

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 Kentucky

Kentucky LTC Jobs	2021 Jobs	2040 Jobs	Net Job Growth	Occupational Replacement Needs	Total Employees Needed
Senior Living	5900	7000	1100	17100	18200
LTC	56200	65000	8800	151500	160300
RNs	3500	3700	200	3900	4100
LPNs	3800	3700	-100	5800	5700
Home Health/ Personal Care Aide	22400	30900	8500	75800	84300
Nurse Assistant	9500	9200	-300	26600	26300
Food Service	3600	3200	-400	11800	11400
Community/ Social Service	1400	1800	400	2900	3300
Management	1500	1900	400	2700	3100
Housekeeping	1300	1300	0	3500	3500
Office/Admin	2600	2500	-100	5800	5700

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.