

Optometrists Growth Trends

This fact sheet is an overview of the trends, distribution, and demographics of optometrists in Texas. In 2022, there were 4,318 actively licensed optometrists in Texas.

- This number represented a 11.4% increase since 2017 and a 47.0% increase since 2012 (Figure 1).
- The ratio of the Texas population per one optometrist in 2012 was 8,902:1 and in 2022 it was 7,102:1. The ratio of population to optometrist has decreased by 20.2% (Figure 2).¹

Figure 1. Total Texas Optometrists

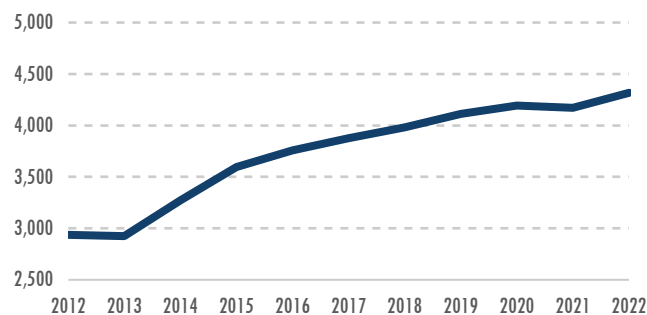
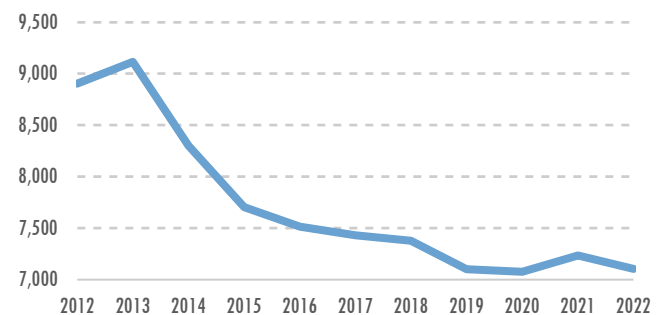


Figure 2. Ratio of Texas Population to Optometrist¹



Geographic Distribution of Optometrists

Figure 3. Ratio of Texas Population to Optometrist by County¹

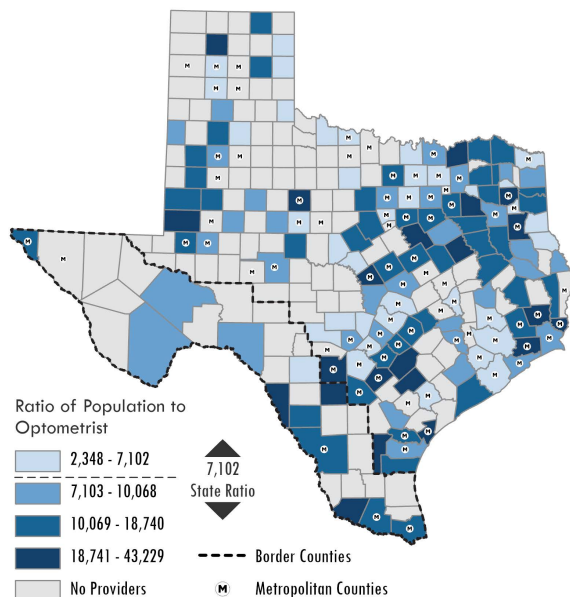


Table 1. Ratio of Texas Population to Optometrist by Geographic Designation¹

| Geographic Designation | Ratio of Population to Optometrist |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Metropolitan | 6,723:1 |
| Non-metropolitan | 14,027:1 |
| Border | 13,600:1 |
| Non-border | 6,767:1 |
| Texas | 7,102:1 |

- The ratio of the Texas population to one optometrist was higher in non-metropolitan counties compared to metropolitan counties.
- The ratio of the Texas population to one optometrist was higher in border counties compared to non-border counties.
- 115 counties had no optometrists (Figure 3).

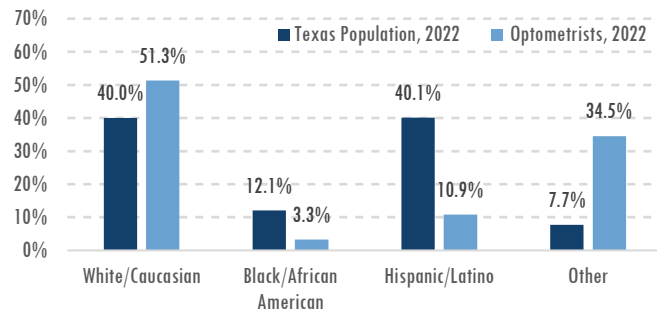
¹ Population numbers are sourced from the Texas Demographic Center (previously the Texas State Data Center). The center regularly updates the demographic projections therefore, population numbers for a particular year may differ depending on the date the data was retrieved.

Demographics of Optometrists

Race/Ethnicity

Black/African American and Hispanic optometrists were underrepresented when compared to the Texas population (Figure 4).² Race/ethnicity data were available for 4,224 of 4,318 optometrists (97.8%).

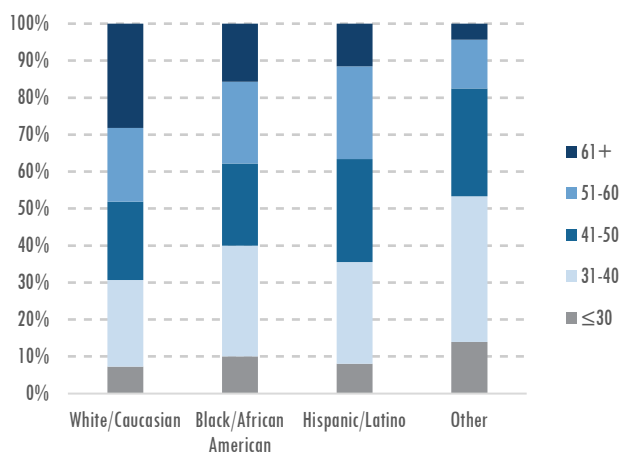
Figure 4. Race/Ethnicity of Texas Population and Optometrists²



Age Distribution by Race/Ethnicity

- 28.2% of White/Caucasian optometrists were 61 years of age or over, while 30.7% were aged 40 years or under (Figure 5).
- 22.1% of Black/African American optometrists were between 41 and 50 years of age, and 40% were aged 40 years or under (Figure 5).
- 27.9% of Hispanic/Latino optometrists were between 41 and 50 years of age, and 35.6% were aged 40 years or under (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Age Distribution of Optometrists



Age

Within 10 years, 24.8% of the current Texas optometrist workforce will be over 65 years of age.

- 11.0% of active optometrists in Texas were over 65 years of age in 2022.

Gender

- In 2022, 55.1% of optometrists were female and 44.9% were male. Gender data were available for 4,316 of 4,318 optometrists in 2022.

Age Distribution by Gender

- Among optometrists over 55 years of age in 2022, males comprised 73.8% of the optometrist workforce.
- Among optometrists aged 40 years or under in 2022, 69.3% were female and 30.7% were male.

Table 2. Age Distribution of Optometrists by Gender

| Age Group | Female | Male | Total |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| ≤30 | 348 | 108 | 456 |
| 31-35 | 442 | 226 | 668 |
| 36-40 | 411 | 198 | 609 |
| 41-45 | 321 | 175 | 496 |
| 46-50 | 319 | 236 | 555 |
| 51-55 | 254 | 203 | 457 |
| 56-60 | 117 | 203 | 320 |
| 61-65 | 82 | 194 | 276 |
| >65 | 82 | 394 | 476 |
| Total | 2,376 | 1,937 | 4,313 |

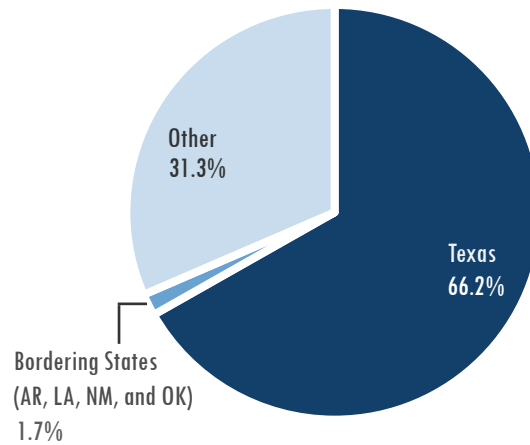
²Population numbers are sourced from the Texas Demographic Center (previously the Texas State Data Center). The center regularly updates the demographic projections therefore, population numbers for a particular year may differ depending on the date the data was retrieved.



Education of Optometrists

- As seen in Figure 6, 66.2% of optometrists trained in Texas.
- 1.7% of optometrists trained in states bordering Texas (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, and Oklahoma).
- The remaining 31.3% of optometrists trained in states other than Texas and those bordering Texas.
- Training data were available for 3,971 of 4,318 optometrists (92.0%).

Figure 6. Optometrists Training by State



Employment Characteristics of Optometrists

- As seen in Figure 7, 59.9% of optometrists reported practicing for 40 or more hours.
- Primary practice hours data were available for 3,786 of 4,318 optometrists (87.7%).
- As seen in Figure 8, 61.6% of optometrists worked as optometric glaucoma specialist.
- This was followed by 31.4% of optometrists working as therapeutic optometrist.
- Primary specialty data were available for 3,863 of 4,318 optometrists (89.5%).

Figure 8. Primary Specialty of Optometrists

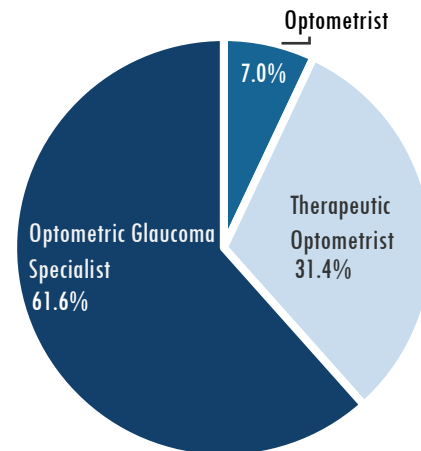
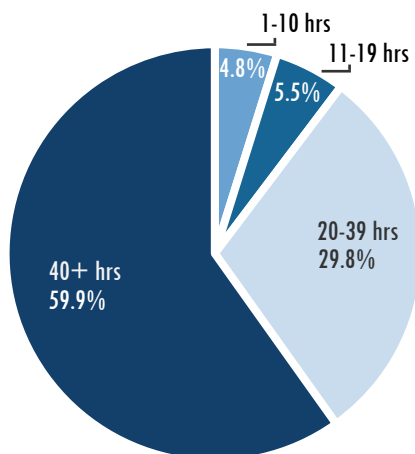


Figure 7. Primary Practice Hours of Optometrists



- In 2022, the top three primary practice settings for optometrists were a private office setting (92.1%), a public clinic college (3.3%), and a government facility (1.6%).
- Primary practice setting data were available for 3,389 of 4,318 optometrists (78.5%).

Table 3. Primary Practice Setting of Optometrists

| Setting | Number of Optometrists |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Private Office | 3,535 |
| Public Clinic College | 128 |
| Government Facility | 62 |
| Hospital | 49 |
| Drug and/or Ophthalmic Device Company | 23 |
| Military Facility | 22 |
| Nursing Home | 17 |
| Research Facility | 3 |
| Total | 3,839 |

