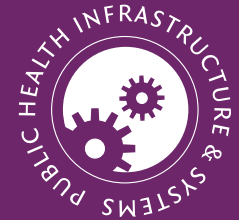


## Local Health Department Budget Cuts and Job Losses: State-Level Findings from the 2017 Forces of Change Study



### Background

Since 2008, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) has periodically surveyed local health departments (LHDs) across the United States to assess the impact of the economic recession on local public health practice. Results consistently demonstrate LHD funding challenges and the negative impacts these challenges have on LHD infrastructures. The national estimates are available on NACCHO's Forces of Change webpage at <http://www.nacchoprofilestudy.org/forces-of-change>. The data presented in this research brief supplement these results by describing the state-level findings related to budget cuts and workforce reductions LHDs experienced in 2016.

and Southern United States. LHDs in the West, however, were more likely (30%) to be affected by budgetary restrictions, while fewer LHDs in the Northeast (11%) reported the same (Figure A).

A total of 31 states reported that at least one of their LHDs' current budgets was less than the budget received in the previous fiscal year—with all the LHDs in Delaware, Mississippi, and Wyoming reporting budget cuts. Conversely, none of the LHDs in seven states (Maryland, Michigan, New Hampshire, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Vermont) reported a lower budget (Figure B).

### Methods

NACCHO distributed the Forces of Change survey to a statistically representative sample of 948 LHDs in the United States from February to April 2017. This sampling strategy allows national estimates, as well as state-level estimates if sufficient response was received from a state. A total of 615 LHDs completed the survey for a response rate of 65%. NACCHO generated national statistics using estimation weights to account for sampling and non-response. All data were self-reported; NACCHO did not independently verify the data provided by LHDs. A detailed description of survey methodology is available on NACCHO's Forces of Change webpage.

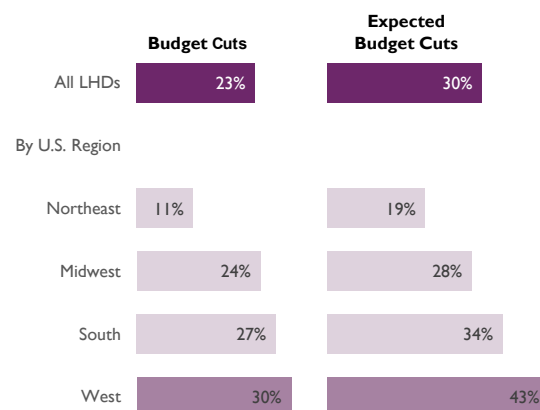
### Results

#### Budget Cuts

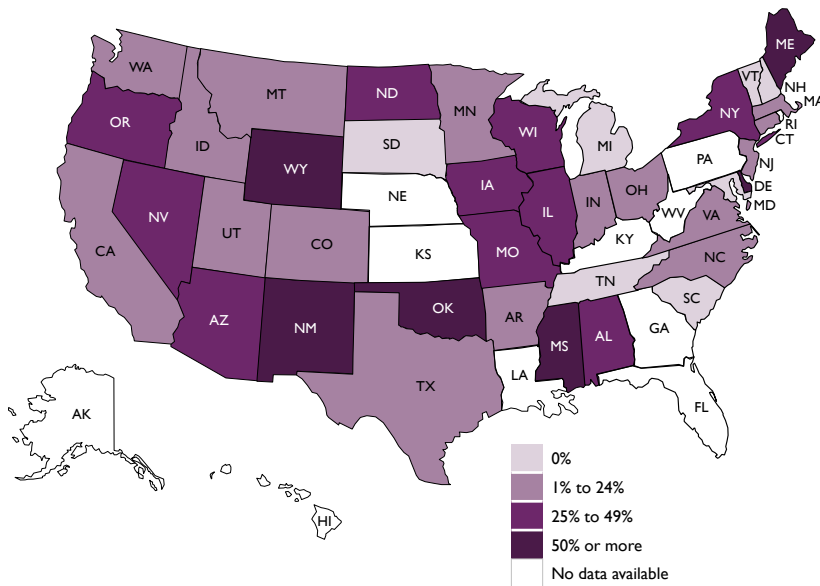
##### Current Fiscal Year

During 2016, 23% of LHDs reported decreased budgets in their current fiscal year compared to their previous fiscal year. Comparable to this overall proportion, budget cuts impacted approximately one-quarter of LHDs located in the Midwestern

**FIGURE A. Percentage of LHDs with Budget Cuts in the Current Fiscal Year, or Expecting Budget Cuts in the Next Fiscal Year, by LHD Characteristics**



**FIGURE B. Percentage of LHDs with Budget Cuts in the Current Fiscal Year, by State**



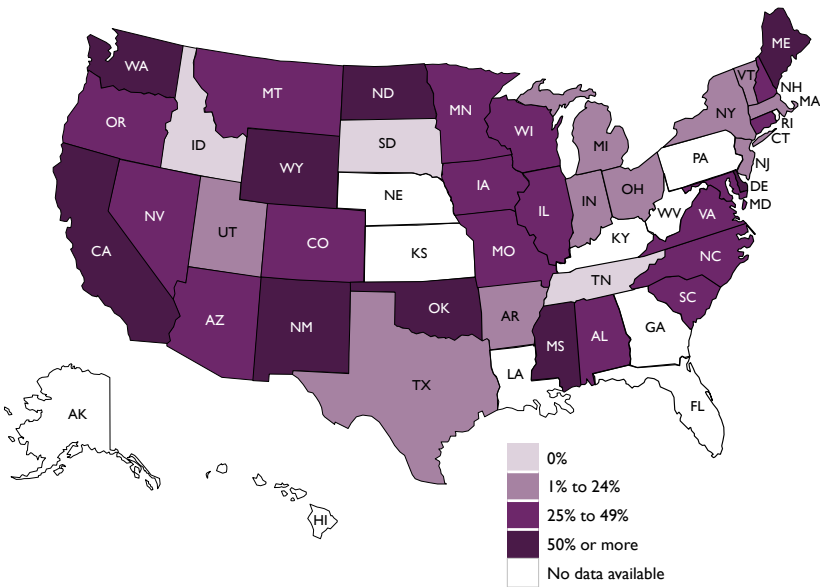
### Next Fiscal Year

Thirty percent of LHDs anticipate decreased budgets in their next fiscal year. Similarly, 28% of LHDs in the Midwest and 30% in the South reported expected budget cuts. LHDs in the West were more likely (43%) to anticipate budgetary restrictions in their next fiscal year, while fewer LHDs in the Northeast (19%) reported the same (Figure A).

A total of 35 states reported that they expect at least one of their LHDs will have a lower budget next fiscal year, with all the LHDs in Delaware and Mississippi expecting budget cuts. Conversely, no LHDs in three states (Idaho, South Dakota, and Tennessee) anticipate decreased budgets next fiscal year (Figure C).

Nationally, 13% of the population is impacted by these cuts to LHD budgets. However, LHDs anticipate that more than one-third, or 36%, of the population will be impacted in the next fiscal year, if budget cuts persist.

**FIGURE C. Percentage of LHDs Expecting Budget Cuts in the Next Fiscal Year, by State**



## Job Losses

### Overall Capacity

Overall, 34% of LHDs experienced at least one job lost due to layoffs or attrition in 2016. Approximately one-third of LHDs in the Midwest and the West reported job losses due to layoffs or attrition. However, more LHDs in the South reported workforce reductions (43%), while fewer LHDs in the Northeast (12%) reported the same (Figure D).

A total of 25 states reported job cuts for at least one of their LHDs, with all the LHDs in Mississippi and New Mexico being impacted. Conversely, no LHDs in three states (Delaware, South Dakota, and Vermont) experienced workforce reductions in 2016 (Figure E).



FIGURE D. Percentage of LHDs Losing Workforce Capacity, by LHD Characteristics

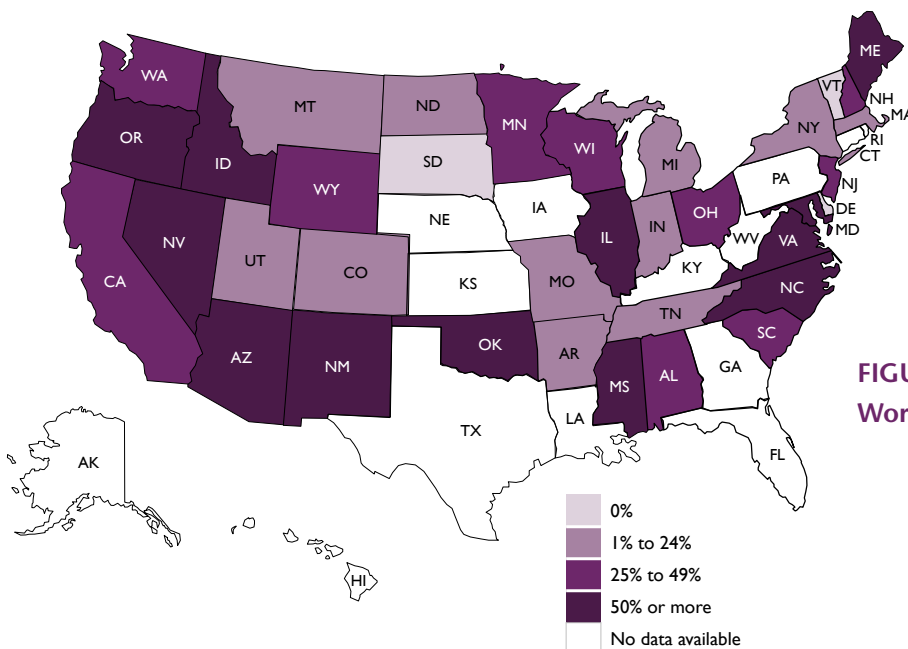


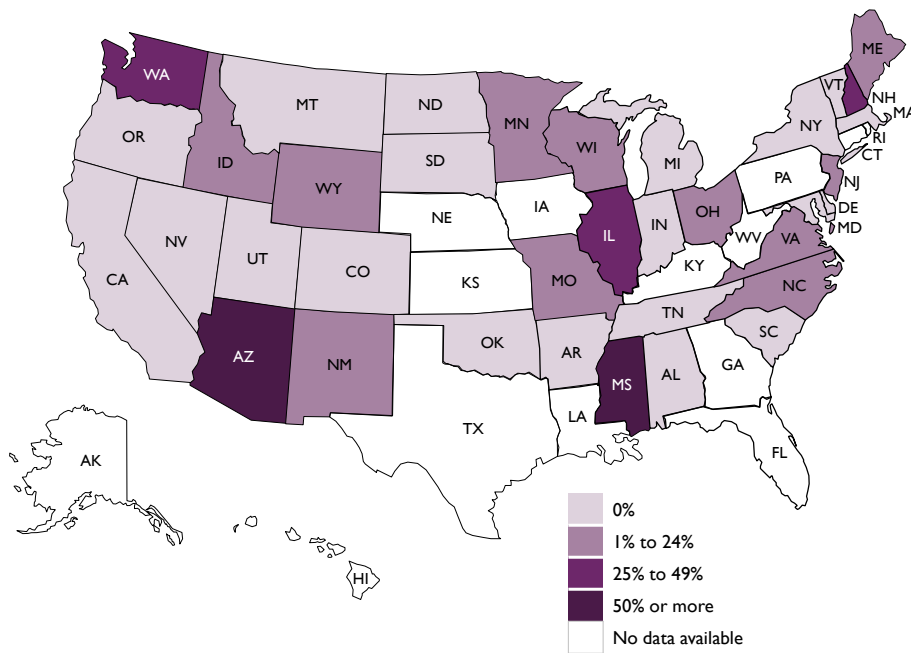
FIGURE E. Percentage of LHDs Losing Workforce Capacity, Overall, by State

## Layoffs vs. Attrition

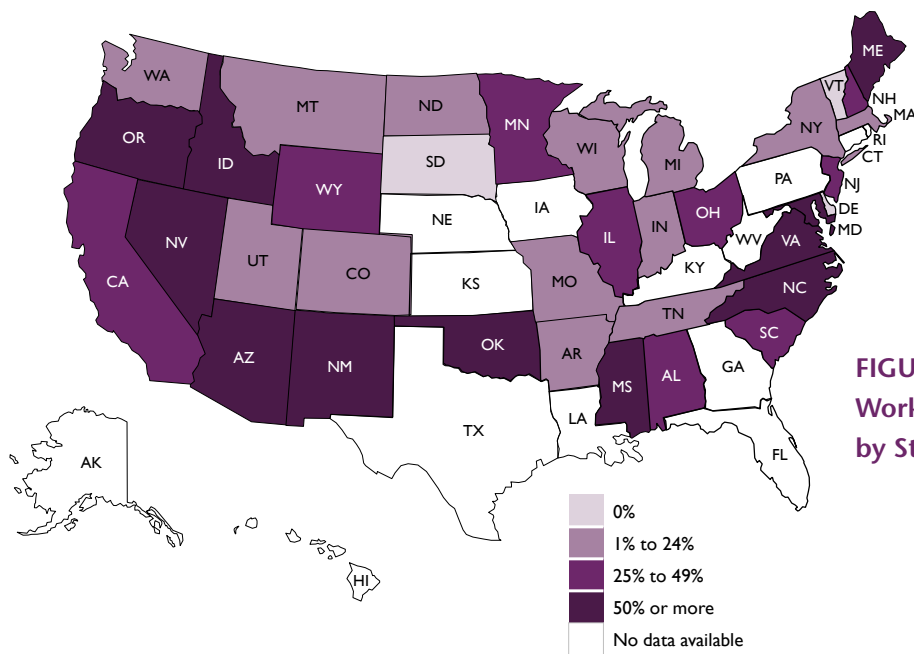
In 2016, most of the reported job losses were due to attrition. Overall, 31% of LHDs reported at least one job lost due to attrition compared to 8% of the LHDs that reported job losses due to layoffs.

LHDs in the Midwest and the West experienced workforce reduction patterns similar to the overall percentage—28% and 35% due to attrition, respectively, and 12% and 8% due to layoffs, respectively. Six percent of LHDs in the South reported job cuts due to layoffs, which is comparable to the overall proportion. However, LHDs in the South were more likely to experience decreased workforce capacity due to attrition (41%). Compared to the overall percentage, fewer LHDs in the Northeast reported job losses due to layoffs (2%) and attrition (12%) (Figure D).

Fewer states reported job losses due to layoffs (16 states, Figure F) than due to attrition (33 states, Figure G). All the LHDs in Mississippi reported job cuts due to attrition (Figure G), while no state reported workforce reductions due to layoffs for every LHD in the state (Figure F). None of the LHDs in three states (Delaware, South Dakota, and Vermont) reported job losses due to attrition (Figure G), while none of the LHDs in 20 states reported job cuts due to layoffs (Figure F).



**FIGURE F. Percentage of LHDs Losing Workforce Capacity through Layoffs, by State**



**FIGURE G. Percentage of LHDs Losing Workforce Capacity through Attrition, by State**

## Implications

LHDs experienced some type of financial stability for the last two fiscal years. However, nearly one in four LHDs continues to be affected by budgetary restrictions. In addition, the majority of these LHDs expect this stability to disappear within the next year. More LHDs in 22 states are expecting budget decreases next year than reported decreases this year. California, Maryland, and Washington are expected to experience the greatest impact of future budget cuts.

Unfortunately, LHDs have not yet had the opportunity to rebound completely from the long-term outcomes of the recession. This, in combination with shifts in state and federal budgets, may cause LHDs to be cautious with future budget and workforce expectations.

In 2016, LHDs also received a reprieve from staffing cuts. Although many LHDs reported at least one job lost in 2016, fewer than 1000 jobs overall were lost for the first time since the Great Recession began.

In addition, at least 32 states exist in which LHDs experienced more job losses due to attrition than layoffs. LHDs are greatly affected by hiring freezes and budget cuts, resulting in positions themselves being eliminated.

Substantial workforce reductions have undermined the ability of LHDs to provide essential services to their communities. Sufficient and consistent funding is critical to ensure LHDs' capacity to continue serving and caring for the people in their communities.

**TABLE 1: Percentage of LHDs with- and Expecting- Budget Cuts, by State**

<b>State</b>	<b>Current Budget Less Than Last Year</b>	<b>Expect Budget to be Lower Next Year</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
AL	32%	40%	20-22
AR	10%	5%	19-21
AZ	33%	44%	9
CA	14%	66%	13
CO	24%	38%	13
CT	19%	41%	11
DE	100%	100%	2
IA	29%	35%	18
ID	14%	0%	7
IL	48%	43%	20-21
IN	15%	12%	17-19
MA	3%	14%	40
MD	0%	40%	7
ME	76%	79%	8-9
MI	0%	18%	11
MN	23%	39%	16-18
MO	26%	26%	27-28
MS	100%	100%	7
MT	18%	35%	12
NC	21%	27%	19-20
ND	40%	69%	10
NH	0%	33%	3
NJ	16%	11%	18-19
NM	83%	83%	6
NV	25%	33%	3-4
NY	26%	17%	15
OH	16%	12%	23-24
OK	58%	79%	12
OR	33%	39%	10
SC	0%	25%	4
SD	0%	0%	8
TN	0%	0%	25-26
UT	13%	13%	9
VA	23%	31%	13
VT	0%	11%	8-9
WA	14%	54%	13
WI	27%	27%	21-22
WY	100%	63%	5

The number of responses varied slightly by question. States with no LHDs (HI and RI) and insufficient data (AK, CT, DC, GA, IA, KS, KY, LA, NE, PA, TX, WV) have been omitted from this table. FL has been removed as requested.

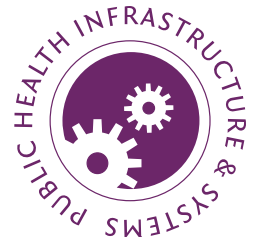
**TABLE 2: Percentage of LHDs with Cuts to Staff, by State**

State	Layoffs and/or Attrition	Layoffs	Attrition	# of Responses
AL	48%	0%	48%	21
AR	15%	0%	15%	21
AZ	89%	57%	67%	7-9
CA	30%	0%	32%	12-13
CO	20%	0%	20%	13
CT	15%	0%	15%	11
DE	0%	0%	0%	2
ID	57%	14%	57%	7
IL	62%	37%	49%	21
IN	10%	0%	10%	19
MA	1%	0%	1%	38-40
MD	50%	0%	50%	7
ME	66%	24%	63%	8-9
MI	18%	0%	18%	10-11
MN	34%	7%	34%	18
MO	21%	10%	21%	28
MS	100%	74%	100%	7
MT	6%	0%	6%	12
NC	62%	11%	52%	20
ND	20%	0%	20%	10
NH	33%	33%	33%	3
NJ	31%	5%	33%	18-19
NM	100%	17%	83%	6
NV	75%	0%	75%	2-4
NY	23%	0%	23%	15
OH	42%	14%	42%	23-25
OK	54%	0%	54%	10-12
OR	52%	0%	63%	10-12
SC	25%	0%	25%	4
SD	0%	0%	0%	8
TN	12%	0%	12%	26
UT	18%	0%	18%	9
VA	53%	8%	53%	13
VT	0%	0%	0%	12
WA	31%	26%	15%	12-13
WI	26%	5%	22%	20-22
WY	47%	10%	47%	5

The number of responses varied slightly by question. States with no LHDs (HI and RI) and insufficient data (AK, DC, GA, KS, KY, LA, PA, TX, WV) have been omitted from this table. FL has been removed as requested.

# [RESEARCH BRIEF]

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### FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

The Research & Evaluation Team at [research@naccho.org](mailto:research@naccho.org).



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1201 Eye Street, NW Fourth Floor Washington, DC 20005

P 202-783-5550 F 202-783-1583

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