

February 13, 2025

The following was sent to Senator Oberacker, Assembly Member Miller and Statewide personnel.

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As the President of the Oneonta Chapter of the United University Professions (UUP), I am writing to bring to your attention critical issues in Health and Housing that require immediate attention and improvement in our rural Oneonta area. It is my intention to ensure that these concerns are highlighted and adequately addressed to foster positive change for the community.

The SUNY Oneonta Health and Housing Survey, distributed to 1,394 SUNY Oneonta employees (current and retired), received a 33% response rate, with 461 total responses. Of those, 83.7% fully completed the survey. Respondents had a range of experience at Oneonta, with 35% having been at the institution for less than 5 years, and 21% for more than 20 years. Most respondents (94%) were not retired, with 82% identifying as part of United University Professions (UUP).

Regarding health insurance, 83% of respondents were covered under The Empire Plan, and 58% had family coverage. A majority (71%) reported an increase in their medical expenses over the years. When rating their health insurance, coverage received generally high ratings, though costs were a concern, with 32.9% of respondents rating overall medical costs as a 4 (out of 5).

Dental insurance was predominantly through Delta Dental (82%), with most participants having family coverage. Similar to medical costs, 61% of respondents saw an increase in their dental expenses, and coverage satisfaction varied, with many citing concerns about costs and availability of care. In terms of housing, the majority (78%) owned their homes, and 41% lived within 5 miles of the campus. Although 34% of respondents had looked for housing closer to Oneonta in the past two years, 66% had not. The primary reasons cited for not finding housing nearby included the availability, quality, and cost of housing. Despite these challenges, 83% of those who had searched would move closer if the housing conditions improved.

Overall, respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction with their current living situations, with 40% being very satisfied and 38% satisfied, indicating that housing is a significant concern for a portion of the population.

This survey highlights the diverse experiences and concerns of SUNY Oneonta employees regarding health insurance and housing, with cost and accessibility being a common theme across medical, dental, and housing issues.

Of particular concern in bringing this to Statewide's attention is the fact that many of our employees with Delta Dental insurance are being notified that their dentist can no longer afford to remain a "participating" or "in-network" provider.

The following link will take you to the actual Health and Housing Survey Results:

[https://www.oneontauup.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/12-2-24-FROM-SUNY-ONEONTA-PRESIDENT-AND-BILL-UUP-Survey-Summary\\_2024\\_11.25.2024.pdf](https://www.oneontauup.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/12-2-24-FROM-SUNY-ONEONTA-PRESIDENT-AND-BILL-UUP-Survey-Summary_2024_11.25.2024.pdf)

I look forward to the opportunity to schedule a meeting with you in the near future to discuss these matters in greater detail.

Sincerely,

***Shirley A. Clark***  
***Oneonta UUP Chapter President***

# Health and Housing Survey

Feedback from SUNY Oneonta Employees



## Health Insurance Results



**71% of responses**  
reported an increase of  
medical expenses over the  
years.



### **Mental Health Providers**

80% of employees reported a lack of mental health providers in the area.



### **Cost of Mental Health**

7 out of 10 employees say costs related to mental health are expensive.

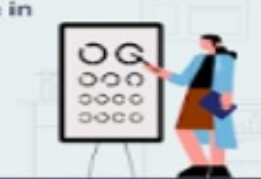


### **Primary Care Providers**

62% reported that there is a general lack of primary care providers.

## Vision and Dental Insurance Results

Our UUP members are having a difficult time finding providers in the Oneonta area for Dental and Vision coverage. When needing specialized care in Dental and Vision there are often no servicers in Oneonta and employees must travel about two hours to find providers.



**50% of employees reported an increase of vision expenses.**

Employees in Oneonta who require specialized care in ophthalmology face significant challenges, as they must travel at least two hours to access a qualified specialist. This extended travel time can create added difficulties for individuals seeking timely care and treatment.



**63 % of employees reported an increase on dental expenses.**

Many employees with Delta Dental insurance are being notified that their dentist can no longer afford to remain a 'participating' or 'in-network' provider.



## Housing Survey Results



**83% of responses**  
Would move closer to Oneonta  
if the following issues are  
resolved



### Availability of Housing

Many employees live in single-family homes and are generally satisfied with their living situation, though a significant portion looked for housing closer to Oneonta but faced issues with availability and cost.



### Quality of Housing

Employees have concerns about the impact of student rentals on housing quality and neighborhood conditions.



### Budget Friendly Rental Options and Availability

SUNY Oneonta employees have a hard time finding affordable non-student rentals in the area. This affects the recruitment and retention of faculty and staff.