

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 Maine

Maine LTC Jobs	2021 Jobs	2040 Jobs	Net Job Growth	Occupational Replacement Needs	Total Employees Needed
Senior Living	5400	6700	1300	16100	17400
LTC	26200	33400	7200	76000	83200
RNs	1400	1600	200	1600	1800
LPNs	1500	1600	100	2300	2400
Home Health/ Personal Care Aide	11800	17600	5800	41800	47600
Nurse Assistant	3700	3800	100	10700	10800
Food Service	1800	1800	0	6300	6300
Community/ Social Service	600	900	300	1400	1700
Management	700	1000	300	1300	1600
Housekeeping	600	600	0	1600	1600
Office/Admin	1200	1300	100	2800	2900

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.