



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **State and local public finance offices are facing a talent shortage according to a new report from GFOA and Lightcast**

*Research finds finance offices must focus on talent to mitigate a large and growing worker shortage, and calls for targeted interventions in recruitment, hiring, retention, and advancement.*

**BOSTON – September 29, 2022** – State and local public finance faces a growing talent shortage as demand piles up but employment stagnates, according to a new report from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and Lightcast, a labor market analytics firm.

The report, *Meeting Demand for State and Local Public Finance Jobs*, studied the worker shortage for public finance workers at state and local governments. The analysis revealed that demand for state and local public finance workers is far outstripping the incumbent supply and straining familiar talent pipelines.

The report shows that many other sectors, including private sector finance, have added back jobs lost during the Covid-19 pandemic, but that there are still 30,000 fewer state and local public finance workers at present than in 2019.

At the same time, the report charts how demand growth in state and local public finance outpaces its private sector counterpart and the economy overall – aggregate worker demand as measured by unique online job postings is up 92% for state and local public finance in the first half of 2022 compared to the same period in 2019, versus 60% for private sector finance and 41% for the public sector overall.

“Before the pandemic, [GFOA and its member organizations] typically talked about new GASB statements, funding pensions, or the impact of revenue constraints. Since I have been back on the road post-lockdown, though, the No. 1 challenge I constantly hear about is attracting and retaining talent—and I’ve heard it described as a crisis for government finance more than once,” said Chris Morrill, Executive Director of GFOA.

The report said the need for state and local public finance workers is projected to grow, as nearly a third of the incumbent workforce will be at retirement age within the next 10 years. Replacing those experienced workers may be challenging, as Financial

Managers, Project Management Specialists, and Accountants and Auditors can earn a salary premium outside of state and local public finance.

The report also highlights many attractive features of state and local public finance: a sense of public service, job security, entry-level positions that pay more than private-sector counterparts, and better representation of women and people of color than comparable sectors, among others.

The report provides recommendations for recruitment and hiring as well as for retention and advancement in state and local public finance. The report recommends that state and local governments:

- Mount a recruitment campaign that highlights the importance of public finance as local communities receive public dollars to aid Covid-19 recovery.
- Leverage strong non-bachelor's degree opportunities in public finance to attract workers into the sector and to evaluate where a bachelor's degree can be removed from job requirements.
- Accelerating the hiring process where feasible and expanding the talent pool for new candidates—including by tapping into adjacent talent pools in private sector finance and federal public finance. The report also recommends compiling and sharing best practices around recruiting from talent pipelines that are diverse in race/ethnicity, gender, and age.

For retention and advancement, the report calls for investing in the education and development of entry-level workers, where public finance offers stronger salaries than its private sector counterpart. The report also recommends ways to build out career paths, including by developing independent contributor tracks, experimenting with compensation models that reward those who take on additional work, and by connecting state and local public finance employees to leadership opportunities in other areas of government.

To view the full report, visit: [gfoa.org/meeting-demand-public-finance](https://gfoa.org/meeting-demand-public-finance)

### **About GFOA**

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), founded in 1906, represents public finance officials throughout the United States and Canada. The association's more than 22,500 members are federal, state/provincial, and local finance officials deeply involved in planning, financing, and implementing thousands of governmental operations in each of their jurisdictions. GFOA's mission is to advance excellence in public finance. For more, visit [gfoa.org](https://gfoa.org)

### **About Lightcast**

Lightcast provides trusted global labor market data, analytics, and expert guidance that empowers communities, corporations, and learning providers to make informed decisions and navigate the increasingly complex world of work. With a database of

more than one billion job postings and career profiles, our team provides best-in-class customer service with robust data, clear analysis, and expert guidance on skills, jobs, and opportunities. Headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, and Moscow, Idaho, Lightcast is active in more than 30 countries and has offices in the United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, and India. The company is backed by global private equity leader KKR. For more, visit [www.lightcast.io](http://www.lightcast.io)

## **Media Contacts**

Natalie Laudadio  
Senior Communications Manager, GFOA  
[nlaudadio@gfoa.org](mailto:nlaudadio@gfoa.org)

Rachael Wilson  
Press Secretary, Lightcast  
[rachael.wilson@lightcast.io](mailto:rachael.wilson@lightcast.io)