



# SEIU 521 in Santa Clara County

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AB2561 Presentation 05/19/26

Public Hearing Regarding the Status of Vacancies

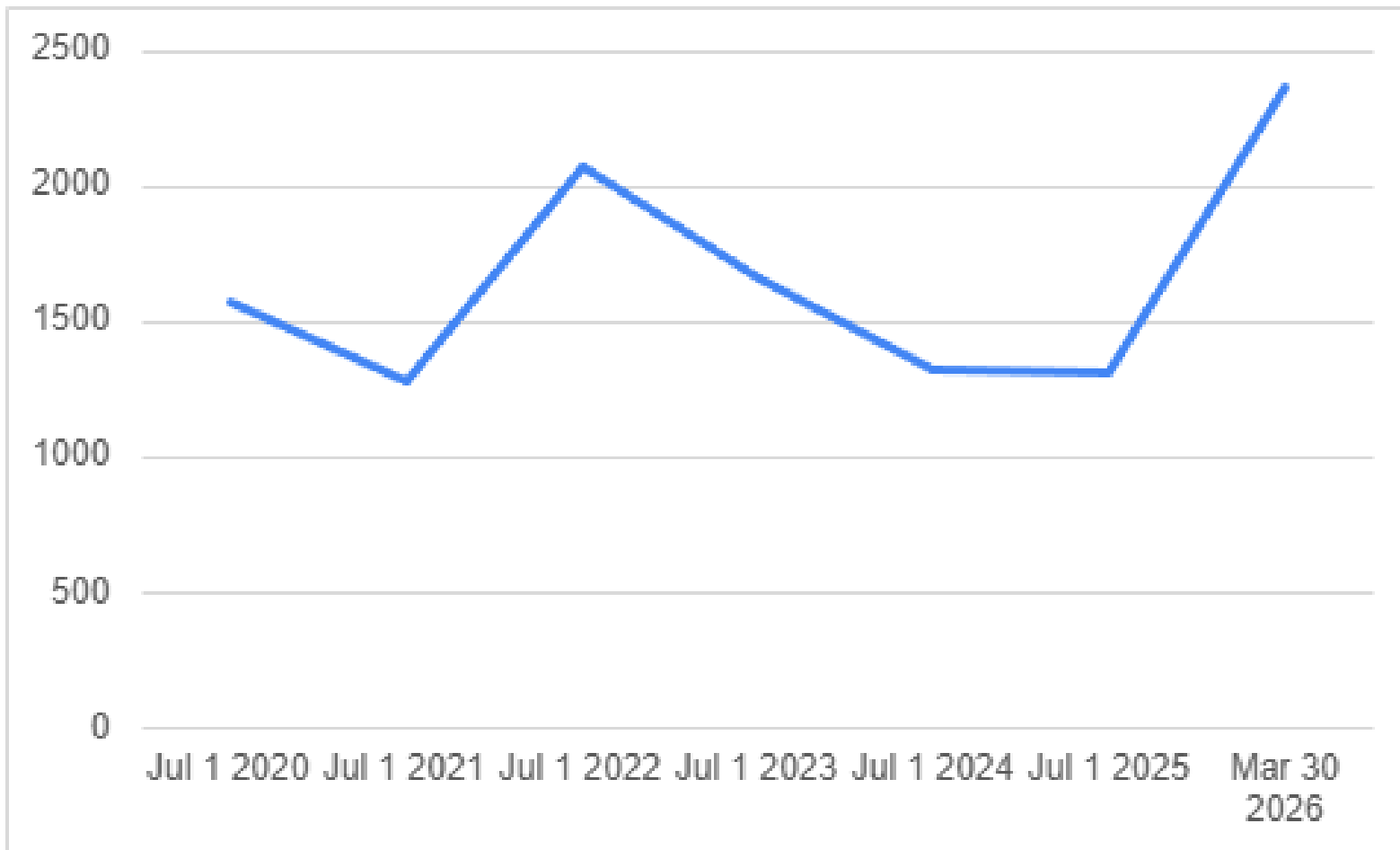


# SEIU 521 in Santa Clara County

Budget Unit	FTEs
a) 01-Administrative, Professional, and Technical Unit	5791
b) 02-Clerical Unit	2837.3
c) 03-Blue Collar Unit	1519.55
d) 05-Public Health Nursing Unit	79
e) 06-Probation Counselor Safety Unit	70
f) 15-Environmental Health Unit	71
g) 17-Social Services Unit	1471
h) 21-Supervisory Unit	293



# Vacancies By Year, Turnover



SCC 12-month  
Turnover: 12.15%



# Top Vacancies

Classification	Vacancies
SOCIAL SVC BENEFITS SPC	84
JANITOR	46.15
SOCIAL WORKER III	44
LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSE	42.7
SHERIFF'S PROTECTIVE SVC OFFCR	42
HEALTH SERVICES REP	34
HOSPITAL SERVICES ASST II	30.9
OFFICE SPECIALIST III	28.5
PSYCHIATRIC SOCIAL WORKER II	27.5
OFFICE SPECIALIST II	27

Classification	Vacancies
EMPLOYMENT COUNSELOR	26
DIT-COMPUTED TOMOGRAPHY	23.1
RESPIRATORY CARE PRAC II	23
PROTECTIVE SERVICES OFFICER	19
CLIENT SERVICES TECHNICIAN	19
REHABILITATION COUNSELOR	16
ACCOUNT CLERK II	16
LAW ENFORCEMENT RECORDS TECH	16
SR HEALTH SERVICES REP	16
COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCHER I-U	14



# Vacancies By Unit

<b>Budget Unit</b>	<b>Vacancies</b>
a) 01-Administrative, Professional, and Technical Unit	634.25
b) 02-Clerical Unit	290.8
c) 03-Blue Collar Unit	145.55
d) 05-Public Health Nursing Unit	5
e) 06-Probation Counselor Safety Unit	11
f) 15-Environmental Health Unit	15
g) 17-Social Services Unit	144
h) 21-Supervisory Unit	22



# Key Takeaways

- Santa Clara County's vacancy crisis is fundamentally a retention and workforce stability problem, not just a hiring problem.
- The County ESA needs to meaningfully partner with SEIU 521 on real workforce solutions. SEIU 521 has repeatedly pushed for faster transfers, clearer promotional pathways, and partnership with the SEIU Education Fund, yet structural barriers remain in place.
- Contracted Behavioral systems experience substantially higher turnover, while millions of public dollars are spent on rent, non-program expenses, and duplicative administrative structures instead of direct services and staffing stability.

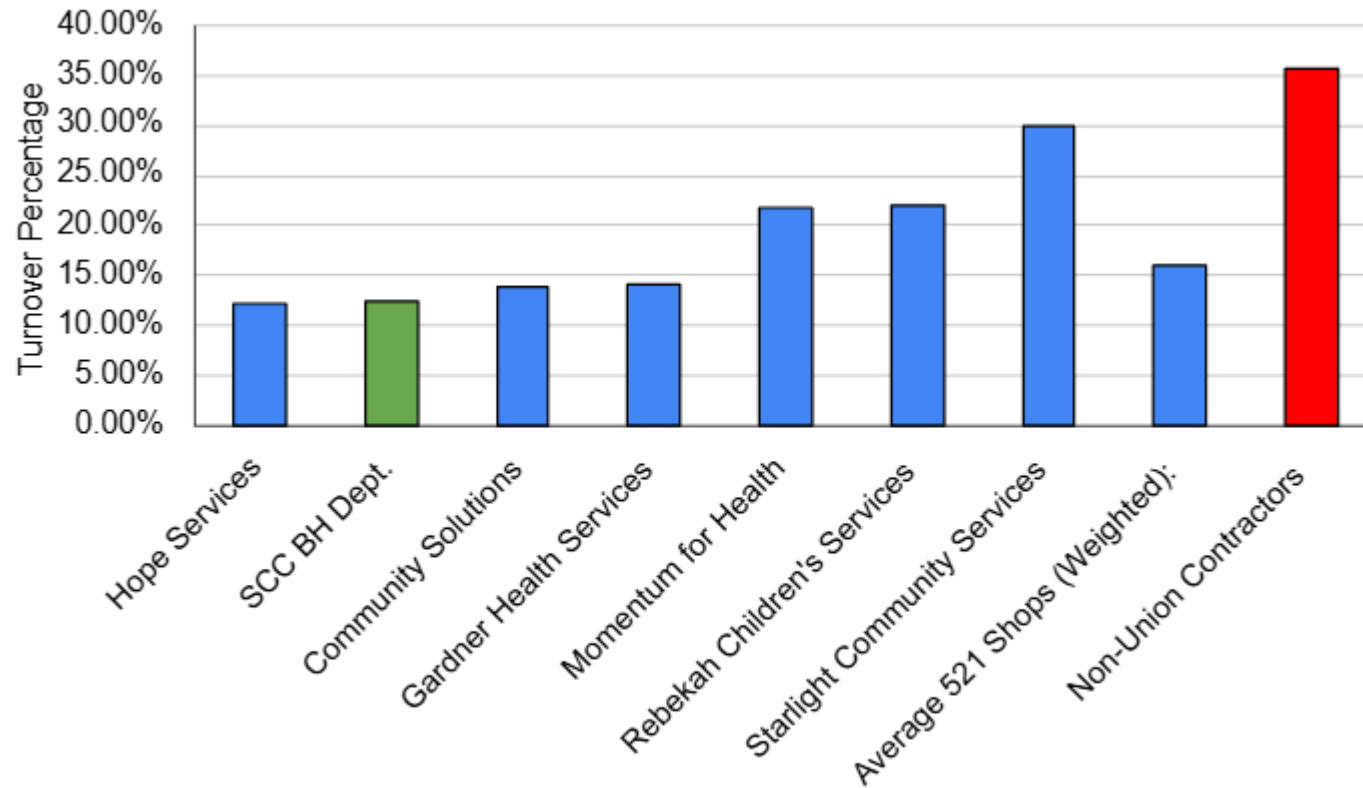


# BH Workers At Contracted Non-Profits Are Paid Less and Have Fewer Benefits

- Example: Licensed Therapist positions at Santa Clara County reach wages that average \$9,800 more than comparable positions at SCC contracted non-profits
- County workers get full coverage of healthcare premiums for themselves and dependents, non-profit BH workers don't
- One worker at Rebekah Children's Services shared "I'm living paycheck to paycheck, I have to be very careful with my spending, my budgeting. It's impacted me a lot."



# Turnover Highest at Non-Union Contractors



- UCSF's SCC BH Labor Workforce report found a mean turnover rate of 33% among providers in BHSD's mental health and SUTS networks
- The average of SEIU 521's BH shops in SCC is 16.16%, significantly under the average.
- Backing this number out of the 33% overall average gives us a 35.7% average for non-union shops



# Turnover a Huge Barrier To Care

- “It’s always the same. I have to tell my whole life story again and again. Even though they have the records, they still want to hear it. No, it’s happened too many times [...].”
- “It’s easier just to deal with one person. That’s so much better than being thrown around backwards and forwards between different social workers.”

Quotes from clients participating in: “Continuity of care as experienced by mental health service users - a qualitative study”  
(<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5698968/>)



# The Coming BH Staffing Crisis

- BH employers do not pay enough to retain people, and are not appealing enough for people to go to school and become qualified for many of the required roles.
- Potential recruits are not given enough support and opportunity to attain the certifications they need to move up the ranks and fill hard-to-fill roles.
- “These findings indicate that Santa Clara County did not have a reservoir of behavioral health professionals who were not working or who were working in other fields who could be tapped to fill vacant positions.” (SCC BH Workforce Report)



# Our Money Is Going To Landlords

- In FY23 just four of the 521 BH non-profits spent **\$7.9M combined on rent**. There are more than double that amount contracting from the county, so this number is a severe underestimate.
- The county could rehouse this work in county buildings, keeping this money going towards services



# Yet More Money Not Spent On Services

- In 2023 Community Solutions, Gardner, Momentum, and Rebekah's spent a combined \$28.98M on Non-Program expenses.
- This doesn't count the money wasted on county grant administrators
- Also doesn't count money spent on duplicative executive staff at each non-profit



# Potential Solutions to Save The BoS' Stated Priority:

- Redirect financial resources to pull services in-house.
- Create a training fund to upskill current workforce and fill vacant higher-qualification positions.
- Track worker turnover amongst contracted agencies to reward contractors that do a better job of retaining workers in the industry.
- Require labor peace agreements in county BH contracts.
- Minimum standards for county service contracts.
- Incorporate client voices in county policy decisions.





# Thank You

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SEIU 521

