

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 Tennessee

Tennessee LTC Jobs	2021 Jobs	2040 Jobs	Net Job Growth	Occupational Replacement Needs	Total Employees Needed
Senior Living	14100	17500	3400	41900	45300
LTC	85500	105300	19800	237600	257400
RNs	5800	6600	800	6700	7500
LPNs	5700	6000	300	9000	9300
Home Health/ Personal Care Aide	34400	50000	15600	120200	135800
Nurse Assistant	13500	13700	200	38700	38900
Food Service	5700	5600	-100	19700	19600
Community/ Social Service	2000	2700	700	4200	4900
Management	2400	3200	800	4400	5200
Housekeeping	2000	2100	100	5400	5500
Office/Admin	4100	4300	200	9700	9900

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.