

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 New Mexico

New Mexico LTC Jobs	2021 Jobs	2040 Jobs	Net Job Growth	Occupational Replacement Needs	Total Employees Needed
Senior Living	3700	5100	1400	11600	13000
LTC	45700	73100	27400	150000	177400
RNs	2600	3600	1000	3400	4400
LPNs	1900	2400	500	3300	3800
Home Health/ Personal Care Aide	26700	46500	19800	104100	123900
Nurse Assistant	3800	4600	800	12000	12800
Food Service	1400	1600	200	5400	5600
Community/ Social Service	1400	2300	900	3400	4300
Management	1100	1900	800	2300	3100
Housekeeping	500	600	100	1400	1500
Office/Admin	2100	2600	500	5400	5900

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.