

Employee Engagement Survey

APPENDICES

2019

May 2020 | Report 11.252

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DSHS Photo Contest • Category: Technical
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 *Washington State*
Department of Social
& Health Services

Transforming lives

2019

DSHS Employee Engagement Survey

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2019 DSHS Employee Engagement Survey

APPENDIX A

Background, Methods, and Response Rates

Background, Methods, and Response Rates

BACKGROUND | PREVIOUS SURVEYS

DSHS has long recognized that a focus on staff well-being and professional growth is vital to ensuring quality service to agency clients. Because of the interest in employee perspectives, in the 1980s and 1990s many of the administrations, divisions, regions, and offices conducted their own employee surveys.

There have been many previous DSHS-wide employee surveys. The first DSHS-wide employee survey was given to a random sample of DSHS employees in 2000. The survey was based on the 50 questions in the standard Washington State Department of Personnel Employee Survey with 11 additional questions based on the DSHS Balanced ScoreCard.

The second DSHS-wide employee survey was designed to meet the need for program-specific information, in addition to agency-wide results. It was conducted as a “rolling” survey, and consisted of a series of program-level surveys conducted between October 2002 and July 2004. Each of the program-level surveys included the 61 questions that were included in the 2000 DSHS-wide survey, plus additional questions for individual programs.

In 2006, a statewide survey was requested by Governor Christine Gregoire. The survey was created by a committee called together by Department of Personnel (DOP), with oversight by the Governor’s cabinet. Instead of using the traditional 50-question “DOP survey,” the committee pared the statewide survey down to 12 questions. DSHS added six additional standard questions and two narrative questions for agency use. The survey was conducted by the survey section of the DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division (RDA) from March 1 to April 14, 2006. For the first time, all DSHS employees were asked to participate in the employee survey. Also, for the first time, the DSHS Secretary required each Administration to complete an Action Plan in response to survey findings.

Further agency-wide surveys were conducted by RDA’s survey section in odd-numbered years from 2007 through 2015. All these surveys were conducted in collaboration with surveys of all state agencies by the Office of Financial Management (OFM). Questions were added or dropped during this time period. For example, four questions originally included only in the DSHS survey were incorporated into the survey for all state agencies, with some minor wording changes.

In 2014, there was a statewide initiative to conduct the survey on an annual basis. In order to meet this goal, DSHS began to participate in the Washington State Employee Engagement Survey in even-numbered years, following OFM guidelines for the survey, without the many added features included in the DSHS Employee Engagement Survey conducted in odd-numbered years. These surveys had a more streamlined approach to recruitment and data management, and no specialized or targeted recruitment methods were used. There were also no open-ended or DSHS-specific questions, and reports were only prepared for Administrations and major divisions. These OFM-sponsored surveys, conducted in 2014, 2016, and 2018 are considered to be “spot checks” in the two-year DSHS survey cycle. The response rate was 48% in 2014, 35% in 2016, and 51% in 2018 based on FTE totals. Because these response rates are much lower than the surveys conducted in 2017 and 2019, we advise against comparing even-year survey results to other survey years.

In 2016, the Office of Financial Management added three questions to the statewide survey:

- People are treated fairly in my work group. (Adapted from previous DSHS surveys)
- At my job, I have the opportunity to make good use of my skills.
- I would recommend my agency as a great place to work.

In 2017, the Office of Financial Management added a question concerning satisfaction with the work environment for the state’s “Building a Modern Workplace” initiative. Employees were asked to rate their satisfaction with five dimensions of their work environment (Flexibility, Mobility, Physical Space, Technology, and Well-being).

In 2018, the Office of Financial Management added the following question to the statewide survey:

- At my workplace, I feel valued for who I am as a person.

THE 2019 SURVEY | ADMINISTRATION

The survey was conducted from October 1 to November 14, 2019. RDA staff worked with each administration to identify work groups and additional program-specific questions. RDA also administered the survey on behalf of the Health Care Authority (HCA) and the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF).

- Surveys were primarily collected on the internet using SurveyMonkey, a web-based survey company (www.surveymonkey.com). The survey was configured so that it did not collect identifying information such as computer network addresses.
- Surveys were also available as printed copies for employees without computer access or those who felt more comfortable submitting a paper survey. Return envelopes were provided in institutions where some employees had limited computer access, so paper surveys could be anonymously mailed to RDA.

Several features were built into the survey process to ensure respondent anonymity and boost response rates:

- Along with invitations and reminders to participate in the survey, employees were sent a link to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), explaining survey procedures and features that ensure anonymity.
- Starting in 2015, a pop-up reminder was presented to most DSHS employees when they logged into their computers. The reminder persisted until an employee either completed the survey or selected the survey link without completing the survey. Reminders were implemented in all locations but ESA and Eastern State Hospital.
- RDA only released survey information in summary format as follows:
 - Answers to all standard questions were released in reports containing summary tables. If a work group had fewer than 6 respondents, no reports were issued.
 - Answers to the narrative questions were released in large lists, generally containing the responses of more than 100 respondents.¹
 - Identifying information was redacted from the narrative responses before general distribution.

The survey was initially announced via email message to all Department staff from Secretary Strange. With consultation and general direction from RDA, staff from each administration and institution customized procedures to distribute and publicize surveys to all employees. Typically, these steps included email to each individual, periodic email reminders, reminders distributed through supervisory channels, notices in program websites and newsletters, prominently displayed posters, and paper surveys distributed to those without computer access. Eastern State Hospital administered the survey using individualized survey links sent via email directly from SurveyMonkey.

In 2019, the Office of Financial Management added two of the five work environment dimensions (Flexibility and Mobility) to the standard questionnaire, and removed the others (Physical Space, Technology, and Well-being). DSHS added new questions to the survey about Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and removed the original fair treatment question that was later adapted for statewide use. The following questions were added to the DSHS survey:

- In the past two years, I have personally witnessed or experienced instances of bias while working at my agency. (This question was excluded from reporting due to issues during survey administration – described below)
- My agency clearly communicates that bullying and harassment are not acceptable.

The following question was removed from the DSHS survey:

- People are treated fairly in my work group, without discrimination.

We found two threats to the validity of responses to the question about experienced or witnessed instances of bias, and removed this question from the analysis. First, an error was discovered in the questionnaire during the

¹ Smaller groups were sometimes used because of small program sizes.

survey period. All of the core questions, and three of the four questions in the DSHS-specific set, were formatted so that responses of “Usually” and “Almost Always or Always” were considered to be positive – indicators of satisfaction. However, frequent observed or experienced bias is clearly negative. A respondent who has just answered 24 questions in which “Always” means positive and “Never” means negative could easily answer in the opposite manner than what was intended. The issue was not discovered until October 10, when the survey had been active for 10 days. Second, additional review of responses using the word “bias” shows that respondents vary considerably in how they use the term and how they think about related instances. Some recall specific events, while others appear to be expressing generalized attitudes. Some describe discrimination against protected groups, while others appear to be focused on issues such as the hiring of friends and family, or bias based on professional roles. While there is obvious value in collecting data on experiences of discrimination, future questions will need better specification and more testing in order to ensure actionable results.

NARRATIVE COMMENTS

Each survey respondent was asked two narrative questions:

- “What do you like best about your current job?”
- “What changes would you like to see in your workplace?”

These questions strengthen the survey analysis by allowing mixed methods analysis (combining both quantitative and qualitative findings). The qualitative analysis of the themes in the responses to these two narrative questions assists in understanding why scores on the standard questions change from year to year and what issues underlie the concerns or praise expressed through scores on the standard questions.

The coding process started with use of a coding scheme and definitions developed in response to previous employee surveys. As new themes emerged, they were added to the code lists and definitions. A summary of the current coding scheme is found in Appendix C.

A number of steps were employed to ensure accurate and consistent coding:

- An electronic system facilitated coding. The coder sees the comment at the top of his or her computer screen, and is able to “click” on the appropriate codes.
- Each coder worked from a standardized list of code definitions.
- All employees who worked as coders and code checkers were trained, and most had extensive prior experience. New coders attended training sessions, and worked on sample sets of responses to ensure reliable and consistent coding.
- Coding meetings were held regularly to identify any questions or differences in interpretation.
- As areas of ambiguity were identified, the coding instructions and definitions were modified to address these issues.
- The former principal investigator (Dr. Nancy Raiha) checked the coding of every response.

In addition to these steps, we assessed inter-coder reliability on a sample of 200 respondents who answered the question “What changes would you like to see in your workplace?” These comments were coded by three independent coders (one set of these had been checked as described above). Krippendorff’s Alpha¹ statistic was calculated for codes with at least 5 instances (average $\alpha = .75$), and for codes with at least 10 instances (average $\alpha = .72$). Based on Krippendorff’s recommendations, these results can be considered “fair.” Results for specific codes are shown below.

Krippendorff’s Alpha	5+ Instances	10+ Instances
.80 or more (good)	JA, RF, RP, RS, RT	JS
.67-.79 (fair)	MR, PP, RO	MC, MF, MO, CI, CL, PP, WC
.67 or less (poor)	GO, GS, CO	MS, GP

¹ Hayes, Andrew F. & Krippendorff, Klaus (2007). Answering the call for a standard reliability measure for coding data. *Communication Methods and Measures*, 1, 77–89.

The table shows that coding is very reliable for comments about job characteristics and resources, adequate for coding most comments about management behavior, communication, and co-worker competence, and in need of improvement for comments about management support and “general” comments. The latter case is not surprising as these categories by definition include comments that are not easily categorized. These results will be used to improve coding methods in the 2021 survey.

RESPONSE RATES

13,105 employees completed the employee survey. Response rates for each program are included in the table below. In general, it was more difficult to obtain responses from large institutions with many shift workers and staff without internet access. Smaller divisions tended to have higher response rates.

The 81% overall response rate was the highest ever achieved for this survey, up from a headcount-based response rate of 79% in 2017. The increase in the response rate reflects significant efforts by all administrations. Starting in 2019, DSHS response rates are calculated on the basis of headcount, rather than full-time equivalence units (FTEs). Using a count of employees as a denominator is simpler and is consistent with the method used by OFM.

WEIGHTING

Data from all administrations and divisions were combined into a master file for analysis. In order to more accurately generalize results to the population of DSHS employees as a whole, each program’s responses were weighted so that the number of responses from that program reflects that program’s share of total DSHS employees as measured by headcount. For example, 25 percent of DSHS employees work for the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA). For DSHS-wide analyses, the 3,183 responses from DDA were weighted by a factor of 1.26 so that they comprised 25 percent of the total survey responses. The weighting scheme for all programs is shown in the table below.

Administration/Program	Number of Employees in Program*	Percent of All DSHS Employees in Program	Number of Completed Surveys	Weight	Response Rate
AGING & LONG-TERM SUPPORT	2,262	14%	1,967	1.15	87%
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH	4,119	26%	2,896	N/A	70%
Child Study and Treatment Center	154	1%	119	1.29	77%
Eastern State Hospital	858	5%	656	1.31	76%
Western State Hospital	2,404	15%	1,477	1.63	61%
Special Commitment Center	381	2%	351	1.09	92%
HQ and Office of Forensic Mental Health	322	2%	293	1.10	91%
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES	4,005	25%	3,183	1.26	80%
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION	302	2%	308	0.98	102%
ECONOMIC SERVICES	4,069	25%	3,599	1.13	88%
FACILITIES, FINANCE AND ANALYTICS	975	6%	704	1.38	72%
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY	423	3%	448	0.94	106%
TOTAL	16,152	100%	13,105	N/A	81%

*Headcount totals as of October 1, 2019 (Source HRMS). Response rates can exceed 100% due to contractors, new employees, respondents revisiting the survey to give additional comments, and other factors.

ANALYSIS

Tables and charts in the main report and in the appendices show the results of survey analysis. Page 5 of the Executive Summary displays bar charts showing the percentage of employees responding positively¹ to each standard question for both 2019 and 2017 surveys. A more detailed table showing all 2019 responses to each standard question, as well as the average responses on a scale of 1-5, can be found in Appendix B (B-2 and B-3).

¹ An answer of “Always or Almost Always” or “Usually” is considered a positive response. For the flexibility and mobility questions, an answer of “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” is considered positive.

Appendix B also displays this data in bar graphs, showing both the questions that elicited the most positive responses (B-5), and those that elicited the most negative answers (B-6).

A chart on page 6 of the Executive Summary, as well as more detailed charts and tables in Appendix B (B-11 through B-13), show analyses of the themes in the responses to narrative questions. Definitions for each of the comment themes are also provided in Appendix C.

Charts on B-8 and B-9 in Appendix B compare the results from this 2019 employee survey to the results of the 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2017 employee surveys. Because the surveys before 2006 had different questions, and the 2014, 2016 and 2018 surveys used different methods, they are not included.

Chart E in Appendix B compares the DSHS survey results to survey results for employees from all state agencies, compiled by the Office of the State Human Resources Director in the Office of Financial Management.

Due to rounding, some percentages reported as whole numbers may not add to 100%.

EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF RESPONSE SIMILARITY

To ensure anonymity, there are no limitations on how many times an employee can complete the survey. The methods available to ensure no more than one response per respondent all require the monitoring of information that could be used to identify individuals, and we know from employee comments that collection of such information can dissuade employees from providing frank feedback or even from participating at all. Historically we have used two methods to identify and remove duplicated responses.

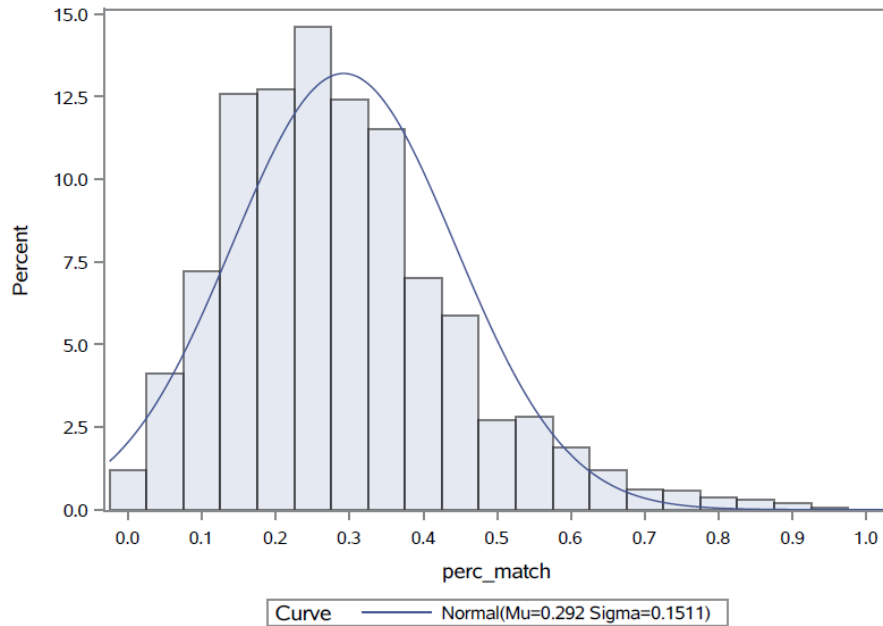
- The coding process allows coders to identify open comment responses that they believe may be duplicated. These are reviewed carefully and conservatively; data are retained if there is a lack of consensus or less than 100% confidence that the responses were submitted by the same individual.
- When printed copies are returned with highly similar features such as content, markings, or handwriting, project staff bring them to the attention of supervisors for review. While such cases are rare, they are easy to identify.

In the 2019 survey analysis, we implemented a new method to identify unusual patterns suggestive of multiple responses.¹ This method involves comparing the answers of each respondent to every other respondent in a group, and records the percentage of matching items for the most similar case. While there are many legitimate reasons for responses to be similar, unusual patterns indicate potential for duplicate responding that should be reviewed carefully. We examined the distributions of maximum percent matches across the 87 groups identified for distributing open ended comments across DSHS. These groups are chosen by administration leadership to allow useful interpretation without compromising the identities of respondents.

The top figure on the following page shows a typical distribution of maximum percent match (shown as a proportion from 0 to 1 on the horizontal axis) by the percent of the group represented in each band (shown as a percentage from 0 to 100 on the vertical axis), with a superimposed normal curve. On the left side of the graph are the relatively few cases that are completely unique (zero percent match), and on the right side are the (again few) cases that are identical (100% match). If there were substantial numbers of identical or near-identical cases, they would appear as a bump or spike in the far right side of the graph. Nearly all of the groups analyzed showed similar patterns, suggesting that duplicated responses are uncommon.

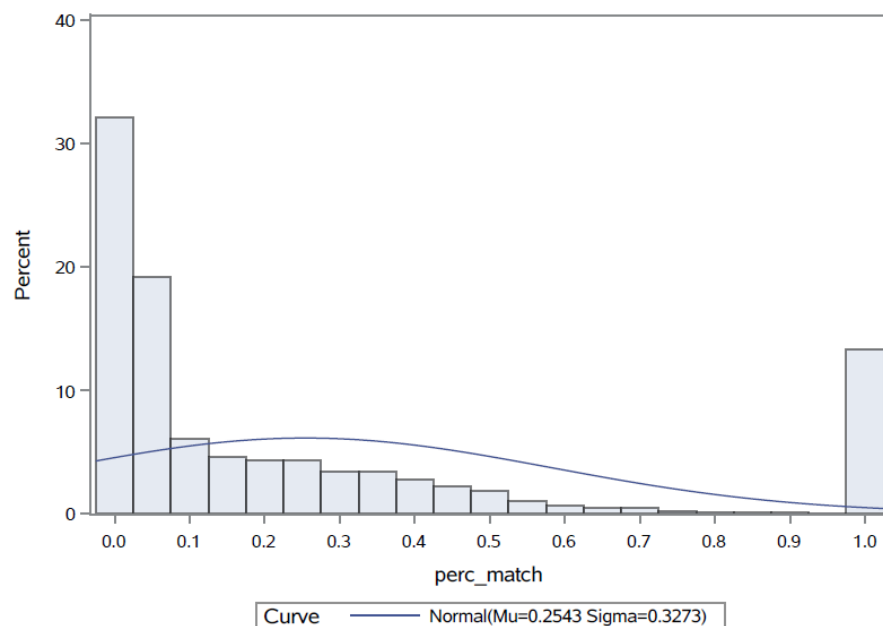
¹ Kuriakose, Noble & Robbins, Michael. (2016). Don't get duped: Fraud through duplication in public opinion surveys. *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*. 32. 283-291.

Maximum Percent Match: Typical Distribution



There was one exception to this pattern, in a group that had multiple responses flagged by coders as potential duplicates. Only a few of these were clear-cut enough to justify removal, but we suspected that there were more. As can be seen in the table below, there was a substantial spike at the far right side of this distribution, indicating that results for this group must be treated with caution. Although there is no way to identify for sure which apparent duplicates are fraudulent, we were able to use these results to warn leaders to be cautious interpreting data from this group (not necessarily related to apparent duplication). Also notable in the second chart is the high number at the left side of the distribution (zero maximum percent match). This reflects a very high rate of skipped questions (35% of respondents in this group did not answer any of the standard survey questions but did provide some other information). Most importantly, we were able to verify that patterns like this can be detected but are unusual; this was the only clear-cut instance of a suspicious pattern across all 87 comment groups.

Maximum Percent Match: Suspicious Distribution



FURTHER QUESTIONS

Please direct questions about survey methods or analysis to:

- John Rogers: (360) 902-0804; rogerjd2@dshs.wa.gov
- Michaela Beals: (360) 902-0744; michaela.beals@dshs.wa.gov



2019 DSHS Employee Engagement Survey

APPENDIX B

Standard Statistical Report



2019 DSHS Employee Survey

for
Department of Social and Health Services

Survey Administered by
Research and Data Analysis

- A1. Statistical Report
- A2. Statistical Report - Continued
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- C. Questions Ordered by Highest to Lowest - Percent Positive
- D. Questions Ordered by Highest to Lowest - Percent Negative
- E. Comparison to All State Employees
- F1. Comparison to Previous Employee Survey - 2017
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- G. Major Comment Themes - Number of Respondents Who Made Comments
- H. Major Comment Themes - Percent of Respondents Who Made Comments
- J. Narrative Comments Report



Statistical Report

DSHS Employee Survey - Oct-Nov 2019

All DSHS Staff - Weighted³

STATEWIDE QUESTIONS		Number of Responses					Average ¹	Percent Always or Usually ²
		Almost Always or Always	Usually	Occasionally	Seldom	Never or Almost Never		
1	I have the opportunity to give input on decisions affecting my work.	23%	32%	24%	13%	8%	3.52	56%
2	I receive the information I need to do my job effectively.	23%	47%	18%	8%	3%	3.80	71%
3	I know how my work contributes to the goals of my agency.	47%	35%	10%	5%	3%	4.18	82%
4	I know what is expected of me at work.	51%	36%	8%	3%	2%	4.32	87%
5	I have opportunities at work to learn and grow.	34%	30%	19%	11%	6%	3.73	64%
6	I have the tools and resources I need to do my job effectively.	26%	42%	19%	9%	4%	3.77	68%
7	My supervisor treats me with dignity and respect.	63%	21%	7%	4%	4%	4.35	85%
8	My supervisor gives me ongoing feedback that helps me improve my performance.	45%	26%	14%	8%	6%	3.96	72%
9	I receive recognition for a job well done.	31%	25%	20%	14%	11%	3.52	56%
10	We are making improvements to make things better for our customers.	31%	35%	20%	9%	5%	3.77	65%
11	A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists in my work group.	35%	33%	16%	9%	7%	3.79	68%
12	I know how my agency measures its success.	26%	33%	21%	11%	9%	3.55	58%
13	My agency consistently demonstrates support for a diverse workforce.	37%	33%	17%	7%	6%	3.89	70%
14	I receive clear information about changes being made within the agency.	18%	31%	26%	15%	10%	3.32	49%
15	I am encouraged to come up with better ways of doing things.	24%	28%	22%	15%	12%	3.38	52%
16	We use customer feedback to improve our work processes.	19%	27%	25%	16%	12%	3.26	46%
17	People are treated fairly in my work group.	32%	32%	16%	10%	9%	3.68	64%
18	At my job, I have the opportunity to make good use of my skills.	33%	35%	17%	8%	6%	3.80	68%
19	At my workplace, I feel valued for who I am as a person.	33%	29%	17%	10%	11%	3.62	62%
20	My supervisor trusts me to make decisions or recommendations that affect my work.	47%	28%	12%	6%	6%	4.04	76%
21	In general, I'm satisfied with my job.	32%	36%	18%	8%	6%	3.82	69%
22	I would recommend my agency as a great place to work.	31%	29%	19%	10%	11%	3.59	60%

¹Average where "Almost Always or Always"=5, and "Never or Almost Never"=1. Does not include missing data.

²Percent answering "Almost Always or Always" or "Usually." Does not include missing data.

³Weighted numbers reflect the number who would have answered if all DSHS employees completed the survey.

Statistical Report - Continued

DSHS Employee Survey - Oct-Nov 2019

All DSHS Staff - Weighted⁵

STATEWIDE WORK ENVIRONMENT QUESTIONS		Number of Responses					Average ¹	Percent Very Satisfied or Satisfied ²
		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied		
23	How satisfied are you with your flexibility? (the ability to adjust your scheduled hours as needed)	34%	26%	18%	12%	10%	3.61	60%
24	How satisfied are you with your mobility? (the ability to work remotely from a variety of locations, such as your home or alternate work site)	27%	21%	25%	14%	13%	3.35	48%

DSHS QUESTIONS		Number of Responses					Average ³	Percent Always or Usually ⁴
		Almost Always or Always	Usually	Occasionally	Seldom	Never or Almost Never		
25	My agency uses my time and talents well.	22%	40%	21%	10%	7%	3.61	62%
26	Overall, my agency supports me in living a healthier life.	23%	34%	21%	12%	10%	3.48	57%
27	My agency clearly communicates that bullying and harassment are not acceptable.	43%	25%	14%	10%	9%	3.84	68%

¹Average where "Very Satisfied"=5, and "Very Dissatisfied"=1. Does not include "Doesn't Apply" or missing data.

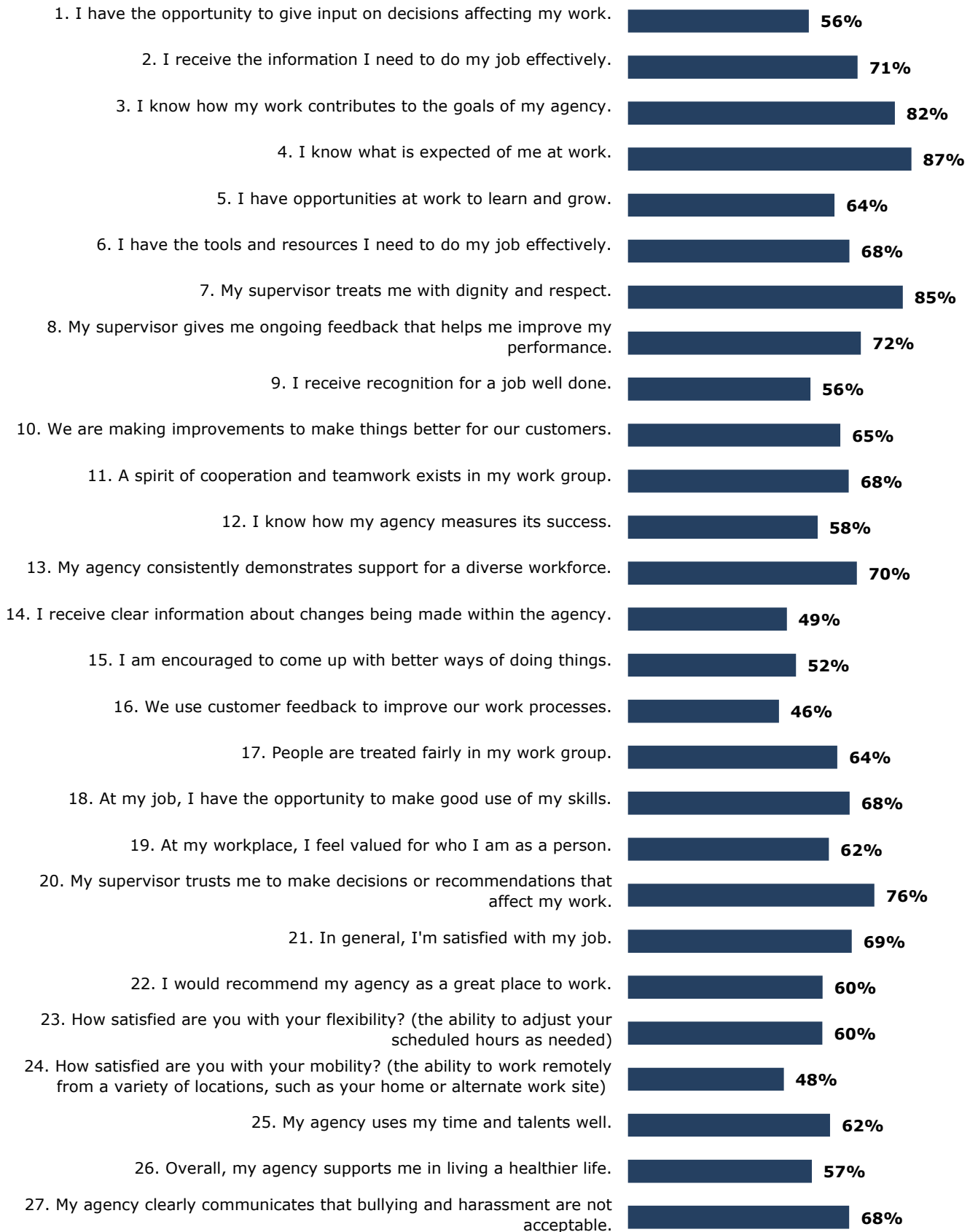
²Percent answering "Very Satisfied or Satisfied." Does not include "Doesn't Apply" or missing data.

³Average where "Almost Always or Always"=5, and " Never or Almost Never"=1. Does not include missing data.

⁴Percent answering "Almost Always or Always" or "Usually." Does not include missing data.

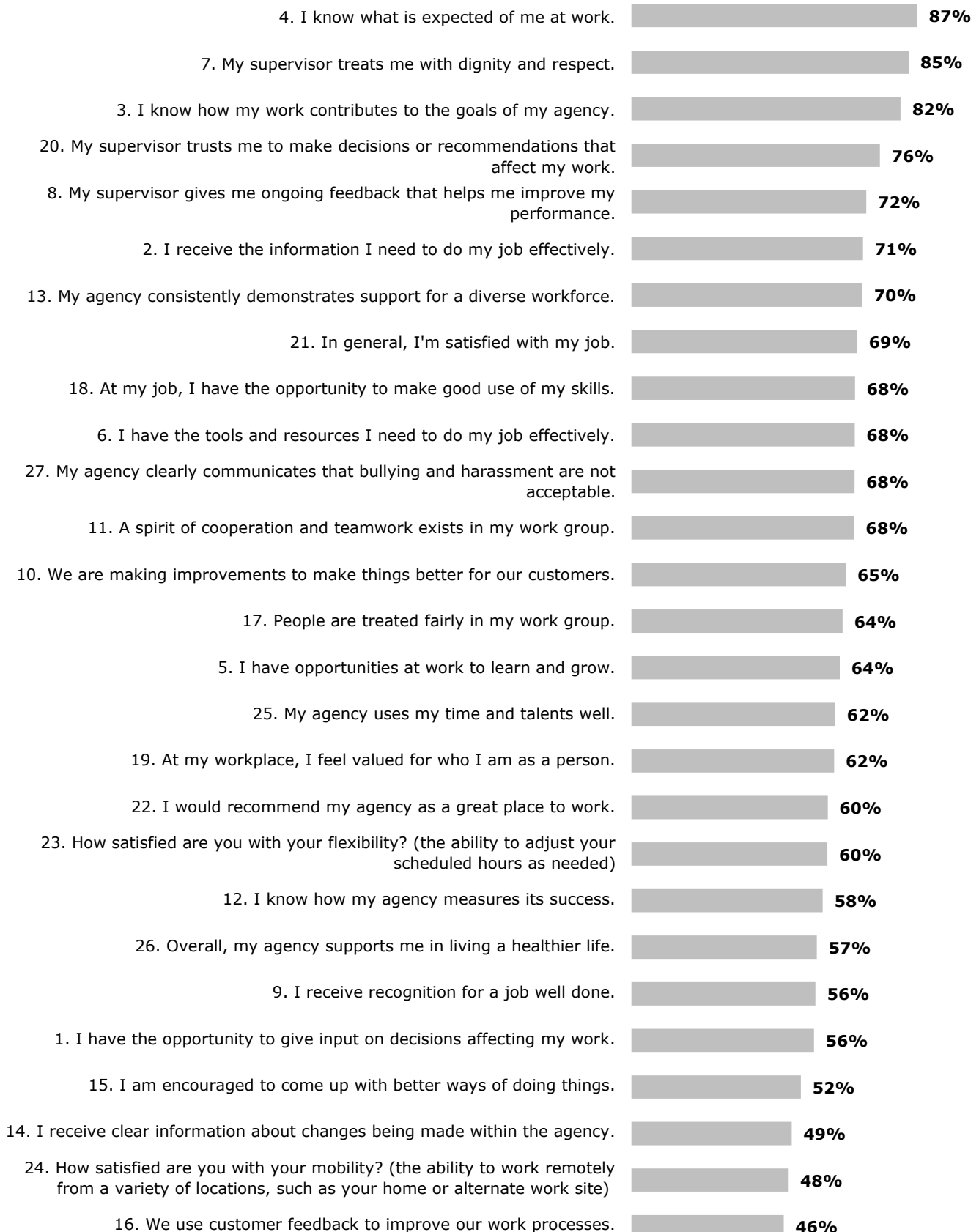
⁵Weighted numbers reflect the number who would have answered if all DSHS employees completed the survey.

Percent Positive¹



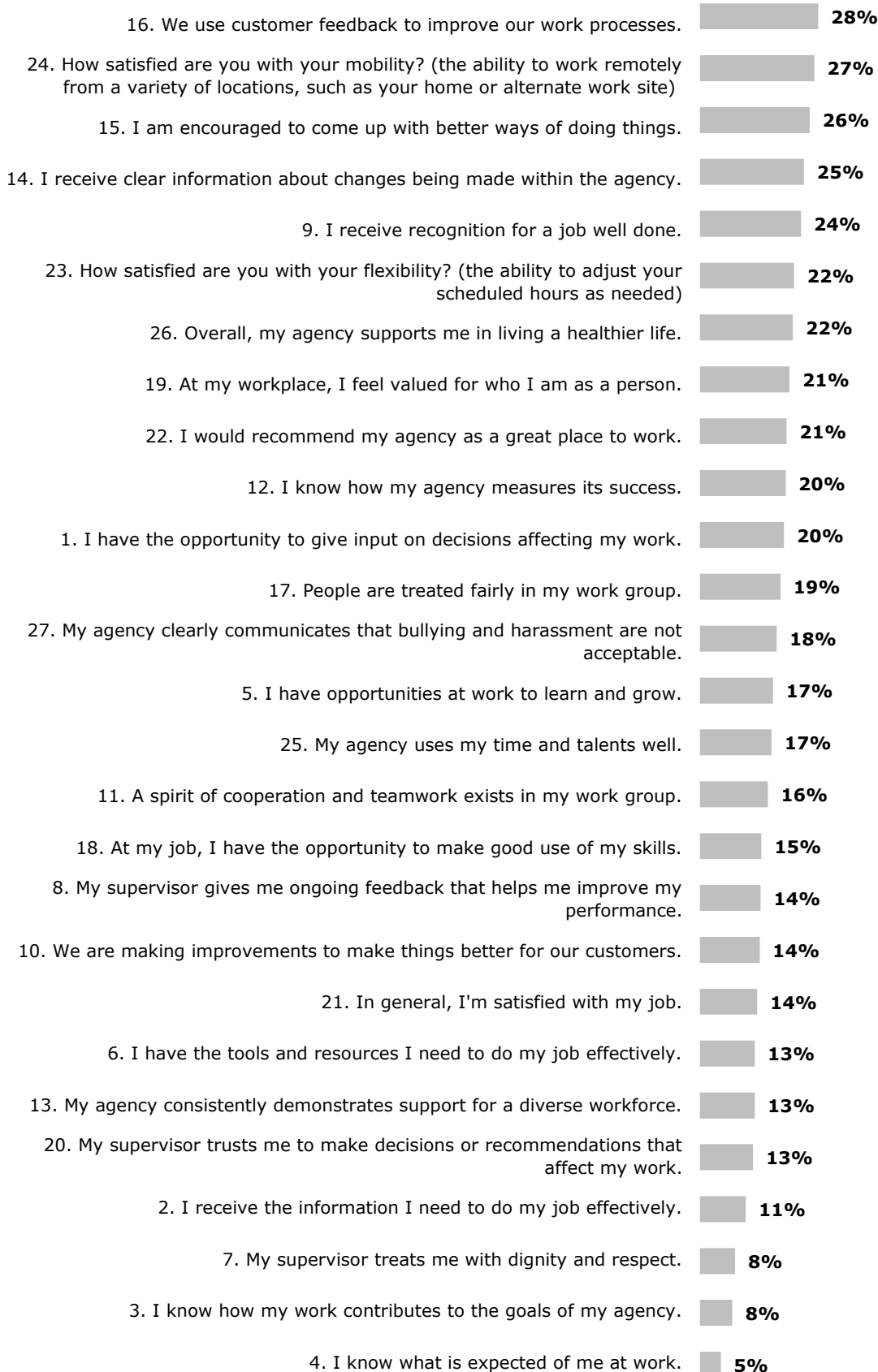
¹ For questions 23 and 24, percent answering "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied." Does not include missing data or "Doesn't Apply." For all other questions, percent answering "Almost Always or Always" or "Usually." Does not include missing data.

**Questions Ordered by Highest to Lowest
Percent Positive¹**



¹ For questions 23 and 24, percent answering "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied." Does not include missing data or "Doesn't Apply." For all other questions, percent answering "Almost Always or Always" or "Usually." Does not include missing data.

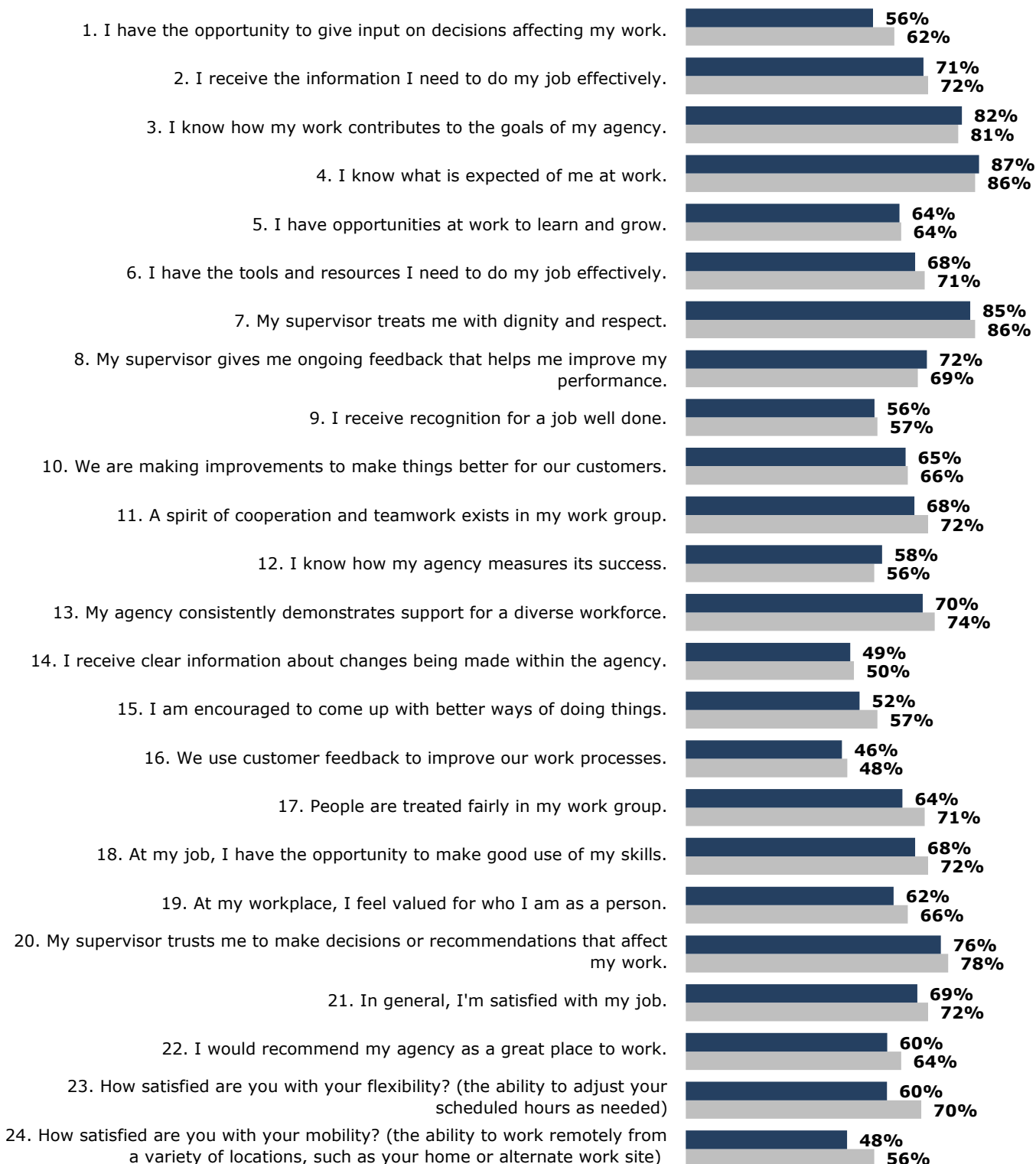
**Questions Ordered by Highest to Lowest
Percent Negative¹**



¹ For questions 23 and 24, percent answering "Very Dissatisfied" or "Dissatisfied." Does not include missing data or "Doesn't Apply." For all other questions, percent answering "Never or Almost Never" or "Seldom." Does not include missing data.

**Comparison to All State Employees
Percent Positive¹**

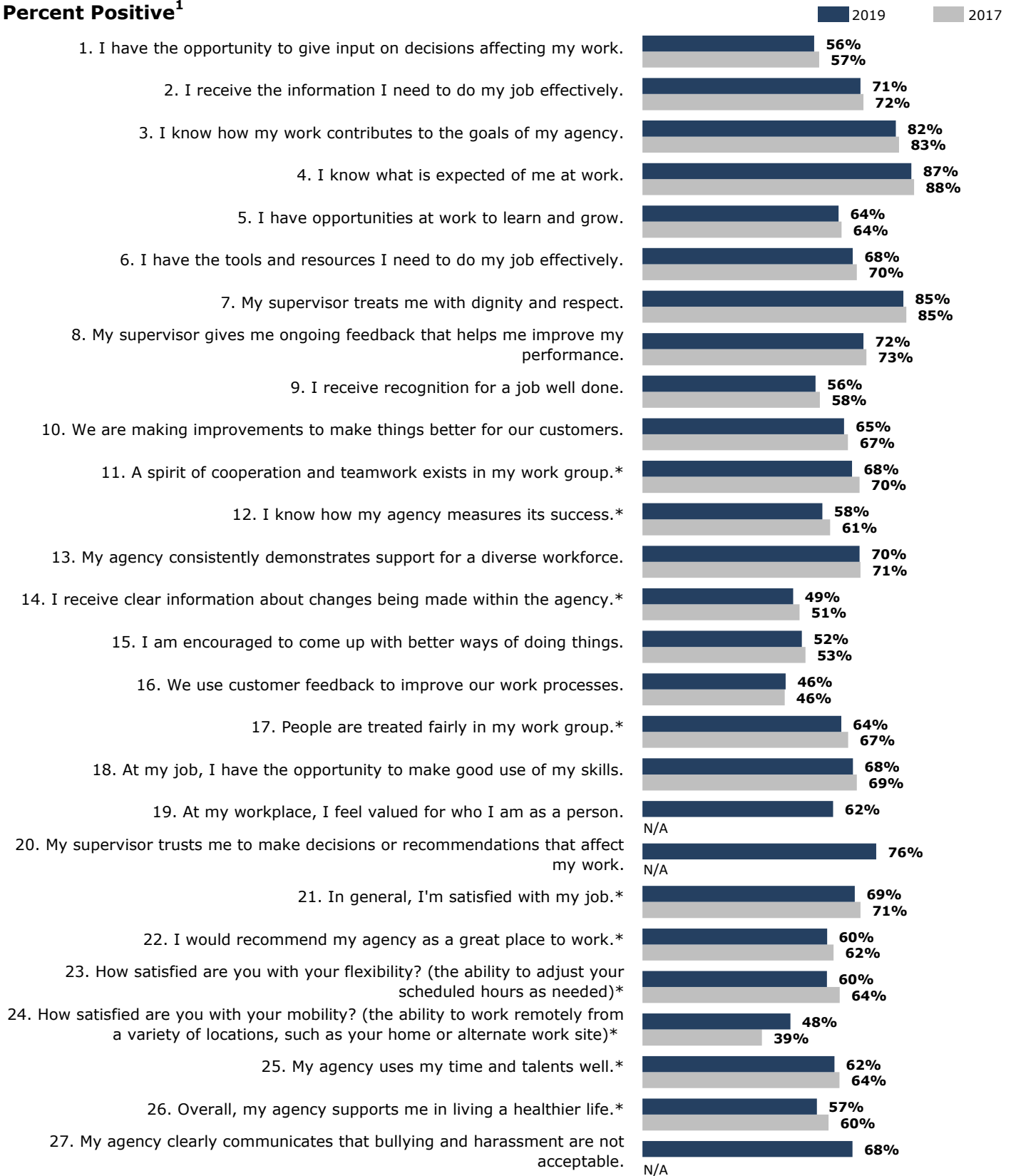
■ All DSHS ■ All State Employees



Statewide Data As Of December 17, 2019

¹For questions 23 and 24, percent answering "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied." Does not include missing data or "Doesn't Apply." For all other questions, percent answering "Almost Always or Always" or "Usually." Does not include missing data.

Comparison to Previous Employee Survey
Percent Positive¹



"N/A" means the question was not asked during the survey year.

* Change between 2017 and 2019 is statistically significant at the .01 level.

¹ For questions 23 and 24, percent answering "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied." Does not include missing data or "Doesn't Apply." For all other questions, percent answering "Almost Always or Always" or "Usually." Does not include missing data.

Comparison to Previous Employee Surveys - Percent Positive¹

DSHS Employee Survey - Oct-Nov 2019

All DSHS Staff - Weighted

		2006	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	Change 06 - 19	Change 17 - 19
1	I have the opportunity to give input on decisions affecting my work.	49%	53%	50%	47%	52%	55%	57%	56%	6% *	-2%
2	I receive the information I need to do my job effectively.	65%	67%	70%	68%	70%	70%	72%	71%	6% *	-1%
3	I know how my work contributes to the goals of my agency.	79%	80%	81%	79%	82%	82%	83%	82%	3% *	-1%
4	I know what is expected of me at work.	85%	85%	87%	87%	88%	88%	88%	87%	3% *	-1%
5	I have opportunities at work to learn and grow.	52%	57%	53%	48%	57%	61%	64%	64%	12% *	-1%
6	I have the tools and resources I need to do my job effectively.	62%	64%	68%	65%	68%	67%	70%	68%	6% *	-1%
7	My supervisor treats me with dignity and respect.	80%	80%	82%	82%	83%	85%	85%	85%	5% *	-1%
8	My supervisor gives me ongoing feedback that helps me improve my performance.	64%	65%	65%	65%	65%	69%	73%	72%	8% *	-1%
9	I receive recognition for a job well done.	48%	51%	50%	48%	51%	55%	58%	56%	8% *	-1%
10	We are making improvements to make things better for our customers.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	61%	64%	67%	65%	N/A	-1%
11	A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists in my work group.	65%	66%	66%	63%	67%	68%	70%	68%	3% *	-2% *
12	I know how my agency measures its success.	50%	54%	54%	52%	54%	58%	61%	58%	8% *	-3% *
13	My agency consistently demonstrates support for a diverse workforce.	N/A	63%	65%	65%	69%	68%	71%	70%	N/A	0%
14	I receive clear information about changes being made within the agency.	N/A	N/A	57%	41%	44%	46%	51%	49%	N/A	-2% *
15	I am encouraged to come up with better ways of doing things.	50%	52%	51%	45%	47%	52%	53%	52%	2% *	-1%
16	We use customer feedback to improve our work processes.	44%	45%	45%	40%	41%	42%	46%	46%	2% *	0%
17	People are treated fairly in my work group.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	67%	64%	N/A	-2% *
18	At my job, I have the opportunity to make good use of my skills.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	69%	68%	N/A	-1%
19	At my workplace, I feel valued for who I am as a person.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	62%	N/A	N/A
20	My supervisor trusts me to make decisions or recommendations that affect my work.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	76%	N/A	N/A
21	In general, I'm satisfied with my job.	N/A	67%	67%	62%	68%	68%	71%	69%	N/A	-2% *
22	I would recommend my agency as a great place to work.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	62%	60%	N/A	-2% *

¹Percent answering "Almost Always or Always" or "Usually." Does not include missing data.

Wording on some questions has changed slightly over the years as DSHS questions were adopted and modified to all state agency use.

If a question was not asked in a year, that year is marked "N/A."

*Change between years is statistically significant at the .01 level.

Comparison to Previous Employee Surveys - Percent Positive¹

DSHS Employee Survey - Oct-Nov 2019

All DSHS Staff - Weighted

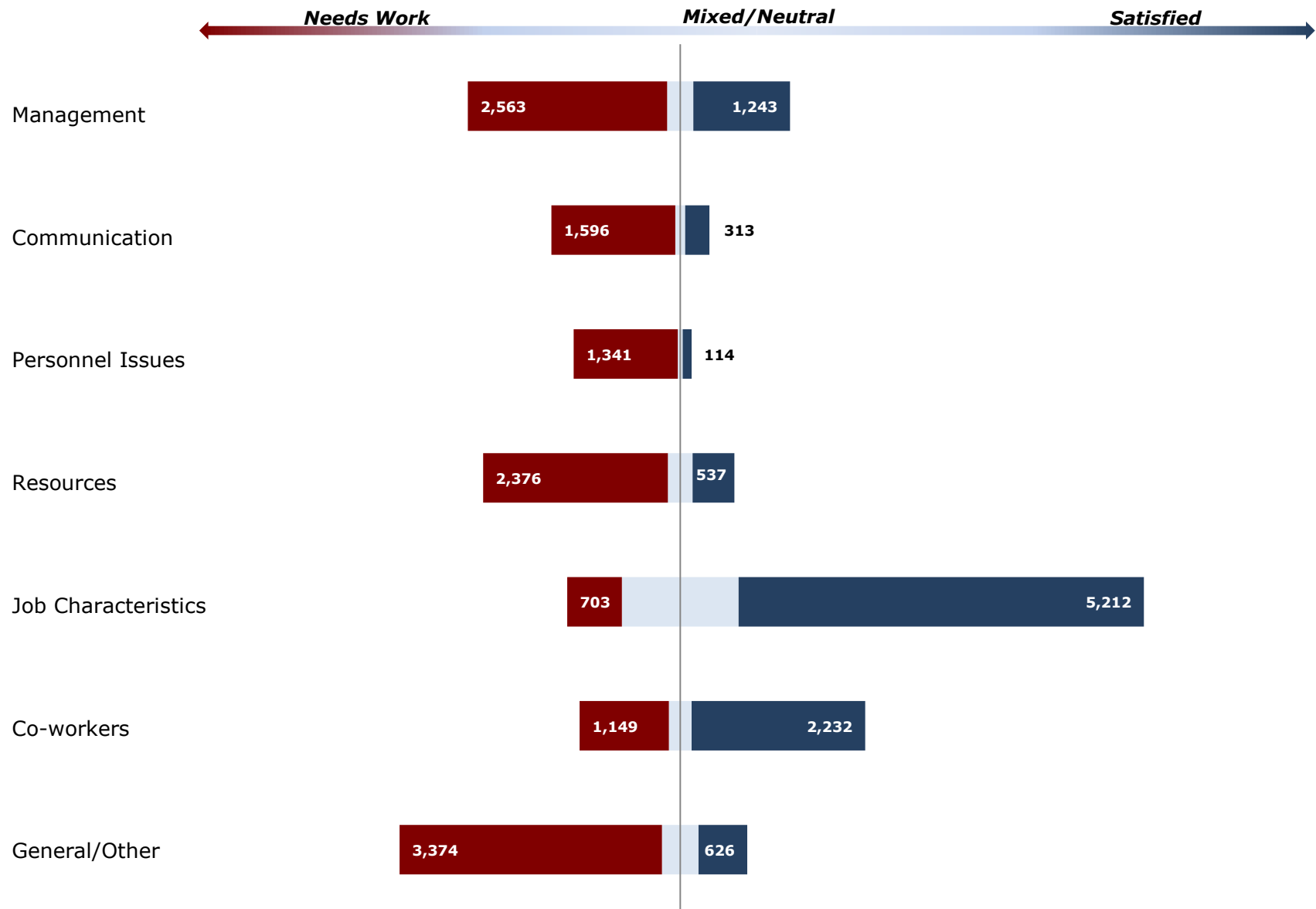
		2006	2007	2009	2011	2013	2015	2017	2019	Change 06 - 19	Change 17 - 19
23	How satisfied are you with your flexibility? (the ability to adjust your scheduled hours as needed)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	64%	60%	N/A	-4% *
24	How satisfied are you with your mobility? (the ability to work remotely from a variety of locations, such as your home or alternate work site)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	39%	48%	N/A	9% *
25	My agency uses my time and talents well.	53%	57%	57%	54%	58%	58%	64%	62%	10% *	-2% *
26	Overall, my agency supports me in living a healthier life.	N/A	N/A	48%	48%	52%	57%	60%	57%	N/A	-4% *
27	My agency clearly communicates that bullying and harassment are not acceptable.	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	68%	N/A	N/A

¹For questions 23 and 24, percent answering "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied." Does not include missing data or "Doesn't Apply." For questions 25 through 27, percent answering "Almost Always or Always" or "Usually." Does not include missing data.

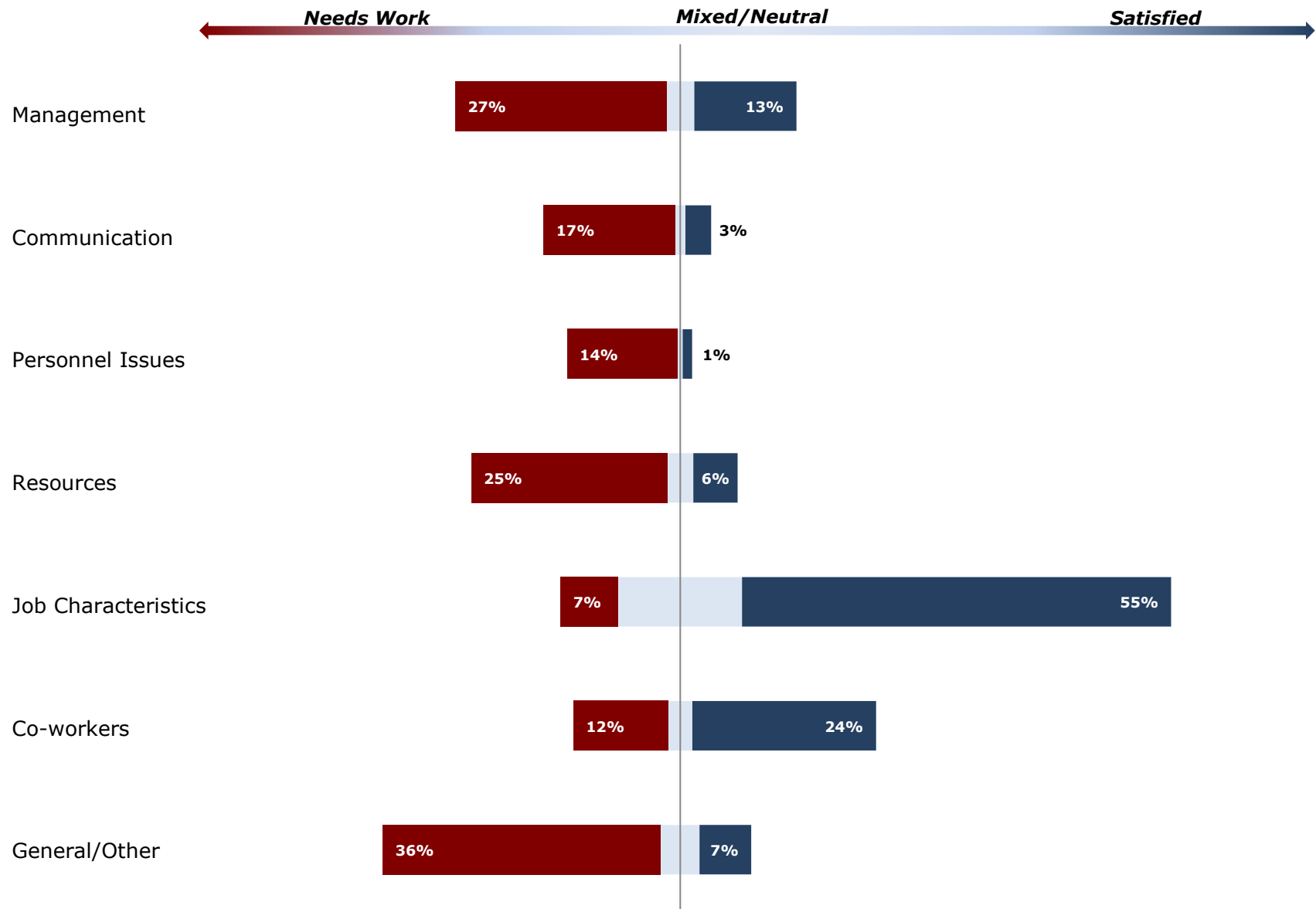
If a question was not asked in a year, that year is marked "N/A."

*Change between years is statistically significant at the .01 level.

Major Comment Themes - Number of Respondents Who Made Comments



Major Comment Themes - Percentage of Respondents Who Made Comments



Notes: Percentages show respondents who commented on this theme as a percentage of the total number of respondents who made narrative comments.
See Report J for more detail.

Narrative Comments Report

DSHS Employee Survey - Oct-Nov 2019
All DSHS Staff - Unweighted

9,444 of 13,105 Respondents Made Comments

MAJOR THEMES AND SUBTHEMES ¹	Total		Satisfied		Needs Work		Mixed or Neutral		
	# ²	% ³	# ²	% ³	# ²	% ³	# ²	% ³	
Management	4,145	43.9%	1,243	13.2%	2,563	27.1%	339	3.6%	
Courtesy & Respect	MC	742	7.9%	126	1.3%	596	6.3%	20	0.2%
Support/Mentoring/Availability	MS	1,593	16.9%	663	7.0%	831	8.8%	99	1.0%
Recognition/Awards	MR	607	6.4%	165	1.7%	416	4.4%	26	0.3%
Fairness/Discrimination	MF	924	9.8%	28	0.3%	889	9.4%	7	0.1%
Other Management Issues	MO	2,460	26.0%	834	8.8%	1,388	14.7%	238	2.5%
Communication	2,034	21.5%	313	3.3%	1,596	16.9%	125	1.3%	
Managers Provide Information	CI	871	9.2%	48	0.5%	796	8.4%	27	0.3%
Management Listens/Includes	CL	939	9.9%	227	2.4%	676	7.2%	36	0.4%
Clear Direction, Priorities	CG	184	1.9%	91	1.0%	83	0.9%	10	0.1%
Other/General Communication	CO	502	5.3%	28	0.3%	459	4.9%	15	0.2%
Personnel Issues	1,517	16.1%	114	1.2%	1,341	14.2%	62	0.7%	
Promotion/RIFs, Security	PP	1,219	12.9%	64	0.7%	1,111	11.8%	44	0.5%
Diversity/Discrimination	PD	450	4.8%	56	0.6%	368	3.9%	26	0.3%
Resources	3,233	34.2%	537	5.7%	2,376	25.2%	320	3.4%	
Facilities, Parking, Environment	RF	679	7.2%	137	1.5%	508	5.4%	34	0.4%
Pay/Benefits for Employee	RP	973	10.3%	437	4.6%	467	4.9%	69	0.7%
Resources for Clients	RC	173	1.8%	30	0.3%	134	1.4%	9	0.1%
Staffing	RS	777	8.2%	7	0.1%	755	8.0%	15	0.2%
Training	RT	938	9.9%	108	1.1%	770	8.2%	60	0.6%
Other Resources	RO	502	5.3%	48	0.5%	440	4.7%	14	0.1%
Job Characteristics	7,417	78.5%	5,212	55.2%	703	7.4%	1,502	15.9%	
Helping/Working w/ Clients/Community	JH	3,249	34.4%	3,242	34.3%	2	0.0%	5	0.1%
Workload	JW	265	2.8%	25	0.3%	231	2.4%	9	0.1%
Flex Schedule/Telecommuting	JS	2,722	28.8%	966	10.2%	1,456	15.4%	300	3.2%
Autonomy and Growth Opportunity	JA	1,170	12.4%	838	8.9%	290	3.1%	42	0.4%
Other Aspects of Job	JO	4,251	45.0%	3,998	42.3%	111	1.2%	142	1.5%
Co-workers	3,672	38.9%	2,232	23.6%	1,149	12.2%	291	3.1%	
Competence, Skill, Accountability	WC	1,001	10.6%	258	2.7%	662	7.0%	81	0.9%
Teamwork, Support	WT	1,719	18.2%	892	9.4%	726	7.7%	101	1.1%
Other Co-Worker Issues	WO	1,891	20.0%	1,682	17.8%	145	1.5%	64	0.7%
General/Other	4,471	47.3%	626	6.6%	3,374	35.7%	471	5.0%	
Work Process/Policies	GP	3,240	34.3%	142	1.5%	2,860	30.3%	238	2.5%
Morale/Overall Satisfaction	GS	866	9.2%	318	3.4%	503	5.3%	45	0.5%
Staff Safety	GF	339	3.6%	9	0.1%	305	3.2%	25	0.3%
Wellness and Mental Health	GW	236	2.5%	13	0.1%	217	2.3%	6	0.1%
None/Nothing	GN	397	4.2%	274	2.9%	74	0.8%	49	0.5%
Comments About This Survey	GC	130	1.4%	15	0.2%	64	0.7%	51	0.5%
Other	GO	429	4.5%	31	0.3%	137	1.5%	261	2.8%

¹Major themes (in blue rows) are rollups of the subthemes listed below. They are unduplicated - not the total of the numbers below. I.e, a person who made "Satisfied" comments in both "Staffing" and "Training" is counted only once in the "Resources" row. A person who has a "Satisfied" comment in the "Staffing" row and "Needs Work" in the "Training" row would be counted as a "Mixed" comment in the "Resources" row.

²All # columns show how many people made any mention of this theme. Multiple comments on the same theme by a single person are only counted once in that theme row. A person with both "Satisfied" and "Needs Work" comments on the same theme is counted in the "Mixed" column.

³Respondents who commented on this theme as a percentage of the total number of respondents who made narrative comments.



2019 DSHS Employee Engagement Survey

APPENDIX C

Narrative Comments Coding Glossary

CATEGORIES FOR CODING NARRATIVE COMMENTS

Code	Definition
Communication	
CI	Providing information ; holding meetings (by management/supervisor or leadership). Management transparency.
CL	Listening to staff; including in decisions; encouraging feedback; asks staff opinion; open-door policy to encourage talk (by management, supervisor, or leadership).
CG	Need or get clear direction/vision/priorities in relation to job and Agency; mission; strategic plan.
CO	Other /general communication: includes communication between sections and offices; staff meetings/brainstorming sessions.
Managers/Supervisors	
MC	Courtesy and respect (how they treat staff).
MS	Support ; mentoring; consultation; oversight; responsiveness; planning; problem-solving; availability; caring; staff evaluations.
MR	Recognize/reward good work; positive words/praise/encouragement, value/respect what staff does.
MF	Fair treatment ; favoritism; inequitable work distribution; retaliation. (<i>Note – discrimination/fairness in personnel practices: hiring, advancement, disciplinary action, or firing are under PP; while diversity/fairness issues are under PD</i>).
MO	Other /general management: Personal characteristics (like integrity, honesty); behavior; trustworthiness/trusts staff; competence; skills; knowledge; understand field/knows what’s going on in field; punitive; specific stories about managers or supervisors; should replace them; like/dislike them.
Personnel Issues	
PP	Personnel (HR) processes: Hiring/promotions/advancement ; nepotism, cronyism; disciplinary actions; firing/removal/RIFs; evaluate/upgrade position.
PD	Client/staff discrimination based on race/ethnicity, gender/sexual orientation, age, or disability; sexual harassment; religion; cultural competence; other diversity issues.
Job Characteristics	
JH	Helping /dealing with clients/customers, community agencies, DSHS providers, stakeholders, tribes - as a source of satisfaction/dissatisfaction.
JS	Work Schedule/location ; ability to work part-time/job share/earn overtime; work from home/in field; telecommuting; mentions “work/life balance.”
JW	Workload : too high/too demanding; big variations or differences in amount of work (time for tasks); caseload size.
JA	Opportunities for autonomy and growth ; independence; setting own priorities; able to be innovative/creative; use own judgement; no micromanagement.
JO	Other : Characteristics of job that employee likes or dislikes: job is challenging/stressful; like or dislike doing specific tasks or processes; offers opportunities/challenges/flexibility/variety of tasks; dealing with changes and uncertainty. Proud of accomplishments; good at job.
Co-Workers	
WC	Competence ; skills; professionalism; integrity; knowledge (includes getting rid of incompetent workers); individual accountability; how treats/cares about clients; abuses leave.
WT	Teamwork ; mutual support; learning from peers; doing share; work ethic/dedicated; staff relationships/workgroup atmosphere.
WO	Other : Attitude of/feelings about co-workers; I like or dislike my co-workers/team; mentions office politics/drama with co-workers.
Resources	
RF	Facilities : Parking; environment; location/length of commute; building maintenance/temperature/lighting; configuration of space.
RP	Pay and benefits for DSHS employees; requests for monetary incentives/recognition awards; overtime pay. Job security (“glad to have a job.”)
RC	Resources/money for clients, customers , and client programs.
RS	Staffing : Fill vacancies; high turnover/retention; understaffing; need for support/intermittent staff.
RT	Training : Includes cultural/diversity training; mentoring/job shadow programs; workshops/conferences/seminars; use of “job coach.” Formal/organized education.
RO	Other things staff need: Computers; information systems (technology/software/server); supplies; phones; equipment/tools; furniture; interpreters; state cars.
General	
GP	Work processes and policies ; service delivery; specific programs/processes (how well these work/whether they should be changed – not whether I like doing them); improvements to existing technology.
GS	Satisfaction/dissatisfaction ; morale; burn-out; general office environment/atmosphere/culture.
GN	“None.” “Nothing.” “Not much.” or “Can’t think of anything” in response to narrative question.
GC	Comments specifically about this survey .
GF	Staff safety issues.
GW	Comments about wellness/mental health : Exercise space; classes; ergonomics; healthy meal options; air/water quality.
GO	Other : Did not fit in other categories; unrelated to DSHS; references to the past.



2019 DSHS Employee Engagement Survey

APPENDIX D

Modeling Employee Engagement

Modeling Employee Engagement

WHAT PREDICTS JOB SATISFACTION AND PROMOTION OF DSHS AS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE?

In 2019, almost seven of 10 DSHS employees (69%) said that they are generally satisfied with their jobs and six of 10 (60%) said they would recommend their agency as a great place to work (sometimes referred to as “net promotion.”) Mirroring overall survey trends, both the job satisfaction and net promotion questions had a 2 percentage point decline compared to 2017.

In order to identify effective actions to improve employee engagement, we calculated logistic regression models to predict the independent contributions of each survey question, while controlling for the effects of all other factors. In the logistic regression model, the probability of a binary outcome variable (positive responses for job satisfaction and recommending the agency) is evaluated according to the effects of a set of predictors (the core set of survey questions, coded as positive vs other responses). We selected this method it is most appropriate for the analysis of binary variables, and because the correlations between responses were too high to justify linear regression techniques.

The top predictor of general job satisfaction is feeling valued as a person. All other things being equal, employees who said they always or usually feel valued for who they are as a person were three times more likely to be satisfied with their jobs than employees who said they feel valued occasionally or less. Similarly, employees who said that their supervisor trusts them or that their agency uses their time and talents well were more than twice as likely to report general job satisfaction. The pattern is similar for likelihood of recommending the agency as a great place to work, with feeling valued and good use of time and talents emerging as two of the top three predictors. Agency support for a healthy life is also strongly related to employees saying they would recommend the agency.

Top 5 predictors of job satisfaction and net promotion, with relative odds

Job Satisfaction	Would Recommend Agency
Valued as a person (3.07)	Valued as a person (2.57)
Supervisor trust (2.19)	Agency uses time and talents well (2.09)
Agency uses time and talents well (2.07)	Agency support for a healthy life (1.84)
Job expectations known (1.99)	Have needed tools and resources (1.72)
Job makes good use of skills (1.77)	Making improvements for customers (1.65)

Satisfaction with mobility and flexibility were slightly predictive of each outcome measure, but were removed because of missing data; including them would have meant excluding more than 3,000 respondents from this analysis. Neither was a strong predictor of job satisfaction or net promotion.

Model results indicate that telework options and alternate schedules matter to employees, especially as they relate to perceptions of trust and fairness, but this analysis suggests that core aspects of personal and professional relationships – like belonging, trust, and using talents – are more important to employee engagement.

The strongest predictors of job satisfaction are all key to an employee’s sense of acceptance by the entire organization as a valued member of the team. Employees who would recommend the agency to others also value support for health, basic resources, and improvements for customers.

ANALYSIS

As in the other analyses in this report, responses on each question were coded as 1 for responses of “Always or Almost Always” or “Usually,” and other valid responses were coded as 0. We used a machine-learning algorithm (stepwise, forward, and backward selection) to identify the combinations of questions that best predict employee

satisfaction and propensity to recommend DSHS as an employer. The final models are shown in the following pages. Items excluded from the model show no independent association with either of the two outcome variables.

The model results are expressed as *odds ratios*, which indicate the relative likelihood of a positive response for engagement given a positive response on each predictor, while controlling for the effects of all other predictors. For example, the odds ratio for “At my workplace, I feel valued for who I am as a person” in the model of job satisfaction is 3.07. This means that all other things being equal, respondents who said they feel valued were more than three times as likely to be satisfied with their jobs, compared to those who did not say they felt valued. Each odds ratio is shown with 95% confidence intervals. All but one item listed (Western WA vs Olympia area) are statistically significant at $p < .05$.

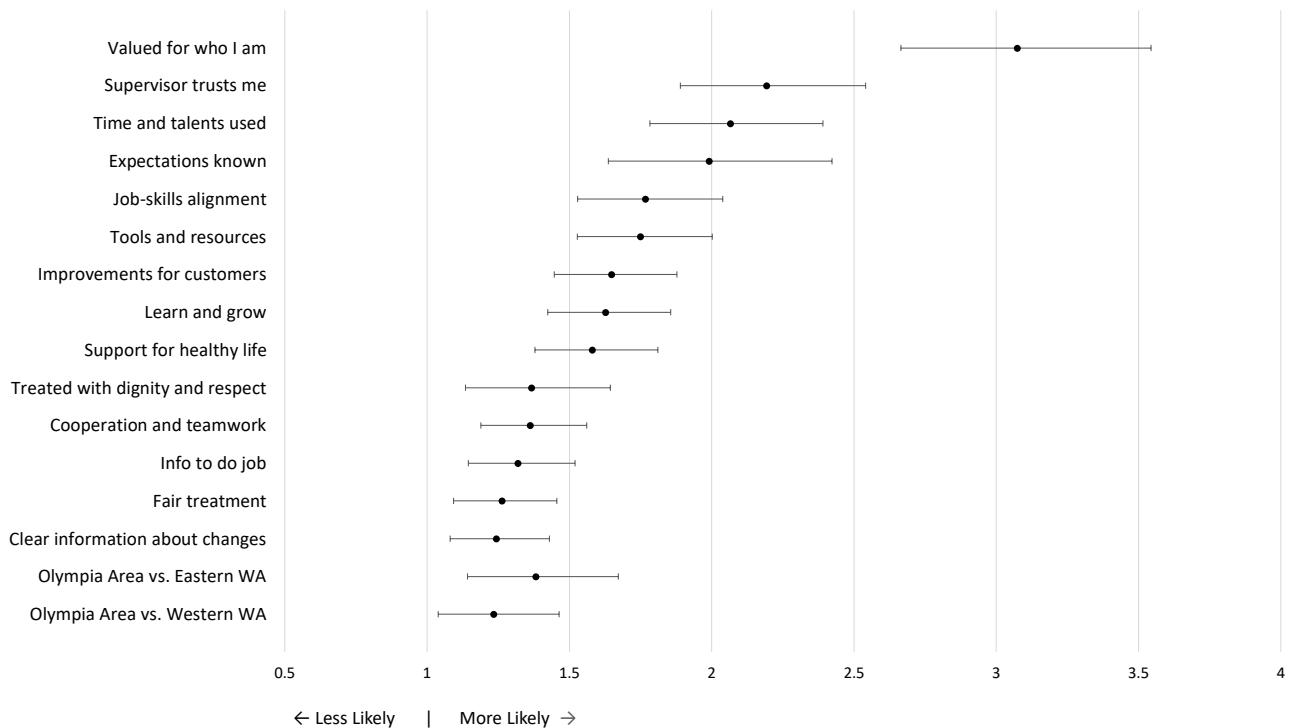
RESULTS | JOB SATISFACTION

Logistic regression results: “In general, I’m satisfied with my job.”

Model Chi-squared = 6937.86 (df = 16), p < .0001; Area under Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curve = .94

	ODDS RATIO	LOWER 95% CI	UPPER 95% CI
I receive the information I need to do my job effectively.	1.32	1.15	1.52
I know what is expected of me at work.	1.99	1.64	2.42
I have opportunities at work to learn and grow.	1.63	1.42	1.86
I have the tools and resources I need to do my job effectively.	1.75	1.53	2.00
My supervisor treats me with dignity and respect.	1.37	1.14	1.64
We are making improvements to make things better for our customers.	1.65	1.45	1.88
A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists in my work group.	1.36	1.19	1.56
I receive clear information about changes being made within the agency.	1.24	1.08	1.43
People are treated fairly in my work group.	1.26	1.09	1.46
At my job, I have the opportunity to make good use of my skills.	1.77	1.53	2.04
At my workplace, I feel valued for who I am as a person.	3.07	2.67	3.54
My supervisor trusts me to make decisions or recommendations that affect my work.	2.19	1.90	2.54
My agency uses my time and talents well.	2.07	1.78	2.39
Overall, my agency supports me in living a healthier life.	1.58	1.38	1.81
Olympia area vs. Eastern WA	1.38	1.14	1.67
Olympia area vs. Western WA	1.23	1.04	1.46

Odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals for positive responses: “In general, I’m satisfied with my job.”



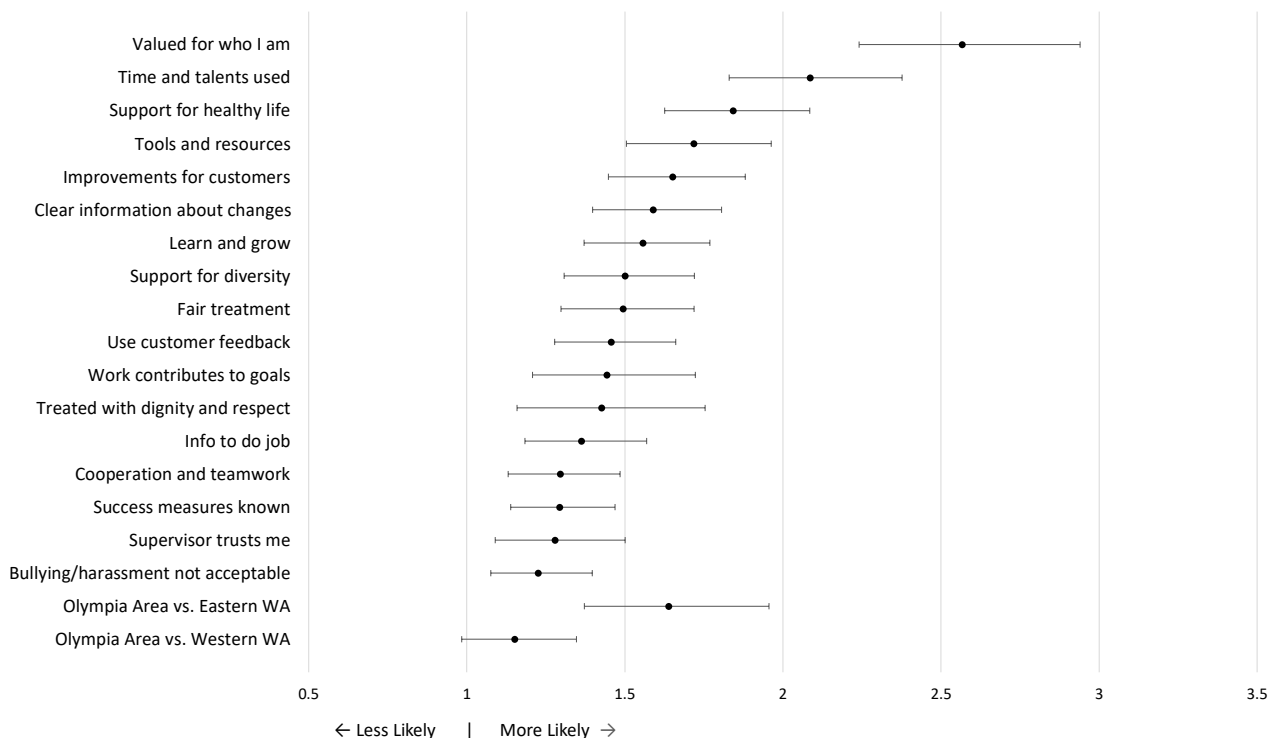
RESULTS | WOULD RECOMMEND AGENCY

Logistic regression results: “I would recommend my agency as a great place to work.”

Model Chi-squared = 6746.96 (df = 19), $p < .0001$; Area under Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curve = .93

	ODDS RATIO	LOWER 95% CI	UPPER 95% CI
I receive the information I need to do my job effectively.	1.36	1.18	1.57
I know how my work contributes to the goals of my agency.	1.44	1.21	1.72
I have opportunities at work to learn and grow.	1.56	1.37	1.77
I have the tools and resources I need to do my job effectively.	1.72	1.51	1.96
My supervisor treats me with dignity and respect.	1.43	1.16	1.75
We are making improvements to make things better for our customers.	1.65	1.45	1.88
A spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists in my work group.	1.30	1.13	1.49
I know how my agency measures its success.	1.29	1.14	1.47
My agency consistently demonstrates support for a diverse workforce.	1.50	1.31	1.72
I receive clear information about changes being made within the agency.	1.59	1.40	1.81
We use customer feedback to improve our work processes.	1.46	1.28	1.66
People are treated fairly in my work group.	1.49	1.30	1.72
At my workplace, I feel valued for who I am as a person.	2.57	2.24	2.94
My supervisor trusts me to make decisions or recommendations that affect my work.	1.28	1.09	1.50
My agency uses my time and talents well.	2.09	1.83	2.38
Overall, my agency supports me in living a healthier life.	1.84	1.63	2.09
My agency clearly communicates that bullying and harassment are not acceptable.	1.23	1.08	1.40
Olympia areas vs. Eastern WA	1.64	1.37	1.96
Olympia area vs. Western WA	1.15	0.98	1.35

Odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals for positive responses: “I would recommend my agency as a great place to work.”



Employee Engagement Survey 2019



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