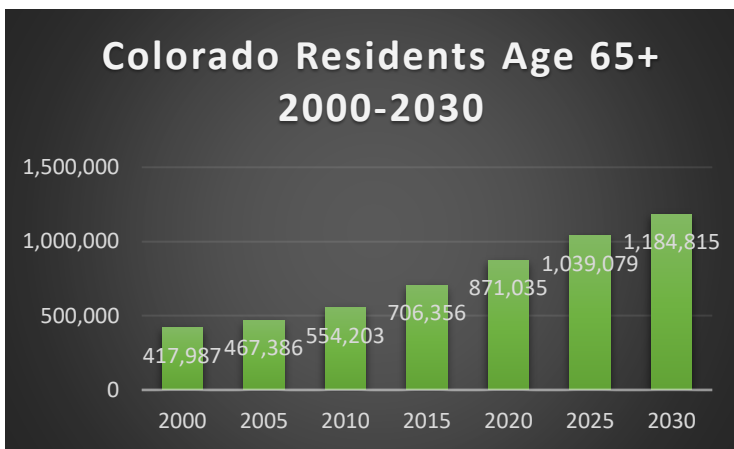


# Colorado's Aging Services Workforce Crisis

**Colorado** is experiencing a significant shortage of qualified workers who can provide high-quality services. Several trends are fueling this workforce crisis.

## A Rapidly Growing Older Population



By 2030, Colorado's population age 65+ will be **72%** larger than it was in 2015 compared to the under 65 age group that will grow by only **20%**.



## A Growing Need for Workers

Due to turnover, Between 2018-2028 Colorado will need **116,100 direct caregivers** to meet the demand.

## A Growing Need for Assistance

**70**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates that nearly **70% of people who reach the age of 65** will ultimately need some form of long-term services and supports (LTSS).

**76**

By 2035, the number of older households with a disability will increase by **76%** to reach 31.2M.

**20**

Women will need care longer (3.7 years) than men (2.2 years). **20 percent** will need it for longer than 5 years.

## Fastest Growing Occupations in Colorado

Rank	Occupation	Number of workers in 2018	Projected Growth through 2028
1	Personal Care Aides	29,130	51%
3	Physician Assistants	3,290	48%
4	Nurse Practitioners	3,040	45%
7	Home Health Aides	9,800	43%

# Colorado's Aging Services Workforce Crisis

## Who are our direct care workers?



26% have children  
under 18

34% work part-  
time



42% rely on public  
health insurance

87% are women



Nearly half identify  
as non-white

## And how do we attract more?

### Higher wages:

- Increase the financial well-being of direct care workers.
- Reduce turnover and staffing shortages within care settings.
- Boost worker productivity.
- Enhance quality of care.
- Increase overall economic growth in communities where direct care workers live.

Considerable work has been done by Colorado to pay direct care workers in Medicaid HCBS settings and nursing homes \$15/hour. These efforts should be continued.

**Funding to address workforce shortages.** The staffing shortages that existed prior to the pandemic have only been exacerbated by COVID-19, and more recently these shortages have been negatively impacted by price gouging and other predatory practices of staffing agencies that provide nurses and direct care workers to senior living and care providers. Funding is needed to help recruit and retain staff as well as regulation of staffing agencies to help control price gouging practices.

**Expand Training Programs:** Colorado needs to increase workforce training programs to ensure more individuals are educated and enter the health care and aging services fields. Start paying individuals to take nurse aide training.

**Expand Loan Repayment and Forgiveness Programs:** Loan repayment and forgiveness programs targeting aging services would help attract critically needed professionals to the field and ensure older adults have access to the professional caregivers they need.

**Access to childcare:** Provide childcare vouchers to direct care workers allowing them to work without worrying about their children.