

NEW JERSEY
COLLABORATING
CENTER FOR
NURSING

NEW JERSEY CNA DATA & ANALYSIS REPORT



2024

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Certified Nursing Assistant Data and Analysis

New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing

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Vision

- To be the dominant voice on nursing workforce solutions for New Jersey residents.

Mission

- Ensure that competent, future-oriented, diverse nursing providers are available in sufficient numbers and preparation to meet the demand of the evolving healthcare system in New Jersey.
- Transform the healthcare system through research and innovative model programs.
- Create a central repository for education practice and research related to the nursing workforce.
- Engage academic/practice partners, inter-professional colleagues, government and legislative agencies, consumers, business, and industry.
- Promote a positive image for nursing.

The correct reference is as follows:

New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing. (2024). *Certified Nursing Assistant Data and Analysis*. Newark, NJ; NJCCN.

NOTE:

Any future modifications to this report will be published electronically.
For the most recent data on the New Jersey Nursing Workforce, visit www.njccn.org.

Certified Nursing Assistant Workforce

Introduction

A Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) has completed a state-approved training program authorized by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) and passed a competency exam to become certified. CNAs work closely with registered nurses and licensed practical nurses to help patients with daily care tasks and basic medical needs. CNAs recertify every two years. A full description of requirements can be found on the NJDOH website: <https://www.nj.gov/health/healthfacilities/certification-licensing/nurse-aide-pc-assistant/apply/index.shtml>.

Methodology:

A CNA survey was developed by the New Jersey Collaborating Center for Nursing (NJCCN) in collaboration with the Essential Jobs Essential Care (EJEC) data committee and PHI. Once it was developed it was then shared with the New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJDHS), Division of Aging Services to ensure that we were capturing key data points to better understand the CNA workforce. The survey was then translated into Spanish by The Language Bank at Rutgers University, School of Arts and Sciences.

NJCCN worked with PSI to obtain the home addresses of all CNAs in New Jersey. It was determined that the best method of distribution would be by mail since email addresses and phones frequently were inaccurate. The English survey was mailed on March 25, 2024 with a deadline of June 1, 2024. The Spanish version was distributed by a QR code in Qualtrics (<https://www.qualtrics.com>). NJCCN worked with colleagues at the New Jersey Hospital Association, Health Care Association of New Jersey and PHI to ensure that the CNAs were aware of this survey as well as employers to encourage participation. Reminders were sent out weekly. NJCCN also posted an advertisement on social media during the survey period and posted it on our website. Funding to support this project was provided by the NJDHS, Division of Aging Services with in-kind support from NJCCN for analysis.

Surveys mailed back in English were entered into Qualtrics by NJCCN staff. Data was then cleaned and analyzed for this report using Excel and R for statistical computing and data visualization. Below is a summary of the survey returns.

Total number of CNAs in NJ	27,603
Total number of valid surveys returned in English	2,327
Total number of valid surveys returned in Spanish	71
Total number of invalid/duplicate surveys	22
Total number of survey unable to be delivered	922
Percentage of valid survey returned	8.7%

Note¹: Not delivered as addressed, moved left no forward address, refused letter, no receptacle to put letter in, attempted person not known.

In addition to the quantitative survey we also received letters from CNAs sharing their experiences as a CNA. These comments were summarized and included in this report. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

Specific facility/employer info was not collected in this anonymous survey. However, anyone who suspects facility non-compliance with state or federal requirements, including staffing ratios, can submit complaints directly to the Department of Health online [here](#) or by calling 1-800-792-9770.

CNA Employment/Certification Information

Table 1 shows the employment status of 2,398 survey respondent as a CNA. There were 92% of the respondents that are currently working as a CNA.

Table 1: Current Employment Status as CNA

CNA Status	N=2,398	%
Working as CNA	2,209	92
Not working as CNA	147	6
Retired	33	1
Missing	9	<1

Table 2 shows the other certifications held by CNAs. There were 23% of the respondents that are certified as a CHHA.

Table 2: Certifications Held by CNAs

Other Certification	N=2,398	%
CHHA (Certified Home Health Aide)	560	23
Medical Tech	140	6
Both	83	3
Other	320	13
None	1,101	46
Missing	194	8

Demographics

Table 3 describes the demographic characteristics of the CNAs. New Jersey’s CNA respondents are primarily female (89%), Black/African American (51%), and Non-Hispanic/Latino (73%). The median age of CNAs is 53, and 53% are between the ages of 46 to 65.

Table 3: CNA Demographic Characteristics

Gender	N=2,398	%
Female	2,145	89
Male	204	9
Non-Binary/Non-Conforming	0	0
Transgender	3	<1
Prefer not to answer	16	<1
Missing	30	1
Race		
Black/African American	1,224	51
White	521	22
Asian	174	7
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	21	<1
American Indian/Alaska Native	12	<1
Two or more races	119	5
Do not wish to disclose	207	9
Missing	120	5
Ethnicity		
Hispanic/Latino	397	17
Non-Hispanic/Latino	1,761	73
Prefer not to answer	134	6
Missing	106	4
Age		
19-25	74	3
26-35	181	8
36-45	401	17
46-55	615	26
56-65	639	27
66-75	227	9
76-85	17	<1
86+	1	<1
Missing	243	10

Training/Recertification

Table 4 shows the initial site where they were trained as a CNA. There were 42% of the respondents that were trained at a vocational technical school and 30% at a nursing facility.

Table 4: Initial Training Background

Training Site	N=2,398	%
Vocational Technical School	1,011	42
At a Nursing Facility	713	30
Community College	253	11
High School	17	<1
Two or more	39	2
Other	326	14
Missing	39	2

Based on the NJ Administrative Code 8:39 - 43.18, employers are responsible for payment of their initial certification within the guidelines set by code.

Table 5 shows the proportion of cost for both initial certification and recertification. There were 55% of the respondents who paid for their initial certification, and 56% who paid for their recertification cost.

Table 5: Initial/Recertification Cost

Proportion of Cost	N=2,398	%
Initial Certification		
All	1,317	55
Part	125	5
None	923	38
Missing	33	1
Recertification		
All	1,351	56
Part	147	6
None	784	33
Missing	116	5

Education

Table 6 describes the highest level of education held by 2,398 CNA respondents.

Table 6: Highest Level of Education

Highest Level of Education	N=2,398	%
Some High School	165	7
High School Diploma or GED	923	38
Some College	725	30
Associate Degree	237	10
Baccalaureate Degree	230	10
Advanced Degree	77	3
Missing	41	2

CNAs were asked if given the opportunity, would they further their education through advancement opportunities in healthcare. Of the total respondents, 1,867 indicated Yes. **Table 7** identifies those roles.

Table 7: Role Advancement

Role	N=1,867	%
LPN	496	27
RN	389	21
Medical Tech	122	7
Phlebotomist	107	6
CHHA	25	1
Two or more	536	29
Other	98	5
Missing	94	5

Employment Characteristics

Table 8 identifies the hourly rate distribution of CNAs. There were 2,205 CNAs who reported their hourly rate. The median hourly rate is \$20.50.

Table 8: Hourly Rate

Hourly Rate	N=2,205	%
Below \$16	42	2
\$16 - \$20	1,102	50
\$21 - \$25	946	43
\$26 - \$30	101	5
Above \$30	14	<1

Note: This table includes hourly rates from all survey respondents, regardless of their employment status.

Table 9 describes the employment status of 2,398 CNAs. The majority of CNAs work full-time.

Table 9: Employment Status

Employment Status	N=2,398	%
Full-time	1,779	74
Part-time	286	12
Per diem	306	13
Live-in	3	<1
Missing	24	1

Note: Full-time is equivalent to 35 hours or greater per week.

Table 10 shows the number of positions employed as a CNA. There were 22% of the CNA respondents who indicated they had two or more jobs.

Table 10: Number of Positions Employed as a CNA

Number of Positions	N=2,398	%
1 position	1,688	70
2 positions	418	17
3 or more positions	129	5
Missing	163	7

Table 11 shows the shift distribution for CNA respondents. There were 14% of the CNA respondents who indicated they worked varied shifts.

Table 11: Shift Distribution

Shift	N=2,398	%
Days	1,030	43
Evenings	563	23
Nights	408	17
Varied Shifts	341	14
Missing	56	2

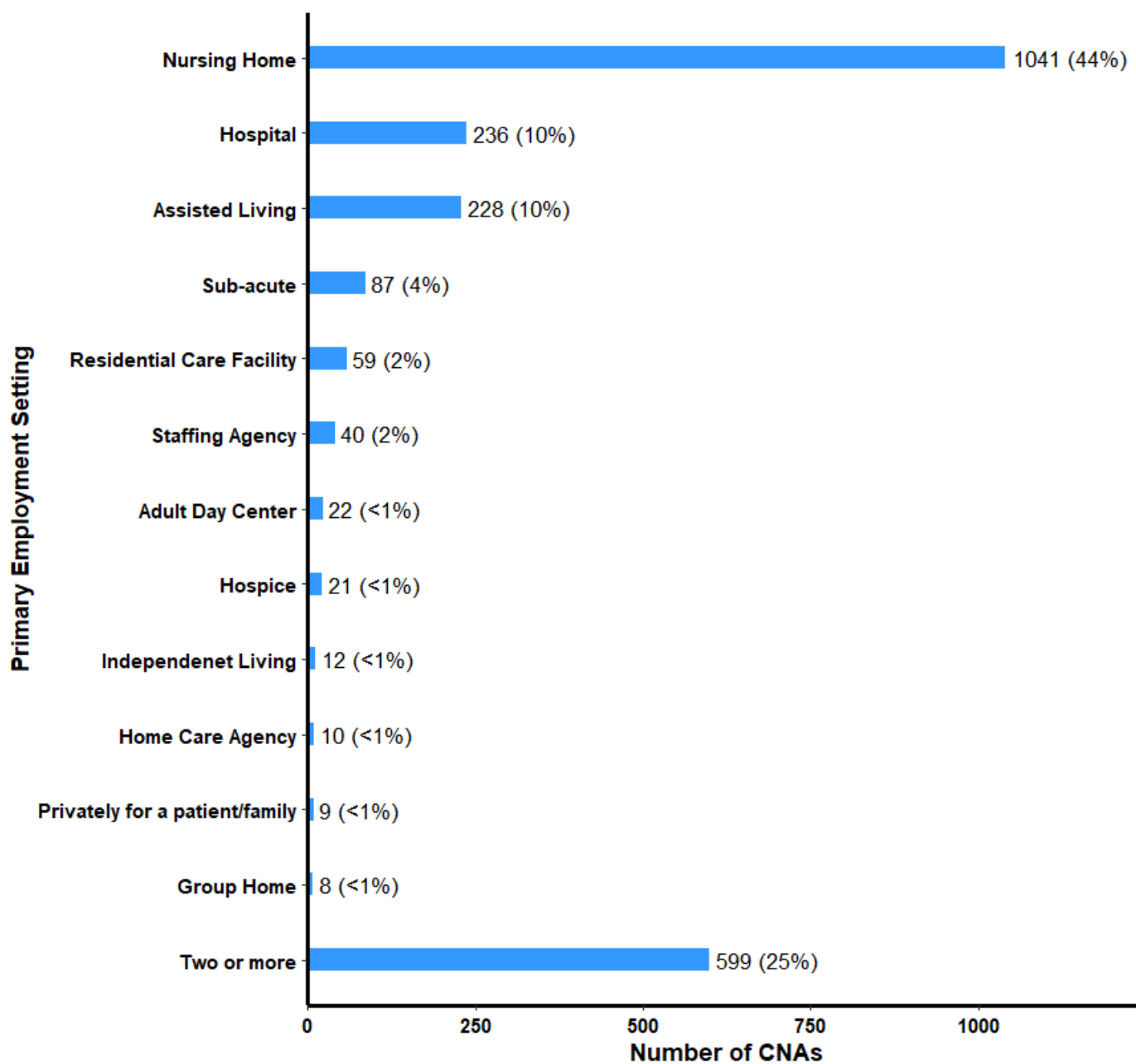
Table 12 shows the number of years they worked as a CNA. There were 57% of the respondents that have worked eleven or more years as a CNA.

Table 12: Number of Years Worked as a CNA

Number of Years Worked	N=2,398	%
Less than one year	146	6
1 - 2 Years	210	9
3 - 5 Years	274	11
6 - 10 Years	384	16
11 - 20 Years	702	29
21 or More Years	667	28
Missing	15	<1

Figure 1 depicts 2,372 CNAs who reported their primary employment setting. There were 44% of the CNAs who worked at a nursing home, and 25% who selected two or more settings.

Figure 1: CNA Primary Employment Setting



*The 26 Missing/No data are excluded.

Table 13 shows the counties where 2,197 CNA respondents were employed.

Table 13: CNA County of Employment

Employment County	Number of CNAs	%
Atlantic	69	3
Bergen	191	9
Burlington	101	5
Camden	151	7
Cape May	22	1
Cumberland	61	3
Essex	272	12
Gloucester	62	3
Hudson	111	5
Hunterdon	28	1
Mercer	80	4
Middlesex	140	6
Monmouth	128	6
Morris	132	6
Ocean	216	10
Passaic	89	4
Salem	16	<1
Somerset	96	4
Sussex	43	2
Union	149	7
Warren	40	2

The 201 missing data are excluded*

Table 14 shows the counties where 2,272 CNA respondents reside.

Table 14: CNA County of Residence

Employment County	Number of CNAs	%
Atlantic	83	4
Bergen	115	5
Burlington	97	4
Camden	174	8
Cape May	16	<1
Cumberland	57	3
Essex	463	20
Gloucester	73	3
Hudson	108	5
Hunterdon	19	<1
Mercer	84	4
Middlesex	135	6
Monmouth	109	5
Morris	52	2
Ocean	203	9
Passaic	145	6
Salem	15	<1
Somerset	52	2
Sussex	37	2
Union	194	9
Warren	41	2

The 126 missing data are excluded*

Table 15 shows the reasons why CNAs have another job. There were 775 CNAs who responded to this question.

Table 15: Reasons for Another Job

Reasons	Frequency
Need the money	628
Can't get enough hours at any one job	75
Like the variety of jobs	83
Can't get health benefits	27

Note: Respondents were able to select more than one category.

Table 16 shows the number of CNAs who identified that they were employed in another state.

Table 16: Employment in Another State

States	N=52
NY	11
PA	18
Other States	13
Missing	10

Occupational Hurdles

Table 17 shows the reasons why CNAs missed work.

Table 17: Reasons for Missing Work

Reasons	N=2,398	%
Transportation Problems		
Yes	203	8
No	1,911	80
Missing	284	12
Childcare Arrangements		
Yes	219	9
No	1,723	72
Missing	456	19
Caring for Others		
Yes	488	20
No	1,628	68
Missing	282	12

Table 18 shows the CNA respondents' concerns about their job.

Table 18: CNAs Concern About Job

Concerns	N=2,398	%
Personal Health and/or Safety		
Very Concerned	1,311	55
Somewhat Concerned	642	27
Not at all Concerned	352	15
Missing	93	4
Injuries From Lifting or Transferring		
Very Concerned	1,245	52
Somewhat Concerned	643	27
Not at all Concerned	350	15
Missing	160	7
Stress or Mental Health		
Very Concerned	1,118	47
Somewhat Concerned	658	27
Not at all Concerned	468	20
Missing	154	6

Benefit

CNAs were asked if benefits were offered at their facility. There were 2,074 respondents that selected Yes. Only 2,013 out of 2,074 selected a benefit choice. **Table 19** shows the frequency of choices selected by the 2,013 respondents.

Table 19: Benefits

Reasons	Frequency
Paid holidays	1,623
Other paid time off, vacation and/or personal days	1,464
Paid sick leave	1,446
Health Insurance	1,371
Extra pay for working holidays	890
Retirement or pension plan	768
Tuition reimbursement	324
Paid transportation assistance	47
Paid childcare assistance	15

Note: Respondents were able to select more than one category.

There were 1,102 (46%) of CNA respondents who reported they did not enroll in a health insurance plan. **Table 20** shows the reasons why CNAs did not enroll.

Table 20: Reasons for not Enrolling in Insurance Plan

Reasons	N=1,102	%
Already covered by another health insurance plan	313	28
Covered by Medicaid or Medicare	233	21
Too expensive	229	21
Not eligible for health insurance	68	6
Don't need health insurance	21	2
Two or more	97	9
Other	61	6
Missing	80	7

Language

CNAs were asked how well they speak English. **Table 21** shows the English proficiency reported by 2,398 CNAs.

Table 21: English Proficiency

English Proficiency	N=2,398	%
Very Well	1,757	73
Well	516	22
Not Well	77	3
Not at all	3	<1
Missing	45	2

There were 1,187 CNA respondents who reported that they spoke a language other than English at home. **Table 22** shows there were 1,122 out of 1,187 CNAs who identified a language.

Table 22: Other Language Spoken at Home

Language	N=1,122	%
Spanish	352	31
Haitian-Creole	263	23
Tagalog	106	9
Polish	15	1
Hindi	14	1
Arabic	7	<1
Portuguese	6	<1
Russian	6	<1
Korean	5	<1
Chinese	5	<1
Gujarati	2	<1
Italian	1	<1
Two or more	37	3
Other	303	27

Retirement

CNAs were asked to report their intention to retire or change careers in the next 2 years. There were 2,155 (90%) CNAs who responded to the question. There were 841 (39%) who indicated they intend to retire or change careers within this time frame.

Table 23 identifies the number of CNAs who declared an intent to retire by age bracket.

Table 23: Intent to Retire According to Age

Age	Number of CNAs	Yes	No	DND
	N=2,155	N=841	N=1,235	N=79
19-25	74	48	25	1
26-35	181	85	90	6
36-45	401	187	204	10
46-55	615	207	388	20
56-65	639	182	432	25
66-75	227	127	84	16
76-85	17	5	11	1
86+	1	0	1	0

The 243 missing data are excluded*

Note: DND signifies did not disclose.

Qualitative Comments

Below is a summary of letters attached to the survey from CNAs. Some of the letters were lengthy and therefore were synthesized.

Survey Number	CNA Years	Comment
50	21+	Bills submitted for financial assistance: child support and spousal support, medical bills for Cancer, unemployment payment, PSE& G bill, and rent receipts. Asking for help. Salary: \$19.00/hour.
234	15	<p>“Nobody cares about what CNAs go through daily.”</p> <p>“Some aides work 16 hour shifts 7 days a week just to make a living off a \$20.00/hour rate.”</p> <p>“It is supposed to be a ratio between 6-8 residents to an aide... Always between 11-16 residents per aide.”</p> <p>“I wouldn’t recommend this career to anyone.”</p>
607	39	“I can’t image what it is going to be like in another 5 years, there are no CNAs applying anywhere.”
688	21	<p>“I don’t feel that we are appreciated at all.”</p> <p>“The pay that we get shows that we are not appreciated.”</p> <p>“Our work assignment should not go by census, it should go by the amount of care we have to give each resident.”</p> <p>“The hoier lift wasn’t working... we told the administrator... I had to get surgery.”</p> <p>“Starting rate should not be less than \$23.00/hr.”</p>
696	21+	<p>“I have worked in hospitals, nursing homes, agencies rehab... CNAs are underpaid.”</p> <p>“We are the ones who spend the most time and know when there is a change in our patient but get the lesser pay.”</p> <p>“CNAs work short every day/night sometimes I get 15 patients or more. You tell me how you can give good care to 15 patients without falls.”</p> <p>“State law says 8 patients to one aide but no matter what facility I work and it’s been the same under staff.”</p> <p>“It’s sad CNAs are underpaid and unappreciative.”</p>

801	21+	<p>“It is a disgrace that corporate and privately owned centers put profits before people.”</p> <p>“Many residents are being neglected because of staffing crisis. They refuse to pay higher wages even after Governor Murphy signed bills S2712 and S2785.”</p> <p>7-3 3 CNAs for 58-59 residents.</p> <p>3-11 2.5 CNAs to 4 for 58-59 residents.</p> <p>11-7 1 CNA for 58-59 residents.</p> <p>“Residents hardly get out of bed, receive showers or participate in activities.”</p> <p>“I pray that sometime soon someone takes the bull by the horns and says enough.”</p>
943	6-10	<p>“I was just informed that per diem healthcare employees are not covered by the mandate sick time law.” “Working per diem has allowed me to finish school.”</p>
1638	23	<p>4 page letter:</p> <p>This CNA shared role of CNA and their functions identifying issue of not enough staff to do lifts, and the addition now of computer work. Person feels underpaid for responsibilities. Has worked on detox units, psych, med-surg, labor delivery, assisted Living, and nursing homes. They shared differences between CHHA and CNA role when they come to a nursing home. Salary is \$18.00/hour.</p> <p>“I want to thank you for your survey and I hope and pray that this information can shed some light on what is expected from CNAs.”</p>
2048	21*	<p>“Two CNAs have 28-30 residents each on the long term units... How can the CNA perform proper care for 30 residents in addition to our other job duties?”</p> <p>“Time for annual survey my facility makes sure the facility is staffed.”</p> <p>“... being threatened by the DON regarding falls. How does the DON expect us to prevent falls when we’re working short staffed? They write us up if residents fall and threatens to terminate our employment.”</p> <p>“Almost all of the staff work double shifts. If the staff wasn’t working doubles the nursing home would have been shut down due to the shortage of staff.”</p> <p>“It’s like no one cares what is going on in these nursing homes. No one cares about the strenuous workload on the CNAs and on one cares about the residents overall well-being.” Salary \$19.50.</p>
2049	21+	<p>“In general I like my job because I have a passion to help others. I see each patient as a VIP (special).”</p> <p>“During COVID time the salon at my job was closed so patients needed haircuts men and women. Seeing the need I bought a hair clipper and started cutting their hair... and they were so happy.”</p> <p>“Thank you Rutgers for thinking or reaching out to us {CNAs}. It’s the first time I receive a survey. I just want someone to read my story.”</p> <p>“Children and the elderly are the 2 vulnerable groups of people, I’m work with both.” Salary: 18.13/hour.</p>

Appendix A

1. Are you currently working as a certified nursing assistant (CNA)?
- ☐ Yes, I am currently working as a CNA
 - ☐ No, I am not currently working as a CNA
 - ☐ No, Retired

2. How long have you worked as a CNA?
- ☐ Less than 1 year
 - ☐ 1-2 years
 - ☐ 3-5 years
 - ☐ 6-10 years
 - ☐ 11-20 years
 - ☐ 21 + years

3. Where did you receive your CNA training?
- ☐ At a nursing facility
 - ☐ Vocational Technical School
 - ☐ Community College
 - ☐ High School
 - ☐ Other: _____

4. How much of the CNA training costs did you have to pay?
- ☐ All
 - ☐ Part
 - ☐ None

5. How much of the recertification costs did you have to pay?
- ☐ All
 - ☐ Part
 - ☐ None

6. What is your MAIN CNA job?
- ☐ Adult day center
 - ☐ Assisted living
 - ☐ Group home
 - ☐ Hospice
 - ☐ Home Care Agency
 - ☐ Staffing agency
 - ☐ Independent living
 - ☐ Nursing home
 - ☐ Residential Care Facility
 - ☐ Sub-acute
 - ☐ Hospital
 - ☐ Working privately for a patient family

7. How much are you paid per hour at your MAIN CNA job? \$ _____

8. What is your employment status at your MAIN CNA job?
- ☐ Full time (35 hrs. + weekly)
 - ☐ Part time (less than 35 hrs.)
 - ☐ Per Diem/On Call/as needed
 - ☐ Live In

9. Are benefits offered at your facility?
- ☐ Yes
 - ☐ No

If yes, which benefits? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Paid sick leave
- ☐ Paid Holidays
- ☐ Other paid time off, vacation and or personal days
- ☐ Paid transportation assistance
- ☐ Retirement or pension plan
- ☐ Tuition reimbursement
- ☐ Extra pay for working holidays
- ☐ Paid childcare assistance
- ☐ Health Insurance

10. Are you currently participating in a health insurance plan?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If No, why not?

- ☐ Too expensive
- ☐ Already covered by another health insurance plan
- ☐ Covered by Medicaid or Medicare
- ☐ Other: _____
- ☐ Don't need health insurance
- ☐ Not eligible for health insurance

11. Do you have another job?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

If yes, what is the reason?

- ☐ Need the money
- ☐ Can't get enough hours at any one job
- ☐ Like the variety of jobs
- ☐ Can't get health benefits

12. In how many positions are you currently employed as a CNA?

- ☐ 1
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3 or more

13. What shift do you PRIMARILY work?

- ☐ Days
- ☐ Evenings
- ☐ Nights

14. Please indicate if you have missed work in the past month for any of these reasons:

-Transportation Problems:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

-Childcare Arrangements:

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

-Caring for a family/relative/friend with a disability or health problem

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Appendix A

15. How concerned you are in general about the following with your main CNA job:
-My personal health and/or safety:
☐ Very concerned ☐ Somewhat concerned ☐ Not at all concerned
-Injuries from lifting or transferring:
☐ Very concerned ☐ Somewhat concerned ☐ Not at all concerned
-My stress or mental health:
☐ Very Concerned ☐ Somewhat concerned ☐ Not at all concerned
16. Are you working as a CNA in another state (other than New Jersey)
☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, which state: _____
17. Where do you work for your Main employment?
Zip Code: _____ County: _____
18. Where do you live?
Zip Code: _____ County: _____
19. What is your gender?
☐ Male ☐ Female
☐ Non-Binary/Non-Conforming ☐ Transgender
☐ Prefer not to answer
20. Please indicate from which country you are originally from:
☐ Africa: _____ ☐ South America: _____
☐ Asia: _____ ☐ Central America: _____
☐ Europe: _____ ☐ Caribbean Island: _____
☐ North America: _____
21. If you are NOT originally from the United States what type of work did you do in your home country?
☐ Please identify: _____
☐ I did not work
22. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Prefer not to answer
23. Which race best describes you?
☐ America Indian or Alaskan Native ☐ White
☐ Asian ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
☐ Black/African American ☐ Two or more races
☐ Do not wish to disclose
24. In what year were you born? _____
25. Do you speak another language other than English at home?
☐ Yes ☐ No
If Yes, What is the primary language?
☐ Arabic ☐ Italian ☐ Portuguese
☐ Haitian Creole ☐ Korean ☐ Russian
☐ Gujarati ☐ Spanish
☐ Hindi ☐ Polish ☐ Other
☐ Chinese ☐ Tagalog
26. How well do you speak English?
☐ Very well ☐ Not Well
☐ Well ☐ Not at all
27. What is your highest level of education?
☐ Some High School ☐ Associate Degree
☐ High School diploma or GED ☐ Baccalaureate Degree
☐ Some College ☐ Advanced Degree
28. Do you plan to retire or change careers in the next two years?
☐ Yes ☐ No
29. What other certifications do you hold?
☐ CHHA ☐ None
☐ Medical Tech ☐ Other: _____
30. If given the opportunity would you further your education in the health care field?
☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, which options would you be interested in?
☐ Medical Tech ☐ RN
☐ Phlebotomist ☐ CHHA
☐ LPN ☐ Other: _____
- Please share your email address for future communication. (Optional)
Email: _____

Acknowledgements

NJCCN Board

Kathleen Burke, PhD, RN

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