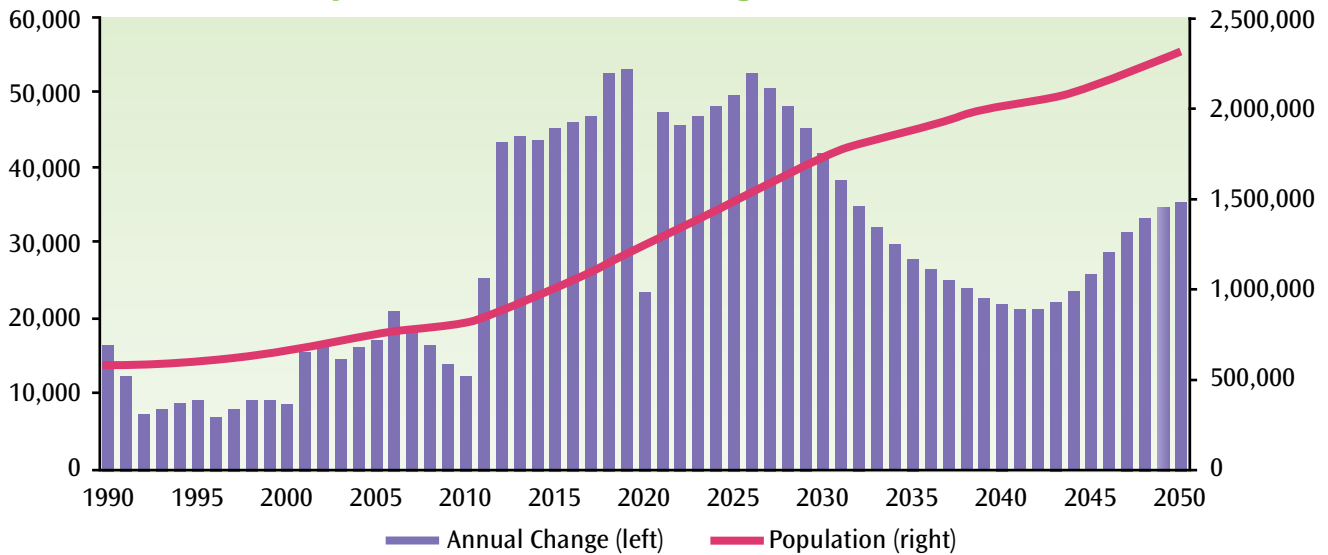


Trends

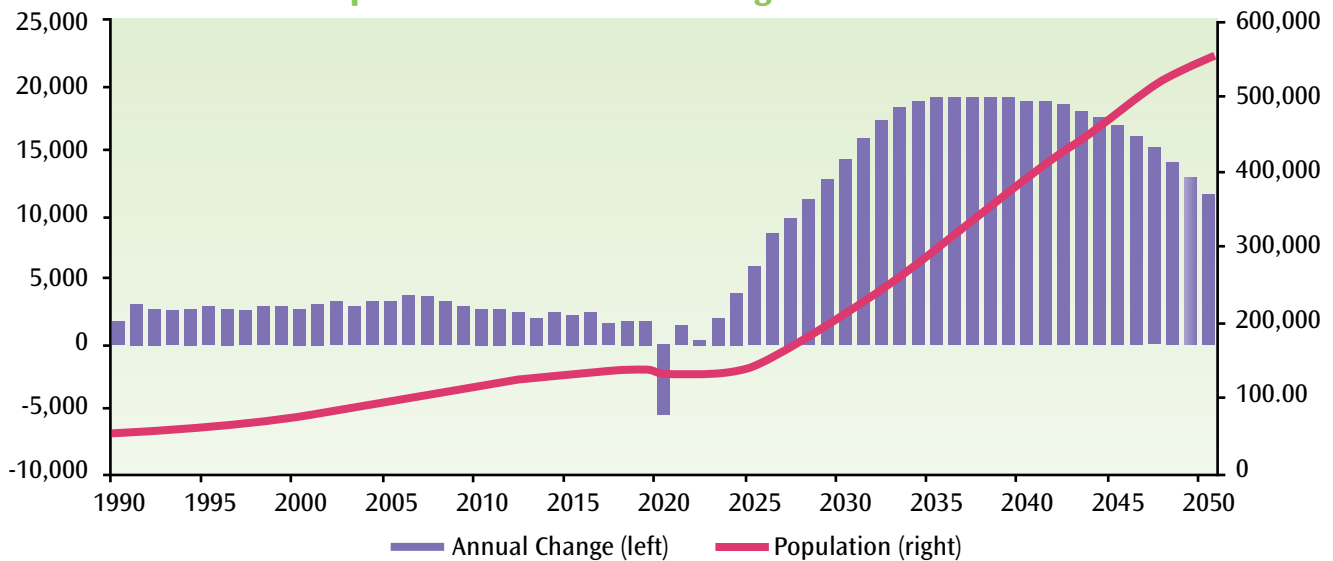
In 2023, the estimated number of adults aged 60 and over is 1,883,911, representing over 23% of the state. By 2030, the baby boomer generation (those born between 1946 and 1964) will be 65 or older and make up 1 of every 5 individuals in Washington. By the year 2050, the number of adults over 60 is forecasted to represent over 29% of the state’s total population.

Population Characteristics Ages 65 and Older



As Washingtonians live longer and healthier lives, older adults aged 85 and over experience the greatest need for LTSS. Over the next three decades, adults aged 85 and older is forecasted to increase by over 400,000 individuals—over 4 times the current amount. The rapid growth of those 85 and above will continue to drive state budget considerations in the coming decades. Washington continues to rebalance its system of LTSS to better support individuals through home and community-based programs. The graphs above and below also illustrate the devastating impact of COVID-19 in 2020 and beyond.

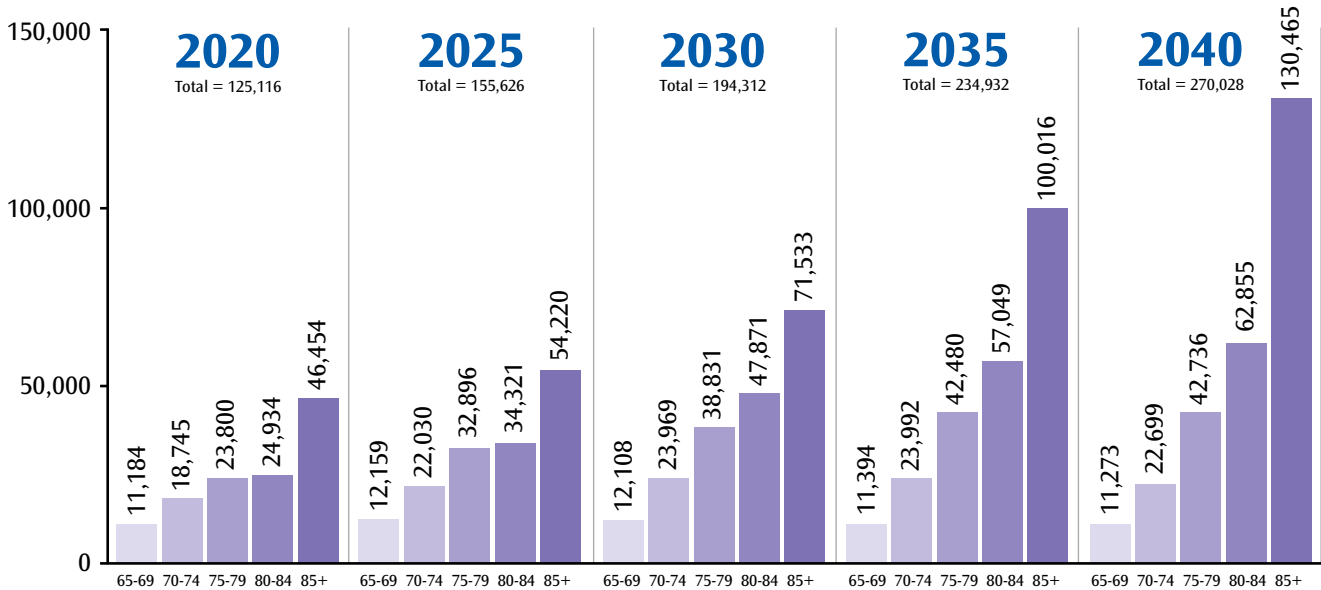
Population Characteristics Ages 85 and Older



Dementia As Washingtonians experience greater longevity, the number of persons living with dementia is expected to rise. In 2020, DSHS Research and Data Analysis estimates there were about 125,000 individuals in Washington State living with Alzheimer’s disease or other dementias (Long-term forecasts of dementia prevalence are based on observed prevalence rates for Washington State Medicare beneficiaries and detailed OFM forecasts of state population change through 2040.). By 2030, this number is expected to rise to above 194,000 people. Alzheimer’s disease is the third leading age-adjusted cause of death in Washington State. The Dementia Action Collaborative in Washington State continues to help in addressing this critical need through additional state planning and implementation efforts.

Forecast Number of Persons with Dementia

Among Washington State Residents Age 65+



Housing Affordable and accessible housing continues to be a priority issue for older adults in Washington State, as referenced in the State Plan on Aging needs assessments. Older adults, many of whom live on fixed incomes continue to face the challenges of higher living costs. Between 2018-2021, the median home price in Washington State increased by over \$198,000, or 54%. As increasing home prices present added barriers for lower income individuals, there is a growing need for more affordable rental options throughout the state. The 2021 National Low Income Housing Coalition Gap Report shows that seniors make up 30% of extremely low income renter households in Washington State ([Washington | National Low Income Housing Coalition \(nlihc.org\)](https://www.nlihc.org/)). A statewide shortage of rental homes that are affordable and available increases the likelihood that severely cost burdened poor households will sacrifice other needs, such as healthy food or healthcare to pay for housing or leave their homes to enter residential and skilled nursing facilities due to an inability based upon cost to remain in their own homes.

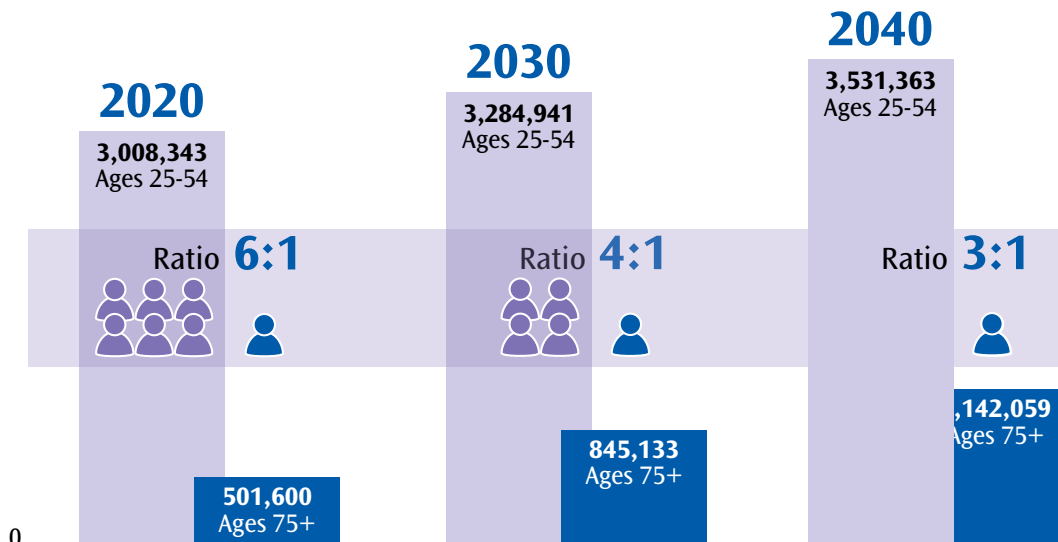
Hunger In 2021, Feeding America found that 7.1% of older Americans aged 60 and above were food insecure ([State of Senior Hunger | Feeding America](https://www.feedingamerica.org/)). Food insecurity is defined by the United States Department of Agriculture as the lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life. Additionally, the impacts of food insecurity disproportionately affect communities of color. Adding to the issue of food security are inflation, resulting in higher food costs and pandemic related nutrition assistance coming to an end. As the population of older adults grows, it is expected that the population of older adults experiencing food insecurity will also rise, even in Washington where the statistic is lower than the nationwide average.



Caregiving

In Washington and the nation as a whole, there is a critical need to strengthen our direct care (paid) workforce and support services for unpaid family caregivers. As the state’s population of older adults rapidly grows, the ratio of available care providers to care receivers is projected to reduce by half from 2020-2040. Prior to 2020, the direct care workforce struggled to meet this mounting need. This intensified through the COVID-19 pandemic as direct care workers faced increasingly unpredictable work combined with relatively low wages.

The Rapidly Growing Size of the Age 75+ Population Relative to Younger Adults Will Greatly Exacerbate Current LTSS Workforce Challenges





Expanding Access to Home and Community Based Services

Washington has developed a system of long-term services and supports that promotes choice and independence for individuals. This system has been developed through decades of transforming services to meet the needs of older Washingtonians. ALTA's rebalancing to home and community-based services has resulted in an estimated savings of \$4.9 billion taxpayer dollars over the period of 2000-2020.

ALTA Long-Term Services and Supports Rebalancing Savings

Monthly Service Expenditures • All Fund Sources • SFY 2000-2020

