

NCCPA
Certification. Excellence.®

**2023 Statistical
Profile of Recently
Board Certified PAs**

ANNUAL REPORT

**National Commission
on Certification of PAs**

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Message from the President and CEO

Dear Colleagues:

Each year, NCCPA publishes four statistical reports that focus on various aspects of the PA profession. I always look forward to the third report, the Statistical Profile of Recently Board Certified PAs, because it includes data from PAs just beginning their journey in a remarkable profession.

In 2023, 11,762 individuals earned NCCPA board certification, representing another record year. The 2023 Statistical Profile of Recently Board Certified PAs, now in its eleventh year, provides data on this group of newly certified PAs, including those who have accepted a position and those still seeking their first role as a board certified PA. These new PAs can be found in every state and the District of Columbia, with the highest representation in New York, California, and Florida. Practicing in a collaborative environment where interprofessional engagement is emphasized, continues to be the most important practice environment attribute for newly certified PAs.



Although there is still much progress to be made for the PA profession to be reflective of the patient population they serve, it is encouraging that over the past five years, we have seen a slight increase in the racial and ethnic diversity of the newly certified cohort. The most significant increases have been in individuals who identify as Asian and those identifying as Hispanic/Latino/a/x.

With the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projecting a 27% growth in the PA profession from 2022-2032, the future is bright for PAs, and it is encouraging that 74.3% of the newly certified PAs report there are many jobs nationally (an increase over the 68.8% reported in 2022). Just over 60% of the newly certified PAs have accepted a position, and nearly 35% are involved in a job search. Of those who have accepted a position, 78.5% received two or more job offers, compared to 75.4% in 2022 and 70.9% in 2019.

These PAs are contributing to patient care throughout the country and in all specialties, and their starting salaries are reflective of their valuable contributions with 76.4% earning starting salaries of over \$100,000, as compared to 64.6% in 2022. Over half (52.5%) of the new positions were in a hospital setting, and Family Medicine and Emergency Medicine were the most selected specialties (17.1% and 17.0%, respectively). Looking at the five-year trend, there has been an increase in the proportion of PAs who are practicing in Health Professional Shortage Areas or Medically Underserved Areas, growing from 1.9% in 2019 to 4.2% in 2023.

In addition to these highlights, the report includes much more data on this newly certified group of PAs and the factors that are important to them as they embark on their careers. On behalf of NCCPA, we are grateful to the newly certified PAs who provided the data for this report, and we wish them all the best as they embark on their new career.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dawn Morton-Rias".

Dawn Morton-Rias, Ed.D., PA-C, ICE-CCP, FACHE
President and CEO

About the Data Collection and Methodology

Introduction

Since board certifying the first physician assistants/associates (PAs) in 1975, NCCPA has collected data on the PA profession as PAs completed various processes related to obtaining initial certification and then maintaining certification by earning and logging continuing medical education credits and passing recertification examinations. In May 2012, NCCPA's data-gathering efforts were significantly enhanced with the launch of the PA Professional Profile. This data-gathering instrument is presented to PAs through a secure portal within NCCPA's website. The Profile was launched with two modules: "About Me" and "My Practice."

In December 2012, NCCPA added a "Recently Certified" module delivered online to PAs who have been certified (for the first time) for one year or less. This report highlights the data collected from this module.

Data Analysis

Data reflected in this report includes aggregated responses from PAs who were board certified for the first time in 2023. The participants included in this report answered at least a portion of the Recently Certified module between January 1, 2023 and December 31, 2023. In addition, some data were obtained from other NCCPA data collection strategies, as noted within the report. As of December 31, 2023, there were 8,176 recently board certified PAs who provided at least one response to the profile out of the 11,762 recently certified PAs with access to the PA Professional Profile (69.5% response rate). Data for age, gender and distribution include all 11,762 recently certified PAs. All other data elements included were derived from the responses of the recently board certified PAs. In 2023, response rates varied by quarter: 1st: 71.9%, 2nd: 70.5%, 3rd: 69.1%, and 4th: 65.6%.

Responses were examined for consistency and potential errors. In cases of obvious error or inconclusive data, the responses were not included in the analysis. The number of responses to individual items varies due to differing response rates or due to the data being removed for reasons previously noted. Analyses of the data consist primarily of descriptive statistics. Percent change calculations reflect proportional changes from 2019-2023 throughout the report unless otherwise noted.

About NCCPA

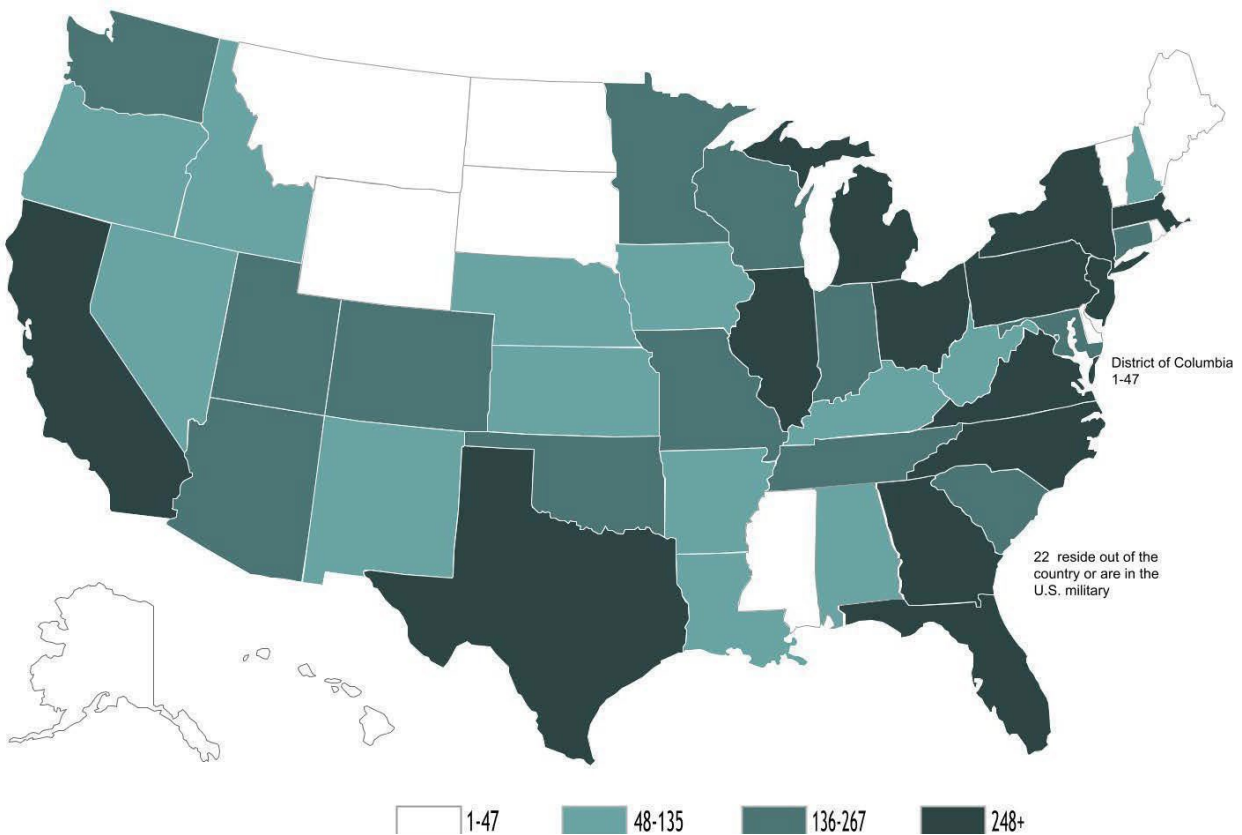
NCCPA is the only certifying organization for PAs in the United States. Established as a not-for-profit organization in 1974, NCCPA is dedicated to providing board certification programs that reflect standards for clinical knowledge, clinical reasoning and other medical skills and professional behaviors required upon entry into practice and throughout the careers of PAs. All U.S. states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. territories have decided to rely on NCCPA certification as one of the criteria for licensure or regulation of PAs. More than 207,000 PAs have been board certified since 1975.

For more information about NCCPA, visit our website at: <http://www.nccpa.net>

Distribution of Recently Certified PAs

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Distribution of Recently Certified PAs by State (Divided by Quartiles)



Note: The map above highlights the states with the greatest number of recently certified PAs based on state of residence as reported to NCCPA.

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) expects that the number of PA educational programs will grow from 310 (July 2024) to 353 by 2027, which would have an impact on the number of PAs seeking NCCPA board certification. *Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc.*

There were 11,762 recently certified PAs who had access to the PA Professional Profile in 2023. The map illustrates the distribution of those PAs.

Distribution of Recently Certified PAs

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

State	2023 Number	2023 Percent (Rank)	2019 Number	2019 Percent (Rank)	Percent Change 2019-2023
Alabama	131	1.1% (28)	76	0.8% (32)	72.4%
Alaska	24	0.2% (47)	30	0.3% (44)	-20.0%
Arizona	206	1.8% (20)	189	2.0% (17)	9.0%
Arkansas	53	0.5% (39)	49	0.5% (38)	8.2%
California	1,010	8.6% (2)	682	7.1% (3)	48.1%
Colorado	214	1.8% (16)	161	1.7% (20)	32.9%
Connecticut	212	1.8% (18)	215	2.3% (15)	-1.4%
Delaware	23	0.2% (48)	31	0.3% (43)	-25.8%
District of Columbia	17	0.1% (50)	14	0.1% (49)	21.4%
Florida	822	7.0% (3)	595	6.2% (4)	38.2%
Georgia	365	3.1% (12)	264	2.8% (13)	38.3%
Hawaii	28	0.2% (46)	10	0.1% (50)	180.0%
Idaho	66	0.6% (36)	54	0.6% (36)	22.2%
Illinois	363	3.1% (12)	316	3.3% (9)	14.9%
Indiana	210	1.8% (19)	141	1.5% (23)	48.9%
Iowa	98	0.8% (32)	90	0.9% (30)	8.9%
Kansas	74	0.6% (35)	64	0.7% (34)	15.6%
Kentucky	135	1.1% (27)	103	1.1% (26)	31.1%
Louisiana	130	1.1% (29)	94	1.0% (29)	38.3%
Maine	40	0.3% (43)	32	0.3% (42)	25.0%
Maryland	214	1.8% (16)	171	1.8% (18)	25.1%
Massachusetts	392	3.3% (9)	310	3.2% (10)	26.5%
Michigan	469	4.0% (7)	403	4.2% (7)	16.4%
Minnesota	248	2.1% (15)	221	2.3% (14)	12.2%
Mississippi	44	0.4% (42)	28	0.3% (46)	57.1%
Missouri	138	1.2% (26)	121	1.3% (24)	14.0%
Montana	47	0.4% (40)	29	0.3% (45)	62.1%
Nebraska	103	0.9% (31)	84	0.9% (31)	22.6%
Nevada	91	0.8% (33)	70	0.7% (33)	30.0%
New Hampshire	54	0.5% (38)	50	0.5% (37)	8.0%
New Jersey	366	3.1% (10)	309	3.2% (11)	18.4%
New Mexico	56	0.5% (37)	44	0.5% (39)	27.3%
New York	1,060	9.0% (1)	972	3.2% (11)	9.1%
North Carolina	527	4.5% (6)	437	4.6% (6)	20.6%
North Dakota	33	0.3% (45)	17	0.2% (47)	94.1%

Distribution of Recently Certified PAs (cont.)

GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

State	2023 Number	2023 Percent (Rank)	2019 Number	2019 Percent (Rank)	Percent Change 2019-2023
Ohio	433	3.7% (8)	378	4.0% (8)	14.6%
Oklahoma	149	1.3% (25)	98	1.0% (28)	52.0%
Oregon	127	1.1% (30)	103	1.1% (26)	23.3%
Pennsylvania	748	6.4% (4)	750	7.9% (2)	-0.3%
Rhode Island	46	0.4% (41)	57	0.6% (35)	-19.3%
South Carolina	185	1.6% (22)	148	1.6% (21)	25.0%
South Dakota	39	0.3% (44)	35	0.4% (41)	11.4%
Tennessee	267	2.3% (14)	144	1.5% (22)	85.4%
Texas	693	5.9% (5)	516	5.4% (5)	34.3%
Utah	151	1.3% (24)	117	1.2% (25)	29.1%
Vermont	20	0.2% (49)	16	0.2% (48)	25.0%
Virginia	361	3.1% (13)	288	3.0% (12)	25.3%
Washington	165	1.4% (23)	164	1.7% (19)	0.6%
West Virginia	81	0.7% (34)	39	0.4% (40)	107.7%
Wisconsin	201	1.7% (21)	200	2.1% (16)	0.5%
Wyoming	11	<0.1% (51)	10	0.1% (50)	10.0%
TOTAL	11,740	100.0%	9,539	100.0%	23.1%

Note: PAs who reported an address in the U.S. Additionally, 22 recently certified PAs had addresses classified as out of the country or military.

Percent change reflects count change in number of recently certified PAs in each state from 2019 to 2023.

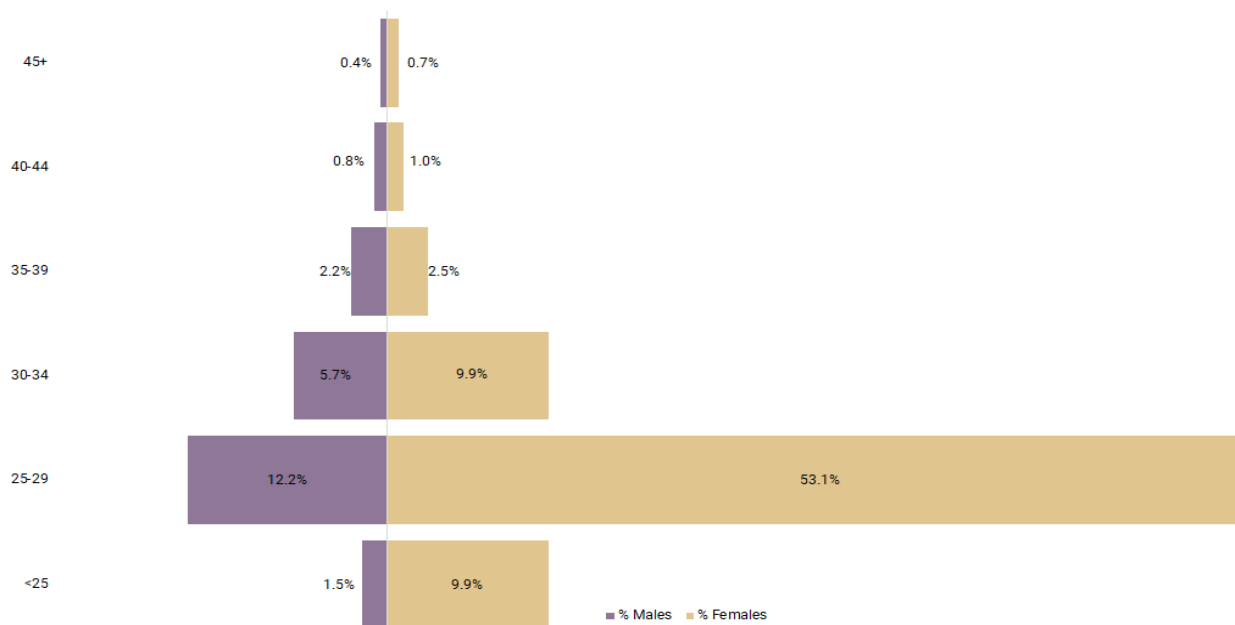
Recently certified PAs were represented in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

The states with the greatest number of recently certified PAs include: New York, California, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Texas. These five states are also the top five most populous for all board certified PAs.

All Recently Certified PAs: Gender and Age

GENDER AND AGE

Distribution of Recently Certified PAs by Gender and Age



Recently Certified PAs by Gender

Gender	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Male	22.6%	-3.5%
Female	76.4%	2.5%
Non-binary	<0.1%	NA
Prefer not to answer	0.9%	NA

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

NA – Gender identity choice first included in 2021.

Recently Certified PAs by Age

Age group	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
<25	11.4%	-1.2%
25-29	65.5%	2.9%
30-34	15.6%	-0.6%
35-39	4.7%	-0.4%
40-44	1.9%	0.0%
45+	0.9%	-0.7%

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Median age of recently certified PAs

2023: 27 years

2019: 27 years

Median age of all PAs is 38.

Race and Ethnicity of Recently Certified PAs

Recently Certified PAs by Race

Race	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
White	74.5%	-5.6%
Asian	11.4%	3.1%
Multi-race	4.2%	1.2%
Black/African American	3.9%	1.4%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.4%	0.2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.1%
Other	2.3%	0.4%
Prefer not to answer	3.2%	-0.6%

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Ethnicity: Percent Who Indicated They are of Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Spanish Origin

2023	10.0%
2019	7.9%

The percentage of recently certified PAs of Hispanic, Latino/a/x, or Spanish origin has steadily increased since NCCPA started gathering this data in 2012.

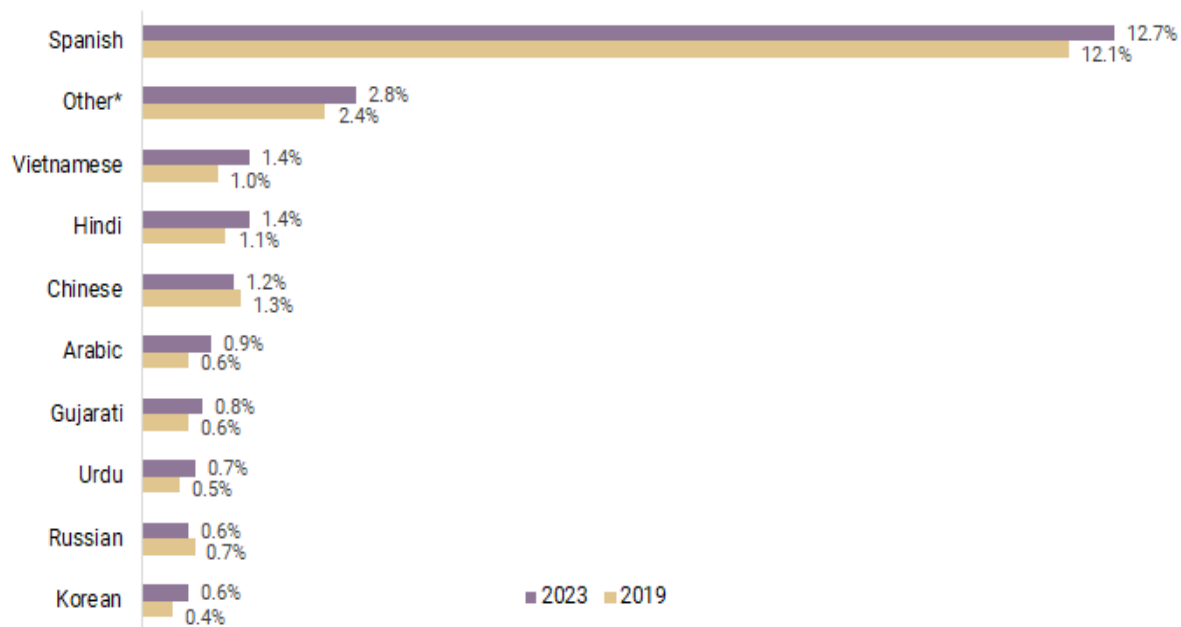
Top Languages Spoken

LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH SPOKEN WITH PATIENTS

Percent of Recently Certified PAs Who Can Communicate with Patients in a Language Other Than English

2023	21.3%
2019	20.0%

Top 10 Languages Other Than English That Recently Certified PAs Use to Communicate with Patients



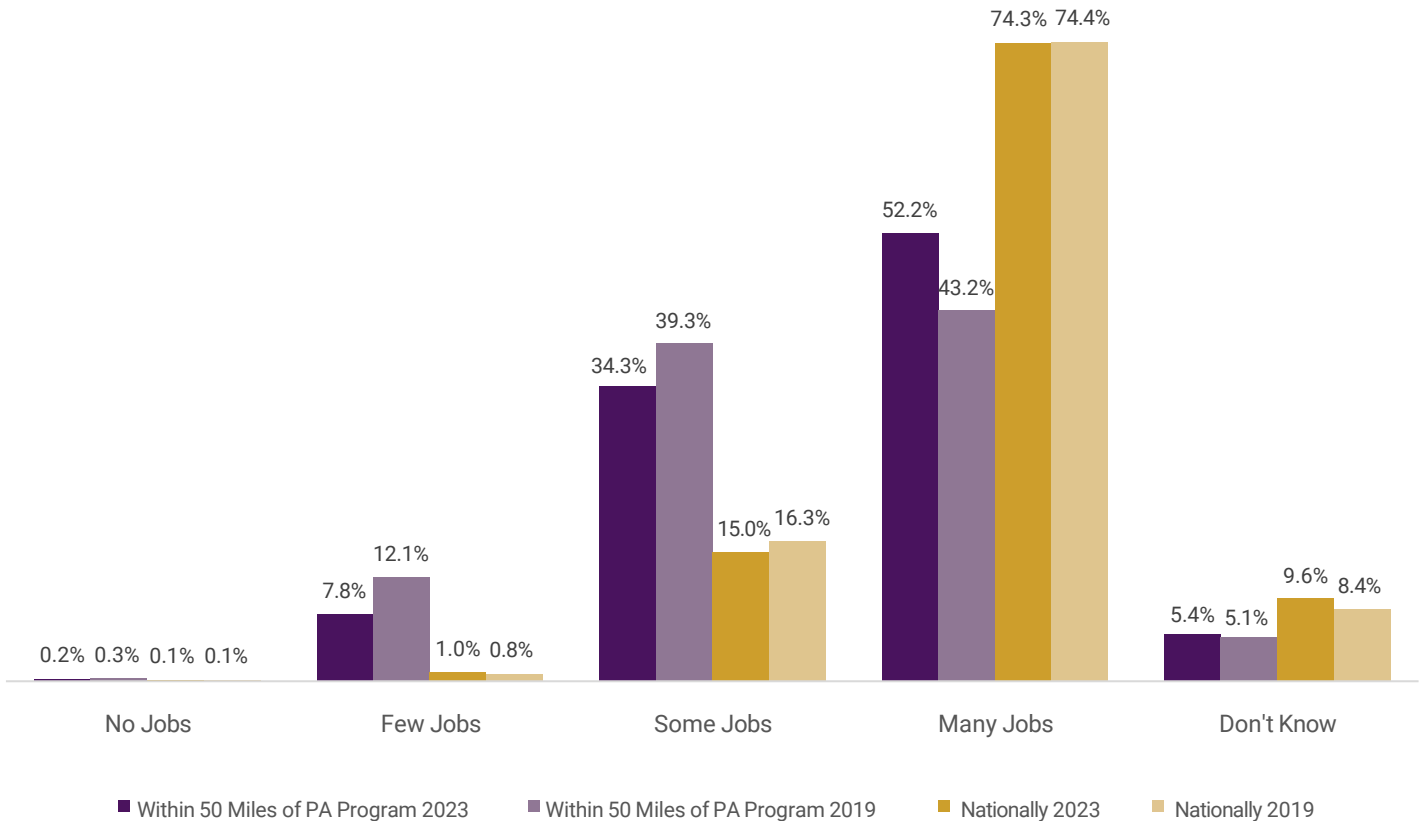
*Most common "other" languages noted: Punjabi, American Sign Language, Hebrew, Malayalam, Ukrainian, and Romanian.

Percent Who Indicated They Can Speak Two or More Languages in Addition to English

2023	2.7%
2019	3.2%

Assessment of Opportunities

Assessment of Job Opportunities



U.S. News and World Report ranked PA #4 in their "100 Best Jobs" and #2 "Best Health Care Jobs" of 2023 listing (January 10, 2023).

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects the PA profession will grow 27% from 2022-2032 (much faster than the average for all occupations)¹. The average growth for all occupations during the same time period is 3%.

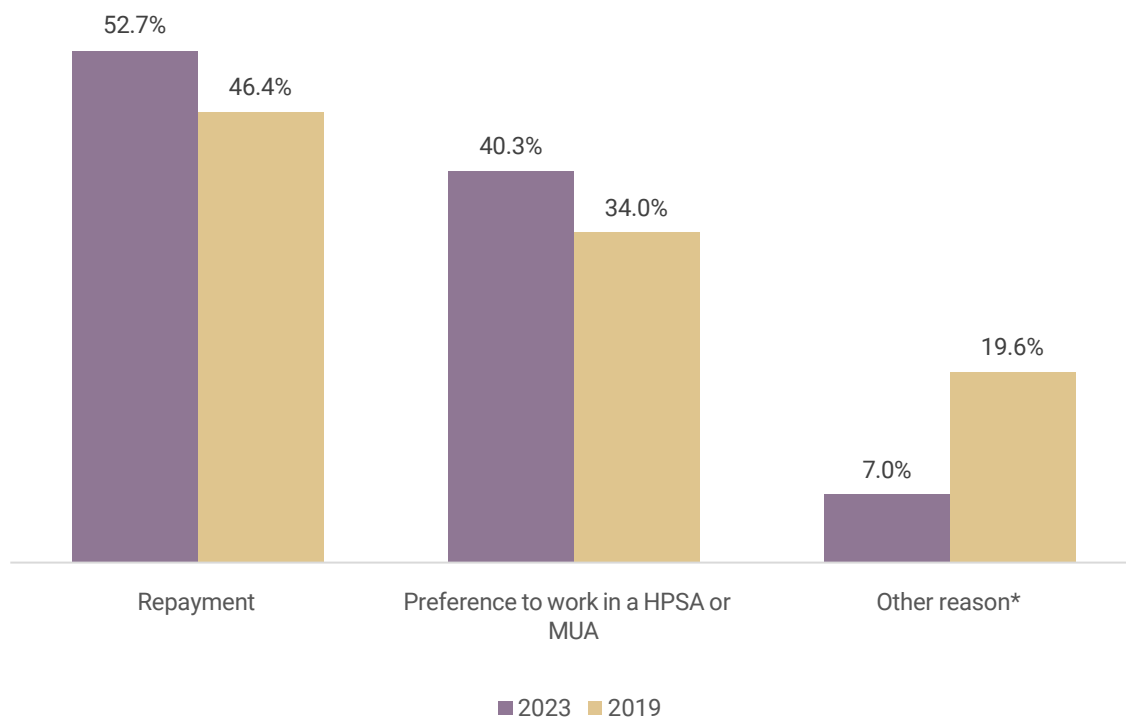
¹Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, Physician Assistants*, at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physician-assistants.htm> (visited July 29, 2024).

Obligation that Requires a Position in a HPSA or MUA

OBLIGATION THAT REQUIRES A POSITION IN A HPSA OR MUA

In 2023, **4.2%** (vs. 1.9% in 2019) of recently certified PAs indicated they are a National Health Service Corps Scholar or a state or federal loan repayment program participant, which requires practicing in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or Medically Underserved Area (MUA).

Motivation To Accept a Position in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or Medically Underserved Area (MUA) for Recently Certified PAs Who Participated in a Loan Repayment Program



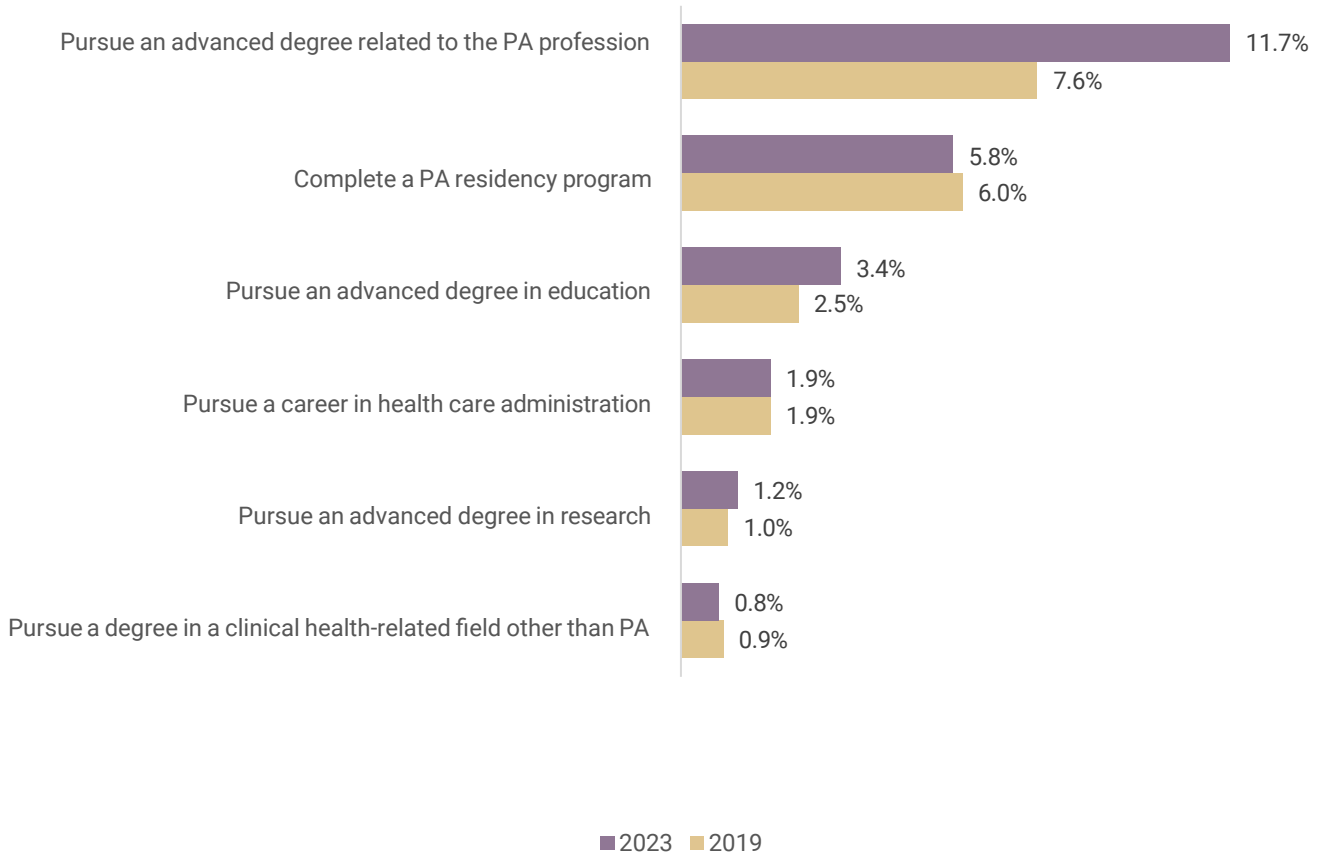
*"Other" reasons cited include: geographic location, job satisfaction, military assignment, and educational opportunity.

Plans to Seek Additional Education or Clinical Training

PLANS TO SEEK ADDITIONAL EDUCATION OR CLINICAL TRAINING

23.5% of recently certified PAs indicated they plan to seek additional education or clinical training within the next three years (this does not include on-the-job training or required CME).

Reasons PAs Are Seeking Additional Education or Clinical Training



Note: Recently certified PAs could select more than one reason.

Degree Planning to Pursue if Changing Health Fields

Degree	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Public Health	0.4%	0.0%
MD or DO	0.2%	0.0%

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Educational Debt*

Debt Range	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
None	12.0%	1.1%
Less than \$25,000	2.9%	-0.2%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	4.6%	0.3%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	7.5%	-0.5%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	9.2%	-1.2%
\$100,000 - \$124,999	12.6%	-0.6%
\$125,000 - \$149,999	13.2%	-0.8%
\$150,000 - \$174,999	13.4%	-0.5%
\$175,000 - \$199,999	11.2%	0.7%
\$200,000 - \$224,999	7.6%	1.0%
\$225,000 or more	5.8%	-0.8%
TOTAL	100.0%	NA

*Educational debt upon completion of all training (undergraduate and graduate school combined).

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Note: In 2023, 259 recently certified PAs chose "Prefer not to answer."

In 2023, 13.8% of recently certified PAs who accepted a position indicated that educational debt influenced their decision to seek a primary care or non-primary care position. In 2019, 14.6% said "educational debt influenced their choice." In 2023, of the PAs who had not accepted a position, 20.2% indicated their level of educational debt will influence their choice (22.7% for 2019).

Educational Debt

Debt Range	2023	2019
Median	\$137,500	\$137,500
Mean	\$120,680	\$119,161

Practice Environment

PRACTICE ENVIRONMENT AND WORK LIFE BALANCE

Recently certified PAs were asked what attributes of their future practice environment were important to them.

Important Attributes of Practice Environment

Attribute of Practice Environment	2023 Percent who Ranked it as Most Important	Percent Change 2019-2023
Ability to practice in a collaborative environment where interprofessional engagement is emphasized	41.0%	-3.9%
Ability to focus practice in area of interest	30.2%	-4.2%
Ability to practice in a setting of choice (i.e., hospital, private office)	19.7%	-7.6%
Ability to practice in a geographic region of choice (i.e., rural, urban)	18.3%	-9.5%

Note: 54 recently certified PAs chose “other” in 2023. PAs who chose “other” mentioned: ability to teach students, practice autonomously, mentoring and scope of practice.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Recently certified PAs were asked what attributes of personal/professional life balance were important to them.

Work-Life Balance

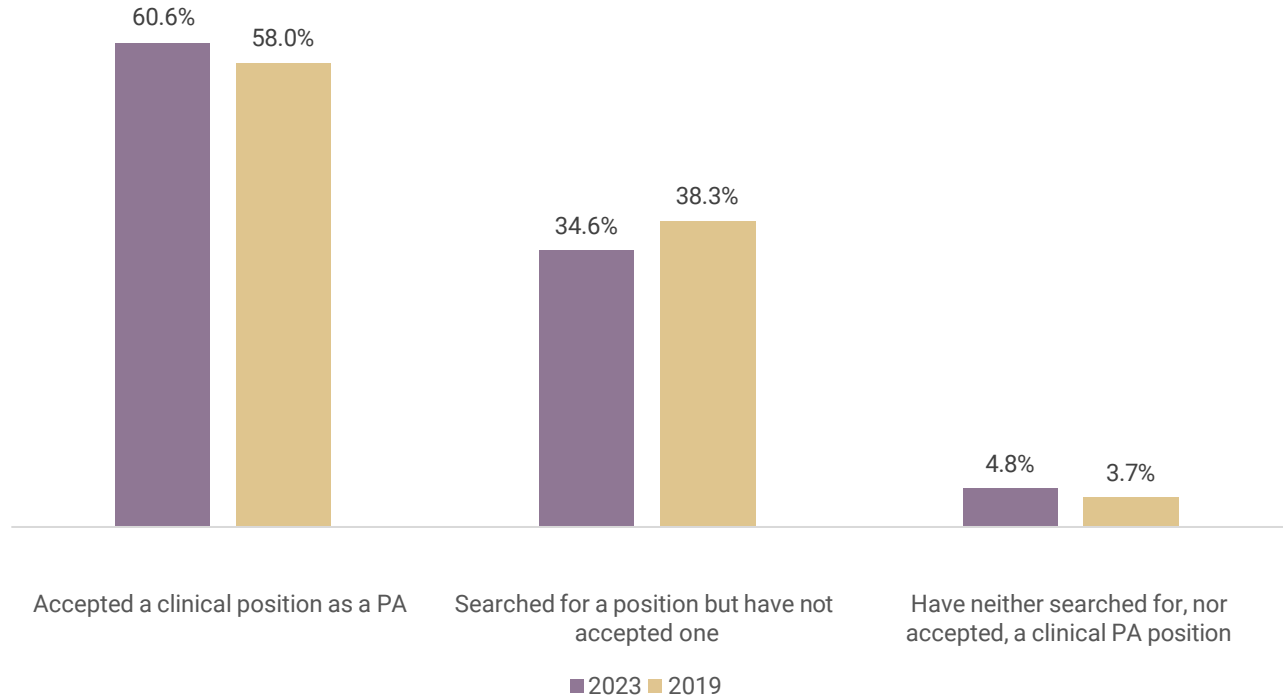
Work-Life Balance Attribute	2023 Percent who Ranked it as Most Important	Percent Change 2019-2023
Ability to maintain reasonable work hours	53.7%	-14.1%
Ability to work flexible hours	15.5%	-3.2%
Ability to take time off from my job	13.1%	-1.7%
Ability to limit after hours responsibilities	17.9%	0.6%
Ability to pursue additional education	7.1%	-5.9%

Note: Recently certified PAs ranked the ability to maintain reasonable work hours as the most important attribute of their future practice environment in 2019 and 2023.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Job Search for Clinical Position

Recently Certified PAs Job Search and Status



Recently Certified PAs Job Search and Status

Job Status	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Yes, accepted a clinical position as a PA	60.6%	2.6%
Yes, searched for a position but have not yet accepted one	34.6%	-3.7%
No, have neither searched for nor accepted a clinical PA position	4.8%	1.1%

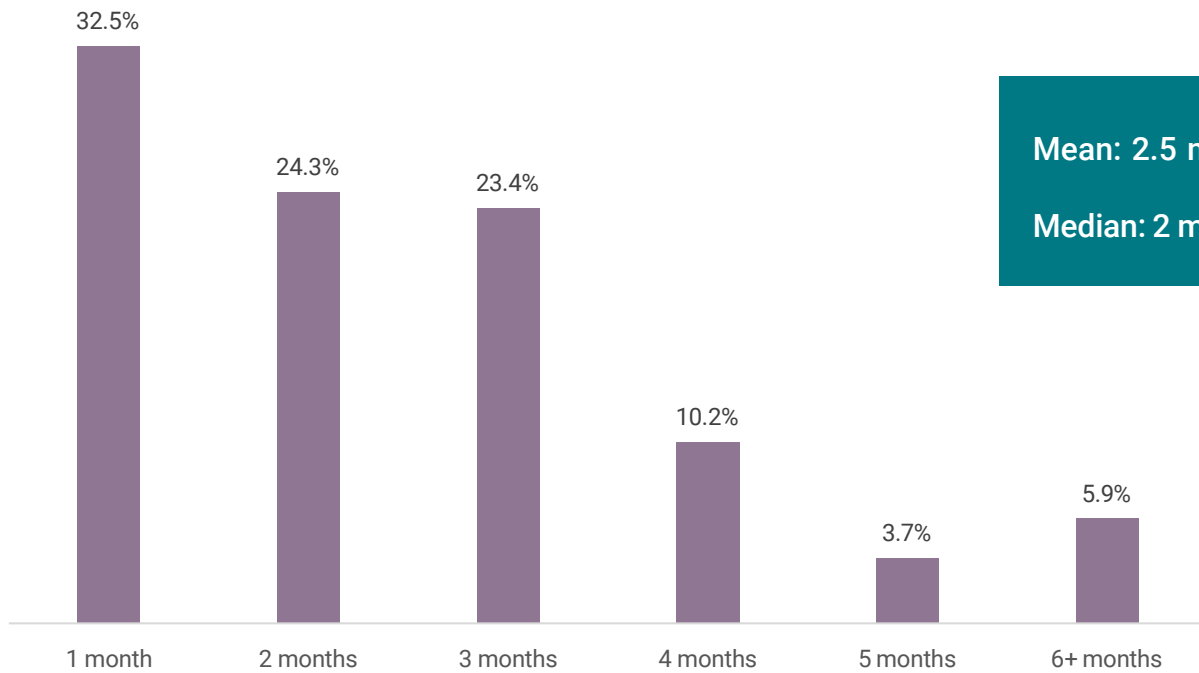
Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Recently Certified PAs Who Accepted a Clinical Position

Amount of Time to Find a Job and Job Offers

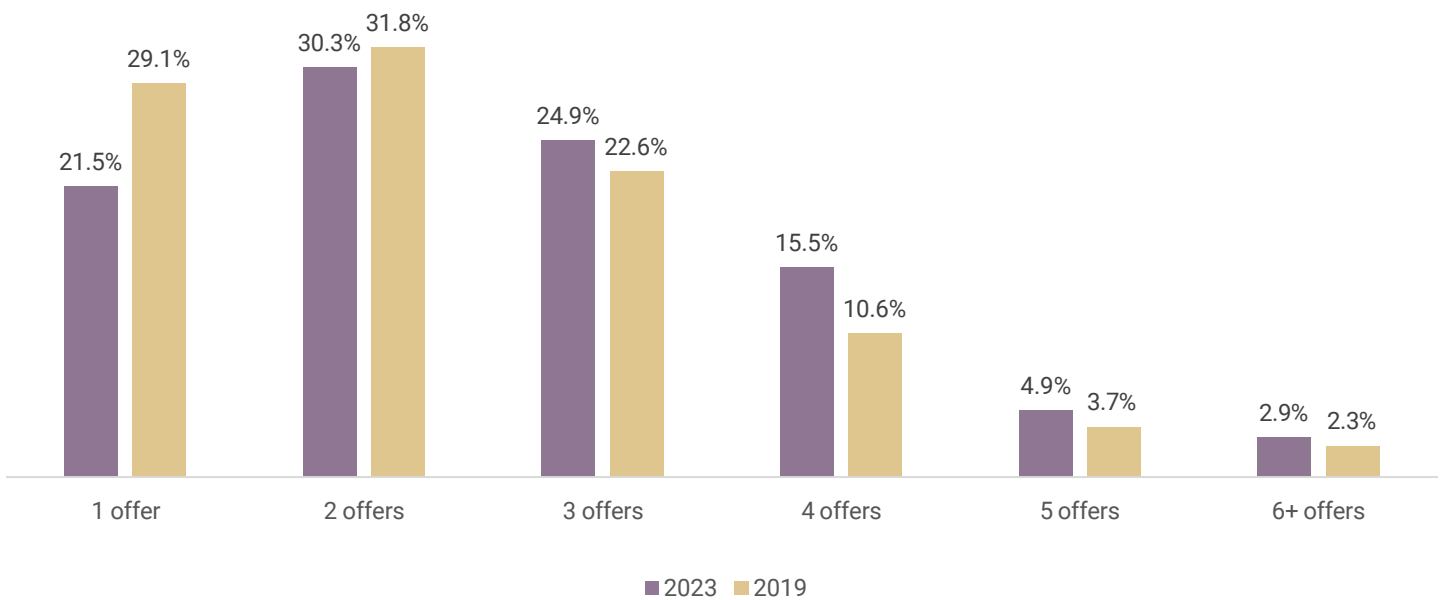
RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO ACCEPTED A CLINICAL POSITION

Number of Months for Recently Certified PAs to Find and Accept a Clinical PA Position



Mean: 2.5 months
Median: 2 months

Number of Job Offers Received by Recently Certified PAs Who Accepted a Clinical Position



78.5% of recently certified PAs had two or more job offers in 2023 (70.9% in 2019).

Challenges Faced When Searching for a Clinical Position

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO ACCEPTED A CLINICAL POSITION

In 2023, **25.4%** of recently certified PAs who accepted a position indicated they faced challenges when searching for a job, compared to **33.5%** in 2019. The following table presents the challenges that recently certified PAs, who accepted a position, reported experiencing:

Challenges Faced by Recently Certified PAs Who Have Searched for and Accepted a Clinical PA Position

Challenges	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Lack of clinical PA opportunities for recent graduates	20.1%	0.8%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in preferred specialty	9.7%	1.0%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in geographic area preferred	8.1%	1.0%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in practice setting preferred	6.3%	0.2%
Inadequate salary and/or compensation	6.3%	0.7%
Abundance of PA graduates competing for same position	5.9%	-0.2%
Lack of clinical PA employment opportunities	3.4%	0.5%
Lack of positions that meet obligations for employment (i.e., NHSC)	1.1%	0.3%
Lack of opportunities for spouse/partner	0.5%	0.0%

Note: Recently certified PAs could choose more than one challenge.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

"Lack of clinical PA opportunities for recent graduates" and "Lack of clinical PA opportunities in preferred specialty" were the top two challenges cited by recently certified PAs regardless of employment status in 2023.

Selection of Clinical Position Location

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO ACCEPTED A CLINICAL POSITION

Location of Position Accepted by Recently Certified PAs

Geographical Location	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Area where grew up	36.6%	-0.9%
Area where PA program located	33.0%	-1.1%
Area lived in prior to attending PA program	26.6%	-1.8%
Area where want to live	25.0%	2.7%
Rural area	12.6%	-0.3%
Urban medically underserved area	10.2%	2.7%
Other area	7.4%	-2.7%

Note: PAs could choose more than one location.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

The most common “other area” responses include active military location, where spouse/significant other is working, new area, near an academic medical center, and moving for PA fellowship/residency.

Of the recently certified PAs who accepted a position in a rural area, 31.7% grew up in a rural area.

Of the recently certified PAs who accepted a position in an urban medically underserved area, 27.6% grew up in an urban medically underserved area.

Position Accepted at a Training Site of Clinical Rotation by Recently Certified PAs

Position at Training Site of Clinical Rotation	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Yes	34.5%	-2.0%
No	65.5%	2.0%

Hours Worked Per Week and Time Spent in Work Activities

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO ACCEPTED A CLINICAL POSITION

Hours Expected to Work Per Week by Recently Certified PAs

Hours	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
1-10 hours	0.3%	0.1%
11-20 hours	0.3%	-0.2%
21-30 hours	1.5%	0.2%
31-40 hours	65.4%	12.9%
41-50 hours	28.2%	-10.4%
More than 50 hours	4.3%	-2.6%

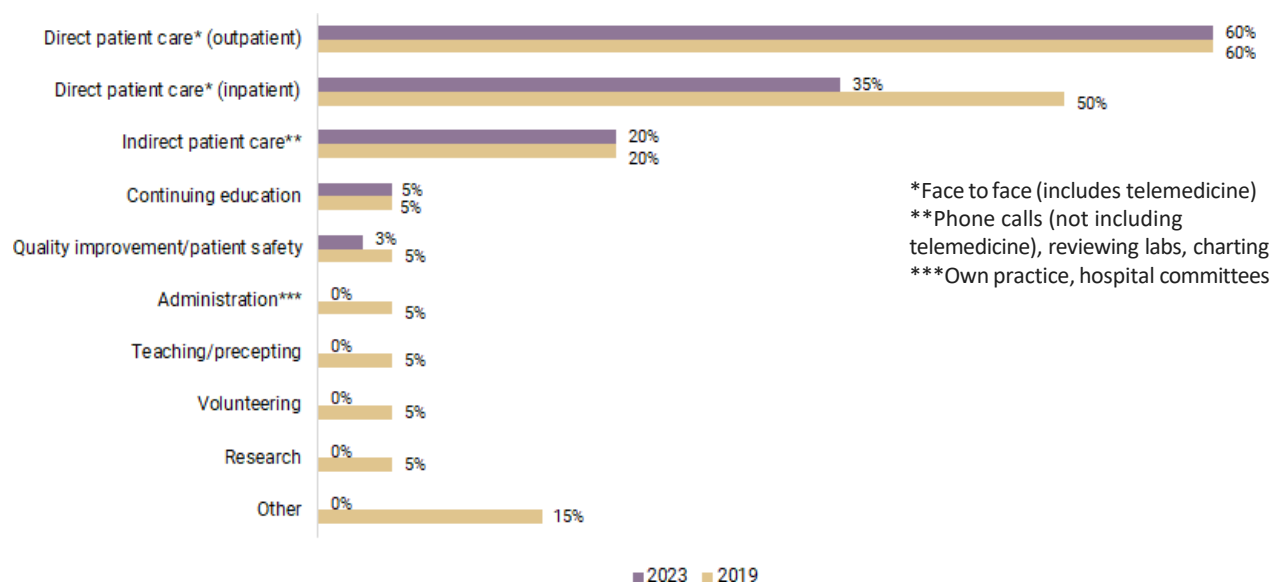
Note: 32.6% of recently certified PAs who have accepted a clinical position expect to work more than 40 hours per week. That has decreased since 2019, when 45.5% expected to work more than 40 hours.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Average Hours Expected to Work Per Week

Years	Hours
2023	40.1
2019	41.4

Median Proportion of Time Recently Certified PAs Expect to Spend in Activities



Practice Settings

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO ACCEPTED A CLINICAL POSITION

Practice Setting of Recently Certified PAs

Practice Setting	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Hospital	52.5%	2.5%
Office-based private practice	27.7%	-4.1%
Urgent care	5.0%	0.2%
Community health center	3.9%	1.2%
Rural health clinic	2.1%	0.4%
U.S. Military (federal government)	2.0%	-0.4%
Other	1.7%	0.2%
Ambulatory surgical center	0.7%	-0.3%
Veterans Affairs (federal government)	0.7%	-0.3%
Public or community health clinic (non-federally qualified)	0.6%	0.0%
Behavioral/mental health facility	0.5%	-0.3%
Extended care facility/Nursing home	0.4%	0.1%
Public Health Service (federal government)	0.2%	0.1%
Indian Health Service (federal government)	0.2%	0.0%
Department of Defense (federal government)	0.2%	-0.1%
School-based or college-based health center or school clinic	0.2%	0.1%
Occupational health setting	0.1%	0.0%
Bureau of Prisons (federal government)	0.1%	<0.1%
Retail clinic	0.1%	<0.1%
Home health care agency	<0.1%	<0.1%
Free clinic	<0.1%	0.0%
Department of State (federal government)	<0.1%	0.0%
Rehabilitation facility	<0.1%	<-0.1%
Hospice	0.0%	0.0%
Locum tenens	0.0%	NA
Unsure/Don't know	0.8%	0.5%
TOTAL	100.0%	NA

NA: Practice setting first appeared on the Profile in 2023.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

52.5% of recently certified PAs who have accepted a position work in a hospital setting. Overall, 41.7% of all certified PAs work in a hospital setting. ¹

¹National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants, Inc. (2024, April). 2023 Statistical Profile of Board Certified PAs: An Annual Report of the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants.

Practice Areas

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO ACCEPTED A CLINICAL POSITION

Principal Clinical Practice Area of Recently Certified PAs

Area of Practice*	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023**
Addiction medicine	0.3%	0.1%
Adolescent medicine	0.1%	0.1%
Anesthesiology	<0.1%	0.0%
Critical care medicine	3.9%	-0.1%
Dermatology	3.2%	-0.2%
Emergency medicine	17.0%	1.6%
Family medicine/general practice	17.1%	-0.3%
Gynecology	0.2%	0.2%
Hospice and palliative medicine	<0.1%	<0.1%
Hospital medicine	5.0%	-0.4%
Internal medicine – general practice	3.7%	-0.2%
Internal medicine – subspecialties	8.0%	-0.2%
Neurology	1.3%	-0.2%
Obstetrics and gynecology	1.4%	-0.1%
Occupational medicine	0.2%	-0.1%
Ophthalmology	0.2%	0.0%
Otolaryngology	1.0%	-0.1%
Pain medicine	0.6%	-0.2%
Pathology	0.0%	0.0%
Pediatrics – general practice	1.9%	0.1%
Pediatrics – subspecialties	2.8%	1.2%
Physical medicine/rehabilitation	0.1%	0.0%
Preventive medicine/public health	0.1%	<0.1%
Psychiatry	1.9%	-0.6%
Radiation oncology	0.1%	<0.1%
Radiology	0.1%	-0.6%
Radiology – interventional	0.7%	NA
Surgery – general	4.0%	-0.2%
Surgery – subspecialties	15.4%	-1.0%
Urology	0.3%	-0.4%
Other	2.6%	1.4%
TOTAL	100.0%	NA

NA: Practice area first appeared on the Profile in 2023.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

In 2023, 22.7% of recently certified PAs were working in a primary care specialty (family medicine/general practice, general internal medicine, or general pediatrics). For 2019, 23.1% were working in a primary care specialty.

Overall, 22.3% of the PA workforce is practicing in primary care.

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO ACCEPTED A CLINICAL POSITION

Salary Range of Recently Certified PAs

Starting Salary Range	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Less than or equal to \$40,000	0.1%	-0.1%
\$40,001 - \$50,000	0.2%	-0.2%
\$50,001 - \$60,000	0.4%	-1.9%
\$60,001 - \$70,000	2.1%	0.0%
\$70,001 - \$80,000	1.9%	-3.0%
\$80,001 - \$90,000	5.6%	-10.5%
\$90,001 - \$100,000	13.3%	-19.6%
\$100,001 - \$110,000	26.7%	2.4%
\$110,001 - \$120,000	21.3%	12.0%
\$120,001 - \$130,000	15.7%	10.7%
\$130,001 - \$140,000	7.1%	5.3%
More than \$140,000	5.6%	4.4%
TOTAL	100.0%	NA

Note: “Prefer not to answer” was chosen by 111 recently certified PAs in 2023. In 2019, 86 chose this response.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Annual Salary

Salary	2023	2019
Median	\$105,000	\$95,000
Mean	\$111,015	\$97,668

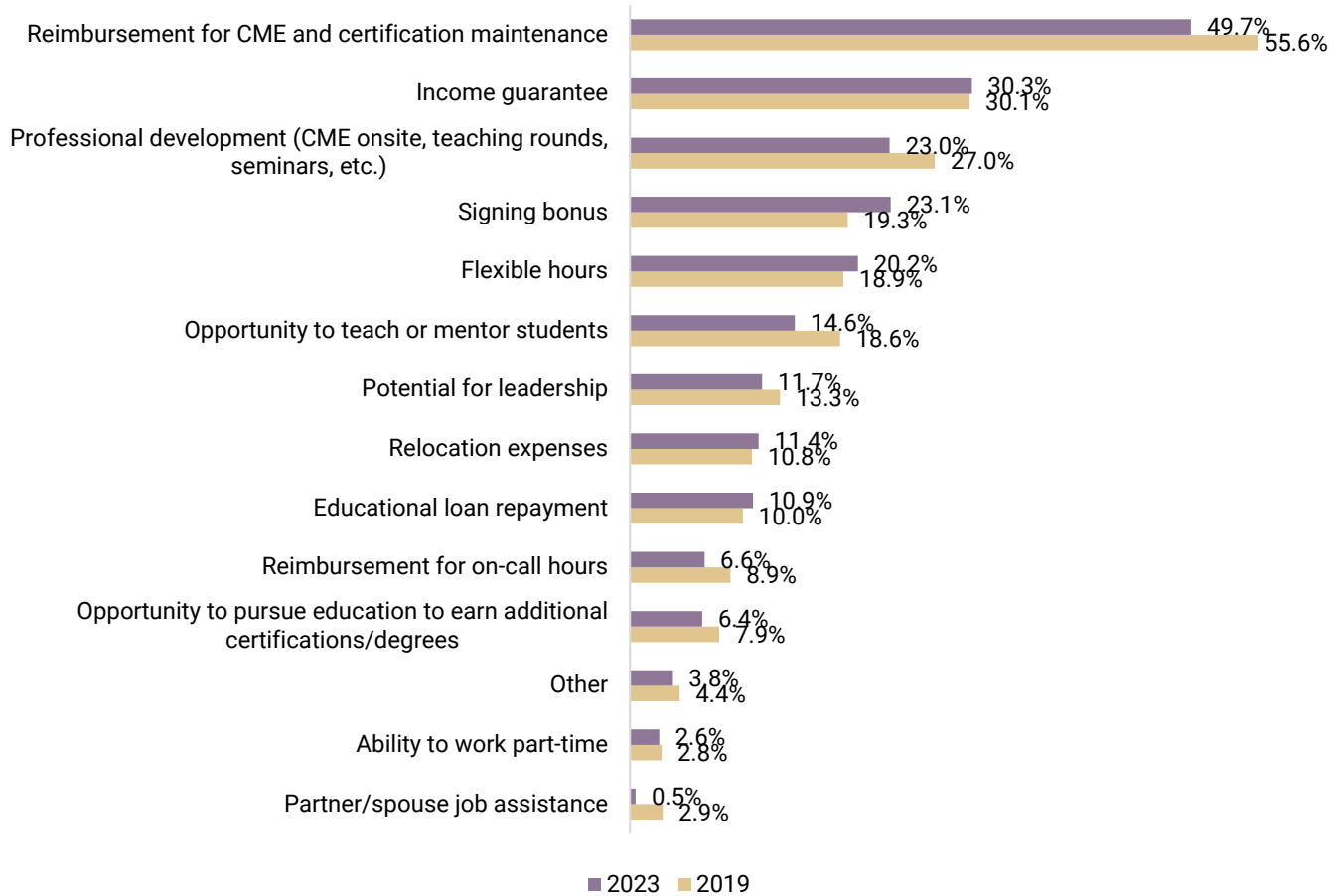
The highest mean salaries for recently certified PAs were in surgical subspecialties, pediatric subspecialties, internal medicine subspecialties, and radiology-interventional.

Employment Incentives

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO ACCEPTED A CLINICAL POSITION

67.2% of recently certified PAs who accepted a position indicated they were offered employment incentives in 2023. In 2019, 64.4% were offered incentives.

Employment Incentives Offered to Recently Certified PAs



Respondents were able to choose more than one incentive.

“Other” incentives include annual, quarterly, and retention bonuses, benefits, productivity bonus, overtime, profit sharing, paid time off, and 401K/retirement plan.

For both 2023 and 2019, when asked to rank order the top incentives that had most influenced their decisions to accept their position, the incentives most frequently selected:

1. Income guarantee
2. Reimbursement for CME and certification maintenance
3. Flexible hours

This differs from the graph above due to some incentives that were chosen, but not ranked in the top three.

Recently Certified PAs Who Searched for but Have Not Accepted a Clinical Position or Who Have Not Searched Yet

Challenges

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO HAVE SEARCHED FOR BUT NOT ACCEPTED A POSITION

46.9% of recently certified PAs who have searched for but not accepted a position indicated experiencing challenges. In 2019, **43.7%** indicated experiencing challenges. The following table presents the challenges that PAs reported experiencing.

Challenges Faced by Recently Certified PAs Who Have Not Accepted a Position or Are Currently Searching for a Position

Challenges	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Lack of clinical PA opportunities for recent graduates	36.6%	-11.1%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in preferred specialty	18.9%	1.1%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in geographic area preferred	16.7%	-2.3%
Lack of clinical PA opportunities in practice setting preferred	14.2%	0.2%
Abundance of PA graduates competing for same position	13.0%	-4.5%
Inadequate salary and/or compensation	7.1%	1.3%
Lack of clinical PA employment opportunities	6.1%	-0.3%
Lack of positions that meet obligations for employment (i.e., NHSC)	1.9%	0.5%
Lack of opportunities for spouse/partner	0.7%	-0.1%

Note: PAs could choose multiple challenges.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

53.1% who have searched for but have not accepted a position, indicated they have not experienced challenges when searching for a job.

Reasons recently certified PAs did not search for nor accept a position:

74.5% of recently certified PAs who have not searched for nor accepted a position said they decided to take time off before they began their PA career. **24.7%** cited “other” and listed reasons including military obligation, relocating to different area, and family considerations. **0.8%** decided to work in a non-PA position, however they may search for a PA position in the future.

Reasons PAs Did Not Accept a Position Offered

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO HAVE SEARCHED FOR BUT NOT ACCEPTED A POSITION

Reasons Recently Certified PAs Did Not Accept a Position

Reasons Cited	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Not in preferred area of practice	14.8%	3.1%
Insufficient compensation	9.5%	2.3%
Other reason	5.2%	0.6%
Insufficient benefits	5.0%	1.5%
Did not feel like it was a good personal match with potential supervisor	4.3%	-0.2%
Insufficient supervision onsite	3.7%	1.4%
PA to assume too much responsibility for their level of experience	3.0%	0.2%
Would not allow PA to sufficiently utilize the competencies gained from education	2.2%	-0.1%
Insufficient learning for continued professional growth	2.2%	0.1%
Too much on-call time	1.3%	0.2%

Note: PAs could choose multiple reasons.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

“Other reasons” include not in a location desired, decided to do a residency/fellowship, family reasons, unpaid call requirement, and only night shifts available.

29.2% of recently certified PAs who have searched for but not yet accepted a position indicated they have turned down at least one offer.

Preferred Clinical Position Location

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO HAVE SEARCHED FOR BUT NOT ACCEPTED A POSITION OR NOT YET SEEKING A POSITION

Location of Position Preferred by Recently Certified PAs Who Have Not Accepted a Position

Geographical Location	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Area where grew up	44.4%	4.8%
Area lived in prior to attending PA program	33.4%	1.7%
Area where want to live	33.2%	4.0%
Area where PA program located	29.9%	-1.6%
Urban medically underserved area	12.2%	0.0%
Rural area	9.4%	1.6%
Other area	5.4%	-1.8%

Note: PAs were able to choose more than one location.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

“Other” responses include close to family/spouse, an area near military obligation, and an area near PA school rotation.

“Area where grew up” has been the top location preferred by PAs who have not yet accepted a position since NCCPA began gathering this data in 2013.

Over one-third (33.4%) indicated they would prefer an area where they lived prior to beginning their PA program.

Preferred Number of Work Hours Per Week

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO HAVE SEARCHED FOR BUT NOT ACCEPTED A POSITION OR NOT YET SEEKING A POSITION

Hours Expected to Work Per Week by Recently Certified PAs

Preferred Work Hours per Week	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
1-10 hours	0.6%	0.3%
11-20 hours	0.6%	0.2%
21-30 hours	1.4%	0.5%
31-40 hours	77.3%	12.8%
41-50 hours	19.4%	-12.7%
More than 50 hours	0.7%	-1.2%

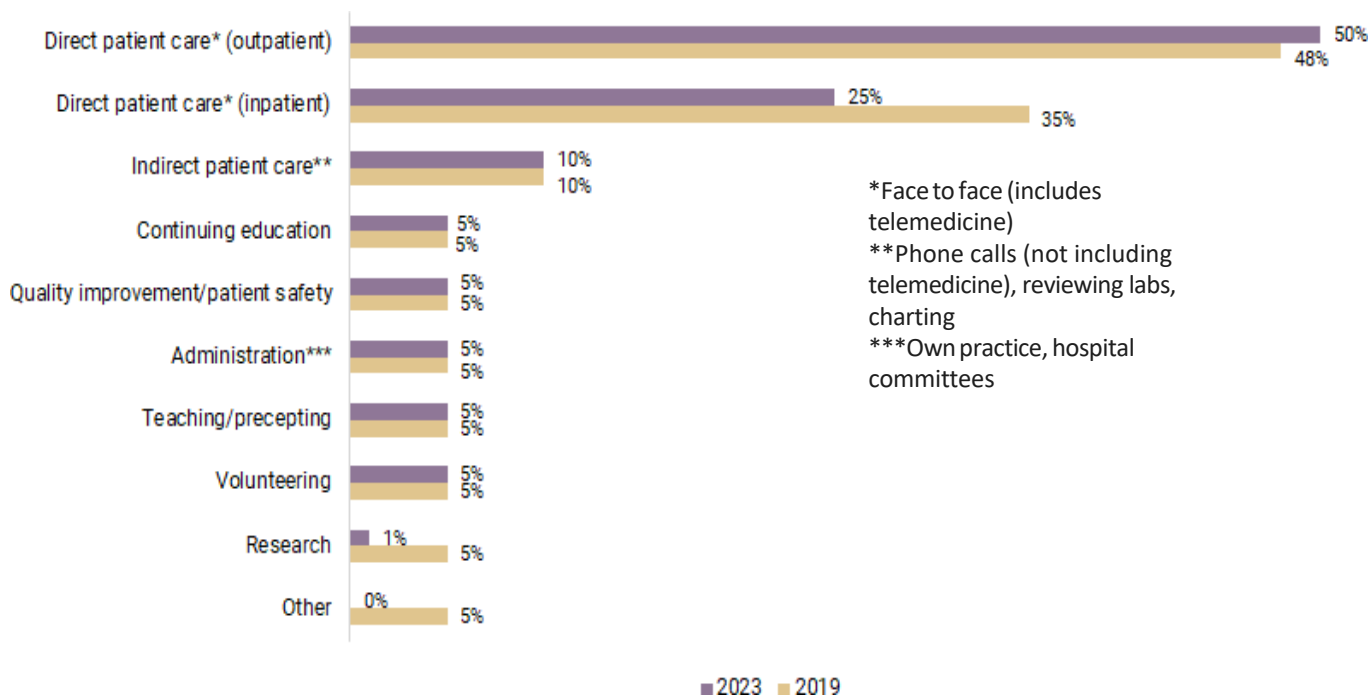
Note: 20.1% of recently certified PAs who have not accepted a position prefer to work more than 40 hours per week when they do have a position. Of those who accepted a position, 32.6% expect to work more than 40 hours per week.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Preferred Time Spent in Work Activities

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO HAVE SEARCHED FOR BUT NOT ACCEPTED A POSITION OR NOT YET SEEKING A POSITION

Median Proportion of Time Recently Certified PAs Prefer to Spend in the Following Activities



Preferred Practice Setting

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO HAVE SEARCHED FOR BUT NOT ACCEPTED A POSITION OR NOT YET SEEKING A POSITION

Preferred Practice Setting of Recently Certified PAs

Practice Setting	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023**
Hospital	39.9%	-6.6%
Office-based private practice	36.2%	4.9%
Urgent care	3.2%	-0.5%
Community health center	2.9%	0.5%
Ambulatory surgical center	1.9%	0.1%
Rural health clinic	1.5%	0.2%
Veterans Affairs (federal government)	1.3%	0.2%
Behavioral/mental health facility	0.9%	0.2%
Other	0.7%	-0.1%
U.S. Military (federal government)	0.5%	0.0%
Public or community health clinic (non-federally qualified)	0.4%	-0.1%
School-based or college-based health center or school clinic	0.2%	0.0%
Indian health service (federal government)	0.1%	0.0%
Free clinic	0.1%	0.0%
Locum tenens	0.1%	NA
Public Health Service (federal government)	0.1%	0.0%
Extended care facility/Nursing home	0.1%	<0.1%
Department of State (federal government)	0.1%	0.1%
Rehabilitation facility	0.1%	0.0%
Home health care agency	<0.1%	<0.1%
Bureau of Prisons (federal government)	<0.1%	0.0%
Hospice	<0.1%	<0.1%
Department of Defense (federal government)	0.0%	-0.1%
Occupational health setting	0.0%	-0.1%
Retail clinic	0.0%	<-0.1%
Undecided/No preference	9.8%	1.3%
TOTAL	100.0%	NA

NA: Practice setting first appeared on the Profile in 2023.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Hospital setting has been the most preferred setting desired among recently certified PAs who have not yet started a job. 52.5% of recently certified PAs who accepted a position work in a hospital setting.

Preferred Practice Area

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO HAVE SEARCHED FOR BUT NOT ACCEPTED A POSITION OR NOT YET SEEKING A POSITION

Preferred Practice Area of Recently Certified PAs

Area of Practice*	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023**
Addiction medicine	0.3%	0.1%
Adolescent medicine	0.2%	0.1%
Anesthesiology	0.0%	0.0%
Critical care medicine	2.3%	-0.6%
Dermatology	9.2%	3.0%
Emergency medicine	12.7%	-6.2%
Family medicine/general practice	15.4%	-1.9%
Gynecology	0.9%	0.7%
Hospice and palliative medicine	0.1%	<0.1%
Hospital medicine	3.4%	-2.3%
Internal medicine – general practice	4.0%	-0.5%
Internal medicine – subspecialties	6.4%	-0.2%
Neurology	0.7%	0.3%
Obstetrics and gynecology	4.2%	1.4%
Occupational medicine	<0.1%	<-0.1%
Ophthalmology	<0.1%	0.0%
Otolaryngology	0.5%	-0.1%
Pain medicine	0.0%	<-0.1%
Pathology	0.0%	0.0%
Pediatrics – general practice	3.1%	0.4%
Pediatrics – subspecialties	2.6%	-0.1%
Physical medicine/rehabilitation	0.1%	-0.1%
Preventive medicine/public health	<0.1%	0.0%
Psychiatry	2.1%	0.7%
Radiation oncology	<0.1%	0.0%
Radiology	0.1%	-0.3%
Radiology – interventional	0.7%	NA
Surgery – general	4.0%	-0.1%
Surgery – subspecialties	15.4%	2.8%
Urology	0.3%	0.1%
Other	2.6%	0.2%
No Preference	8.2%	1.5%
TOTAL	100.0%	NA

22.5% of recently certified PAs who have not accepted nor are seeking a position yet would prefer to work in primary care (family medicine/ general practice, general internal medicine, general pediatrics). This is a decrease from 2019, when 24.5% preferred a position in primary care.

Dermatology and surgical-subspecialties had the greatest percent increase in recently certified PAs, who prefer working in these specialties when they do accept a position.

NA: Practice is first included on the Profile in 2023.

Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

Salary Desired

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO HAVE SEARCHED FOR BUT NOT ACCEPTED A POSITION OR NOT YET SEEKING A POSITION

Minimum Starting Salary Range Desired by Recently Certified PAs

Starting Salary Range	2023 Percent	Percent Change 2019-2023
Less than or equal to \$40,000	0.0%	0.0%
\$40,001 - \$50,000	0.0%	0.0%
\$50,001 - \$60,000	0.1%	<0.1%
\$60,001 - \$70,000	0.2%	-0.5%
\$70,001 - \$80,000	0.9%	-3.5%
\$80,001 - \$90,000	5.2%	-21.4%
\$90,001 - \$100,000	21.2%	-22.0%
\$100,001 - \$110,000	34.9%	-16.7%
\$110,001 - \$120,000	18.7%	14.3%
\$120,001 - \$130,000	11.9%	10.2%
\$130,001 - \$140,000	4.1%	3.7%
More than \$140,000	2.8%	2.5%
TOTAL	100.0%	NA

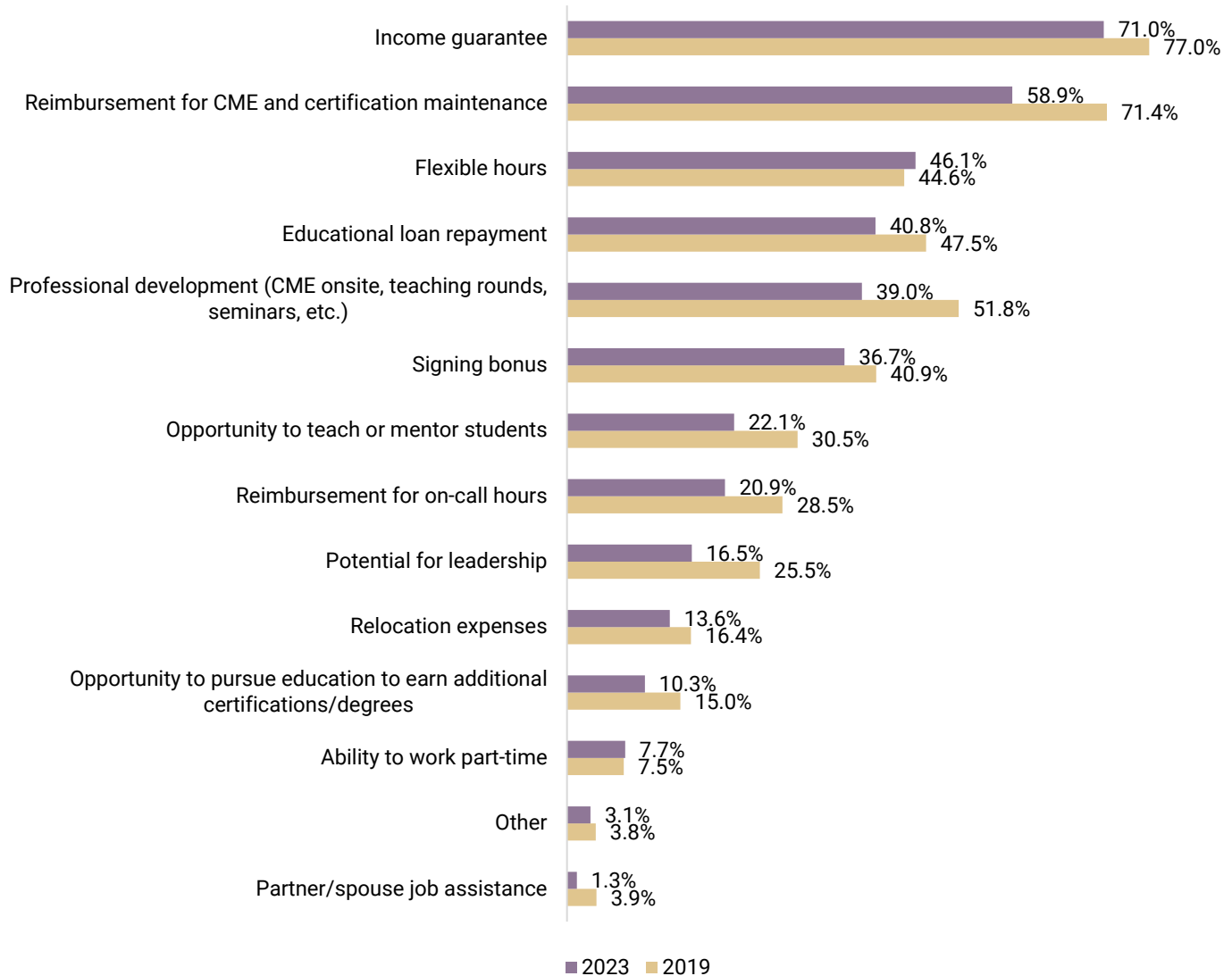
Percent change reflects proportional change from 2019 to 2023.

72.4% of recently certified PAs who have not accepted nor are seeking a position yet indicated that the minimum salary they would accept for their first position would be over \$100,000 per year. For recently certified PAs who have accepted a position, 76.4% are earning over \$100,000 per year.

Employment Incentives Desired

RECENTLY CERTIFIED PAs WHO HAVE SEARCHED FOR BUT NOT ACCEPTED A POSITION OR NOT YET SEEKING A POSITION

Employment Incentives Desired by Recently Certified PAs



Note: Respondents were able to choose more than one incentive.

“Other” responses include: comprehensive benefits, autonomy, good training on the job, no on-call requirement, and a good retirement package.

When asked to rank the top incentives when looking for their first clinical position, the incentives that recently certified PAs ranked number one most often were:

1. **Income guarantee**
2. **Flexible hours**
3. **Educational loan repayment**

This differs from the graph above due to some incentives that were chosen, but not ranked in the top three.

Future Data on Certified PAs

FUTURE DATA ON CERTIFIED PAs AND CITATION

NCCPA pursues a research agenda that focuses on its core activities and the ongoing evaluation and improvement of its exams and certification program. NCCPA is also committed to collaborating with external researchers to share data in appropriate and ethical ways to further advance the health and safety of the public or otherwise conduct useful research related to board certified PAs. To facilitate research collaborations, NCCPA has developed *Policies for the Review of Requests for Data and External Research Collaboration* and guidelines that describe the process external researchers must follow for submitting requests for data and how those requests will be reviewed. The policies and guidelines are provided on NCCPA's website at <https://www.nccpa.net/resources/nccpa-research>.

This *Statistical Profile of Recently Board Certified Physician Assistants* will be updated and published annually. In addition, NCCPA provides other reports that are currently available. Those reports include:

- Statistical Profile of Board Certified PAs
- Statistical Profile of Board Certified PAs by Specialty
- Specialty Supplement Report on Secondary Specialty
- Statistical Profile of Board Certified PAs by State

Please cite this report using the following:

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This study is exempt from IRB review pursuant to the terms of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service's Policy for Protection of Human Research Subjects at 45 C.F.R. §46.101(b).

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Please address questions, comments or your request to be notified when the new data reports are published to: PAProfile@nccpa.net

Appendix

Feel Prepared to Start PA Career

PREPARED TO START CAREER

Recently certified PAs were asked how prepared they feel to start their PA career after graduating from their PA program.

How Prepared PAs Are to Start Their Career

Preparedness	2023 Percent
Very prepared	39.5%
Somewhat prepared	55.4%
Neither prepared nor unprepared	3.2%
Somewhat unprepared	1.5%
Very unprepared	0.3%

PA's Employed in a PA Educational Program and Role

PA's EMPLOYED IN A PA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND ROLE

The next several pages pertain to PAs who indicated they are employed in a PA educational program. As of July 2024, there were **310** accredited PA educational programs. Other healthcare professionals are often employed in various roles within PA programs. These data only include PAs who indicated they are employed in a PA program. 55.0% of PAs responded to this question.

Employed in a PA Educational Program

Employed in a PA Program	2023 Percent
Yes	3.9%
No	96.1%

Current Role in a PA Educational Program

Role	2023 Percent
Adjunct faculty	36.2%
Admissions director/chair/coordinator	3.2%
Assistant/associate director/chair	3.0%
Associate or assistant dean	0.5%
Clinical faculty	16.1%
Clinical site coordinator	3.5%
Data specialist	0.5%
Dean	0.5%
Department chair	1.7%
Didactic faculty	27.1%
Director of clinical education/clinical coordinator	5.8%
Director of didactic education/didactic coordinator	4.9%
Guest lecturer	12.6%
Program director	7.6%
Simulation specialist	1.9%
Researcher/research coordinator	1.2%
Other*	10.4%

Note: PAs could select multiple roles.

*Other responses include: assessment coordinator/lead, advisory board member, program tutor, and student support.

PAs Employed in PA Program and Practicing Clinically

PAs EMPLOYED IN PA PROGRAM AND PRACTICING

PAs Employed in a PA Program and Practicing Clinically

Clinically Employed	2023 Percent
Yes	81.6%
No	18.4%

Top 10 Practice Areas for PAs Employed in a PA Program and Practicing Clinically

Practice Area	2023 Percent
Emergency medicine	19.0%
Family medicine/general practice	15.1%
Surgical - subspecialties	12.7%
Other	10.6%
Internal medicine - subspecialties	8.9%
Hospital medicine	4.8%
Internal medicine - general	4.2%
General surgery	3.3%
Psychiatry	3.3%
Critical care medicine	2.9%

Current Academic Rank

CURRENT ACADEMIC RANK

Current Academic Rank of PAs Employed in a PA Educational Program

Academic Rank	2023 Percent
Assistant professor	26.4%
Associate professor	14.8%
Clinical assistant professor	6.4%
Clinical associate professor	2.8%
Instructor	14.9%
Lecturer	11.8%
Professor	5.5%
Other	10.6%
Not applicable	6.8%
TOTAL	100.0%

Hours Working in PA Educational Program

HOURS WORKING IN PA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Hours Worked per Week in Educational Position

Hours Worked in Educational Position	2023 Percent
Less than 10	41.1%
10-19	55.4%
20-29	3.2%
30-39	1.5%
40 or more	0.3%

Mean	Median
22.2	20

Years in PA Education

YEARS IN PA EDUCATION

Years in Current PA Program

Number of Years	2023 Percent
Less than 5	60.7%
5-9	23.0%
10-14	8.3%
15-19	4.7%
20-24	1.7%
25-29	0.9%
30 or more	0.7%

Number of Programs Employed in During Career

Number of Programs	2023 Percent
1	71.5%
2-3	25.2%
4-5	2.7%
6 or more	0.6%

Satisfaction with Present PA Educational Position

SATISFACTION WITH PRESENT JOB

Satisfaction with Present Job in a PA Educational Program

Satisfaction	2023 Percent
Completely satisfied	23.2%
Mostly satisfied	48.3%
Somewhat satisfied	14.8%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	6.2%
Somewhat dissatisfied	3.4%
Mostly dissatisfied	2.9%
Completely dissatisfied	0.0%

Reason Leaving PA Educational Program Position

REASON LEAVING PA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

7.8% of PAs working in a PA educational program indicated they intend to leave the program in the next 12 months.

Reasons Influencing PAs Planning to Leave Their Principal Educational Program Position

Reason selected as “very important”	2023 Percent
Insufficient wages given the workload and responsibilities involved	39.5%
Feelings of professional burnout	35.5%
Work responsibilities would interfere with my ability to care for my family	20.2%
Plan to retire	17.7%
Would like to return to full-time clinical practice	14.9%
Other	14.9%
Would like to pursue a faculty position at another PA program	14.5%
Work is not professionally challenging or satisfying	13.3%
Would like to pursue a leadership position in academia outside of PA education	12.5%
Relocating to another geographic area	11.7%
Would like to pursue an administrative leadership position in PA education	8.9%
Desire a non-clinical health related position	8.5%
Desire a position outside of health care	8.5%
Want to pursue a doctorate degree	3.6%
Want to pursue additional education	3.2%
Want to pursue other education or degree in a non-health related field	2.4%
My health does not allow me to continue working	2.0%
Want to pursue a master’s degree	1.6%
Want to pursue other education or degree in health related field	0.4%

Percent of PAs who work in a PA educational program and indicated they plan to leave their principal educational program position in the next 12 months.

PAs could choose multiple factors.