



2023  
**Community Needs  
ASSESSMENT**



**Together,** we create opportunities that change lives and strengthen **communities.**



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Clark Brekke



As a non-profit organization, Goodwill Industries of the Inland Northwest proudly serves 23 counties in Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho. In partnership with local, state, and federal referral sources, we've helped more than 84,000 people in our communities since 2008.

Last year, we sought the services of an independent consultant to conduct comprehensive Community Needs Assessment to help us better understand the evolving needs of our communities. The scope of work includes

surveys, data gathering, and community focus group meetings.

We recognize that the rapid changes in our region present an existential threat to the well-being of our neighbors. Our goal is to adapt our service model - with your input - to meet the emerging needs of our service region. We look forward to your input to help us meet the evolving challenges facing our constituents.

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# A UNIQUE SERVICE AREA

Goodwill's mission is "Together, we create opportunities that change lives and strengthen communities."

We serve 23 counties in the Inland Northwest (eastern Washington and north Idaho), covering 47,050 square miles. This is almost the size of the state of New York and is larger than 20 separate US states.

The service area includes urban and rural communities. There are limited public transportation options in this largely rural area. The distance between cities makes it difficult for people to get help and access services.

The Inland Northwest is home to seven Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. The largest in our region is the Spokane/Coeur d'Alene MSA, which ranks 70th in the nation. The Spokane/Coeur d'Alene MSA has a population of 773,225 people (about half the population of Idaho).

The Inland Northwest is experiencing many changes in its populations and a changing labor market. As in other communities nationwide, prices are going up for food, gas, clothing, housing, etc. It is hard for many people to find affordable housing, childcare, and medical care. Many people have a hard time finding a job with high enough wages to meet those living expenses. Spokane is facing record homelessness, rising crime, and a fentanyl crisis. The same is true even of smaller cities in the region, like Lewiston, Idaho and Moses Lake, Washington.

People continue to choose to make the Inland Northwest home because of its diverse economy, medical facilities, education opportunities, and many recreation opportunities.

## WHY A NEEDS ASSESSMENT?

Goodwill Industries of the Inland Northwest (Goodwill) develops a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) every few years. The CNA gathers input from our communities, our employees, our participants, and our partners. This input helps us understand what people need and what services are missing. Goodwill may be able to meet some of these needs and services. So, the CNA helps us decide where to put our resources and support



**1**

Learn about needs in our region.

**2**

Identify gaps between community needs and services.

**3**

Identify populations in need of Goodwill's services.

**4**

Identify new opportunities to partner with other agencies to meet service gaps.

# **GOALS OF THE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

# GOODWILL'S SERVICE AREA

## Demographic Data

County Data, provided by Census Bureau, Social Security Administration, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017-2021)



**35.6%**  
of residents in Goodwill's service territory are 25 years of age or older have a high school diploma (or less).



**38.8%**  
of Pacific Islander residents live in poverty, which is more than three times the percentage of white residents.



**3%**  
of all residents are unemployed.



**62.1%**  
of residents with a disability aged 18 to 64 are unemployed.



**84.7%**  
of residents rely mostly on a personal vehicle for transportation

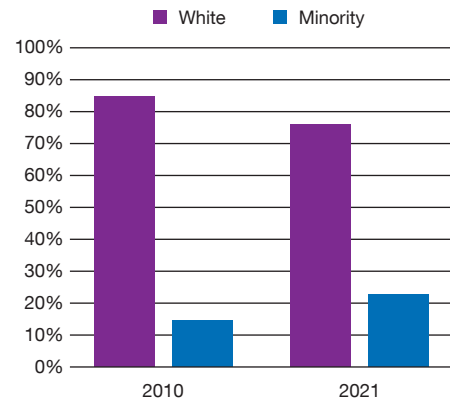
The average number of residents aged 0-64 is expected to decline between 2022 and 2027, while the average number of residents aged 65-85+ is expected to increase.

## U.S. Census Data

The number of people living in communities served by Goodwill went up by 16% from 2010 to 2022.



In 2021, about 76.6% of these people were white, which is a bit less than before (86% in 2010). Around 22.5% were from different races, and 9.8% of them were a mix of two or more races, which is more than in 2010 (14%).



## Program Data, provided by Goodwill Industries of the Inland Northwest, 2022



**99%**  
were living in poverty (50% of MFI or less).



**77.3%**  
have a high school diploma (or less).



**13%**  
enrolled participants were between the ages of 65-85.



**36.4%**  
rely primarily on a personal vehicle for transportation; the remainder (63.6%) use public transportation, walk, or a combination of these.



**90%**  
were unemployed; 67% of these participants have a documented disability.

# PROJECT SCOPE

Goodwill worked with an external partner to conduct unbiased, neutral research for the CNA. In addition to gathering regional and demographic data, the partner conducted surveys and town hall meetings in different communities. These surveys and town halls included input from Goodwill employees, Board members, program participants, and community partners.

## TOWN HALL

The CNA facilitator held seven meetings, involving 41 total people.

The Surveys and Town Hall conversations focused around needs that people see or experience personally in their communities, services available to meet community needs, gaps in service, ideas for how Goodwill or other providers could help fill those gaps in service, etc.

In the following pages, the responses from the surveys and Town Hall meetings have been summarized, along with demographic information, to form recommendations on population groups needing services, programs, and opportunities for Goodwill's future service growth.

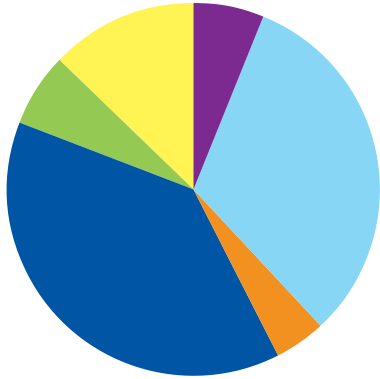
A full list of anonymous survey responses is included in the Appendix at the end of this report.



# DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

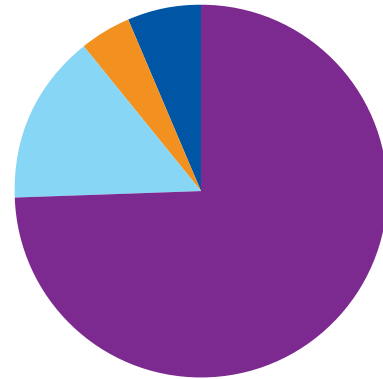
## Perception Survey

What best described your relationship with Goodwill?



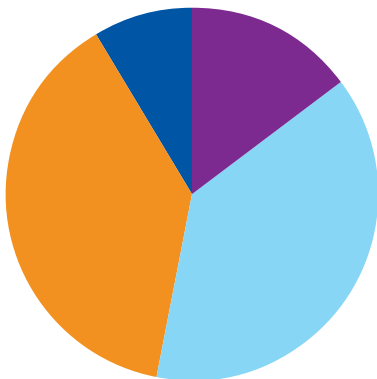
- 7% Goodwill Participant
- 32% Goodwill Employee
- 4% Goodwill Board Member
- 38% Community Agency
- 0% Employer
- 0% Educator
- 6% Landlord
- 13% Other: Individual w/disabilities; Customer (2); User of Workforce Solutions, Service Coordinator for Adults with DD; Collaboration

Which best describes your residency?



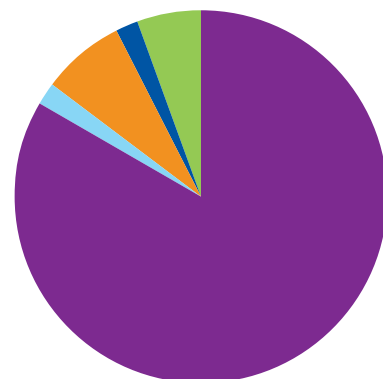
- 74% Large City or Town
- 15% Small City or Town
- 4% Near City/Town, Not in City Limits
- 6% Rural Area

Select your age range.



- 0% Under 25
- 15% 25-35
- 38% 36-50
- 38% 51-65
- 9% 66+

Which languages do you speak at home?

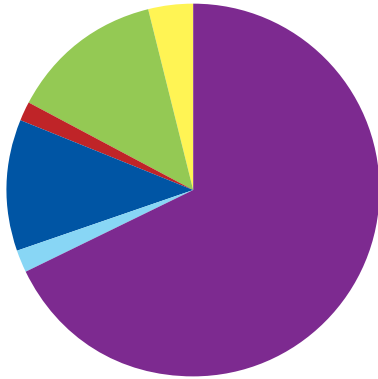


- 0% Arabic
- 97% English
- 0% Marshallese
- 1% Russian
- 0% Salish or other Native Language
- 4% Spanish
- 1% Ukrainian
- 0% Vietnamese
- 3% Other



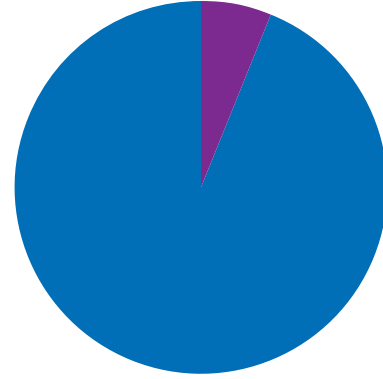
Online perception surveys were sent to 492 individuals.  
 We had a 9.5% response rate, with 47 total survey responses.

### Select the race you identify as.



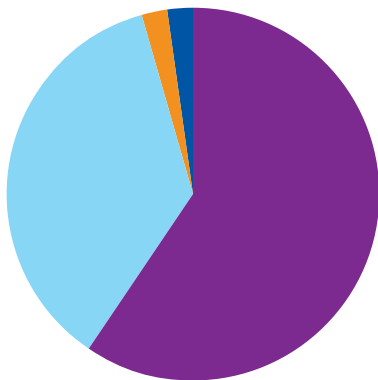
- 77%** White or Caucasian
- 1%** Black or African American
- 0%** Asian or Asian American
- 6%** American Indian or Alaska Native
- 1%** Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- 0%** Middle Eastern and North African
- 15%** Two or more races
- 2%** Other

### Select the ethnicity you identify as.



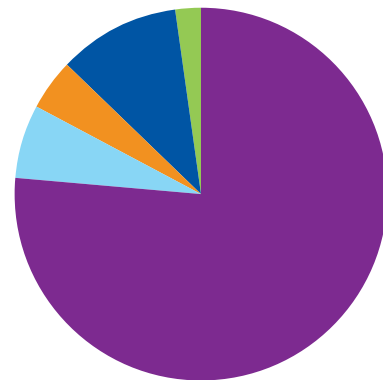
- 6%** Hispanic
- 94%** Not Hispanic

### Please select the gender you identify as.



- 60%** Female
- 36%** Male
- 2%** Non-binary
- 2%** Prefer not to say

### Please select your employment status.

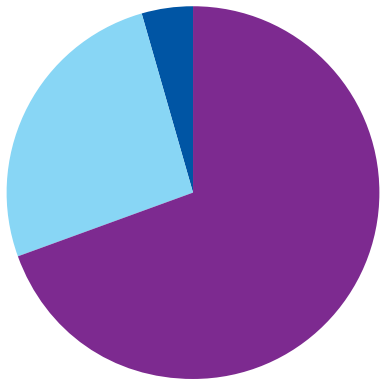


- 77%** Employed Full-time
- 6%** Employed Part-time
- 4%** Self-employed
- 2%** Unemployed, looking for work
- 11%** Unemployed, not looking
- 0%** Unpaid Volunteer or Intern
- 0%** Employed, currently not working

# DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

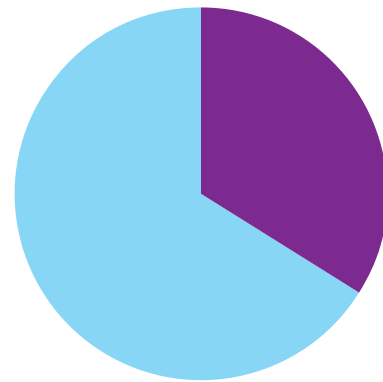
## Perception Survey

Please select your housing status.



70% Housed, own  
26% Housed, rent  
0% Transitional housing  
4% Living with friends/family  
0% Living in shelter  
0% Not housed

Have you ever worked with Goodwill?



34% Yes  
66% No

# COMMUNITY NEEDS QUESTIONS

## Perception Survey

Briefly describe the challenges that you, or those you know, have had related to finding employment, housing, or leading a fulfilling life.

### Affordable Housing

Many people find it hard to get homes they can afford, either to rent or buy. There aren't many homes available, so rent goes up, and it's harder for people to qualify to rent or buy.

### Living Wage Jobs

Wages are not going up as much as the cost of other things. This is making it tough even for people who are working full time. More people who are working full time need public assistance to balance their household budgets. Some communities lack job training opportunities, which makes it hard for people who want to be promoted or get a more skilled job.

### Employment Barriers

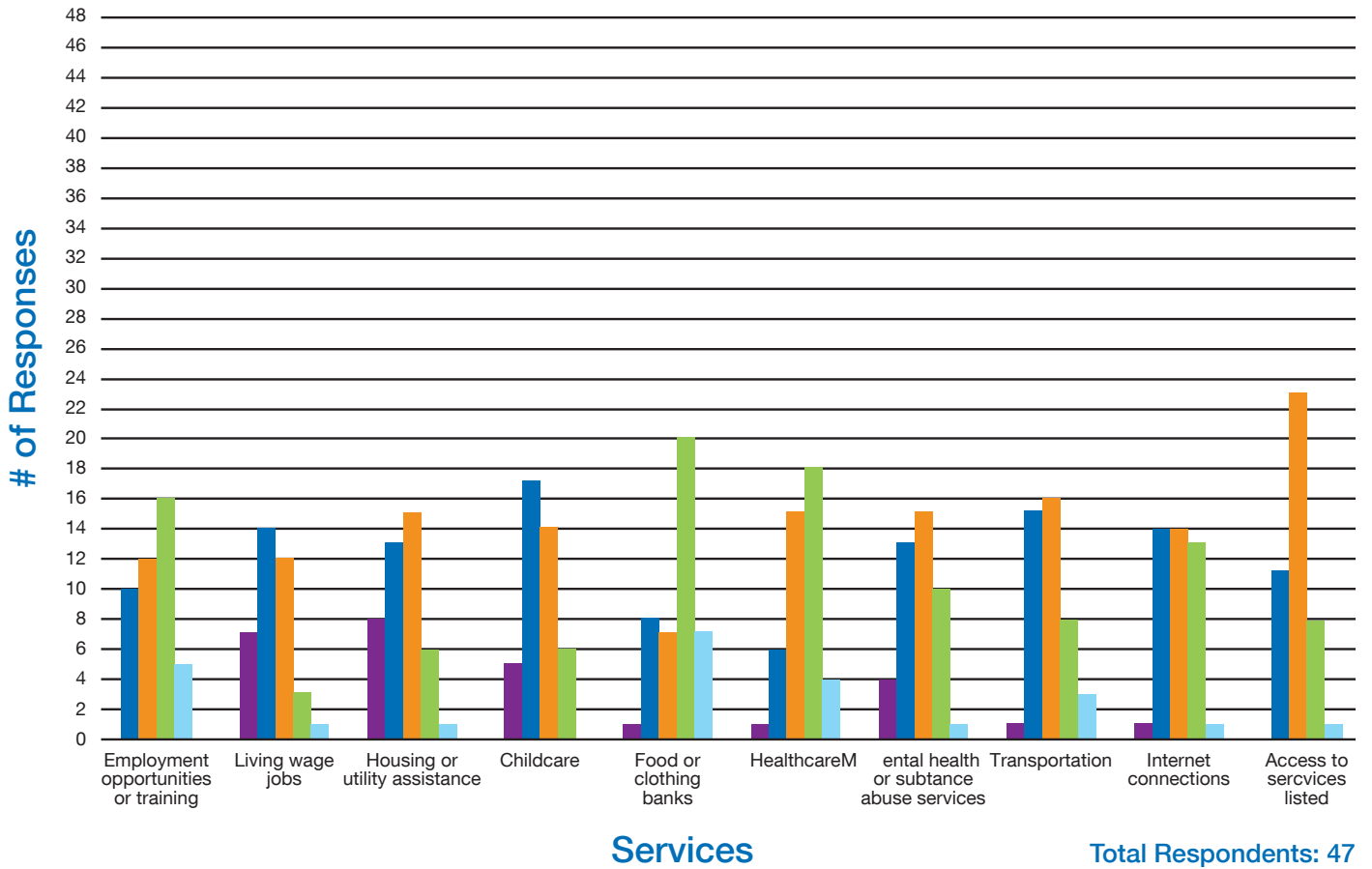
People who have a disability or a history of breaking the law say they face challenges finding work because others treat them unfairly. Even though not many people are without jobs, there aren't many chances for those without experience, even for basic jobs. Some people can't work because of a disability, no transportation, or a lack of services to help them recover.

### Limited Access to Mental Health Services

There aren't enough mental health services, making it harder for people to keep up with the rising costs of living. Some people feel alone and stressed because they don't have enough support.

## Please rate the availability of each service listed in your community.

■ Not Available   
 ■ Somewhat Available   
 ■ Available to Only Some   
 ■ Available   
 ■ Available to All



## What role should Goodwill perform to meet these needs?

The answers we got to this question were sorted into three groups. Specific answers are included in the Appendices at the end of this report.

### Programs and Resources

Many people feel Goodwill should continue the programs it is already offering. People also want new programs or resources to help with transportation, especially in rural areas. People feel Goodwill should promote its services more.

### Community Partnerships

If Goodwill gets more resources, people suggest it should look for new partnerships to help more people. People would like to see Goodwill actively support public policies that would increase access to affordable housing.

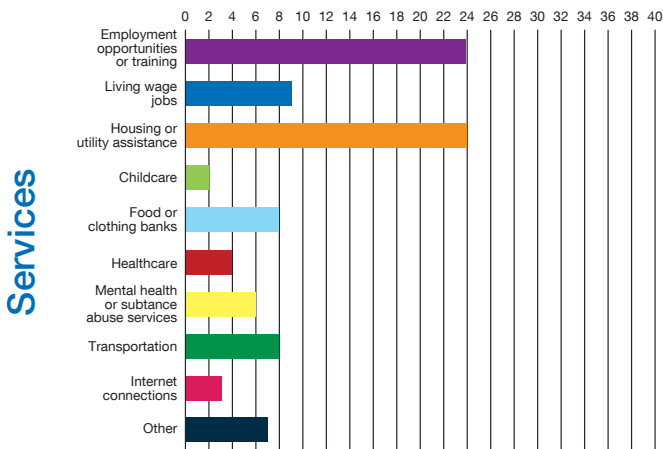
### Better Work Conditions

Some people felt Goodwill needs to provide better pay and benefits to attract and keep good employees. Benefits might include peer support and mentor programs for employees and participants.

# COMMUNITY NEEDS QUESTIONS

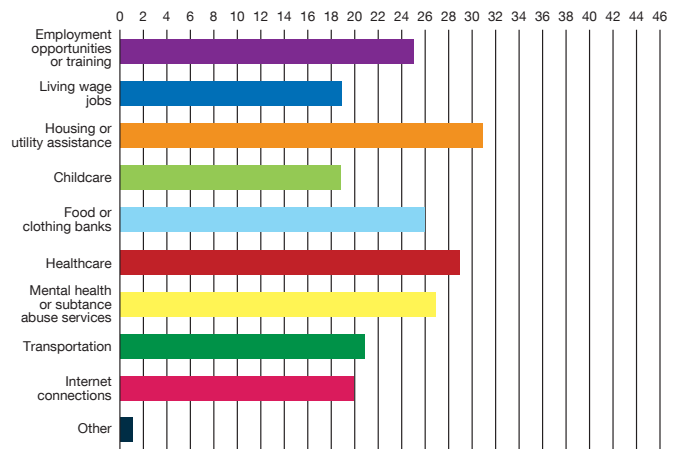
## Perception Survey

What services do you, or those you know, access at Goodwill?



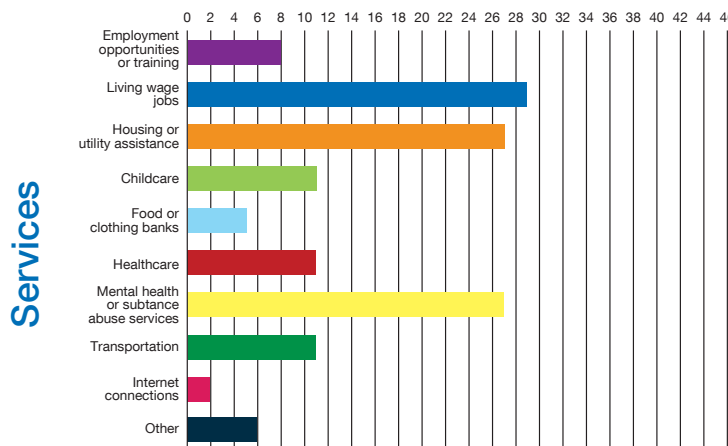
Total Respondents: 40

What services do you, or those you know, access?



Total Respondents: 45

Select the top 3 needs you would like to see met in the community in the next 3-5 years.



Total Respondents: 45

# TOWN HALL MEETINGS



Each of the seven Town Hall meetings were held in cities where Goodwill has locations.

- Spokane, Washington
- Moses Lake, Washington
- East Wenatchee, Washington
- Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
- Lewiston, Idaho
- Moscow, Idaho

Meetings Employees and Community Partners were held separately from meetings with Program Participants. An independent contractor led these meetings. At each meeting, the contractor explained the Community Needs Assessment. After privately gathering demographic information about people in the Town Hall meetings, the following questions were asked and discussed.

## QUESTIONS ASKED

### Program Participants

1. Please discuss your experience, or the experience of others you know, with regard to accessing services in your community.
2. What barriers have you, or other people you know, experienced trying to get services?
3. What kinds of programs or services are needed to help people in your community?
4. What can Goodwill and other service providers (including local government) do to help close the gaps in your community?
5. What are the signs that service providers support diversity and inclusivity?
6. What are the three biggest needs facing this community?
7. (If time permitted) What is Goodwill's mission?

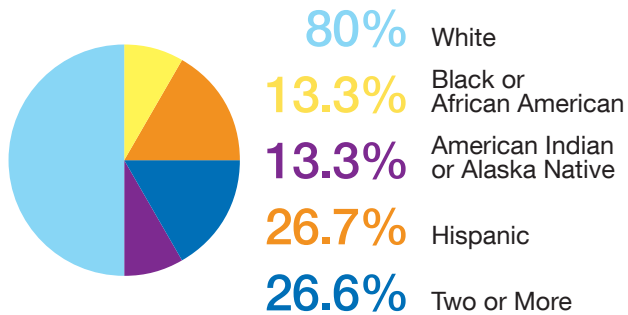
### Resource Provider/Employee

1. Please discuss the human service needs that are not met in your community, based on your direct experience, or the experience of others you know (your staff, other agency representatives, etc.)
2. What barriers make it difficult for people in your community to access the services they need?
3. What kinds of programs or services are needed to help people in your community?
4. What can Goodwill and other service providers (including local government) do to help close the gaps in your community?
5. What are the signs that service providers support diversity and inclusivity?
6. What are the three biggest needs facing this community?
7. (If time permitted) What is Goodwill's mission?

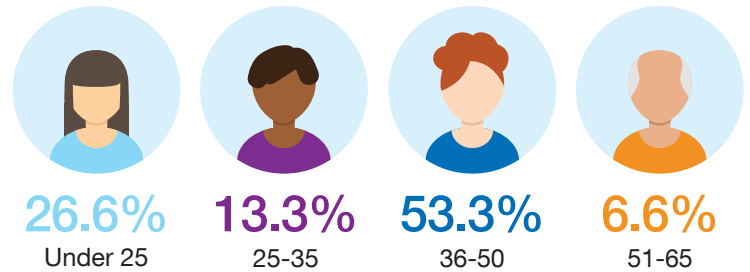
# PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

## Demographics

### Ethnicity



### Age Range



### Residency

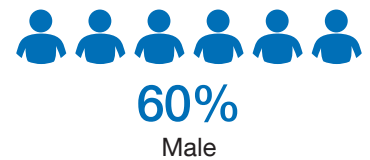


46.7%  
Large City/Town



53.3%  
Small City/Town

### Gender



### Languages in Home

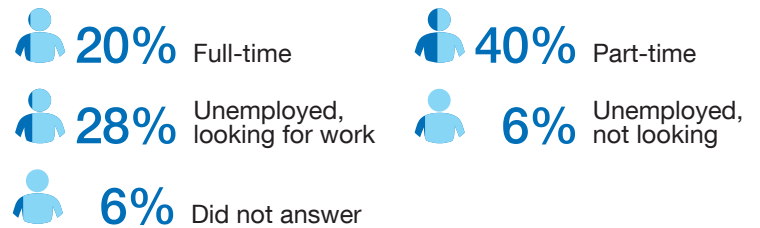


100%  
English



2%  
Spanish

### Employment



### Employed at Goodwill



27%  
Yes

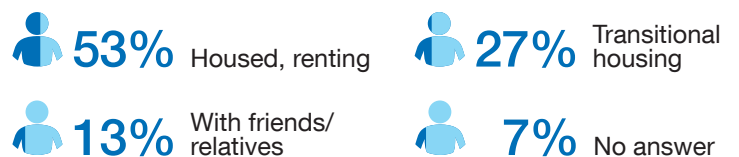


53%  
No



20%  
NA

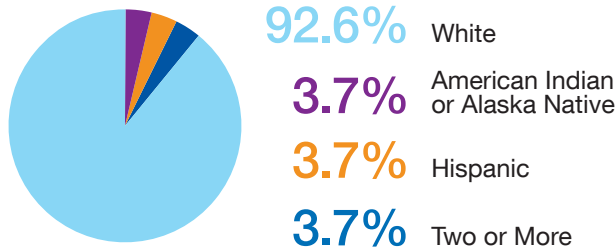
### Housing



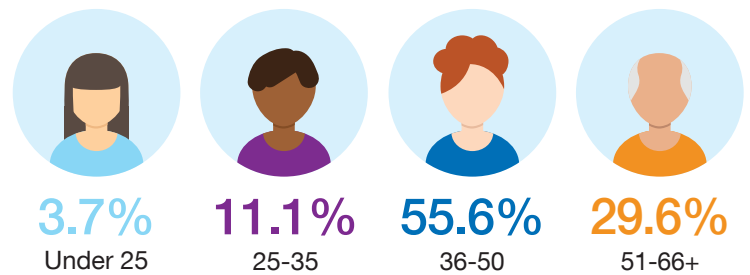
# RESOURCE PROVIDER/EMPLOYEE

## Demographics

### Ethnicity



### Age Range



### Residency



48.1%  
Large City/Town



40.7%  
Small City/Town



7.4%  
Rural Area



3.7%  
Urban Area

### Gender



59.3%  
Female



33.3%  
Male



3.7%  
Non-binary



3.7%  
Prefer not to say

### Languages in Home



100%  
English



3.7%  
Spanish



3.7%  
Turkish

### Housing

66.7% Housed, own

27% Housed, renting

13% With friends/relatives

### Employment

92.6% Full-time 7.4% Part-time

### Employed at Goodwill



37%  
Yes



63%  
No

# TOWN HALL SUMMARY

## Top 4 Community Needs

There were four community needs that were raised repeatedly in these Town Halls.

### Living Wage/Employment

In every meeting, the lack of living-wage jobs was the main community need people talked about. Inflation is making it harder for people to afford the things they need, like food, a place to live, medical care, clothing, childcare and transportation.

People shared that three common barriers get in the way of living-wage jobs in our region:

1. The minimum wage difference between Washington and Idaho. As of December 2023, Washington minimum wage was \$15.74 an hour. Idaho's minimum wage was \$7.25 an hour.
2. Employment practices that limit applicants:
  - a. Screening out people with a criminal history.
  - b. Not allowing part-time work options.
3. Lack of employers willing to hire people with little or no work experience.

### Affordable Housing

The lack of affordable housing in our region is a big barrier. This came up in every Town Hall meeting. People

said it is tough to find homes or apartments they can afford. Units that have been affordable housing are being converted to higher rental rates. The converted units often have stricter rental criteria, such as higher income requirements and background checks. These strict criteria make it more difficult for people with barriers to get in. The result is increasing homelessness. In smaller communities that lack emergency shelters, homelessness is becoming more visible, just like in larger cities.

### Medical Care, Substance Abuse and Mental Health

In every community, medical care, substance abuse treatment and mental health services are in high need. Rural communities are lacking mental health providers. While some people do have medical insurance, if they live in a rural community, they must travel long distances to get the care they need.

### Access to Help and Resources

People in the Town Hall meetings generally agreed that it is hard to know what help and resources are available in their communities. Websites are often out of date or unreliable. For people who do not have access to the internet, either through a computer or a smart phone, it is even more difficult to find the help and information they need. There is still a digital divide, for people who do not know how to use a computer or get services remotely.

## Other Needs

### Make it Easier to Get Services

People who use services and agencies who provide services all explained the need for a better system. People often must visit multiple offices to get the services they need, which takes time and money for gas or bus fares. The system is complicated. There should be a "One Stop Shop," like the Spokane Resource Center. But the Spokane Resource Center does not have all the services people need, so they still must go to different offices to get help. People say it is too hard to find and get the help they need in their communities.



# PARTICIPANT NEEDS

People using services talked about their struggles finding homes and jobs. They mentioned the need for homes with support for those with special needs. People who are employed or looking for work said it's hard to find jobs because there isn't enough transportation. They also shared the need for mental health counseling, classes to understand mental health, and a place for those facing homelessness to gather and support each other. They also mentioned the need for a program for people with autism.

## Participant's Priorities

1. Mental health counseling.
2. Peer support groups/life skills training.
3. Affordable housing.
4. Safe shelters that also teach survival skills.
5. Help finding resources for special needs groups (such as people with autism).

# PROVIDER NEEDS

Providers said there's a need for transportation help, affordable housing for special needs groups, and a better response system. They mentioned that the current one-stop shop in Spokane has limited staff, making it hard to collaborate. They also talked about the need for programs helping people with disabilities keep their jobs, including counseling for nonverbal individuals. Internet safety for vulnerable adults was also a concern.

## Provider's Priorities

1. Jobs that pay enough.
2. Affordable and creative housing.
3. Substance abuse treatment and recovery programs, and childcare.

# EMPLOYEE NEEDS

Employees shared that lack of funding, staff, and program policies create barriers for people to get help. Strict rules for housing and jobs make it hard for those facing homelessness. Working remotely is also a challenge for people with limited computer skills or no access to technology.

1. Improving internal systems.
2. Investing in employees.
3. Access to technology.
4. Life skills programs.
5. Flexibility in program design and delivery.

# LOCATION HIGHLIGHTS



## Coeur d'Alene Post Falls

Many people are moving into this region. The influx is driving up home prices, rent, and resulting in lower vacancy rates. Many people are leaving this area to find affordable housing, living wage jobs, and social services they are not finding here. One employee said more resources are greatly needed in this area.



## Lewiston

There are many needs in Lewiston, due to limited state and local resources. Several subsidized housing properties in Lewiston are being converted to market rate (higher rent) housing. This is making it even harder to find affordable housing. There is a need for nonprofit organizations willing to partner with housing organizations or private individuals to develop affordable housing in the community. The discussion also identified bias and stereotypes in the community about affordable housing projects and emergency shelter.

In addition to the housing crisis, the differences in minimum wage between Idaho, and its neighboring Clarkston, WA across the river is making it difficult to attract and keep qualified employees to work in Lewiston.

### Other opportunities include:

1. A computer center where people can look for work, without time limits.
2. Transportation assistance.
3. Public laundry services.



## Moscow

One person from Moscow, representing others who live with barriers, said there is a need for more accessible transportation and medical care in this community.



## East Wenatchee

Goodwill does not have a Workforce and Family Services office in East Wenatchee. So, Payee services are the only service offered in East Wenatchee. Work opportunities are limited for people who do not have experience or specific training. There is a waiting list for housing aid. Rental properties often require income that is twice the amount of rent. Several employees mentioned they cannot afford to live on their own.

### Solutions suggested by Town Hall participants:

1. The City of Wenatchee should do more.
2. Discriminatory employment practices need to be addressed in the community.
3. Offer more programs in person.



## Moses Lake

Public transportation has limits. It is hard to navigate. Current fixed bus routes serve only main streets, which limits access to schools, medical care and workplaces. The distance between the downtown employment center and the community college has created a disconnect in the community. More collaboration is needed between resource providers.

# Spokane

Five town halls were held in Spokane, with a total of 23 people. These employees, participants and providers gave a lot of input. Many of their recommendations overlapped. They are summarized below.

**Housing:** The Spokane area has a high need for transitional housing with on-site supportive services for people who have special needs, including youth ages 16-24. One specific example is a transitional living program for people with autism that includes mental health services on site. Strict rental and employment criteria are the most common barriers for people who are trying to escape homelessness.

**Transportation:** Challenges with transportation make it harder for people to find work that is a good fit. While Spokane has STA, the area lacks sufficient transportation programs and transportation aid to meet the needs.

**Counseling:** More mental health counseling and peer support programs are needed. People would like classes that teach them how to navigate the mental health system and/or live independently.

**Community:** For people who are experiencing homelessness need a “community place” where they can gather to build positive relationships and support each other. In having a place where they can gather, it creates a sense of community, a place where they can meet people who are going through the same thing, so they do not feel alone in their struggle. One program participant said, “We need a program/place for those in transition to find a community.”

**Support for people with disabilities:** People who have a disability need help keeping their jobs. This should include counseling services that can serve people who are also nonverbal. There is a growing concern over internet safety for vulnerable adults. A program is needed to help prevent vulnerable adults who lack in-home supervision from being exploited.

**Connected resource system:** Providers agree Spokane needs a more effective and compassionate resource response system. Spokane’s existing one-stop shop (the Spokane Resource Center) is staffed by seven agencies,

but only three staff are full-time. As a result, the service delivery system has become siloed by agencies that are reluctant to collaborate or share funding resources. They also are challenged to find qualified applicants for open positions.

**Service barriers:** Lack of funding and/or staffing, program policies, and poor coordination between agencies all limit access to services people need. These barriers can cause long wait lists and limited appointments for people who need services (for the HEN program specifically). While remote work and service have helped some, these remote services have created a barrier for people who have limited computer skills and/or no access to the internet, computers or cell phones.

## **Biggest needs in Spokane region according to program participants:**

1. Mental health counseling
2. Peer support groups/life skills training
3. Affordable housing
4. Safe and secure shelters (that also teach people how to survive in the shelter)
5. Help finding resources for special needs populations (e.g., persons with autism)

## **Biggest needs in the Spokane area according to resource providers:**

1. Living wage (sustainable) jobs which support:
2. Affordable housing (new or more creative)
3. Substance abuse treatment programs/recovery
4. Childcare

## **Biggest needs in the Spokane area according to employees:**

1. Improve internal systems and program quality by (but not limited to) investing in employees.
2. Access to technology
3. Life skills programs, including peer support
4. Flexibility in program design and delivery

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING

Diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging are at the core of Goodwill. We believe everyone should be treated equitably. We try to create a space where everyone feels welcome. In Town Hall meetings, people were asked “What are signs that service providers support diversity and inclusion?”

## What People Said

People talked about Goodwill’s culture, not just how they hire. Everyone agreed that Goodwill does a good job of making a place where everyone, no matter their race, gender, or disability, feels accepted and appreciated. Employees feel supported by their co-workers, and service participants feel like Goodwill staff really listen and understand them. People also said Goodwill has made their lives better in many ways.

Some employees who have been at Goodwill for a long time worried that the efforts for diversity and equity

weren’t as strong as before COVID-19. Most employees agreed that these practices are important and should come back strong.

### Program Participant:

*“Diversity and inclusion shows when they (providers) take time to listen. When they acknowledge what you are saying I know I am being heard.”*

### Resource Provider:

*“Diversity and inclusivity is an organizational culture that respects those being served. People in leadership positions need to be open to having these on-going discussions.”*

### Resource Provider:

*“People need to share their story and that can be hard to do. We need a safe space to do this so that employees feel heard and then can contribute to their employment team in a fuller, more meaningful way.”*

## WHAT SHOULD GOODWILL DO?

People said that Goodwill should continue its existing Workforce and Family Services programs to help meet needs in the community. Many people still think Goodwill is just a thrift store that also offers employment training. There is an opportunity to expand awareness of all Goodwill offers.

### Goodwill could grow its services in the following ways:

1. **Paths to living-wage jobs:** Expand or create programs to help people who are living in poverty get living-wage jobs. These should serve both employees and community members.
2. **Affordable housing:** Goodwill can help make more affordable housing units available through advocacy and services. There are three opportunities.
  - a. Provide case management support and/or guidance to public and private housing developers.
  - b. Get actively involved in affordable housing networks on behalf of people who have disabilities.
  - c. Advocate for housing policies to help the communities we serve.
3. **Mental health services:** Goodwill should invest in mental health and/or peer support services to help both employees and program participants. This could be done through partnerships with other organizations, or by becoming a mental health provider.
4. **Transportation for people with disabilities:** Grow new partnerships, especially in rural areas, to make transportation programs that help people with disabilities get to work, medical care, and social opportunities.

# CNA KEY FINDINGS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

## Target Population

**The need for Goodwill's programs will increase.**

The number of people living in the Inland Northwest will continue to grow over the next five years, based on U.S. Census Bureau data. This growth is likely to include people who are older and people with disabilities who are unemployed. In 2022, most people enrolled in Goodwill's programs had barriers to housing, employment, and community services. The demand for Goodwill's programs is likely to increase as the population in our region increases.

**Our communities will become more diverse.**

Census data shows the population in the region is getting older and more diverse. The data also shows there are more minority people living in poverty. Goodwill should continue periodic assessment of its Workforce and Family Services programs to keep meeting the changing needs of the population. Target populations may be different in each community Goodwill serves in future years.

**People who need Goodwill's programs also need help with transportation**

More than 63% of Goodwill's program participants don't have their own transportation. They are relying on the bus, friends/family, or other options. Only 15% of the overall population faces this barrier. In smaller and mid-size communities, fewer public transportation options and lack of personal vehicles has resulted in limited access to employment, health care and social services.

**Technical/professional training programs are needed.**

Living wage employment is the highest need in every community in Goodwill's region. Current employment training programs don't build the technical or professional skills needed to get a living wage job in the region. According to MIT's Living Wage Calculator, living wage for a family of 4 (2 adults, 1 working) in the Spokane/Spokane Valley region is \$37.39/hour.

## Program Quality

**Mission training.**

Goodwill staff need more/different training to help them connect Goodwill's mission (Together, we create opportunities that change lives and strengthen communities.) to their work.

**Help for long-term unemployed people**

Many Goodwill participants have found jobs as the economy recovers. But people who have been unemployed for a long time have life barriers that need ongoing support services.

**Diversity training.**

As the population becomes more diverse in the Inland Northwest, ongoing cultural competency and diversity training will help Goodwill staff provide a welcoming and supportive environment for participants.

**More information about Goodwill.**

As Goodwill's programs have changed over the years, people still are not broadly aware of all the programs Goodwill offers in different communities. There is opportunity to grow marketing efforts to better inform each community of Goodwill's unique offerings.

## Opportunities for Future Growth

Through the surveys and Town Hall meetings, people named these top three needs to be addressed in the next three to five years:

1. Living wage jobs
2. Affordable housing
3. Mental health and substance abuse treatment services

There are a variety of funding sources, programs and partnerships Goodwill could pursue or promote to help meet these key needs in the region.

# WHAT COMES NEXT

**Braden Fish**  
*Vice President WFS*  
*MSW, MHP*



**Together, we create opportunities that change lives and strengthen communities.**

This is the clear mission that Goodwill Industries of the Inland Northwest strives to achieve with the impact you create whenever you donate.

We are committed to the highest level of ethical practices in all that we do, and value each dollar donated. Our stewardship and daily goal is focused on channeling those resources back into your community, in an ongoing cycle for good. As part of this commitment, we have produced a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) that captures information about the people, jobs, and services in the communities of Eastern Washington and North Idaho. This assessment describes how regional economic development has impacted different populations, what

needs remain unmet in different communities, and where there may be gaps that Goodwill can target with the goal of increased economic prosperity and stability for all members of our communities.

Goodwill shares its findings in this report as a tool to help the community at large better understand and meet the needs of the region, as well as to foster transparency surrounding our team's decision-making process that goes into how your donated resources are allocated. Our hope is that the report can serve as a guide to others as we strive to foster inclusive and impactful services that change lives and strengthen our communities.



# APPENDIX

*Q2 - Please Briefly describe the challenges that you, or those you know, have had related to finding employment, having a home, or leading a fulfilling life.*

## Open ended survey question text responses

- » None, I have been very fortunate. But some family members have had problems finding jobs and housing that is affordable to their budget.
- » Normal challenges with low housing inventory and higher home prices. Struggle finding jobs that pay enough to meet the demands of today's bills.
- » When I was homeless and now working for Goodwill the thing, I needed most was a network that shows how agencies work together, what exactly they provide and the process to get into the programs.
- » Many of our employees do not earn enough wages to pay their own rent and are facing homelessness. In addition, many employees are still eligible for food stamps/medical even though they work full time.
- » Cannot work due to disability, lack of transportation, lack of rehabilitation services for adults
- » Housing costs vs wages are incongruous.
- » Community members who call in to 211 are struggling with being able to afford their current housing, utilities, and groceries.
- » The biggest thing is a lot of people are not getting the break they need because of their credit score, which applies to every aspect of their lives, when they are just trying to live.
- » Costs of housing, childcare, folks are not prepared to work and/or employers have unrealistic expectations
- » I am disabled and became homeless. The homeless grant tried to help me, but I did not have a revolving income to continue payment rent so this type of grant did not end up helping me. I also signed up for the computer information class and while I knew about 80% of what he was talking about, I still learned 20% of the time things I didn't know so it was totally worth it.
- » Lack of affordable housing.
- » Interest rates are so high that they prevent working class households or those on a fixed income from purchasing a home.
- » With the cost of living rising more quickly than wages, finding a job that covers all of your bills has become difficult. I know people who have to make really hard decisions about whether they are going to have food, electricity, or a car – sometimes you can only choose 1.
- » Support from the participants' family or friends. 9 out of 10 have none. And necessary documents that are needed during pre-assessment for Amerigroup.
- » Cannot find a job. Disabled. Criminal history. Applied to over 130 jobs in the greater Moscow Pullman LC Valley area.
- » Employment – Skills Mismatch: The skills that job seekers possess might not align with what employers are currently looking for. Limited opportunities: In certain areas or industries, there might be fewer job openings than job seekers. Lack of experience: Entry-level positions often require experience, which creates a paradox for new entrants into the job market. Economic downturns: National or regional economic struggles can reduce the number of available jobs. Discrimination: Some individuals face discrimination based on age, race, gender, disability, etc. Lack of networking: Often, finding a job can be about who you know rather than just your qualifications. Having a home – High housing prices: In many areas, housing prices have outpaced wage growth, making it difficult for individuals to afford homes. Lack of affordable rentals: The rental market can be tight, with high demand leading to increased rental prices. Strict lending criteria: Getting a mortgage can be challenging for those without a consistent employment history or without a substantial down payment. Homelessness: Various factors, from mental health to economic hardships, can lead to homelessness. Addressing this requires comprehensive solutions that span healthcare, employment, and housing support. Leading a fulfilling life – Mental health challenges: Issues like depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions can hinder one's sense of fulfillment. Economic hardship: Constant financial

strain can limit opportunities for recreation, education, and other activities that contribute to a sense of fulfillment. Lack of social connection: Loneliness and a lack of community can contribute to feelings of isolation. Barriers to education: Without access to continuing education or training, individuals may feel stuck in their current circumstances.

- » I am constantly discriminated against as a disabled Veteran.
- » High prices to move in, not high enough wage to do so.
- » Affordable housing for larger families, affordable childcare especially for non-traditional hours (evenings/weekends).
- » Providing childcare in order to find employment is a challenge.
- » I was homeless for over a year. When I got help from goodwill to get into a place my daughter lost her job and everyone in my house got really sick with hand foot and mouth disease. Goodwill paid another month's rent for us. My daughter just got a job today, but we are behind on this month's rent and are needing help again to catch us up so we can get on our feet. We appreciate everything goodwill has done for our family. Thank you.
- » It took me 5 years since arriving back in Spokane to go from couch-surfing with my family, to being in HUD housing to finding our own home. It was not easy to start out with no job and no housing after graduate school.
- » Gaps in work history, no credit/negative credit score lack of mental health resources.
- » Housing: lack of affordable housing. Employment: lack of motivation to work or not in the fields participants request.
- » Domestic violence, criminal record, education level
- » My clients rely on support from various types of providers within the community in order to live and work as independently as possible. Staff shortages, temporary shutdowns, unqualified staff, and lack of reliable/safe transportation are some of the issues that impact their quality of life.
- » With increasing housing costs, renters are often stuck

with non-empathetic landlords. Finding affordable, quality childcare is also a barrier to employment and education.

- » I know people who are having trouble with finding affordable housing. Employment paying enough to make ends meet.
- » I am of an older generation of my peers and am running into the challenge of not having like-minded individuals to converse with. When I hear and see others around me talking together and excluding me, it does not feel great. Also, I recently purchased a home and need resources.
- » Having a home to live in, lack of computer skills
- » Rental prices
- » Being evicted or given a notice to vacate from my landlord and not having enough money to pay for a security deposit. Also, finding another unit is challenging.
- » Isolation issues
- » Pay not keeping up with cost of living. Homeowners' properties value goes up after Covid which increased mortgage payment by \$300.00. Food and gas prices
- » Housing – not able to find affordable housing. Too expensive. Employment – need a higher paying job just to afford housing.
- » Housing availability
- » Housing, job-training, and substance abuse.

*Q7 - What role should Goodwill perform to help meet (these) needs in the community?*

#### Open ended survey question text responses

- » Help with access to many of these services.
- » Goodwill should actively pursue opportunities to serve more people in need. If available resources continue to increase, the organization may want to leverage or expand its core competencies in order to spread its reach and impact.
- » Cont. as they are right now.
- » Provide their employees with a living wage.
- » Goodwill could pay us a living wage.



- » Anything to help provide more resources.
- » Lobby politicians to get citizens equal footing for affordable housing.
- » No price gouging on their inventory to the public because it is all donated keep it affordable for all.
- » By implementing a new hire to perform these needs.
- » Connection, linkages. Better promote the great services you have available!
- » Community outreach to city officials for public needs for the needy.
- » Increase training opportunities for higher wage jobs. Increase wage and benefits for Goodwill Team Members.
- » More questionnaires on what is needed or surveys.
- » Pay better. Follow through with applications.
- » Peer support, especially in the realm of mental health and substance use, is an evidence-based practice that has been shown to lead to better outcomes, both for the individuals receiving the services and for the peer providers themselves. Here's how Goodwill can expand on the mental health and employment training aspects by incorporating peer support:
  1. Mental Health and Substance Use Services: Peer Support Training: Goodwill could develop and offer a training program for individuals who want to become certified peer support specialists. This would provide people with lived experience of behavioral health challenges, the opportunity to become advocates and supporters for others in their community.
  - Hiring and Integration: Integrating peer support specialists into existing Goodwill services can provide a unique perspective and approach that complements the work of other professionals. They can work side-by-side with other mental health professionals, providing a more holistic service.
  - Advocacy Initiatives: Empowering peer support specialists to take on advocacy roles, such as public speaking engagements, workshops, or policy advocacy, can help raise awareness of behavioral health challenges and reduce stigma in the community.
  - Collaborative Approach: Developing a model where peer partners work in tandem with qualified professionals, ensuring that the services provided are both clinically sound and deeply empathetic due to the peer's personal experience.

2. Employment Opportunities and Training: Peer Employment Support: Peer support specialists can provide tailored employment support for individuals with behavioral health challenges, offering insights from their own experiences in returning to the workforce. Peer-led Workshops: Workshops focused on overcoming employment barriers, managing workplace stress, and building confidence can be led by peer specialists, providing real-world insights and strategies. Advocacy for Inclusive Employment: Peer partners can advocate for more inclusive hiring practices, emphasizing the strengths and unique perspectives of those with behavioral health experiences. Mentorship Programs: Setting up mentorship initiatives where peers can guide others through the nuances of job seeking, interview processes, and onboarding can provide invaluable support. Leveraging the unique strengths and experiences of peer support specialists, Goodwill could address gaps in service delivery, create more empathetic support systems, and drive meaningful change in the community. Furthermore, the addition of peers would create new employment opportunities and pathways for individuals who have overcome or are managing their behavioral health challenges, furthering Goodwill's mission of eliminating barriers to opportunity.

- » Get actual help faster, referrals are not help.
- » Build housing with 3 and 4 bedrooms.
- » Goodwill should provide these programs or services to meet these gaps.
- » Organize/Coordinate Care
- » Should serve as additional conduit to connect people with services or provide services.
- » Offer access to peer-support specialists.
- » Not sure, they seem to have all the programs but for HEN as an example the wait time is not reasonable.
- » Do better with letting the public know what they have to offer.
- » Transportation options for supported employment, continued efforts for retaining qualified employs, increase community involvement.
- » Provide support or collaboration with agencies working in these areas.

- » Provide better wages for employees and pay some if not all of the health insurance.
- » It would be nice if Goodwill would provide better wages and a better bonus to employees instead of \$25! If we are so successful, we should be provided with something of more substance.
- » Follow through to ensure goodwill services are not abused.
- » Help with financial assistance.
- » Goodwill can offer case management services to the community to assist with connecting to the above resources.
- » Better outreach
- » Listen to needs, consider needs, listen to ideas not simply say they want to hear but actually do it.
- » Resources for grants to help the community more without low-income limits.
- » Facilitator

*Q17 - Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences working with Goodwill?*

Open ended survey question text responses

- » I have an immense amount of respect for Goodwill's financial sustainability model. It is a big deal!
- » As a landlord, the needs of my tenants are rental assistance, living wage jobs, and possibly training on budgeting. I am also finding an increasing need for interpreters.
- » Appreciate the services you provide to others.
- » Goodwill is an extremely well run, highly respected organization. I am glad they regularly look for new and innovative ways to service those in need.
- » Working for them for 2 weeks as a cashier in 2022 was hard. I was told I was smart and sweet, but I had better get my "change round up" up from 11% that is so messed up I argued with the manager that over half of our customers did not speak English well enough to consent. Also, about all of them are poor already needing to buy thrift items so why were they wanting me to get more of them to donate their change.... She literally told me my 11% was like I

was not even trying. So, I had a panic attack from anger and false guilt so I quit right there and walked. Goodwill was designed to help, not take from the poor to help. Solicit help from the well to do not the poor.

- » Thank you, Goodwill!
- » I just want to say that this company is by far the best to work for in the Inland Northwest.
- » How Goodwill should stop denying employment to disabled Veterans and quit discriminating.
- » Wages do not match what my bills are. I work 40 hours and may have to get a second job just to eat.
- » Great to have them as an ongoing community partner and advertiser in The Fig Tree and Resource Directory.
- » I have found Goodwill to adhere to its mission statement, and witness daily the commitment to Goodwill's core-values.
- » They offer more services than I was aware, but they are not advertised very well.
- » I think Goodwill offers a lot and is doing a lot for the community. However, they need to pay better to keep good employees. People are having a tough time in this economy. Everyone needs medical but if you have to pay over 200 plus to have it and wages do not increase, then you are not getting ahead.
- » I wish health benefits were paid at %100. I feel like this would help with "making a living wage."
- » The first job I have ever had where I respect my supervisors.
- » I currently work with the supported employment staff and protective payee staff in Lewiston ID on a regular basis and they are very efficient with the services they provide as well as excellent with their communication. They make great partners for continuing to promote the health and well-being of the vulnerable adults that we mutually serve.
- » I believe Goodwill is an amazing workplace overall.
- » Great company.



