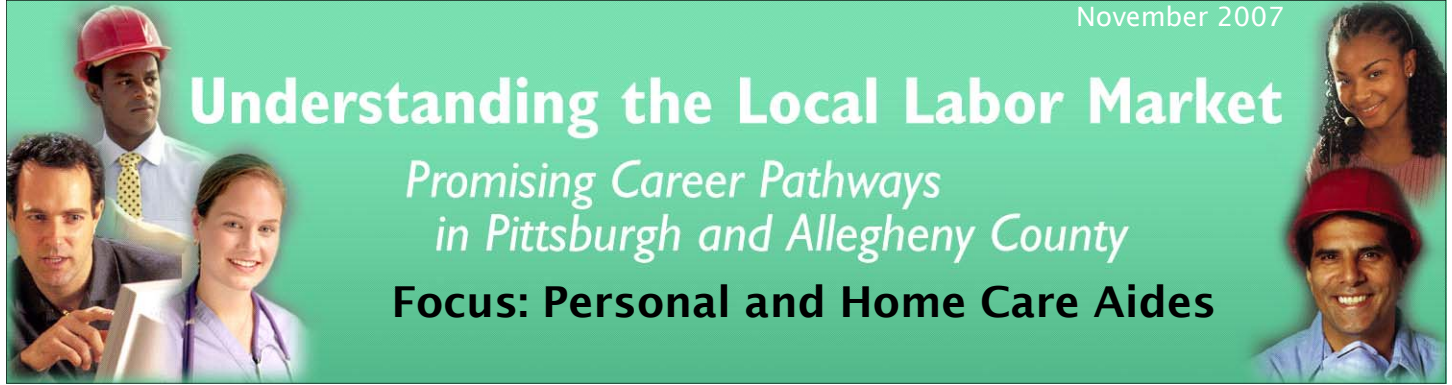


Understanding the Local Labor Market

Promising Career Pathways in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County

Focus: Personal and Home Care Aides



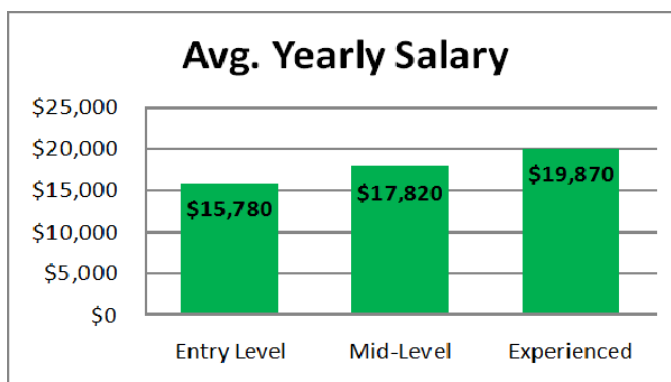
Understanding the Local Labor Market: Promising Career Pathways in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County is a useful resource for career counselors and other professionals responsible for helping jobseekers make informed decisions about employment and training. Featured occupations are selected on the basis of vacancies, wages and benefits, and opportunities for advancement.

What do personal and home care aides do?

- Personal and home care aides help elderly, disabled, ill, and mentally disabled persons in their own homes or in residential care facilities instead of working in live-in, managed health facilities or outpatient centers.
- Most personal and home care aides work with elderly or physically or mentally disabled clients who need more extensive personal and home care than family or friends can provide.
- Personal and home care aides—also called *homemakers*, *caregivers*, *companions*, and *personal attendants*—provide housekeeping and routine personal care services. They clean clients' houses, do laundry, and change bed linens. Aides may plan meals (including special diets), shop for food, and cook.
- Personal and home care aides provide instruction and psychological support to their patients. They may advise families and patients on nutrition, cleanliness, and household tasks.

What are wages, benefits, and work conditions for personal and home care aides?

- The personal and home care aide's daily routine may vary. Aides may go to the same home every day for months or even years.
- Most aides work with a number of different clients, each job lasting a few hours, days, or weeks. Aides often visit four or five clients on the same day.
- While benefits may vary by employer, they tend to be very comprehensive.



Source: PA Dept. of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis (www.paworkstats.state.pa.us/)

What do personal and home care aides like about their jobs?

- Aides feel very connected to their patients and their families. Oftentimes, aides become very personally invested in a patient's recuperation and progress.
- Aides enjoy a relatively low-stress environment, lots of individual interaction and a large amount of personal freedom on the job.
- Aides like the wide variety of personalities they are able to interact and work with on a regular basis.

What are advancement opportunities and related occupations?

- As aides gain experience, some may advance to supervisory or administrative positions in larger health management systems.
- Some workers set up their own home aide businesses.
- Personal and home care aides combine the duties of caregivers and social service workers. Workers in related occupations that involve personal contact to help others include childcare workers; nursing, psychiatric, and home health aides; occupational therapist assistants and aides; physical therapist assistants and aides; and social and human service assistants.

How many openings are there for personal and home care aides?

- High replacement needs should create good job opportunities for child care workers as workers retire.
- Personal and home care aides are one of the fastest growing employment sectors.
- Qualified persons who are interested in this work should have little trouble finding and keeping a job.
- Mental health, elderly care and private home firms are likely to have a higher rate of need.
- It is projected that in 2014 there will be 5,970 personal and home care aide positions.
- Since January 2007, there have been 66 requests for personal and home care aides in the CareerLink database.

FOCUS: Home and Personal Care Aide Workers

How can I become a home and personal care aide worker?

- The training and qualifications required of personal and home care aides vary widely. The National Association for Home Care and Hospice (NAHC) offers national certification for personal and home care aides.
- Some firms may require formal training, which is available from community colleges, vocational schools, elder care programs, and home health care agencies.
- Certification is a voluntary demonstration that the individual has met industry standards.
- Certification requires the completion of a standard 75-hour course and written exam developed by NAHC. Certification is a voluntary demonstration that the individual has met industry standards.
- Home care aides seeking certification are evaluated on 17 different skills by a registered nurse.
- Personal and home care aides should have a desire to help people and not mind hard work. They should be responsible, compassionate, emotionally stable, and cheerful.
- Aides should be tactful, honest, and discreet because they work in private homes.
- Aides also must be in good health, as they often care for very ill and recuperating patients.
- A physical examination, including State-mandated tests such as those for tuberculosis, may be required.
- A criminal background check also may be required for employment.
- Certifications in CPR or first-aid are considered highly desirable.
- Home care aides seeking certification are evaluated on 17 different skills by a registered nurse.

How do I find out about home and personal care aide worker jobs?

- **Pittsburgh/Allegheny County CareerLink** has job postings for these positions (contact 1-866-317-JOBS or visit www.careerlinkpittsburgh.com to learn more)
- **UPMC Outpatient Centers.** Often have extensive connections to local community members and organizations that need aides
www.upmccancercenters.com/outpatient/index.html
- **National Association for Home Care and Hospice.** Limited information about certification programs may be found online at <http://www.nahc.org/education/home.htm>

Where can I get training locally?

- **Penn State—Beaver.** Office of Continuing Education. (724) 773-3700 <http://www.br.psu.edu>. Offers a Personal Home Care Training certification program that teaches basic management and basic patient care.
- **CCAC** 412-237-2511 www.ccac.edu offers associate degrees in nursing and pre-health professional care. They offer relevant certificates in nursing, child care and business management.
- Training on the job is standard practice, so being inexperienced or untrained is not necessarily a disadvantage.

Can I get help paying for training?

- Training is usually provided by the employer. Most training is offered onsite so that employees meet individual employers standards and expectations.
- Limited funds may be available via your local Career-Link office.

Remember...

Labor markets are affected by economic, social, and institutional factors that are difficult to predict. No one can forecast perfectly how many jobs will be available, or whether there will be too many or too few workers to fill those jobs. The reality is that employment is never a guarantee, even for individuals who pursue training in demand occupations.

The Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board (TRWIB) is charged with promoting a coordinated and accountable employment and training system for Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Responsibilities include setting and monitoring local performance standards, chartering CareerLink comprehensive and community centers that provide a range of services to jobseekers and employers, and certifying qualified training providers. Board members are appointed by Mayor Luke Ravenstahl (City of Pittsburgh) and Chief Executive Dan Onorato (Allegheny County).

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The TRWIB does not warrant that the information in this publication is accurate or complete.



This series is a product of the TRWIB Labor Market Council (LMC), a standing committee comprised of CareerLink counselors, labor market analysts, and industry cluster coordinators. The TRWIB would like to thank members of the LMC for their contributions. The entire series may be found on the Internet at www.trwib.org/library/lmi/careers/index.htm. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

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