

2025

THE STATE OF THE PHARMACY TECHNICIAN WORKFORCE

THE RISE OF THE EXPERT CORE

AND RETENTION OPPORTUNITIES

PTC/B

Pharmacy Technician Certification Board®

TABLE OF CONTENTS

02 INTRODUCTION

03 CHAPTER 1: THE MATURING WORKFORCE

04 CHAPTER 2: THE ROI OF CERTIFICATION

06 CHAPTER 3: THE RETENTION PIVOT

07 CHAPTER 4: EDUCATION & ENVIRONMENT

08 CONCLUSION: EMPOWERING THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & CEO

To the Pharmacy Community,

In 2022, our workforce survey captured a profession at a crossroads, navigating the immense pressures of a global pandemic while simultaneously expanding roles. We spoke of a "workforce in transition."

Today, the data tells a new story: one of sophisticated stabilization. We are witnessing the emergence of an "Expert Core," a growing segment of veteran technicians who view this profession not just as a job, but as a lifelong career. While the challenges of competitive compensation and workplace stress remain, the 2025 findings highlight a workforce that is more dedicated and more integrated into the patient care team than ever before.



William Schimmel, CAE, ICE-CCP
Executive Director & CEO

WHILE THERE MAY STILL BE A RECRUITMENT NEED, IT IS CLEAR WE ARE STANDING BEFORE A MASSIVE RETENTION OPPORTUNITY.

At PTCB, we remain committed to empowering these essential healthcare professionals by providing the credentials and advocacy they need to excel in their evolving roles.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2025 Pharmacy Technician Workforce Survey reveals a maturing industry characterized by clinical stability and deepening professional roots. While the so-called "Great Resignation" era focused on getting people in the door, 2025 is about keeping them there.

- **The Professionalization Pivot:** For the first time, more than 63% of technicians now consider the profession a long-term career, up nearly 7.4% since 2022.
- **The Rise of the "Expert Core":** 41% of pharmacy technicians have been certified for 10+ years, providing a stabilizing foundation of experience for pharmacies nationwide.
- **The 20% Certification Advantage:** National certification has evolved from an optional credential to a major economic driver, providing a consistent 20% wage advantage over uncertified peers.
- **The Retention Tension:** Despite high career dedication, "lack of pay/incentives" remains the #1 reason for potential turnover, highlighting the continuing need for the industry to align compensation with advanced responsibilities.

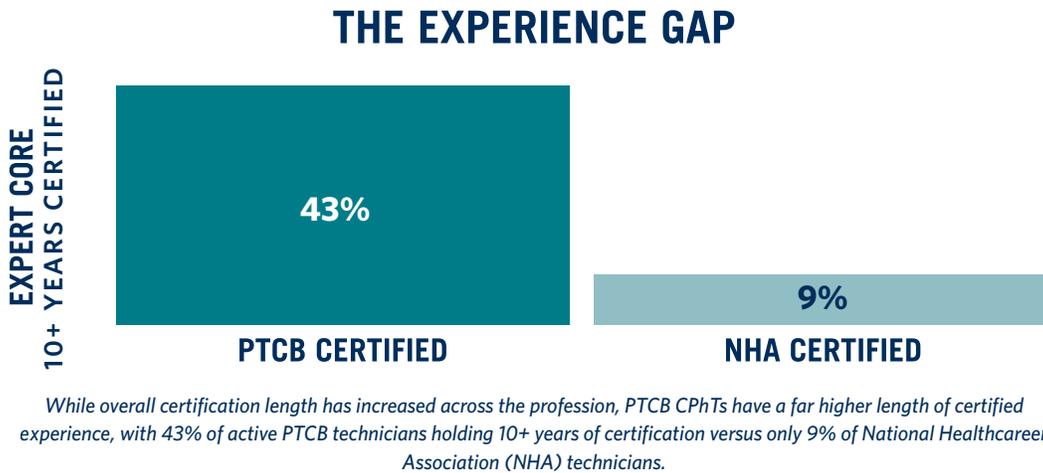
METHODOLOGY

To ensure a statistically representative snapshot of the profession, PTCB fielded an online survey in May 2025 to over 350,000 pharmacy technicians. The survey garnered 17,112 responses from both certified and non-certified technicians across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico. This report analyzes these results against 2022 and 2019 benchmarks to identify long-term workforce shifts.

CHAPTER 1: THE MATURING WORKFORCE

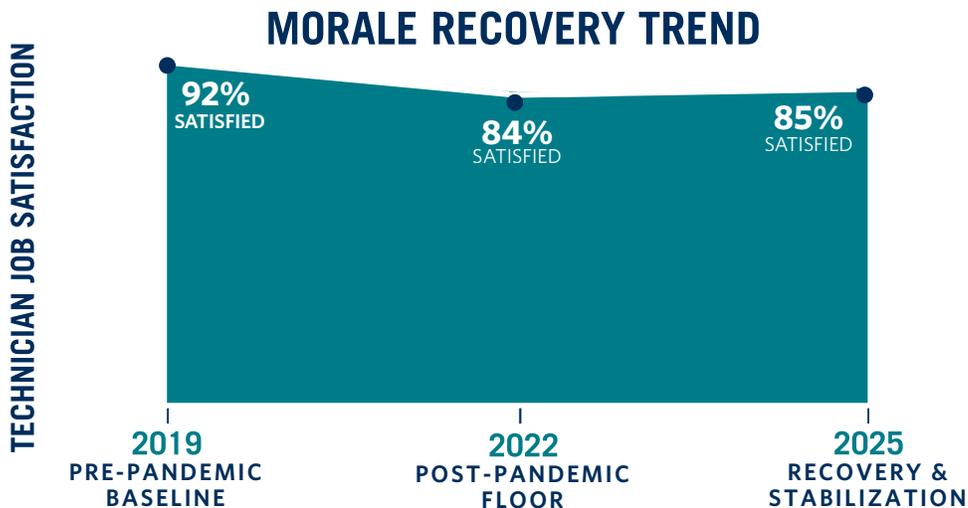
PROTECTING THE "EXPERT CORE" FOR PATIENT SAFETY

The most significant takeaway from 2025 is the growth of the "Expert Core." 42.6% of the workforce has 10+ years of tenure as pharmacy technicians, and the percentage of technicians with more than 10 years or more of certification has risen to 41%, an 8% increase since 2019.



This cohort represents the most experienced workforce in history. These decade-long veterans are not just filling prescriptions; they are managing complex inventory, facilitating immunizations, and serving as the final check for patient safety in high-volume environments.

Protecting this "Expert Core" through competitive incentives is no longer just a human resources goal; it is a patient safety mandate. When experienced technicians leave the field due to burnout or stagnant wages, the industry loses decades of skill and intuition that cannot be easily replaced by entry-level recruitment.



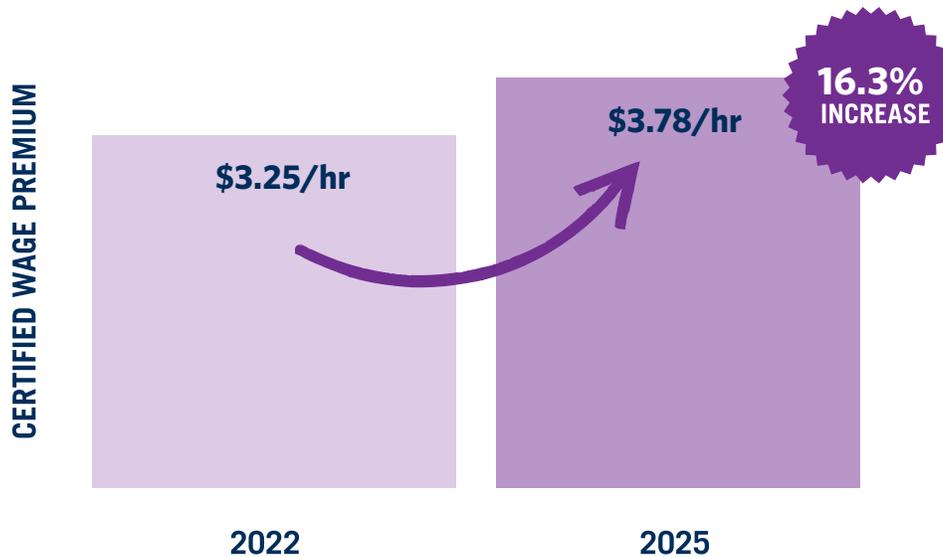
CHAPTER 2: THE ROI OF CERTIFICATION

IT'S NOT JUST A BADGE; IT'S A 20% RAISE

In 2025, national certification remains the single most reliable tool for increasing a pharmacy technician's earning power. The data shows that the financial gap between certified and non-certified technicians is not just persisting—it is widening.

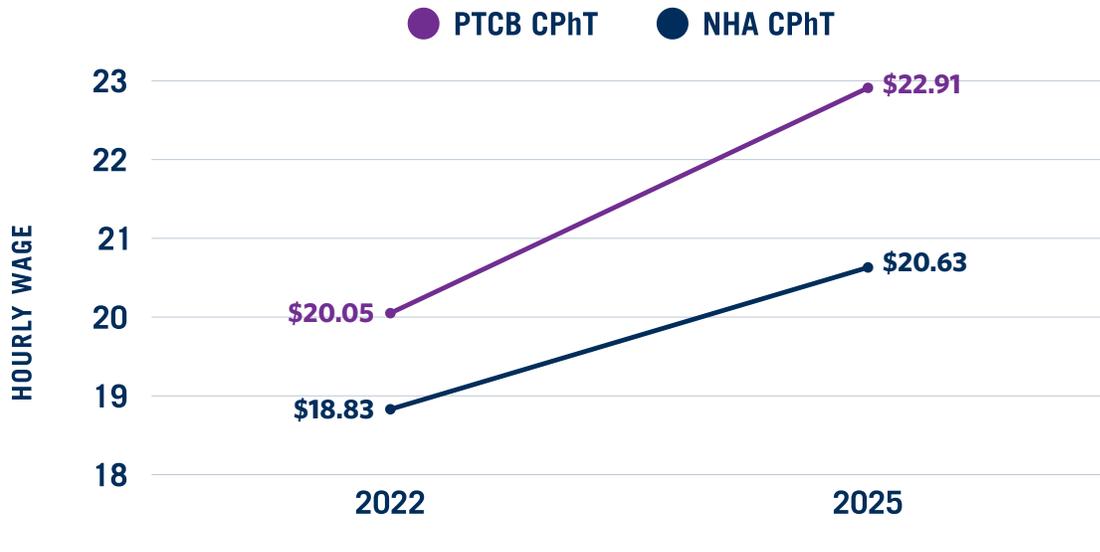
- **The Certified Wage Premium:** The premium for national certification jumped from \$3.25 in 2022 to \$3.78 in 2025 (a 16.3% increase in the value of the credential itself).
- **The 20% Advantage:** On average, Certified Pharmacy Technicians (CPhTs) earn approximately 20% more than their uncertified counterparts. An important distinction in our data also shows that active PTCB CPhTs on average make 11% more than active NHA CPhTs (\$2.28/hr more). Since 2022, PTCB wages have grown nearly 1.5 times faster than NHA wages.

THE WAGE PREMIUM ACCELERATOR



On average, Certified Pharmacy Technicians (CPhTs) earn approximately 20% more than their uncertified counterparts.

AVERAGE WAGES PTCB VS NHA



For employers, this data proves that certification is the primary mechanism for professionalizing the staff. For technicians, the message is clear: the path to economic stability in pharmacy runs directly through national certification through PTCB.

HOURLY WAGES BY PRACTICE SETTING

 COMMUNITY PHARMACY	\$20.06
 CENTRAL FILL	\$20.73
 LONG-TERM CARE	\$21.11
 EDUCATION INSTITUTION	\$21.57
 OTHER	\$21.65
 MAIL ORDER	\$21.95
 COMPOUNDING CENTER	\$23.46
 PBM/INSURANCE PLAN	\$24.05
 HOSPITAL	\$24.22
 SPECIALTY	\$24.30
 HOME INFUSION	\$25.90
 AMBULATORY CLINIC	\$26.16

CHAPTER 3: THE RETENTION PIVOT

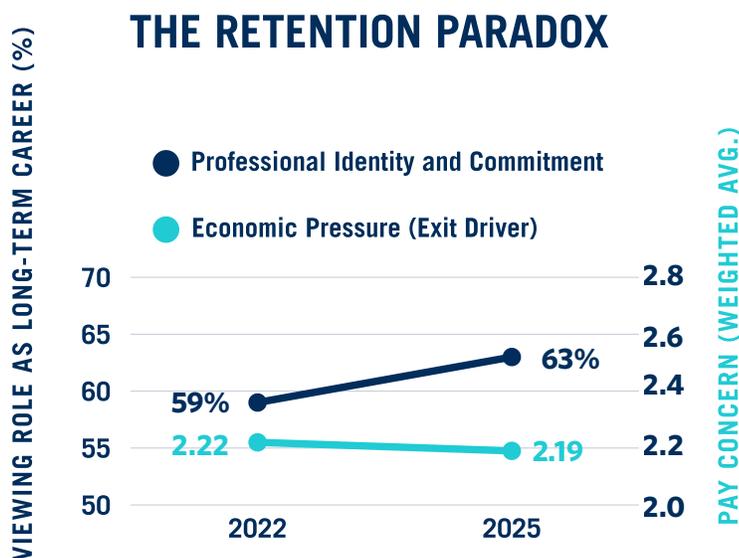
FROM "JOB" TO "CAREER SPECIALIST"

The 2025 data confirms that technicians want to stay in the profession. More than 63% of respondents view their role as a long-term career, up from 59% in 2022. This commitment reflects a significant post-pandemic surge in professional dedication, with PTCB CPhTs being more than 13% as likely to see it as a career than NHA CPhTs. However, a dangerous disconnect exists: while dedication is at a 6-year high, "lack of pay and incentives" remains the top driver for those considering leaving.

We no longer have a recruitment crisis; we have a retention opportunity. While we recognize that a robust pipeline of entry-level technicians is important to pharmacy, to bridge this gap, the industry must focus on career paths. Technicians are signaling that they want a path upward, not just a path in. This includes:

- 1. Advanced Credentials:** Implementation of advanced and specialty credentials to recognize specialized skills in compounding, supply chain, or immunizations.
- 2. Career Pathways:** Identifying clear paths for technicians to advance in their careers while staying with their employers will provide a return on investment to employers.
- 3. Incentivized Loyalty:** Transitioning from "sign-on bonuses" for new hires to "stay-on incentives" for the Expert Core.

This commitment reflects a significant post-pandemic surge in professional dedication, with PTCB CPhTs being more than 13% as likely to see it as a career than NHA CPhTs.



This shows a "Retention Paradox": Technicians are more dedicated to the profession than ever, but the economic pressure is the primary force pushing them out.

This paradox is significantly mitigated by the PTCB credential, as 40% of active PTCB CPhTs have been with their current employer 6+ years, compared to only 18% of NHA CPhTs, underscoring its stabilizing impact on retention.

We no longer have a recruitment crisis; we have a retention opportunity.

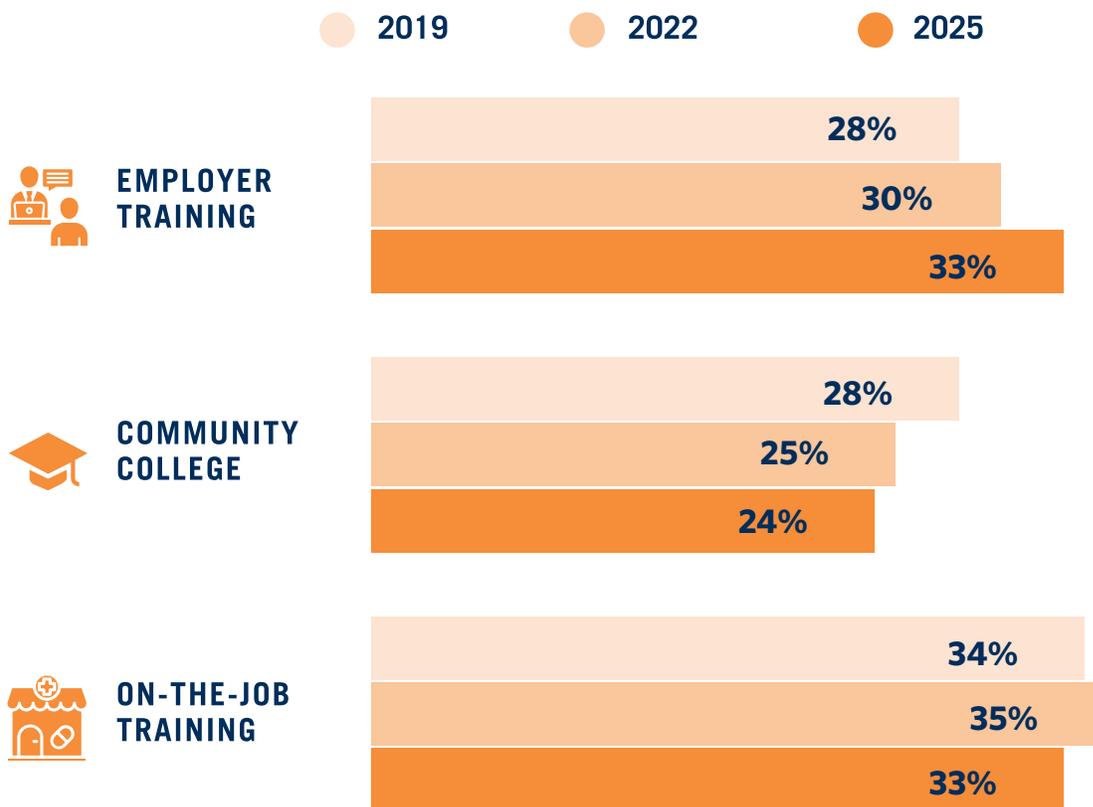
CHAPTER 4: EDUCATION & ENVIRONMENT

THE NEW TALENT PIPELINE AND ENVIRONMENT

The industry's focus on retention and professionalization is fundamentally altering the way the next generation of pharmacy technicians is educated and deployed. The 2025 data points to a significant pivot away from traditional academic routes, with employers stepping in to take greater ownership of the talent pipeline. This shift is occurring while the workforce continues to play a critical role in underserved areas.

- **Employer-Led Growth:** There has been a 6.3% increase in employer-based training programs. Pharmacies are increasingly taking ownership of their own pipelines, replacing traditional college routes with internal, clinical training modules.
- **Rural Stability:** Pharmacy technicians remain critical for healthcare access in underserved areas, with 22.1% of the workforce practicing in rural settings.

TRAINING PIPELINE EVOLUTION



There has been a 6.3% increase in employer-based training programs

CONCLUSION: EMPOWERING THE FUTURE WORKFORCE

The results of the 2025 survey confirm that the pharmacy technician is no longer a "support" role, but a specialized profession. To sustain this "Expert Core" and continue the trend of stabilization, PTCB offers the following recommendations for employers:

- 1. Reward the Credential:** With the wage premium widening, expand use of credentials as a benchmark for higher-tier responsibilities and compensation.
- 2. Invest in Internal Growth:** Expand training to include specialized roles (e.g., sterile compounding, immunization, supply chain) to keep veteran technicians engaged.
- 3. Address the Wage-to-Responsibility Gap:** While job satisfaction is high (85%), morale can only be maintained if compensation reflects the increasing sophistication of the technician's duties.

By focusing on these areas, the pharmacy community can ensure that the stabilization seen in 2025 becomes the foundation for a thriving, professionalized workforce for years to come.