Public Media’s Local Journalists
A distributed national network
October 2021
Against the backdrop of a continuing local journalism crisis

A growing number of local public media organizations are becoming premier providers of public service journalism for their communities

- Producing in-depth, high quality coverage and opportunities for civic engagement that improve civic and cultural life
- Leveraging multiple platforms—broadcast, on-demand, digital, live event, video, text, and social media—to meet the changing ways audiences consume news
- Remaining remarkably resilient through the challenges and disruptions of the Covid pandemic
Public Media's Local Journalists
1,150 positions added over 9 years

Source: Corporation for Public Broadcasting Station Surveys
Station Resource Group
Public Media's Full-Time Local Journalists
Radio and TV Organizations with 25 or More Full-Time Positions, FY 2020

Source: Corporation for Public Broadcasting Station Surveys
Station Resource Group
Public Radio's Full-Time Local Journalists
Organizations with 15 or More Full-Time Radio Journalists, FY 2020
Impact of the pandemic
January 2020 to January 2021

Net loss of 48 full-time journalist positions across 462 radio, television, and joint public media organizations

- 22 net full-time radio positions lost, 26 net full-time positions lost in television
- Combination of buy-outs and layoffs
- Some stations added journalist positions to meet local needs

Part-time positions – 217 lost jobs
- Most of the part-time loss was in radio, down 192 part-time jobs

Contract personnel increased – 77 positions
A spectacular achievement under pandemic adversity
Resilience among public radio’s news stations

134 public radio organizations with strong commitments to local news saw a net loss of just two positions from January 2020 to January 2021

• These organizations account for 88% of public radio’s full-time journalists

• Part-time journalists at these organizations increased by a net of 39 positions, from 330 to 369 (+12%)

• Contract journalism personnel among the 134 organizations declined by four positions, from 126 to 122 (-3%)

• Several stations with the largest losses as of January 2021 have since been hiring to levels above their January 2020 numbers