

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 Massachusetts

Massachusetts LTC Jobs	2021 Jobs	2040 Jobs	Net Job Growth	Occupational Replacement Needs	Total Employees Needed
Senior Living	21800	29300	7500	67700	75200
LTC	179600	266100	86500	566000	652500
RNs	9800	12500	2700	12100	14800
LPNs	8700	10000	1300	14400	15700
Home Health/ Personal Care Aide	93600	159800	66200	360500	426700
Nurse Assistant	20200	22500	2300	60700	63000
Food Service	8500	9200	700	31100	31800
Community/ Social Service	5000	8200	3200	12000	15200
Management	4500	7100	2600	9100	11700
Housekeeping	3000	3300	300	8300	8600
Office/Admin	8100	9600	1500	20400	21900

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.