

Insights Into Aging in North Carolina

Population Estimates and Projections

POPULATION OVERVIEW



In 2024, there were **4,503** centenarians. This population is projected to **increase to 16,804** by 2050, a 273% change.

In 2024, **88** counties have more people above the age of 60 and older than under the age of 18.



	2024		2050		% Change 2024-2050
	#	%	#	%	
Total	10,984,106		14,241,032		30%
0-17	2,277,028	21%	2,841,892	20%	25%
18-44	3,950,947	36%	4,769,622	34%	21%
44-59	2,074,345	19%	2,763,692	19%	33%
60+	2,681,786	24%	3,865,826	27%	44%
65+	1,993,441	18%	3,038,133	21%	52%
85+	210,203	2%	529,204	4%	152%

Check out the [State and County Aging Profiles](#) to find county-specific data related to county rankings, race and ethnicity, social and economic characteristics, in-migration, kinship care, and others.

Demographic Snapshot (2022)

NC ranks **9th** in total population nationally. NC also ranks **9th** in the population of those age 65 and older.



An estimated **47,600** people 60 and older migrated from another state or abroad to North Carolina.



By 2031, the number of individuals aged 65 and older is **expected to surpass** the population under 18 years old.



Adults aged 85 and older are **projected to experience the fastest growth in the state** over the next 20 years.



Health and Wellness



81% of individuals aged 65 and older live with one or more chronic diseases, with **54%** managing two or more chronic conditions.

34% of adults aged 65 and older report living with a disability.

Community Engagement and Civic Participation

NC voters have become older, on average, over the last decade. **Nearly a quarter of all registered voters in 2023** were 66 and older (23.4%) compared to just 18.2% in 2013. As the Baby Boomer generation has aged, the proportion of older voters has grown, signifying Baby Boomers remain **one of the largest voting cohorts**.



NATIONAL TRENDS IN INFORMAL VOLUNTEERING (2019-21):

Baby boomers had the **highest rate** (59%) of all generations.

While formal volunteering rates dropped from 2019 to 2021 in every demographic group, informal helping rates largely remained steady.

Alzheimer's Disease in NC



In 2024, according to North Carolina Alzheimer's statistics, **210,500** adults aged 65 and older were **diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease**, constituting **12%** of the population within that age group.



Food Insecurity and Malnutrition

- In 2020, North Carolina had the **14th-highest rate of older adult food insecurity** in the United States; **nearly 7.7%** of older adults aged 60 and older were food insecure.
- The **annual costs of disease-associated malnutrition** for adults aged 65 and older in North Carolina is **\$140,348,592**.

Caregiving in NC (2021)

of Family Caregivers: **1,280,000**


Total Hours of Unpaid Care: **1.2 Million**

Total Value of Unpaid: **\$16.5 Billion**

A caregiver is a person of any age who tends to the needs or concerns of a person with short- or long-term limitations due to illness, injury or disability.

Socio-Economic Characteristics (2022)

HOUSING AND LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

 **43% of housing units** occupied by individuals aged 65 and older were **single-person households**.

27% of adults aged 65 and older **lived alone**, placing them at risk of **social isolation** and **associated poor health outcomes**.

POVERTY AND INCOME

One in 10 people aged 65 and older lived below the 100% poverty level and another **20%** of the population 65 and older lived below the 100-199% poverty level.



Poverty thresholds stood at **\$14,040 for individuals** aged 65 and older and **\$17,710 per household of two people** with the householder aged 65.

EDUCATION



Among individuals aged 65 and older, **43% attained a high school education or less**.

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION

17% of the population aged 65 and older **actively participated in the labor force**.

COMMUNITY LIVING

97% of individuals aged 65 and older **lived in the community**.



In households with individuals aged 65 and older, **86% possessed a computer**, while **78% had a broadband internet subscription**. These figures underscore the critical need for enhancing technological literacy among older adults, including educating them about online scams, phishing attempts, and other cybersecurity risks.

KINSHIP CARE

45% of the estimated **80,928 grandparents** responsible for grandchildren under 18 were aged 60 and older.

Healthcare Workforce Crisis



Research shows that from 2018 to 2028, North Carolina's long-term care sector will need to fill more than **186,000 openings in direct care**, including nearly **21,000 new jobs** to meet rising demand and **165,500 jobs that become vacant** as existing workers transfer to other occupations or exit the labor force.

Cost of Long-Term Care: North Carolina Statistics (2023)



National statistics revealed that **seven out of 10 people** will require long-term care services and support in their lifetime.



Based on the 2023 Genworth Cost of Care survey data, the **median long-term care costs** in North Carolina were as follows:

HOME HEALTH AIDE	ASSISTED LIVING FACILITY	NURSING HOME FACILITY PRIVATE ROOM
\$5,339 per month (\$64,068 annually)	\$5,769 per month (\$69,228 annually)	\$9,125 per month (\$109,500 annually)

Local-level data can be accessed at

www.genworth.com/aging-and-you/finances/cost-of-care

REFERENCES

- 1 NC Office of State Budget and Management, vintage population 2022; population projections 2024, 2050
- 2 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022, 1-year estimates. Table B01001: Sex by Age.
- 3 NC State Center for Health Statistics. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) 2022 survey results, <https://schs.dph.ncdhhs.gov/data/brfss/survey.htm>
- 4 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022, 5-year estimates. Table S0103: Population 65 and over, <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/>
- 5 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022, 5-year estimates. Table B09020: Relationship by household type (including living alone) for population 65 and over
- 6 U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2022, 5-year estimates. Table B28005. Age by presence of a computer and Types of internet subscription in households
- 7 2024 NC Alzheimer's facts and figures www.alz.org/media/Documents/northcarolina-alzheimers-facts-figures-2024.pdf
- 8 Genworth cost of long-term care data Genworth 2023 Cost of Care Survey for North Carolina www.genworth.com/aging-and-you/finances/cost-of-care
- 9 Time to Lift Up North Carolina's Direct Care Workers, www.phinational.org/now-is-the-time-to-lift-up-north-carolinas-direct-care-workers/
- 10 North Carolina Medical Journal article - "Malnutrition and Food Insecurity in Older Adults" <https://ncmedicaljournal.com/article/73010>
- 11 How have registered voters in NC Shifted Demographically Over the Past Decade: <https://carolinademography.cpc.unc.edu/2023/11/15/how-have-registered-voters-in-nc-shifted-demographically-over-the-past-decade/>
- 12 North Carolina Aging Profiles. www.ncdhhs.gov/2022-north-carolina-aging-profiles-1/open
- 13 Volunteering in America: New U.S. Census Bureau, AmeriCorps Research., www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/01/volunteering-and-civic-life-in-america.html
- 14 AARP Valuing the Invaluable: 2023 Updates, www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2023/3/valuing-the-invaluable-2023-update.doi.10.26419-2Fppi.00082.006.pdf

