



**PHI** QUALITY CARE  
THROUGH  
QUALITY JOBS

# HOME CARE WORKERS IN ILLINOIS: KEY FACTS

In Illinois, more than 81,000 home care workers provide personal assistance and health care support to older Americans and people with disabilities in home and community-based settings.

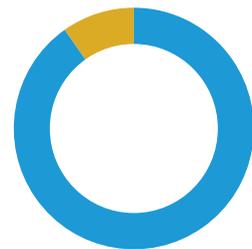
The state's home care workforce has more than doubled in size over the past 10 years as the delivery of long-term services and supports has shifted from institutional settings to private homes and communities. From 2015 to 2025, the population of people over the age of 65 in the state will grow by a third, from 1.9 million to 2.5 million, driving demand for home care even higher.

Recruiting adequate numbers of home care workers to fill these jobs is becoming increasingly difficult, in part due to the poor quality of home care jobs: wages are low and access to employer-provided benefits is rare. With a median hourly wage of \$10.59 and work that is often part time or part year, home care workers in Illinois earn on average \$12,600 annually. As a result, one in four of Illinois' home care workers lives below the federal poverty line (FPL) and over half rely on some form of public assistance.

## WHO ARE ILLINOIS HOME CARE WORKERS?

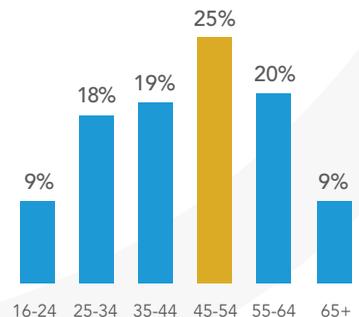
- Of home care workers in Illinois, 9 in 10 are women, and their median age is 46.

ILLINOIS HOME CARE WORKERS  
BY GENDER, 2014



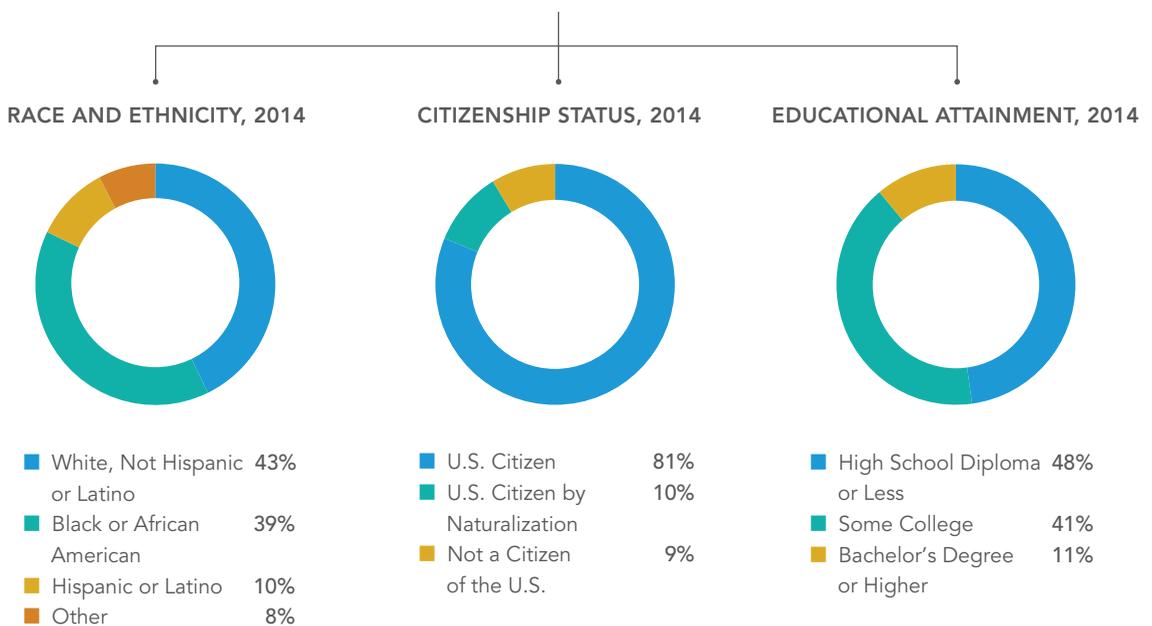
■ Female 90%  
■ Male 10%

ILLINOIS HOME CARE WORKERS  
BY AGE, 2014



- **While people of color make up 20 percent of the total workforce in Illinois, they comprise more than half of the home care workforce.**
- **Nearly 20 percent of home care workers in Illinois were born outside the United States,** but 91 percent are U.S. citizens.
- **Nearly half of Illinois' home care workers have completed no formal education beyond high school.** Because home care requires little education, experience, or training, it is an accessible occupation for workers who encounter educational or language barriers when seeking employment.

ILLINOIS HOME CARE WORKERS BY



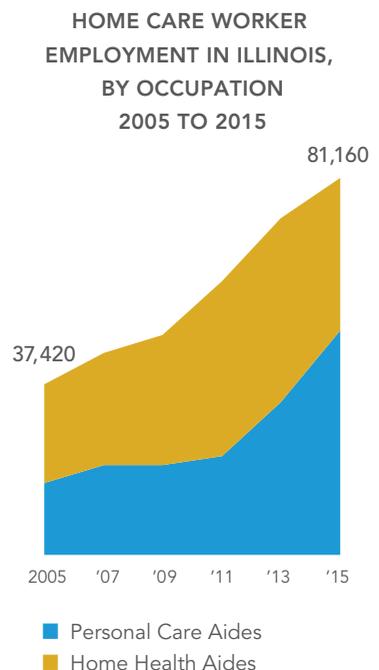
**Chart Source:** PHI analysis of the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau (2015). 2014 ACS 5-year PUMS. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/pums.html>

## WHAT ARE HOME CARE JOBS?

Home care workers include personal care aides, home health aides, and nursing assistants who work in two industries: Home Health Care Services and Services for the Elderly and People with Disabilities.<sup>1</sup> Home care work, regardless of occupational title, typically involves assistance with daily tasks such as eating, dressing, and bathing. In addition to assisting with these tasks, personal care aides provide social supports to help older adults and people with disabilities remain active in their communities. Home health aides and nursing assistants perform some clinical tasks under the supervision of a licensed professional. (See end notes for detailed descriptions of home care occupations.)

- **The Illinois home care workforce more than doubled in size over the past 10 years, from 37,420 in 2005 to 81,160 in 2015.** Demand for non-medical assistance is contributing the most to total home care employment growth: the personal care aide workforce tripled in size from 16,130 to 48,860, which accounted for three-quarters of total home care employment growth.

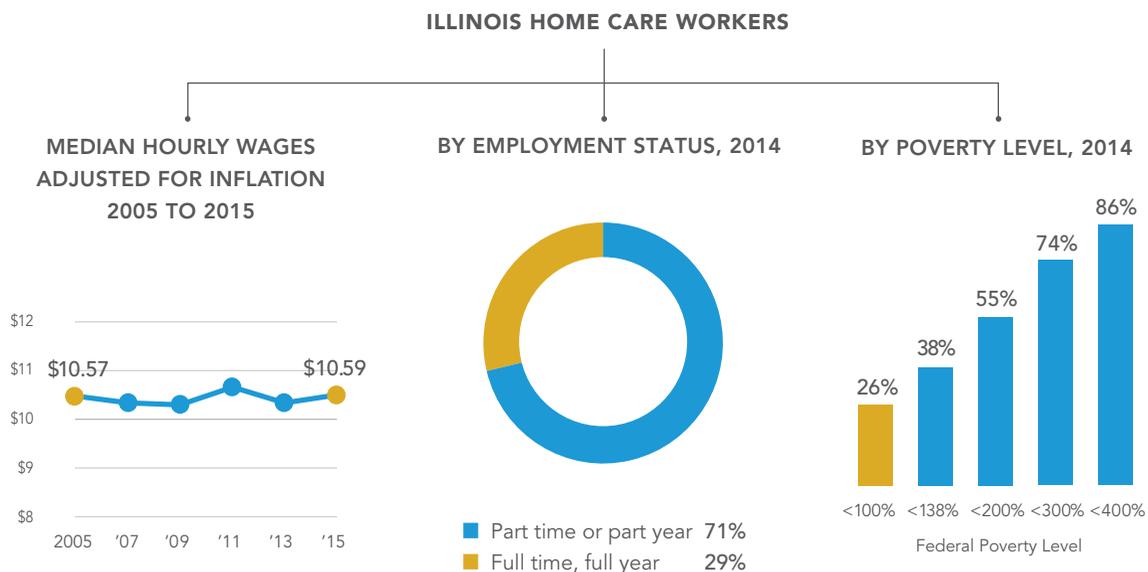
PHI estimates that in addition to the home care workers tracked by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, approximately **28,600 independent providers are employed directly by consumers in Illinois**, primarily through publicly funded consumer-directed programs statewide. These workers bring the total home care workforce to nearly 110,000.



**Chart Source:** U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics (2016, March 30). May State Employment and Wage Estimates, 2005 to 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/oes/#data>

## WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FOR THE HOME CARE WORKFORCE IN ILLINOIS?

- **Home care worker wages remained stagnant over the past 10 years:** inflation-adjusted wages were \$10.57 in 2005 and \$10.59 in 2015.
- **More than 70 percent of the state’s home care workers work part time or for part of the year.** Employment tends to be erratic because client care needs vary from a few hours a week to around the clock and may change over time.
- **Because of low wages and inconsistent hours, Illinois’ home care workers earn a median annual income of \$12,600,** while the average annual cost of living statewide is \$23,800 for a single adult.<sup>2</sup>
- **Low incomes mean high poverty rates:** 26 percent of home care workers in Illinois live in households below the federal poverty line, compared to 7 percent of all of the state’s workers.

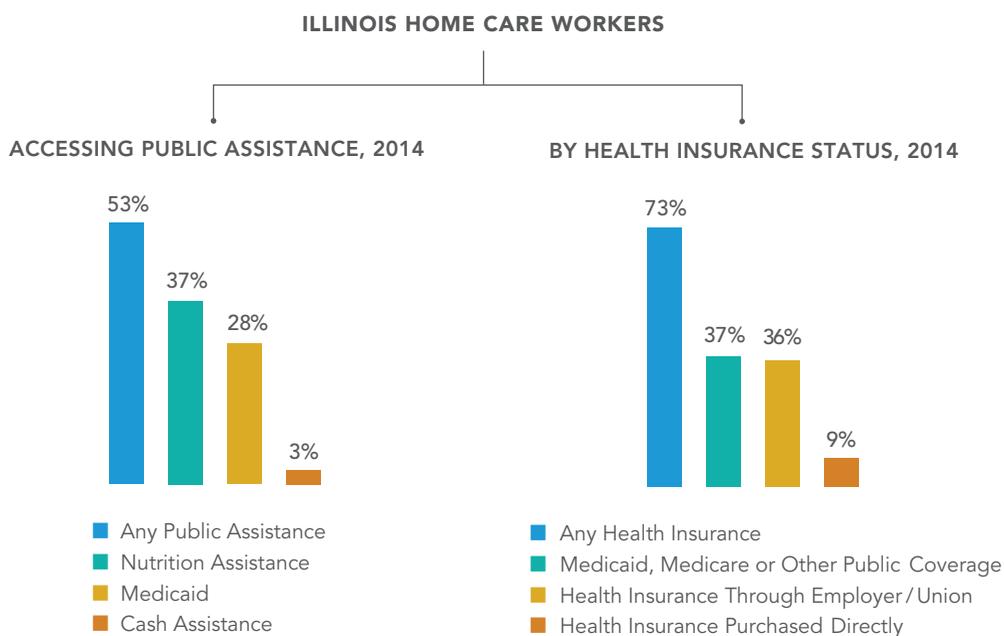


**Chart Sources:** U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment Statistics (2016, March 30). May State Employment and Wage Estimates, 2005 to 2015. Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/oes/#data>

PHI analysis of the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau (2015). 2014 ACS 5-year PUMS. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/pums.html>

- Because poverty rates are high among home care workers in Illinois, **over half rely on some form of public assistance.**
- **The uninsured rate among home care workers in Illinois is 27 percent.** Over one-third of home care workers rely on public coverage, most often Medicaid or Medicare.<sup>3</sup>

From 2010 to 2014, following implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA)—which incentivized expanded health care coverage through Medicaid, employer-sponsored plans, and individual plans—the rate of health care coverage for all Illinois direct care workers (including personal care aides, home health aides, and nursing assistants) increased by 14 percent. Most of this increase can be attributed to a 33 percent increase in Medicaid coverage among the state’s direct care workers.



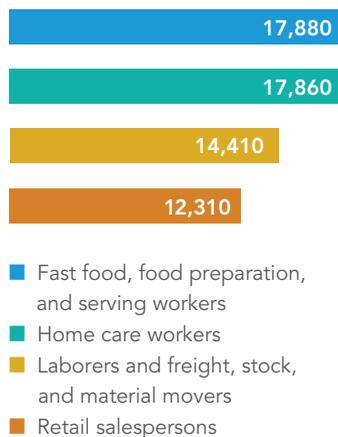
**Chart Source:** PHI analysis of the American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau (2015). 2014 ACS 5-year PUMS. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/pums.html>

## WHAT IS THE FUTURE DEMAND FOR HOME CARE WORKERS IN ILLINOIS?

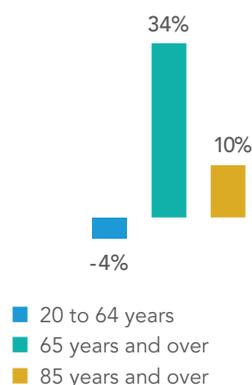
- **From 2014 to 2024, home care occupations are projected to add as many new jobs to the Illinois economy as fast food occupations.** Both home care and fast food will create approximately 17,900 jobs, far more than any other occupation in the state.
- **From 2015 to 2025, the population of adults over the age of 65 in Illinois is expected to grow by a third, from 1.9 million to 2.5 million.** The number of adults over 85 is expected to grow by 10 percent over the same time period, from 254,000 to 279,000. Employment growth for home care workers is primarily driven by this shift.
- While the population of older adults is growing in Illinois, **the number of working-age adults (ages 20 to 64) is projected to decrease 4 percent** over the same time period.

With greater demand for home care services, and little growth among working-age adults, a significant care gap is emerging: insufficient numbers of workers to provide home care services. In this context, the issue of job quality becomes increasingly important. If the home care workforce is to grow, jobs will need to be more competitive, offering higher wages and improved working conditions.

OCCUPATIONS WITH THE MOST JOB GROWTH IN ILLINOIS 2014 TO 2024



ILLINOIS PROJECTED POPULATION GROWTH BY AGE 2015 TO 2025



**Chart Sources:** Projections Central, State Occupational Projections (2016, October 3). Long-Term Occupational Projections. Retrieved from <http://www.projectionscentral.com/>

Illinois Department of Public Health (2015, March 17). IDPH Population Projections 2014 Edition. Retrieved from <https://data.illinois.gov/>

## NOTES ON OCCUPATIONAL TITLES

Home care worker occupational categories are defined by the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system developed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) at the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Occupation definitions can be found at: <http://www.bls.gov/SOC>

TITLE	OTHER TITLES	JOB DESCRIPTION
<b>Personal Care Aides</b> (SOC 39-9021)	Personal Care Attendant, Home Care Worker, Personal Assistant, and Direct Support Professional (for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities)	In addition to providing assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs), personal care aides often help with housekeeping chores, meal preparation, and medication management. They also help individuals go to work and remain engaged in their communities.
<b>Independent Providers</b>		Independent providers resemble personal care aides in their responsibilities. They are often employed through Medicaid programs that offer consumer-directed services. These programs grant consumers varying degrees of control over the hiring, scheduling, and paying of home care workers. Because BLS OES employment data is drawn from surveys of establishments, independent providers are often not counted or undercounted in employment estimates.
<b>Home Health Aides</b> (SOC 31-1011)	Home Hospice Aide, Home Health Attendant	In addition to providing assistance with activities of daily living (ADLs), home health aides also perform clinical tasks such as range-of-motion exercises and blood pressure readings. They assist people under the supervision of a nurse or therapist.
<b>Nursing Assistants</b> (SOC 31-1014)	Certified Nursing Assistants, Certified Nursing Aides, Nursing Attendants, Nursing Aides, Nursing Care Attendants	Nursing assistants primarily work in institutional settings, but nursing assistant credentials are sometimes portable to home and community-based settings, where they perform essentially the same work as home health aides.

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## DATA SOURCES

Wage data are from the current and archived estimates of the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) Program, available at: <http://www.bls.gov/oes/#data>

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all urban wage earners and clerical workers (1982-84=100) for the Midwest region was used to calculate inflation-adjusted wages. CPI data can be found at <http://www.bls.gov/cpi/>

Employment projections are sourced from Projections Central and produced by the Illinois Department of Economic Security. State-specific employment projection data can be found at <http://www.projectionscentral.com/>

The number of Independent Providers employed in publicly funded long-term care programs was estimated using PHI's original research, gathered through consultation with stakeholders in Illinois. State-specific counts of independent providers can be found at <http://phinational.org/policy/states>

Statistics relating to direct care worker demographics and employment and income characteristics are based on PHI analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2014 5-Year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), with statistical programming and data analysis provided by Carlos Figueiredo.

## FOOTNOTES

1. Industry-specific occupational wage and employment estimates are not available at the state level, but personal care aides and home health aides comprise the majority of direct care workers employed in home care industries. In this report, personal care aide and home health aides across all industries were used to aggregate employment and to create a weighted average wage. Because the majority of nursing assistants do not work in home care industries, they are excluded.
2. Glasmeier, A. K. (2016). Living Wage Calculator. Poverty in America, Boston, M.A.: Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Retrieved from <http://livingwage.mit.edu>
3. Coverage categories do not add up to 100 percent because survey respondents may have more than one source of health insurance.



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