



**THROUGH A  
PROVIDER'S LENS**

A STUDY ON WORKFORCE DYNAMICS  
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AN AGENCY





**BRANDI KURTYKA**

Chief Executive Officer

 @brandikurtyka

“  
*The study, unveils nine key findings, equipping the industry with vital insights for a transformative future.*”



## STUDY INTRODUCTION

**Through a Provider's Lens: A Study on Home Care Workforce Dynamics from the Perspective of an agency** is a research initiative conducted by MissionCare Collective. This study, carried out in May 2023, surveyed 450 home care agencies in an effort to provide a snapshot of the current state of the home care workforce and the challenges faced by home care organizations.

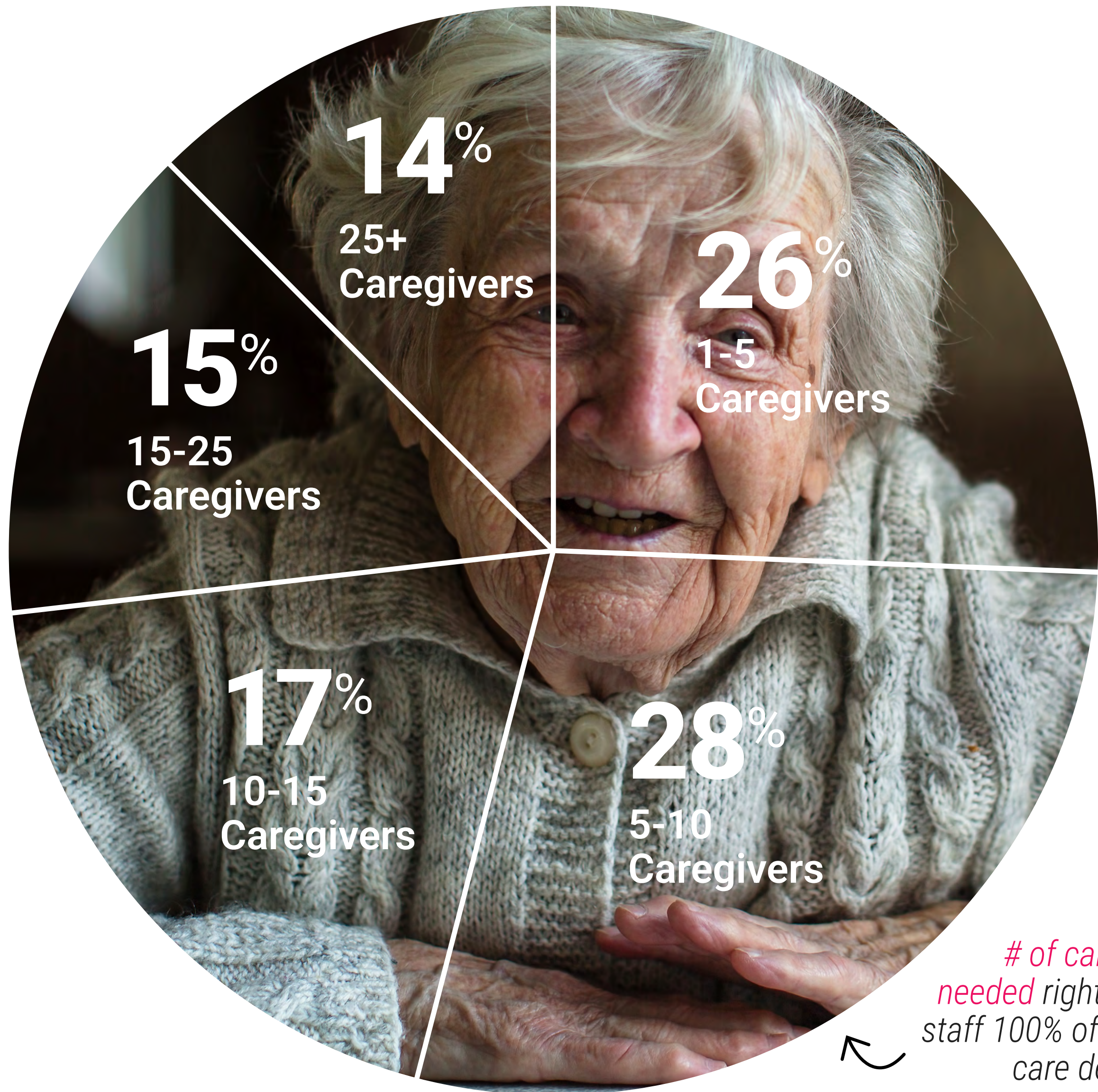
The study participants represent a diverse group within the home care sector, with 82% being Owners, 15% Directors, and 3% holding other positions. Agencies of various sizes participated, including those with less than 50 employees (39%), those with 50-250 employees (52%), and larger agencies with 251 or more employees (9%).

The primary objective of the study is to better understand current workforce-related issues as we work collectively to drive much-needed policy and innovation to address the caregiving crisis. The urgency of this matter is evident, as 89% of surveyed home care agencies reported turning away care due to workforce constraints and 76% reported that the industry has not recovered from COVID-19.

The study unveils nine key findings, equipping the industry with vital insights for a transformative future.







*# of caregivers  
needed right now to  
staff 100% of current  
care demands*

**SOARING DEMAND, LIMITED  
WORKFORCE: 89% OF AGENCIES  
FORCED TO TURN AWAY CARE**

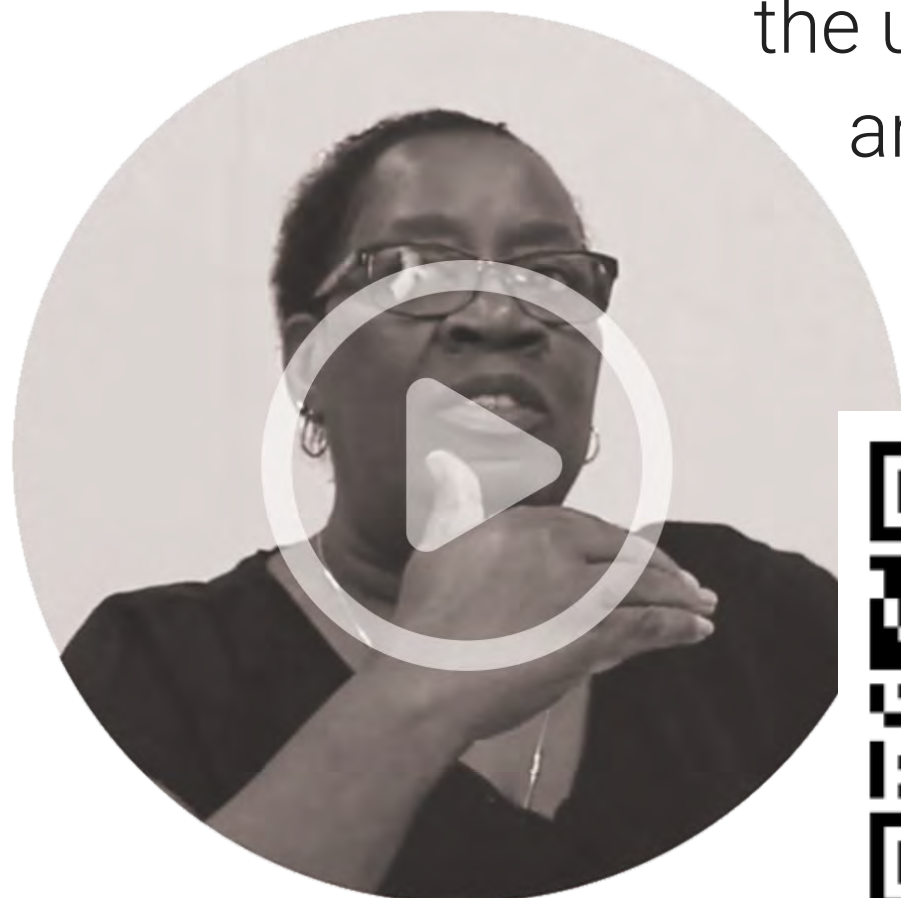
An alarming number of home care agencies are compelled to turn away care due to workforce shortages. Small to medium sized agencies are turning away an average of 510 hours of care monthly, with a median of turning away 100 hours of care monthly, leaving individuals that need care without access to services.



## RACIAL BIAS:

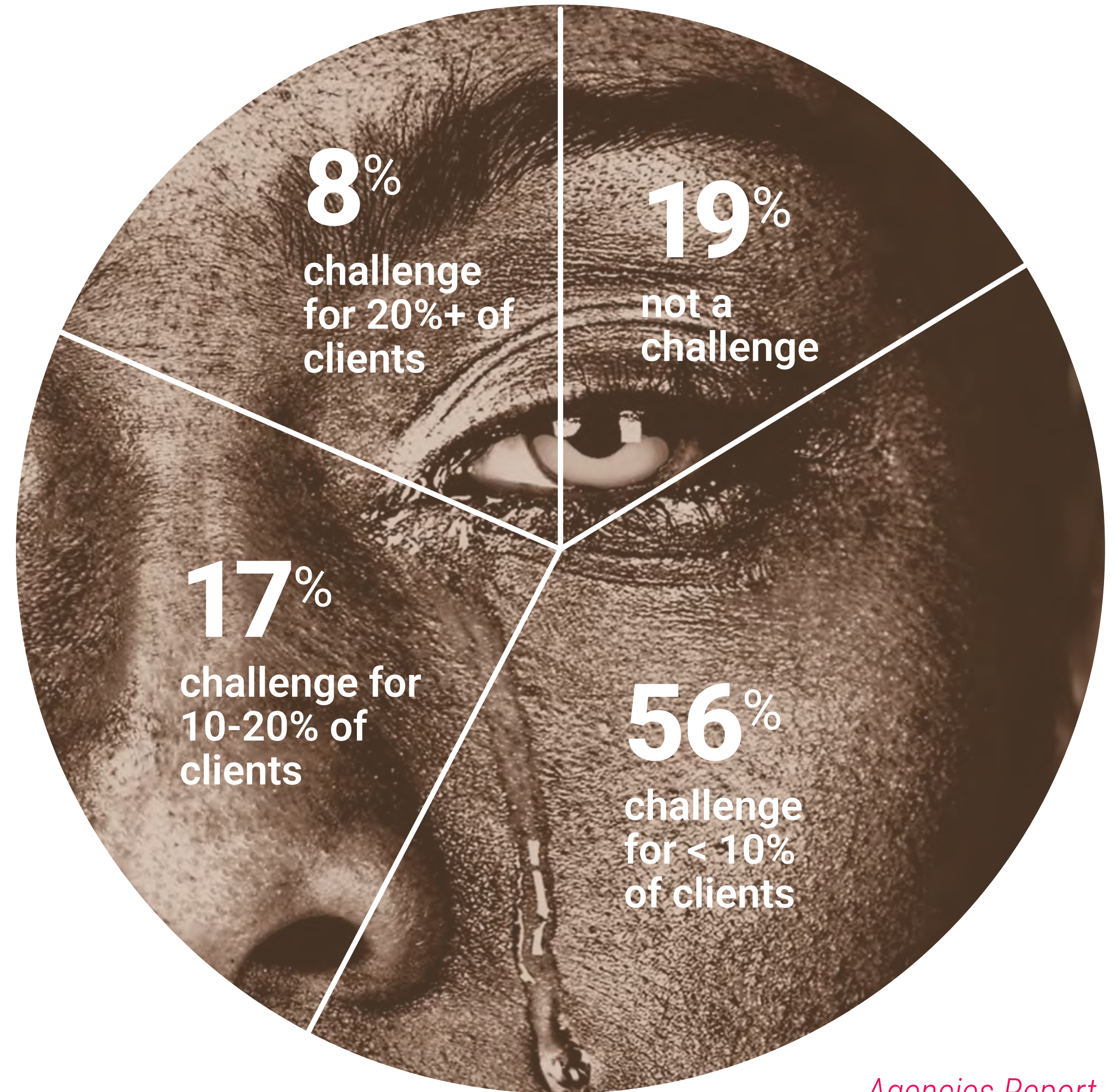
# 79% OF AGENCIES REPORT STAFFING CHALLENGES DUE TO RACE-SPECIFIC CAREGIVER REQUESTS

Staffing challenges of an already strained home care workforce are exacerbated due to race-specific caregiver requests from clients. The study explored "racial refusal" – clients' unwillingness to work with a caregiver of a different race. This issue is particularly concerning as 63% of the direct care workforce consists of people of color, many of whom reside in underserved communities. The findings underscore the urgent need to address racial biases in home care to ensure equitable access to caregiving opportunities for all.



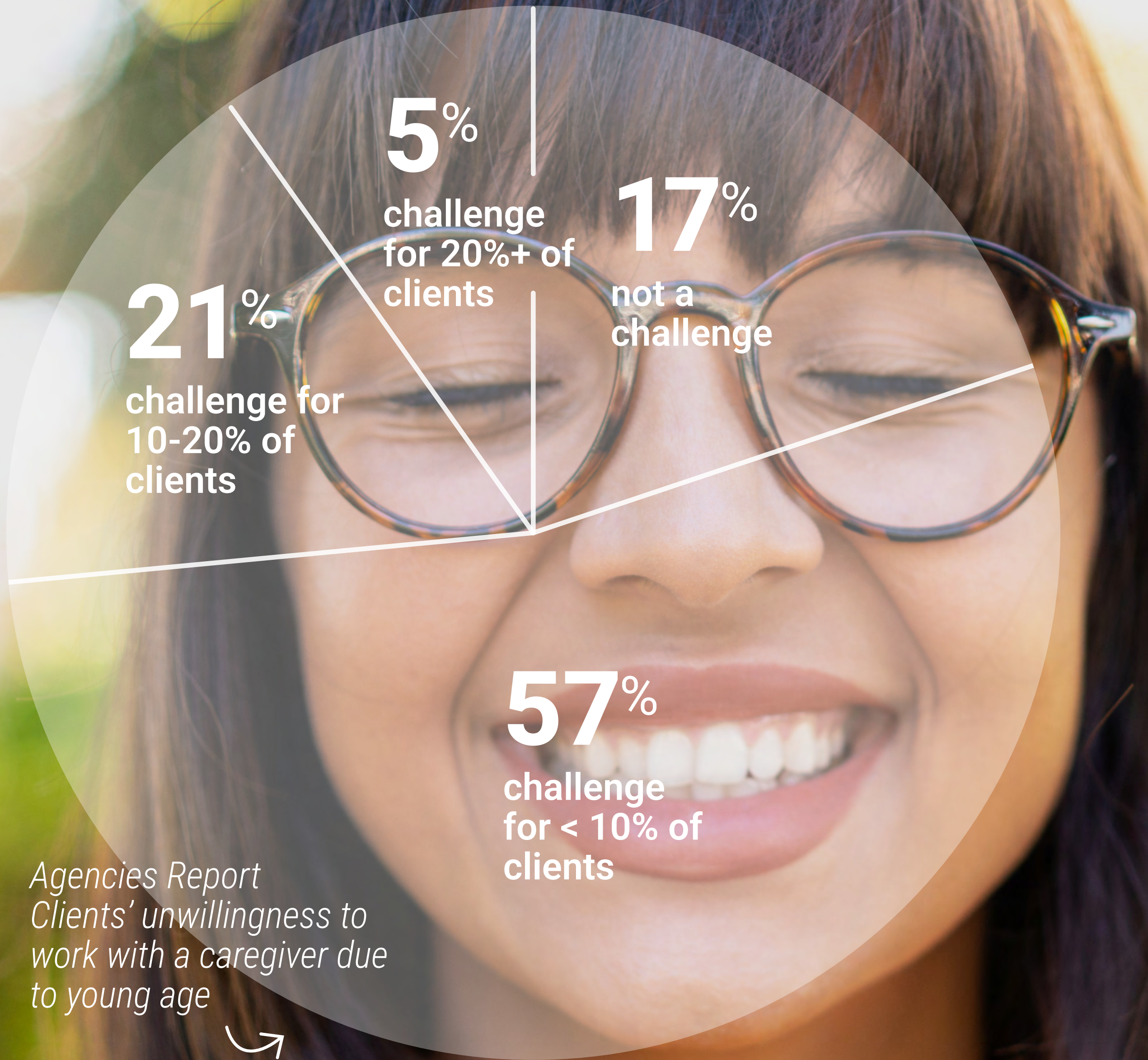
View her story

*Video contains strong language.  
Viewer discretion advised.*



*Agencies Report  
Clients' hesitancy to work  
with a caregiver of a  
different race*





*Agencies Report Clients' unwillingness to work with a caregiver due to young age*



## **AGE BIAS: 83% OF AGENCIES REPORT STAFFING CHALLENGE DUE TO YOUNGER CAREGIVERS**

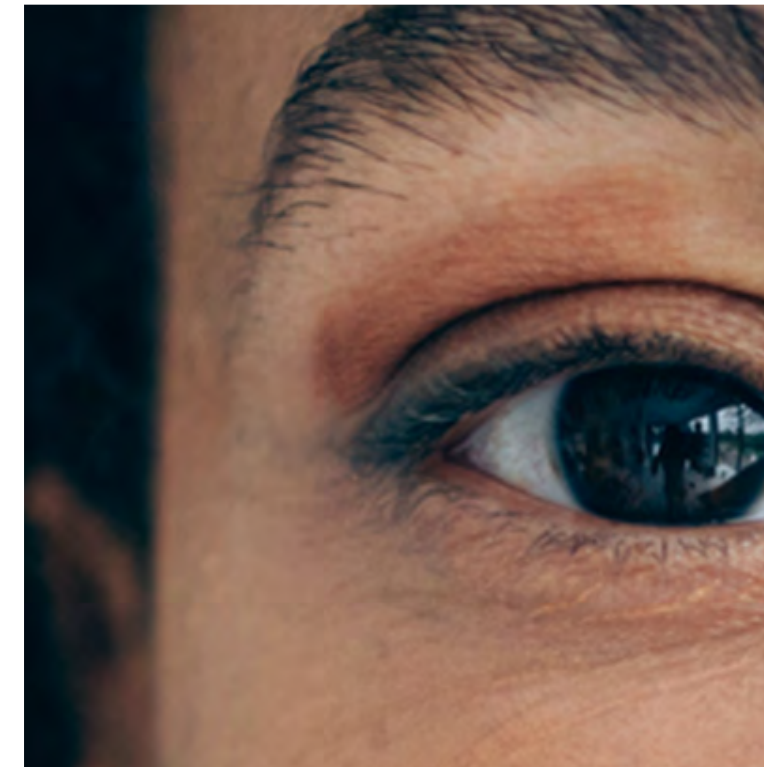
According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2020, approximately 12.4% of healthcare support workers were aged 16-24. The reluctance to accept younger caregivers worsens the workforce shortage in the home care industry, hindering the entry of younger generations into caregiving roles. These roles often serve as valuable stepping stones for career development. Given the wage pressure in home care, younger individuals might be more willing to accept these positions as a potential pathway, emphasizing the need to encourage more young people to join the field.



# CAREGIVER REALITY GAP: AGENCIES OVERESTIMATE FULFILLMENT AMID MENTAL HEALTH & FINANCIAL STRUGGLES

Seventy-three percent of home care agencies reported that caregivers feel engaged and fulfilled in their work. However, there may be a discrepancy between agency perception and the actual experiences of caregivers. According to the [2023 State of the Direct Care Workforce report](#), home care workers are three times more likely to experience anxiety and depression than the average US population, and 53% depend on public assistance due to financial stress. Moreover, caregiver turnover exceeds sixty percent.

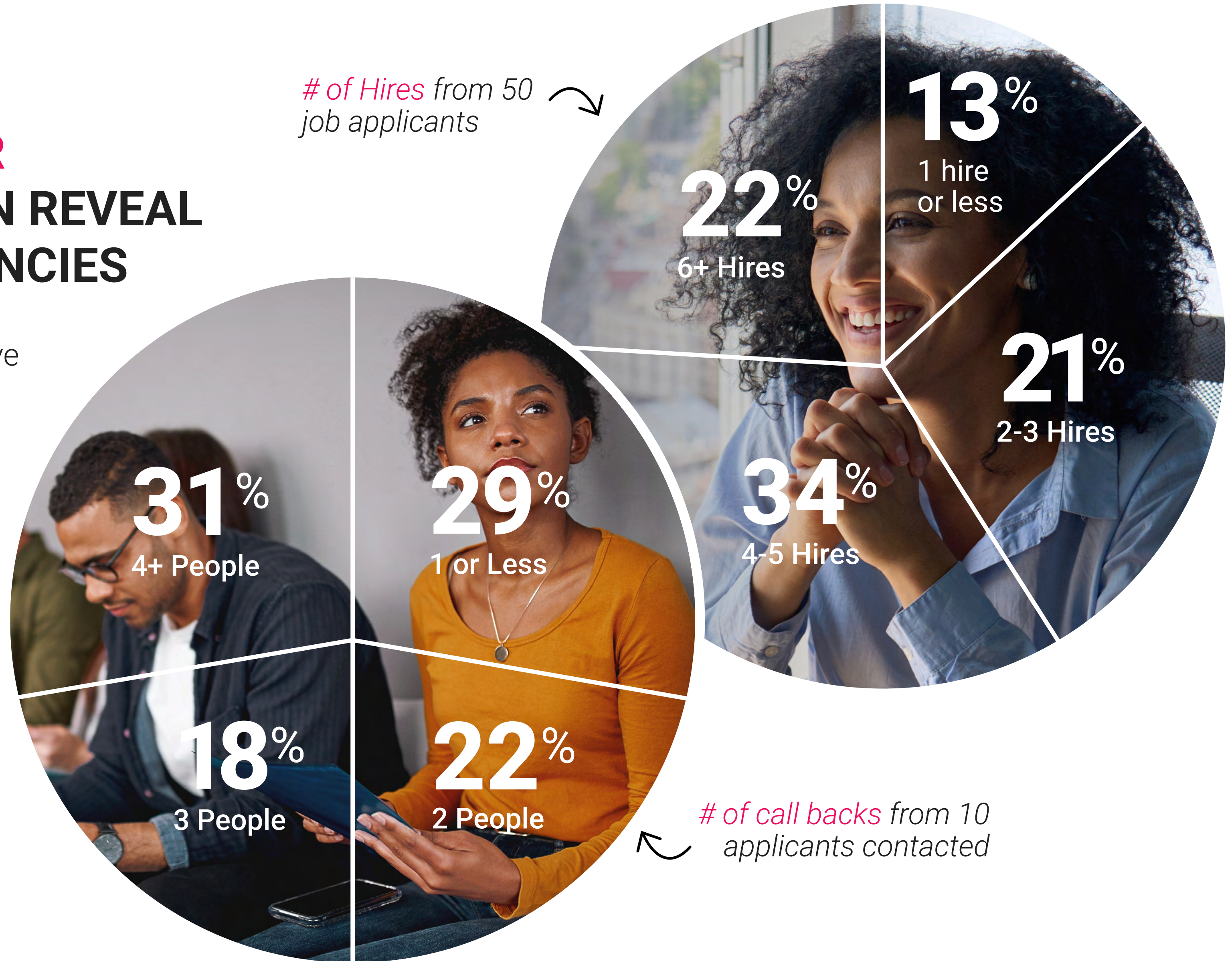
Despite caregivers' commitment and sense of purpose in their work, they often earn less than they would in other positions. In almost every state, there is a negative competitive compensation score, indicating that a caregiver could typically earn an additional \$2 - \$4 per hour in another job with similar or fewer requirements. Acknowledging this disparity is crucial as the industry collaborates to offer the necessary support services to keep workers more engaged and fulfilled.



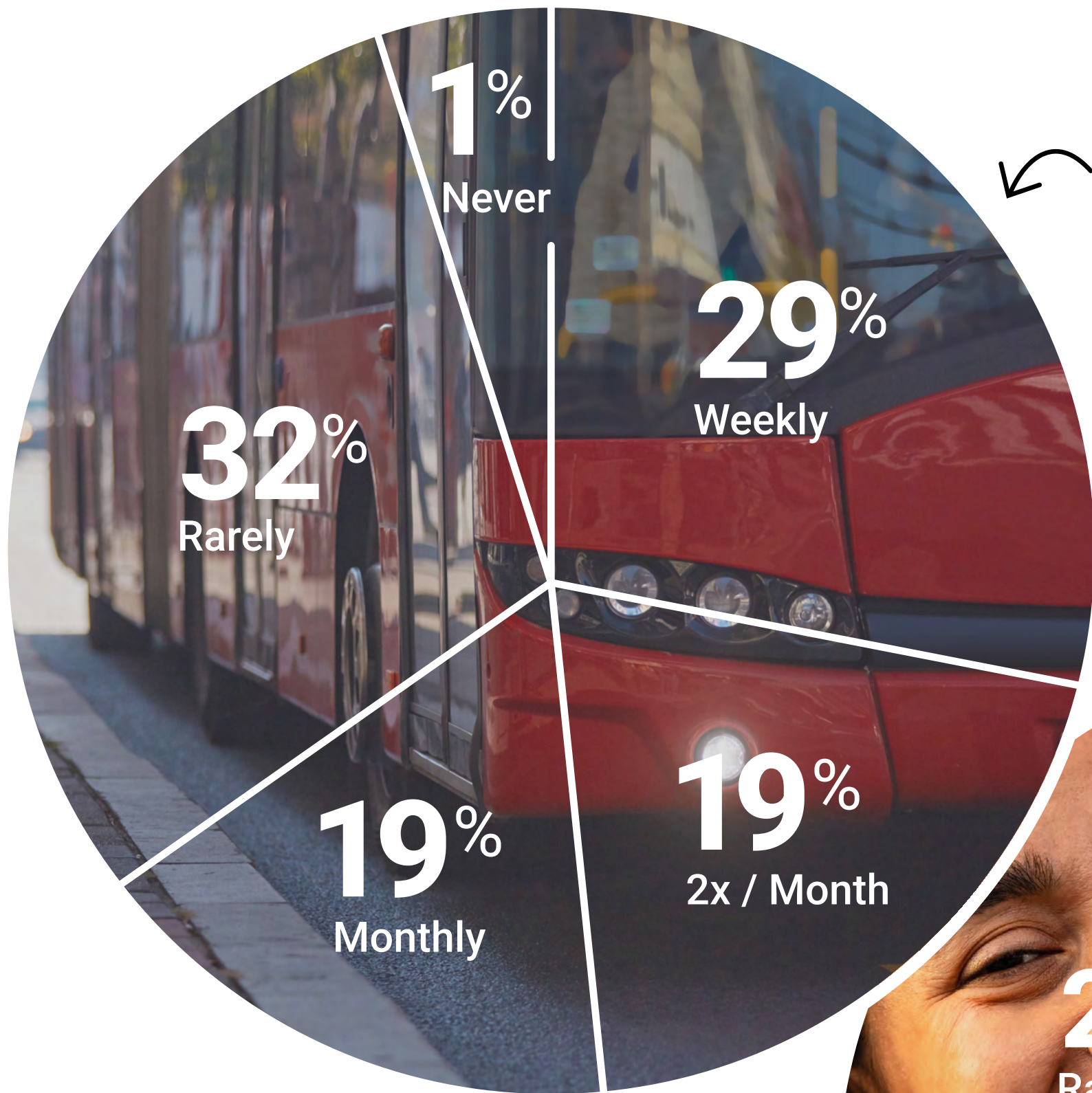


# CHALLENGES IN CAREGIVER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION REVEAL MAJOR DIVIDE AMONG AGENCIES

Over the past six months, 53% of agencies have reported worsening [caregiver recruitment](#) and retention, while 38% observed no change. The study highlights a striking disparity in recruitment effectiveness, emphasizing the crucial role of internal operations in driving hiring success. For instance, 34% of agencies make fewer than three hires from 50 applicants, while 22% make over six. Efficient recruitment practices, streamlined operations, and careful management of key KPIs are vital. The same investment in two agencies yields vastly different outcomes.



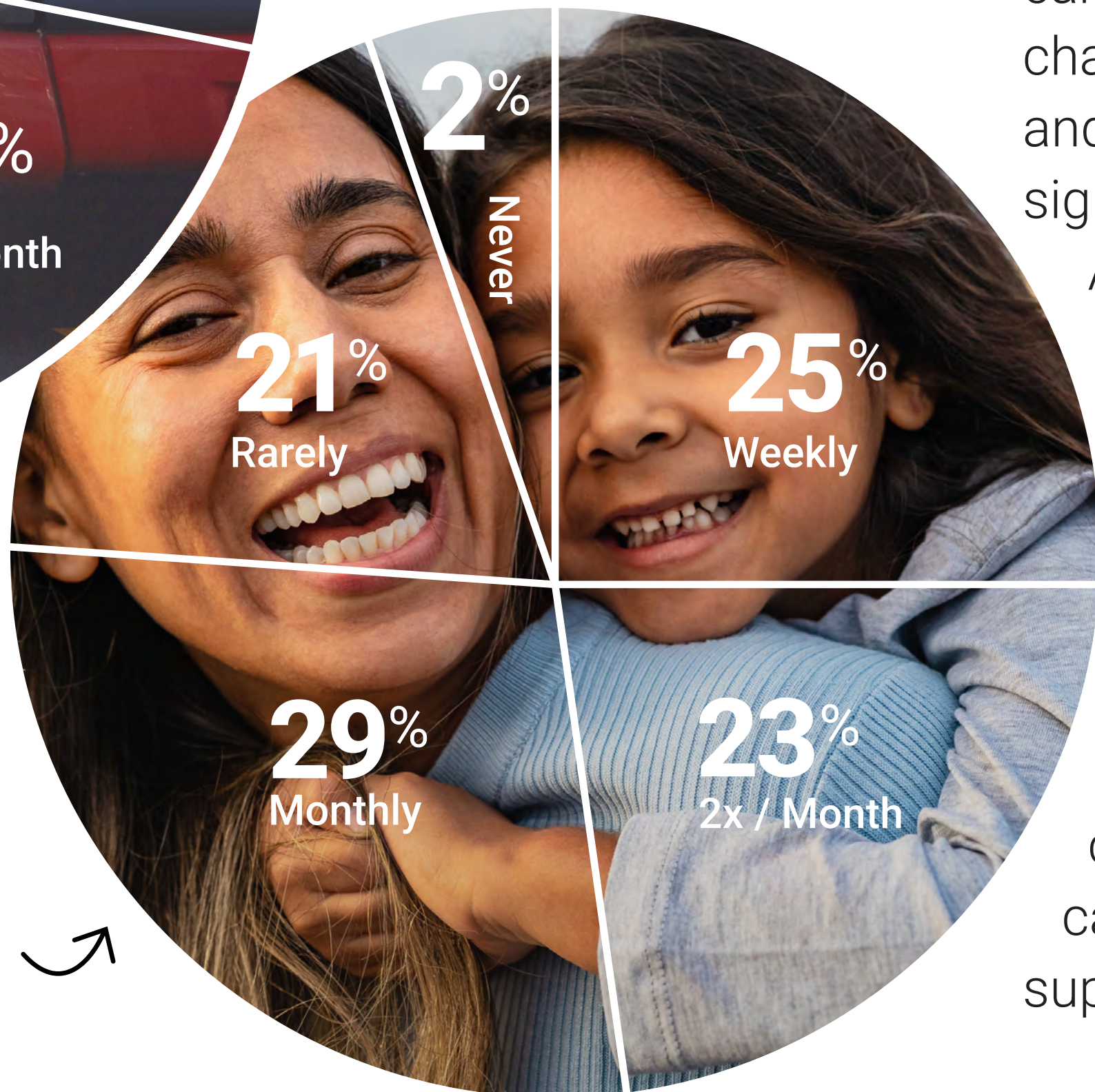




Call off frequency due to *transportation challenges*

## TRANSPORTATION & CHILDCARE CHALLENGES TRIGGER CAREGIVER CALL-OFFS, RESULTING IN REDUCED CARE DELIVERY

Agencies have reported frequent caregiver shift cancellations due to transportation and childcare challenges. With 85% of direct care workers being female and many single parents, these obstacles impact a significant portion of the workforce. Unlike many Americans who can work remotely or with flexible schedules, care must be delivered in-person and punctually. Limited access to affordable, quality childcare exacerbates the financial stress and instability of low-income jobs. To envision a brighter future, advocacy and policy changes supporting affordable childcare, transportation, and fair wages are necessary. While some care workers assist their communities part-time, many seek a full-time caregiver career, underscoring the need for a more supportive environment.

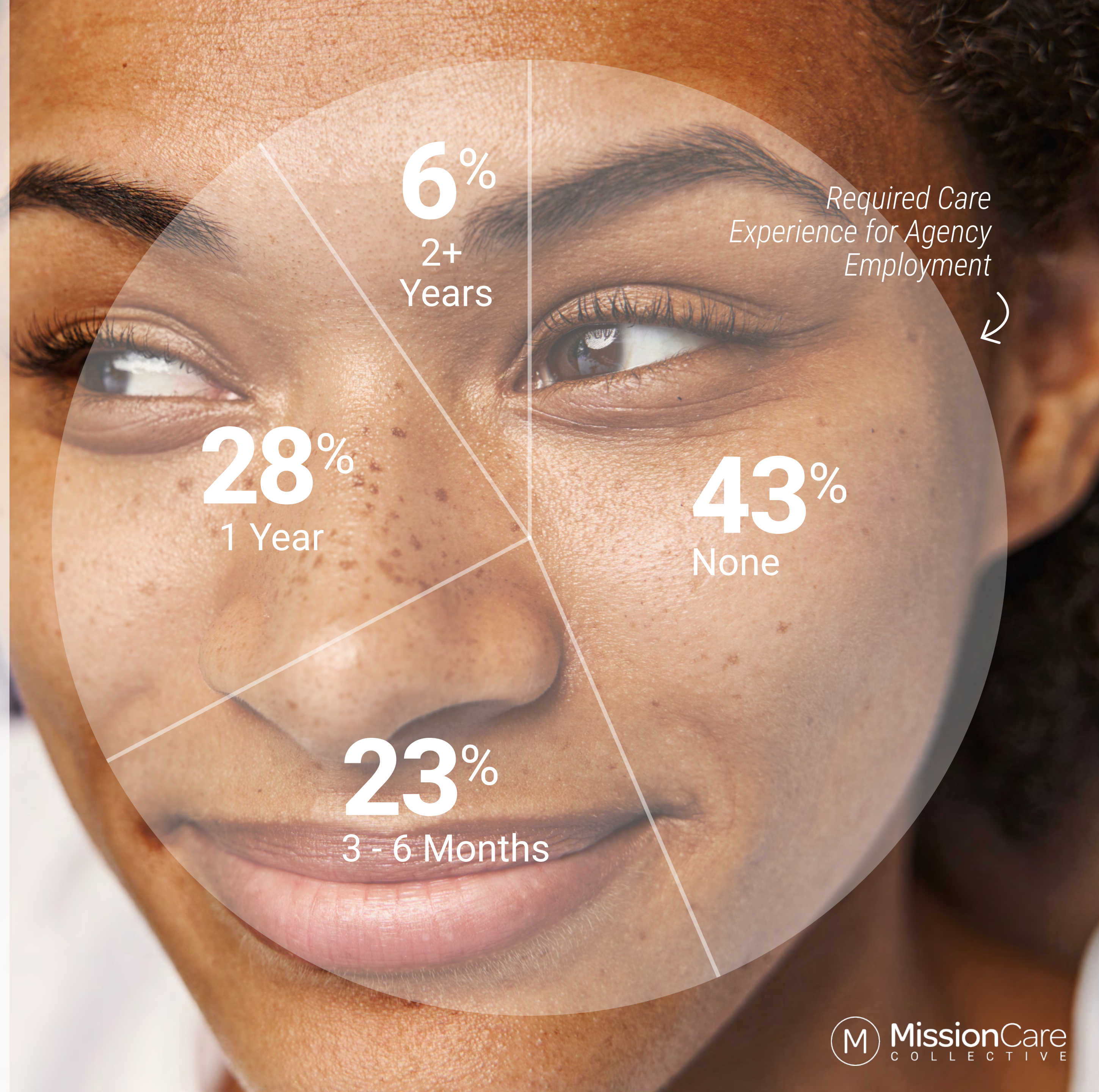


Call off frequency due to *childcare challenges*



## EXPERIENCE & EDUCATION PREREQUISITES IN HOME CARE AGENCIES MAGNIFY WORKFORCE SHORTAGE

Experience and education prerequisites, such as the desire to only recruit individuals with a high school diploma in addition to prior experience working in care intensify workforce shortages. While well-qualified caregivers are essential for outstanding care, limited labor pool availability hinders agencies' recruitment efforts. As too few individuals enter the profession and experienced workers depart, there's a need to reevaluate strategies, train future caregivers, and broaden the workforce. Positively, 70% of direct care workers desire more training, and 85% of agencies are open to providing it.







Do you anticipate your agency will *grow, shrink, or maintain* this year?

## AGENCIES OPTIMISTIC ON GROWTH, YET 40% REPORT DETERIORATING CLIENT SERVICE

Agencies display strong confidence in their ability to grow this year, despite facing workforce challenges. Although some express concerns of deteriorating client service due to workforce challenges, 18% of agencies report notable improvements. As the industry accelerates growth due to the crucial importance and positive outcomes of in-home care, there's immense opportunity to work towards stabilizing the workforce to improve in-home care experiences.



Over the past 6 months, do you think the home care industry's level of client service has *improved, gotten worse, or stayed the same*?



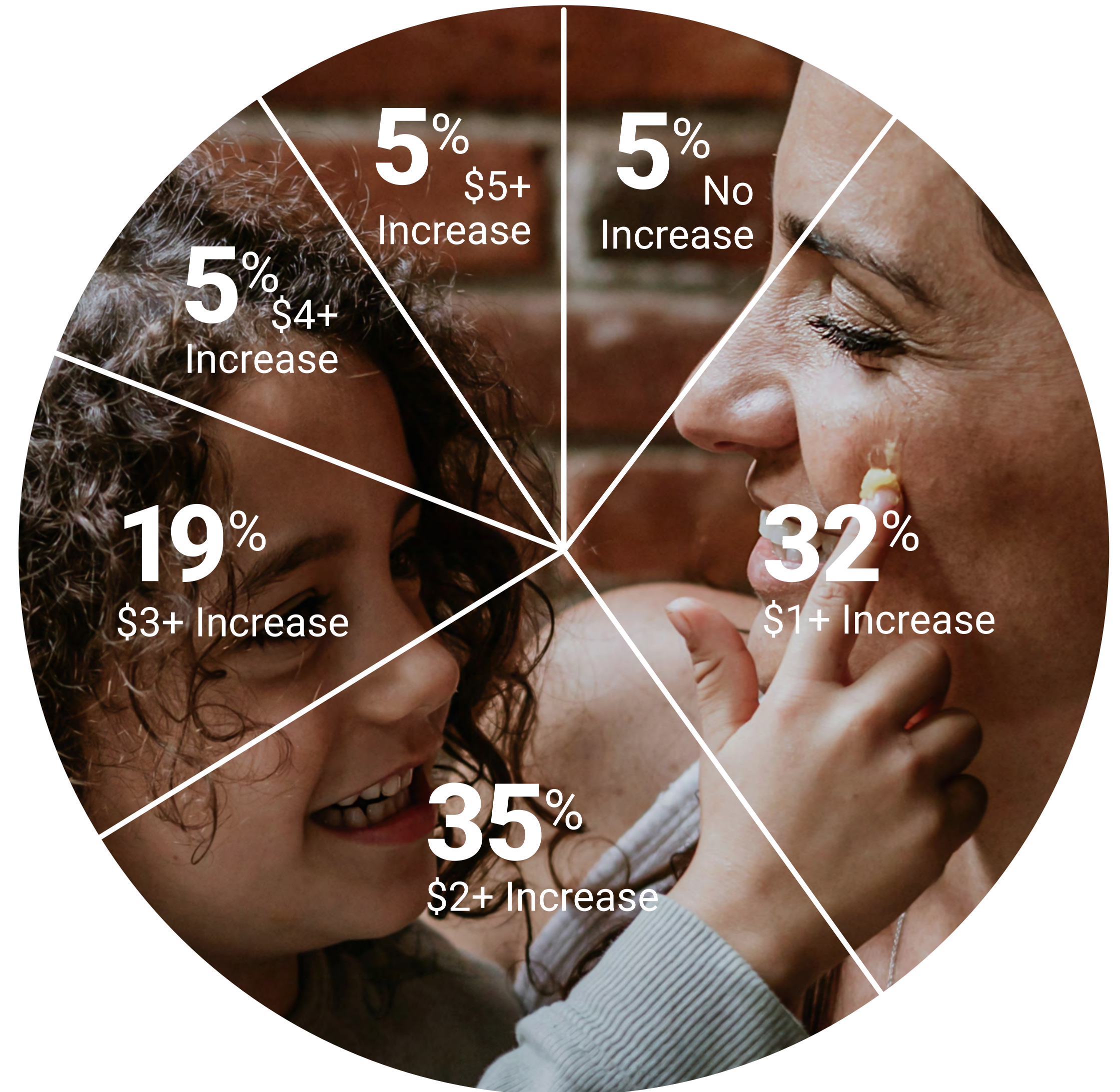
# AGENCIES RAISING WAGE YET STILL STRUGGLE TO COMPETE WITH OTHER INDUSTRIES

The median hourly wage for U.S. direct care workers stands at \$13.56, translating to a median annual income of \$20,200. Despite minimal growth in wage rates in this sector, they have struggled to keep pace with inflation and remain uncompetitive when compared to other occupations with similar entry requirements, such as retail and customer service positions.

Low wages are frequently identified as a contributing factor to poor job quality and workforce instability within the direct care industry. While 95% of private pay agencies reported wage

increases in the past year, Medicaid-funded agencies continue to face challenges, and all agencies find it difficult to compete with external occupations.

Research indicates that wages have a significant impact on job satisfaction, recruitment, and retention within this workforce. Addressing this multifaceted and complex challenge is crucial to the growth and stability of the home care workforce. While compensation may not be the sole motivator, it remains a critical factor in employee retention and overall satisfaction.



↶ Average Agency Wage Increase Over Past Year



Despite challenges,  
caregivers persist... fueled by a  
**PASSION TO CARE** for people.



MissionCare  
COLLECTIVE





**MissionCare**  
COLLECTIVE  
[www.MissionCare.com](http://www.MissionCare.com)