

Long-Term Care Workforce Projections

The United States is on the precipice of a seismic shift that will transform our population from an aging population to an aged population. Today, 17 percent of Americans—or 55.7 million people—are 65 and older. By 2040, 22 percent—or 80.8 million Americans—are projected to be 65 and older, more than twice as many as in 2000. The most rapidly aging segment of the population are seniors aged 85 and older, and it is these individuals who will need the greatest and most direct care.

As the need for senior care continues its dramatic growth, the current and future workforce is simply not keeping pace. The senior living industry lost more than 100,000 positions in the first 20 months of the pandemic. LTC workforce shortages eclipse all other health care shortages, with an estimated 20.2 million workers needed by 2040. Assisted living and memory care communities face the most acute workforce needs across the entire LTC continuum.

Workforce Projections in Arkansas

Arkansas LTC Jobs	2021 Jobs	2040 Jobs	Net Job Growth	Occupational Replacement Needs	Total Employees Needed
Senior Living	4300	5000	700	12300	13000
LTC	46200	51600	5400	122800	128200
RNs	2800	2800	0	3000	3000
LPNs	3000	2900	-100	4500	4400
Home Health/ Personal Care Aide	19100	25100	6000	62900	68900
Nurse Assistant	7600	7100	-500	20900	20400
Food Service	2800	2400	-400	9100	8700
Community/ Social Service	1200	1400	200	2400	2600
Management	1200	1500	300	2100	2400
Housekeeping	1100	1000	-100	2800	2700
Office/Admin	2100	1900	-200	4600	4400

THE SOLUTION: Policymakers at all levels of government should pursue policies to address the senior care crisis and find cost-effective solutions to meet the challenges of our rapidly aging population. Congress can alleviate the senior care workforce crisis without creating new programs by re-targeting existing HHS and DOL workforce training programs like Job Corps, American Job Centers, and others to offer specializations in senior care.

Argentum supports increasing investments in workforce development including existing federal recruitment, training, and retainment programs, and engaging foreign-born workers.