

## Illinois' Direct-Care Workforce

Illinois' direct-care workers are the state's "frontline" paid caregivers who provide daily living services and supports to persons with disabilities and chronic care needs, including the elderly and those with physical or intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD). The majority of these staff work in the consumer's own home, or in residential or community-based settings such as nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and group homes.

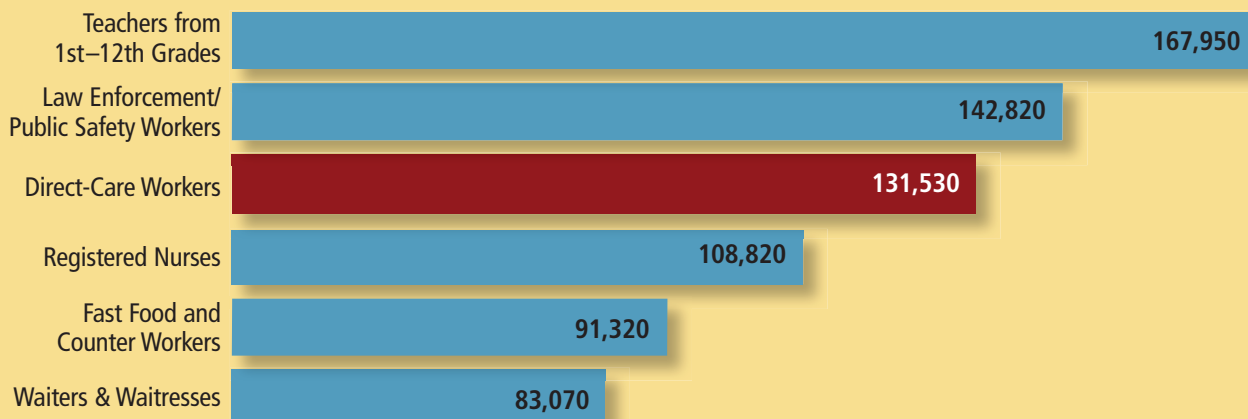
In standardized government surveys of employment and compensation, direct-care workers are officially counted as Personal and Home Care Aides;<sup>1</sup> Home Health Aides;<sup>2</sup> and Nursing Aides, Orderlies and Attendants.<sup>3</sup> The first occupational category also includes direct support professionals—workers who provide services and supports to individuals with ID/DD.

A growing number of direct-care workers are independent providers working directly for consumers. These workers tend to be heavily undercounted by government surveys.

### A sizable workforce

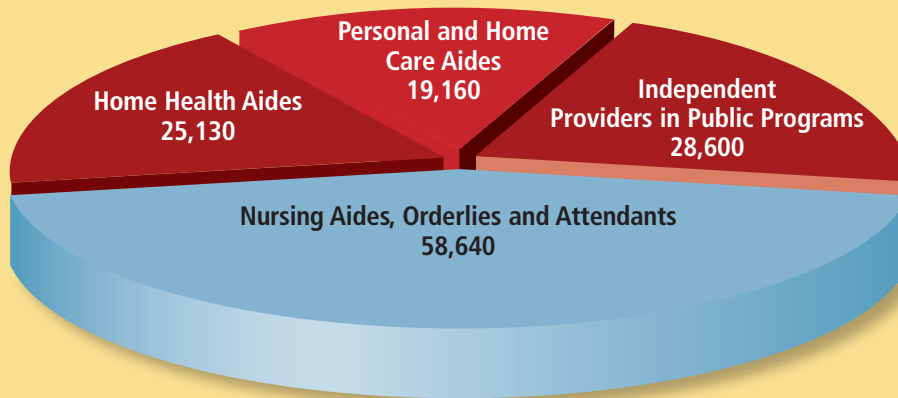
Illinois' direct-care workforce today totals over 130,000 workers, and is one of the largest occupational groupings in the state.

#### Illinois' Largest Occupational Groups



The majority of direct-care workers in Illinois (55 percent) are employed as Home Health Aides, Personal & Home Care Aides, and Independent Providers largely in home and community-based settings.

### Breakdown of Illinois Direct-Care Occupations, 2008



## Among the occupations creating the most new jobs

Direct-care occupations, taken as a group, are among the top ten occupations in Illinois expected to add the most new positions over the decade.

### Occupations Generating the Most Jobs, 2006–2016

Occupation	Number of positions to be added	Percent change
1 Retail Salespersons	76,380	42%
2 Cashiers	67,120	48%
3 Laborers & Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	58,990	42%
4 Waiters and Waitresses	55,850	70%
5 Customer Service Representatives	50,050	51%
6 Registered Nurses	47,100	45%
<b>7 All Direct-Care Workers</b>	<b>42,230</b>	<b>40%</b>
8 Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaner	39,940	38%
9 Office Clerks, General	39,490	33%
10 Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Fast Food	33,730	42%

Projected demand estimated by the Illinois Department of Employment Security calls for an additional 42,230 new direct-care positions over the period 2006 to 2016. The resulting workforce will total about 175,000 workers.

The fastest-growing direct-care jobs in Illinois are in home and community settings where demand is increasing at over 50 percent. Positions for both **Personal and Home Care Aides** and **Home Health Aides** are expected to increase 53 percent over the period 2006–2016.

### Home and Community-Based Jobs Growing the Fastest

Occupation	Positions to be added	Percent change
Home Health Aides	13,330	53%
Personal and Home Care Aides	10,740	53%
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	18,160	30%
<b>All Direct-Care Workers</b>	<b>42,230</b>	<b>40%</b>

## Uncompetitive wages for home and community-based jobs

The median hourly wage for all occupations in Illinois was \$16.30 in 2008. In sharp contrast, **wages for both Personal and Home Care Aides and Home Health Aides in Illinois fall between 150 percent (\$7.50) and 200 percent (\$10.00) of the federal poverty level for a single person.** The 200 percent poverty level is low enough to qualify households for many state and federal assistance programs. Wages for Nursing Aides are higher, yet still far below the state's median wage.

### Median Wages for Direct-Care Workers in Illinois, 2005–2008

Occupation	2005	2006	2007	2008
Personal & Home Care Aides	\$7.90	\$8.22	\$8.36	\$8.75
Home Health Aides	\$9.59	\$9.68	\$9.85	\$9.42
Nursing Aides, Orderlies & Attendants	\$9.73	\$10.10	\$10.76	\$11.15
All Occupations	\$14.78	\$15.21	\$15.80	\$16.30

## Inadequate health coverage

**About a quarter of direct-care workers in Illinois report having no health insurance compared to 14 percent of the state's general population.** Only half of direct-care workers in the state receive coverage from their employers.

## Public subsidies required to meet basic needs

**Earnings and labor force participation.** Annual earnings for direct-care workers in Illinois averaged only \$15,000 during the period 2005 to 2007. More than half of direct-care workers in the state (55 percent) are employed part time.

**Poverty status.** A third of direct-care workers in Illinois live in households with incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty line.

**Reliance on public benefits.** A third of direct-care workers in Illinois rely on some form of public assistance, such as Medicaid or food stamps.

## Endnotes

- 1 *Personal and Home Care Aides* may work in either private or group homes. They have many titles, including personal care attendant, personal assistant, and direct support professional (the latter work with people with intellectual and developmental disabilities). In addition to providing assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs)—such as eating, dressing, bathing, and toileting—these aides often help with housekeeping chores, meal preparation, and medication management. They also help individuals go to work and remain engaged in their communities. A growing number of personal assistance workers are employed and supervised directly by consumers.
- 2 *Home Health Aides* provide essentially the same care and services as nursing assistants, but they assist people in their own homes or in community settings under the supervision of a nurse or therapist. They may also perform light housekeeping tasks such as preparing food or changing linens.
- 3 *Nursing Assistants or Nursing Aides* generally work in nursing homes, although some work in assisted living facilities, other community-based settings, or hospitals. They assist residents with ADLs, and also perform clinical tasks such as range-of-motion exercises and blood pressure readings. In some states, they may also administer oral medications.

## Data Sources

Occupational projections data are from: Illinois Department of Employment Security, available at: <http://lmi.ides.state.il.us/projections/employproj.htm>.

Employment and wage data are from the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Program, available at: <http://www.bls.gov/tables.htm>.

Data on independent providers (IPs) in public programs were provided by SEIU Healthcare Illinois & Indiana and includes 25,000 Personal Assistants in the Home Services Program of the Division of Rehabilitation Services, Department of Human Services, and 3,600 IPs providing in-home supports through the Developmental Disabilities Division of DHS.

Data on **health insurance coverage, earnings, labor force participation, poverty status and reliance on public benefits** are from PHI analysis of U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, pooled state data for Illinois from the 2006, 2007, and 2008 Annual Social & Economic (ASEC) Supplements.



PHI ([www.PHInational.org](http://www.PHInational.org)) works to improve the lives of people who need home and residential care—and the lives of the workers who provide that care. Using our workplace and policy expertise, we help consumers, workers, employers, and policymakers improve eldercare/disability services by creating quality direct-care jobs. Our goal is to ensure caring, stable relationships between consumers and workers, so that both may live with dignity, respect, and independence.

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Also see PHI PolicyWorks, our policy website: [www.PHInational.org/policy](http://www.PHInational.org/policy)

