

Health Care Aides in Alberta

Updated: August 2026

INTRODUCTION

On February 2, 2026, Health Care Aides (HCAs) became regulated, and the College of LPNs and HCAs of Alberta (CLHA) became the **largest health care regulator in Alberta** and now currently oversees over 60,000 professionals providing patient level care.

WORKFORCE OVERVIEW

HCAs are important members of the care team and provide basic health services and support with daily living activities. HCAs work in a variety of settings including home care, assisted living, long term care, acute care, and with individual clients. Most HCAs work in long term care (57%), followed by hospitals (16%), and home care (13%).

In 2014, the College of Licenced Practical Nurses of Alberta partnered with Government of Alberta to help create and oversee the Alberta Health Care Aide Directory. The Directory, which collected demographic, employment, and core competency information from HCAs across the province, went live in 2017. In 2019, it became mandatory for all HCAs working for a publicly funded employer to ensure continued enrollment on the Directory. HCAs were asked to review and update their profile annually on the Directory.

Currently there are over 38,000 HCAs registered to practice in Alberta. Most HCAs are employed in public facilities such as Alberta Health Services, Covenant Health, and contracted operators (77%). Approximately 30%, or over 12,000 HCAs, work outside the Edmonton and Calgary zones.

REGULATING HCAS

As HCAs care for some of the most vulnerable Albertans, they are placed in positions of power, requiring high levels of trust from their patients. It is important to ensure those caring for all Albertans have appropriate training and have the competence to provide safe, quality care.

The regulation of HCAs:

- allows for standardization of training and education, competencies, and practice;
- supports greater clarity around an HCA's role and establishes a process for investigating complaints;
- creates a greater level of confidence in the HCA-patient relationship and greater public protection;
- provides access, data, and an ability to survey the largest single group of continuing care providers in the province; and
- supports HCAs to remain competent and be accountable for their continued competence.

HCA SCOPE OF PRACTICE

HCA's work in various healthcare settings assisting and supporting activities of daily living to provide basic personal care and health services. HCA's perform a variety of skills such as mobilizing clients using transfer assists or mechanical lifts, blood glucose monitoring, and taking vital signs such as blood pressure. HCA's may provide certain kinds of medication assistance, like providing reminders or opening packages as prescribed and documented on the care plan. HCA's also participate in client education and promotion of client wellness across the lifespan.

Entry-level education for HCA's establishes a baseline of competencies for the HCA within their individual scope of practice. With further education, training, and practical experience, each HCA's scope of practice expands and varies.

HCA's work as part of a larger healthcare team under the supervision of professionals such as nurses and doctors. HCA's work directly with clients, and they can observe and report changes in a client's condition to the healthcare team. This makes them a vital part of providing safe care.