



## What do direct care workers do?

Direct care workers provide an estimated 70 to 80 percent of the paid, hands-on, long-term care and personal-assistance care required by older adults and people with disabilities, such as:

- Daily activities such as dressing, grooming and mobility,
- Meal preparations,
- Housekeeping, and
- Personal care.

Direct care workers are known by other titles, including nurse aide, nursing assistant, home health aide, home care aide, personal assistant, personal care attendant and direct support professional.

## Where do direct care workers work?

Direct care workers often provide care in a variety of settings including nursing homes, adult day centers, assisted-living facilities and other community and residential settings. Direct care workers are often offered a wide array of work schedules. Since care is provided around the clock, some workers may work shifts that include nights, weekends and holidays.

## How can I become a direct care worker? After high school...

Nurse aides and home health aides must complete a minimum of 75 hours of training and pass a competency evaluation. Training is offered in high schools, career and technical schools, vocational-technical centers, nursing facilities and community colleges.

Personal assistants and home care aides are currently not required to obtain formal training or certification prior to employment. However, most employers provide 40-60 hours of on-the-job training.

## Is this the career for me?

Direct care work is rewarding, but can also be challenging. Direct care workers gain satisfaction from assisting people in need. This career requires a high level of responsibility, maturity and the ability to adapt to demanding situations. Good communication skills and a desire to help people are also important. Recommended high school courses include Health and English.

## How much money do direct care workers make?

	Average Annual Salary
Home Health Aides	\$19,060
Nurse Aides	\$22,980
Personal and Home Care Aides	\$18,730

## Will I be able to get a job in Pennsylvania?

As the population of Pennsylvania ages, more direct care workers are needed. On average, there are 1,359 annual openings for home health aides, 1,629 for nurse aides and 1,227 for personal and home care aides.

*Where do I go for more information?*

# [www.pahealthcareers.org](http://www.pahealthcareers.org)

**Pennsylvania Center for Health Careers**

901 North Seventh Street  
Suite 103  
Harrisburg, PA 17102

Telephone: 717-772-4966  
Fax: 717-783-4660  
[www.paworkforce.state.pa.us](http://www.paworkforce.state.pa.us)