

# 2022 ALASKA HEALTHCARE WORKFORCE ANALYSIS



The Alaska Hospital & Healthcare Association (AHHA) commissioned Juneau-based Rain Coast Data to conduct a healthcare workforce statistical analysis which was published in December 2022. This report includes data and analysis of Alaska healthcare jobs, earnings, wages, growth projections, and workforce demographics. Key study findings are below. *Download the full 2021 and 2022 reports at [alaskahha.org](http://alaskahha.org).*

## ALASKA'S TOP INDUSTRY

Healthcare has become a leading economic sector in Alaska, paying out nearly \$3 billion in direct wages in 2021 - more than any other sector.

- Healthcare was responsible for 12% of all workforce earnings, outpacing military and natural resource sectors.
- Healthcare employs 11% of Alaska's entire workforce, nearly 43,000 healthcare jobs in 2021.
- When including the multiplier effect, the total impact of Alaska's healthcare sector was 75,060 jobs across the state's economy with a total income impact of \$4.4 billion in 2021.

**#1**  
Economic  
sector in Alaska  
43,000 jobs  
\$3 billion wages

## THOUSANDS OF NEW WORKERS NEEDED ANNUALLY

Workforce growth projections show that the healthcare sector is expected to add 4,500 new jobs over the next 10 years through growth, more jobs than any other sector in the state. Additionally, turnover means that replacement workers are continually needed.

- Approximately 7,500 new healthcare workers must be hired across Alaska every year to keep up with staffing needs.
- This includes a need for over 1,500 new registered nurses each year in Alaska.

**7,500**  
New Alaska  
healthcare workers  
needed annually  
(growth +  
replacement)

## HEALTHCARE WORKER SHORTAGE

There are too few Alaska healthcare workers to fill the current demand, and vacancies are increasing. Alaska is projected to have the most significant shortages moving forward of any state.

- In 2022, Alaska programs graduated just 841 healthcare workers, including 324 registered nurses, a fraction of what is needed.
- While travel nurses can be used to meet short-term staffing needs, it comes at a higher cost. In November 2022, travel nurses earned 77% more on average than non-traveling RNs in Alaska.
- According to the 2022 AHHA Salary and Benefits Report, hospital nurses had a vacancy rate of 24% with it taking an average of 161 days to fill each opening.

**24%**  
Vacancy Rate for  
nurses in Alaska's  
hospitals & even  
higher in nursing  
homes

## HIGHER WAGES

Alaska providers have repeatedly increased wages to remain competitive in attracting and retaining workers.

- Alaska healthcare wages overall have increased by \$646 million, or 28%, from 2016 to 2021.
- Based on an analysis of key healthcare positions nationally, Alaska wages are the highest or second highest for a third of those positions.
- Cost of living adjustments can reduce the competitiveness of Alaska's relatively higher wages.

**28%**  
Healthcare  
payroll  
increase over  
last 5 years