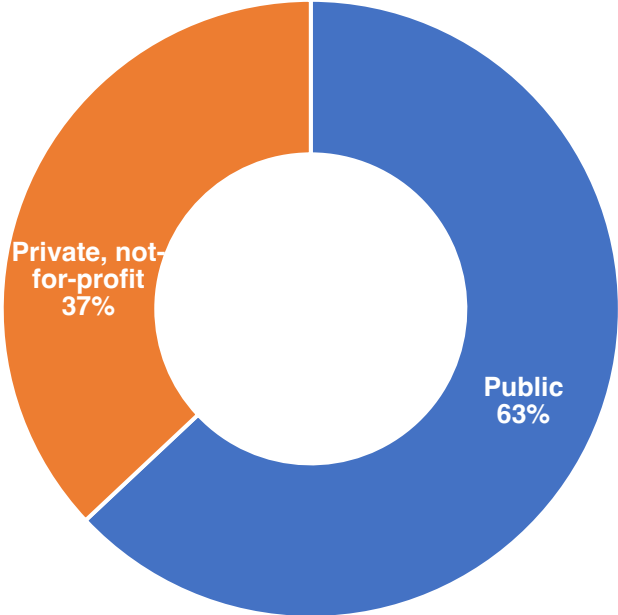


Institutional Characteristics

Region

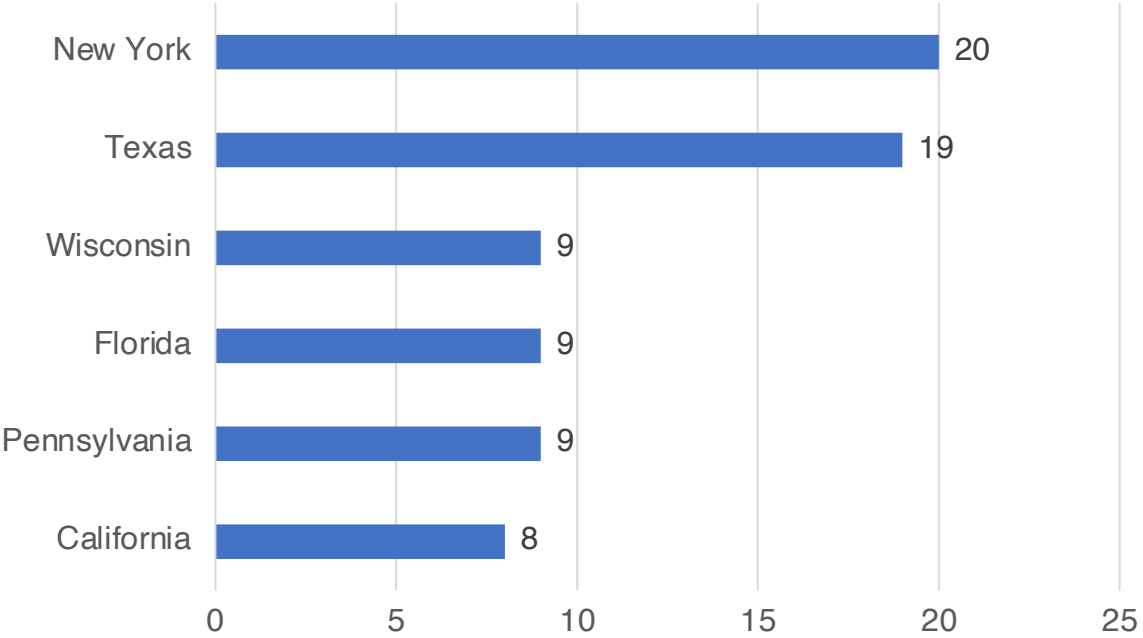


Sector



Institutional Characteristics

Most Represented States



Entry-Level, Live-In Staff Salary

Comparison by Undergraduate Enrollment	
<i>Overall Average</i>	
	\$43,438.58
<i>Average by Sector</i>	
<i>Public</i>	\$43,272.65
<i>Private, not-for-profit</i>	\$44,215.31

- Private, not-for-profit institutions reported **higher average salary** than public institutions
- The average salary at public institutions **fell below** the overall average salary

Entry-Level, Live-In Staff Salary

Comparison by Region	
<i>Overall Average</i>	
	\$43,438.58
<i>Region Average</i>	
<i>AIMHO</i>	\$45,163.84
<i>GLAUCHO</i>	\$40,688.42
<i>MACUHO</i>	\$42,540.00
<i>NEACUHO</i>	\$47,421.13
<i>NWACUHO</i>	\$43,628.46
<i>SEAHO</i>	\$40,845.66
<i>SWACUHO</i>	\$39,909.78
<i>UMR-ACUHO</i>	\$43,071.68
<i>WACUHO</i>	\$60,685.15

- **Highest average** salary is in WACUHO region
- **Lowest average** salary is in SWACUHO region
- The average salary in the GLACUHO, MACUHO, SEAHO, SWACUHO, and UMR-ACUHO regions **falls below** the overall average

Entry-Level, Live-In Staff Salary

Comparison by Bed Capacity	
<i>Overall Average</i>	
	\$43,438.58
<i>Average by Bed Capacity</i>	
<i>< 3,000 beds</i>	\$42,969.45
<i>3,001 – 5,000 beds</i>	\$42,600.68
<i>5,001 – 7,500 beds</i>	\$45,403.94
<i>> 7,500 beds</i>	\$48,367.33

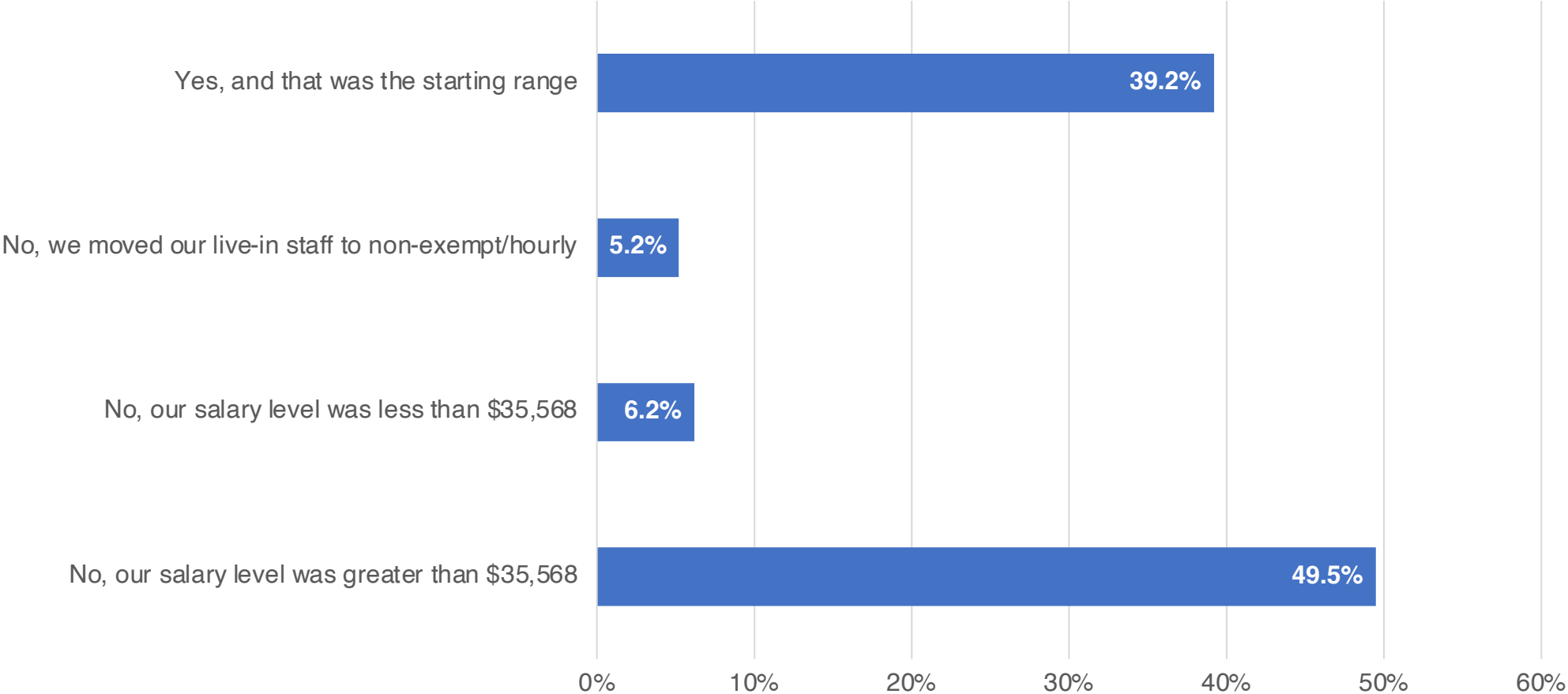
- **Highest average** salary is at institutions with > 7,500 beds
- **Lowest average** salary is at institutions with 3,001 – 5,000 beds
- The average salary at institutions with 5,000 or fewer beds **falls below** the overall average

Entry-Level, Live-In Staff Salary

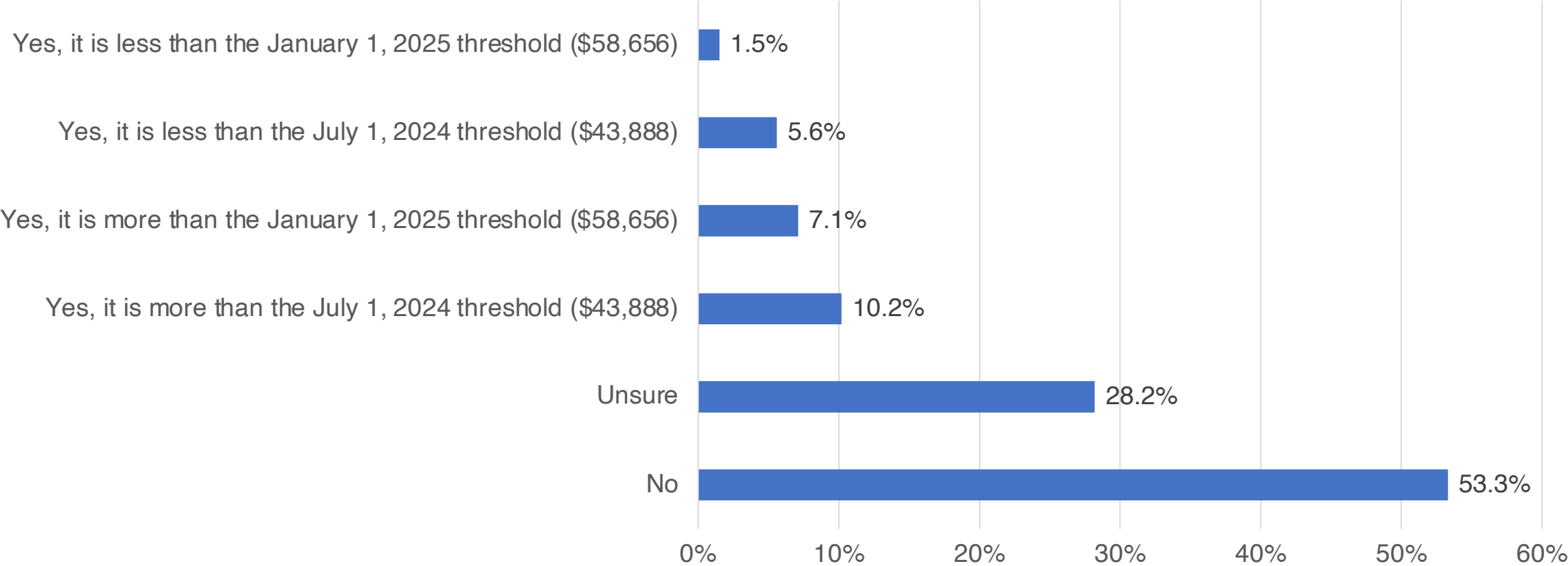
Comparison by Undergraduate Enrollment	
<i>Overall Average</i>	
	\$43,438.58
<i>Average by Enrollment</i>	
<i>< 2,000 students</i>	\$44,559.64
<i>2,001 – 10,000 students</i>	\$42,920.57
<i>10,001 – 20,000 students</i>	\$42,582.33
<i>20,001 – 30,000 students</i>	\$43,680.93
<i>> 30,000 students</i>	\$47,879.40

- **Highest average** salary is at institutions with > 30,000 students
- **Lowest average** salary is at institutions with 10,001 - 20,000 students
- The average salary at institutions with between 2,001 – 10,000 and 10,001 – 20,000 **students falls below** the overall average

A Look back: Adoption of 2019 Exempt Salary Threshold



Does Your State Have an Exempt Salary Threshold?



FLSA Classification

For entry-level, live-in staff positions that do not currently meet the July 1, 2024, exempt salary threshold (\$43,888), how close is your campus to a decision on FLSA classification?

Rating	% of Institutions
Not at all close	23.9%
Somewhat close	18.8%
Very Close	14.5%
Decided	13.8%
Unsure	29.0%

- More than half (52.9%) of institutions reported **not at all close** or **unsure** regarding their decision on FLSA classification for July
- 1 in 3 institutions reported being **somewhat** or **very** close to a decision
- More than 1 in 10 institutions (13.8%) have **decided** on FLSA classification

FLSA Classification

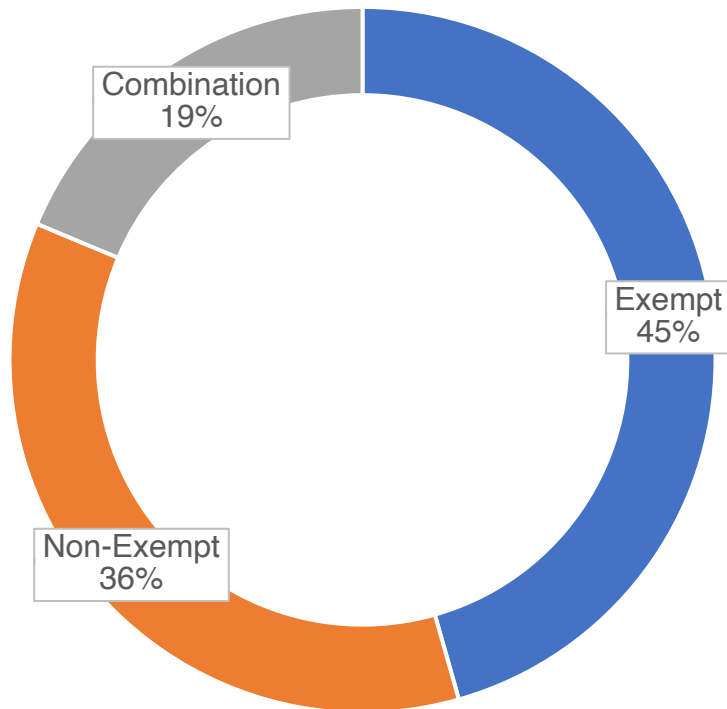
For entry-level, live-in staff positions that do not currently meet the January 1, 2025, exempt salary threshold (\$58,656), how close is your campus to a decision on FLSA classification?

Rating	% of Institutions
Not at all close	50.3%
Somewhat close	8.7%
Very Close	5.5%
Decided	7.7%
Unsure	27.9%

- Half of participating institutions (50.3%) reported being **not at all close** to a decision on FLSA classification for January
- Less than 10% of institutions have **decided** on FLSA classification for January (7.7%)
- More than 1 in 5 institutions (27.9%) are **unsure** how they will proceed on FLSA classification

FLSA Classification

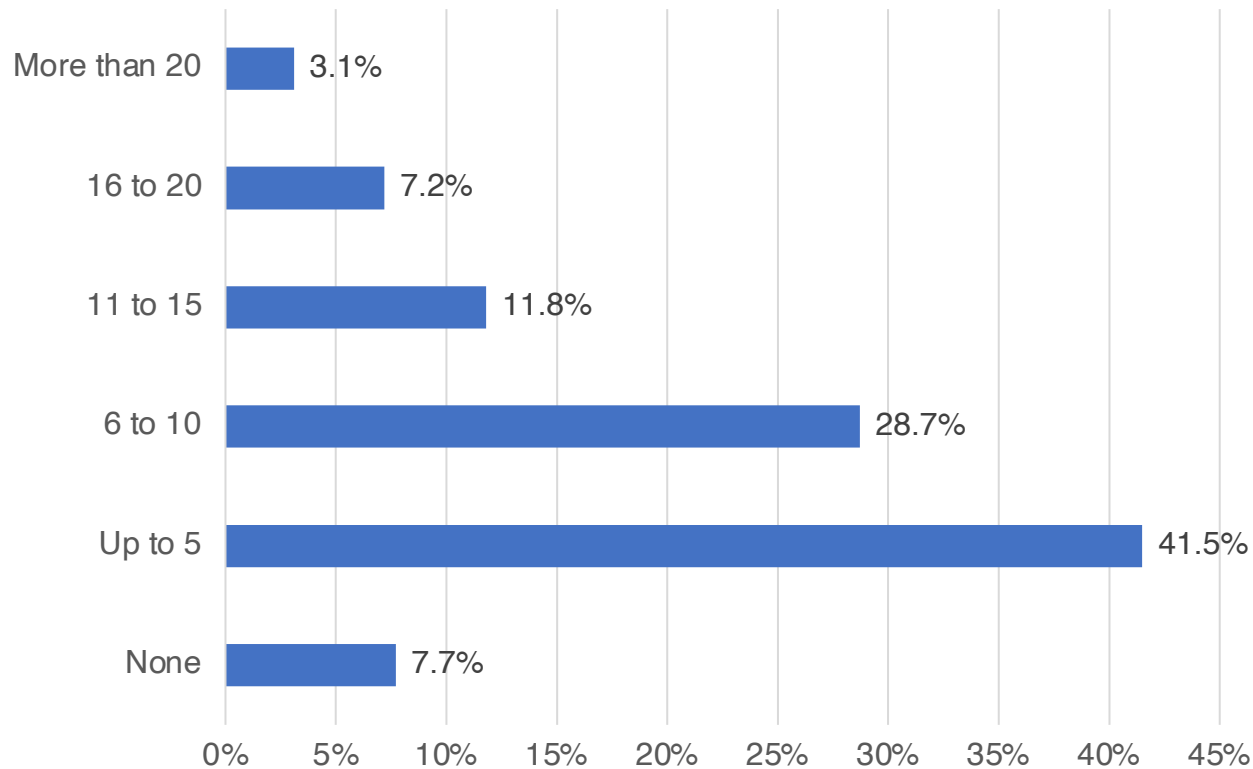
At this point, how do you anticipate classifying entry-level, live-in staff?



- **Exempt** classification was most common response reported by institutions (45%)

Staff Impact – Entry-Level, Live-In Staff

How many entry-level, live-in staff will be impacted by this decision?



Staff Impact – Mid-Level Housing Staff

How will this change impact mid-level housing staff?

Impact	% of Institutions
We will need to raise salaries to the exemption threshold	43.2%
We will need to pay overtime	23.9%
We will need to increase salaries due to salary compression	68.4%
We will need to reclassify them	16.1%
We will need to reduce mid-level positions to pay for the increase to entry-level	5.8%

- Nearly 7 in 10 institutions will need to **increase salaries due to compression** (68.4%)
- More than 4 in 10 institutions will need to **raise salaries to the exemption threshold** (43.2%)
- Nearly 1 in 5 institutions will need to **pay these staff overtime** (23.9%)
- Only about 6% of institutions plan to **reduce mid-level positions** to pay for the entry-level salary increase

Salary Compression

How severe will salary compression be for your department due to the classification of entry-level, live-in staff as exempt?

Level of Severity	% of Institutions
Not an issue	8.5%
Slightly severe	17.1%
Moderately severe	31.7%
Very severe	19.5%
Extremely severe	22.0%
Unsure	1.2%

- Nearly 1 in 3 institutions (31.7%) reported salary compression will be **moderately severe**
- Only 8.5% of institutions reported salary compression as **not an issue**
- 41.5% of institutions reported salary compression as **very** or **extremely severe**

Salary Compression

What is your department hoping to do about salary compression due to the classification of entry-level, live-in staff as exempt?

Plans to Address Compression	% of Institutions
Raise next level salaries	32.9%
Keep next level salaries the same	7.3%
It will not be an issue	7.3%
We haven't decided yet	50.0%
Other	2.4%

- Half of institutions haven't yet decided what action(s) to take
- About 1 in 3 institutions plan to raise next level salaries (32.9%)

Communication

How much have you communicated on the decision to raise salaries for entry-level, live-in positions impacted by the new exempt salary threshold?

	Not at all	Little	Somewhat	A Great Deal
Impacted staff	51.2%	27.7%	14.5%	6.6%
HR	23.2%	19.5%	32.9%	24.4%
VPSA	17.1%	16.4%	26.3%	40.1%
Other student affairs units	38.4%	26.0%	23.3%	12.3%
General counsel	70.1%	15.3%	9.5%	5.1%
Bargain units	93.3%	4.4%	1.1%	1.1%
State system	77.8%	13.1%	8.1%	1.0%

Adaptive Strategies – Part 1

How much have you considered the following adaptive strategies for entry-level, live-in staff?

	Not at All	A Little Bit	Somewhat	A Lot	Already Implemented
Hire 2 nd layer of FT staff to limit OT	70.7%	13.0%	8.7%	6.5%	1.1%
Hire 2 nd layer of FT staff to cover on-call responsibilities	62.0%	16.3%	14.1%	5.4%	2.2%
Hire more grad staff to cover some FT responsibilities	68.5%	15.2%	10.9%	4.3%	1.1%
Hire more undergrad staff to cover some FT responsibilities	71.7%	17.4%	6.5%	2.2%	2.2%
Restructure positions	18.5%	34.8%	25.0%	20.7%	1.1%
Reduce business hours support to provide additional after-hours support (e.g., change working hours)	31.5%	17.4%	26.1%	20.7%	4.3%
Limit on-campus professional development (e.g., on-campus committee work)	40.2%	30.4%	19.6%	7.6%	2.2%

Adaptive Strategies – Part 2

How much have you considered the following adaptive strategies for entry-level, live-in staff?

	Not at All	A Little Bit	Somewhat	A Lot	Already Implemented
Limit travel and professional organization involvement	56.5%	29.3%	8.7%	4.3%	1.1%
Change to a flexible work week	13.0%	21.7%	30.4%	20.7%	14.1%
Change live-in requirement to optional	66.3%	21.7%	6.5%	2.2%	2.2%
Make on-call less restrictive	35.9%	29.3%	14.1%	10.9%	9.8%
Reduce after hours support	55.4%	19.6%	13.0%	9.8%	2.2%
Eliminate jobs completely	83.7%	9.8%	3.3%	2.2%	1.1%

Levers to Manage Budget Impact

Levers	% of Institutions
Cut programming initiatives	22.2%
Cut professional development	26.9%
Use reserves or other pool (temporarily)	12.3%
Raise rates	29.8%
Suspend staff recruitment (open positions)	11.7%
Eliminate positions	15.8%
Salary differentials can be covered under existing budget structures	25.7%
We do not anticipate increased staffing costs due to FLSA compliance	11.7%
Unsure	40.4%
Other	21.1%

Budget Impact – July 1, 2024, Threshold

- *Regarding the July 1, 2024, threshold, what is the estimated budgetary impact for housing positions on your campus?*
 - **40.5%** of institutions reported **little to no impact**
 - **22.8%** of institutions reported they are **unsure**
 - **36.7%** of institutions indicated a specific dollar amount that their budget will be impacted
 - Average estimated budget impact is **\$42,396.55**

Budget Impact – January 1, 2025, Threshold

- *Regarding the January 1, 2025, threshold, what is the estimated budgetary impact for housing positions on your campus?*
 - **12.5%** of institutions reported **little to no impact**
 - **36.3%** of institutions reported they are **unsure**
 - **51.3%** of institutions indicated a specific dollar amount that their budget will be impacted
 - Average estimated budget impact is **\$198,830.54**

Qualitative Feedback – Salary Compression

- Concerns about salary compression
 - Affecting staff all the way to senior level staff – how do we retain mid- or senior-level staff when raises won't be given to them?
 - Already existed before rule was issued, this will make worse
 - All units within department affected (dining, marketing, operations, etc.)
 - Uncertainty about best practices around salary differentials

Qualitative Feedback – Managing Added Cost

- Manage added cost by removing parts of salary package
 - Remove meal plan
 - Require live-on professionals pay for their housing
- Plan to rotate on-call through the team as one tactic
- Need reasonable pay structure for on-call in addition to overtime
- Day-to-day operations will be impacted by moving staff to hourly and having to rethink how on-call is handled
- Need different pay models if on-call positions will become hourly

Qualitative Feedback – Complicating Factors

- Lower enrollment and budget cuts preceded this announcement and are making navigating changes even more complicated
- Litigation is anticipated, plan to wait to implement any changes
- Concerned this will lead to inability of staff to be involved with professional orgs, volunteer on committees, attend conferences
- July salary threshold is ‘doable,’ but January is not
- This will lead to a budget crisis at small, private institutions
- It is the right thing to do but not sure how we will manage

Takeaways

- More respondent institutions are decided about the July (13.8%) vs. January (7.7%) FLSA deadlines, but in both, over half are still unsure
- At this point, less than half of respondent institutions anticipate classifying their live-in staff as exempt
- Salary compression is a concern for almost 75% of respondent institutions
- Almost 70% of respondents plan to raise mid-level salaries due to compression

Takeaways

- The most significant communication line about these decisions are with supervisors/VPSAs (very few are communicating with impacted staff)
- 40% do not know how they will manage the additional budgetary costs associated with compliance
 - 1 in 5 would consider cutting programs
 - 1 in 4 cutting pro devo
 - 1 in 3 raising rates

Takeaways

- The most promising adaptive strategies from this list are:
 - Restructuring positions (>45% considering somewhat or a lot)
 - Reducing business hours for after-hours support (>46% considering somewhat or a lot)
 - Changing to a flex work week (14% already implemented and >50% considering somewhat or a lot)
 - Implementing less restrictive on-call policies (10% already implemented and 25% considering somewhat or a lot)