

Optometrist Growth Trends

This fact sheet is an overview of the trends, distribution, and demographics of optometrists in Texas. In 2020, there were 4,194 actively licensed optometrists in Texas.

- This number represented a 16.6% increase since 2015 and a 36.3% increase since 2010.
- Relative to population growth, the size of the optometrist workforce has improved by 14.2% over the past 10 years.

Despite these improvements, Texas still had fewer optometrists per capita than the national average.

Figure 1. Total Optometrists¹

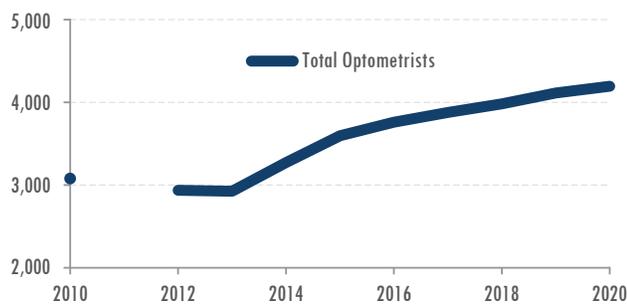
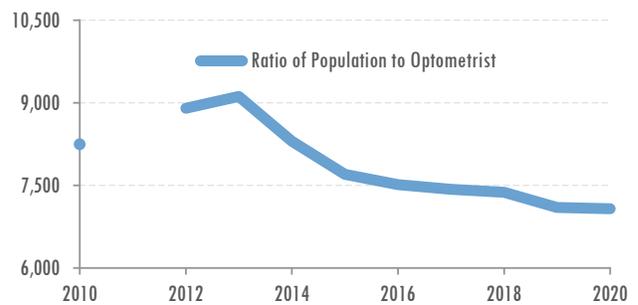


Figure 2. Ratio of Population to Optometrist



¹ Data were unavailable for 2011.

Geographic Distribution of Optometrists

Figure 3. Ratio of Texas Population to Optometrist by County

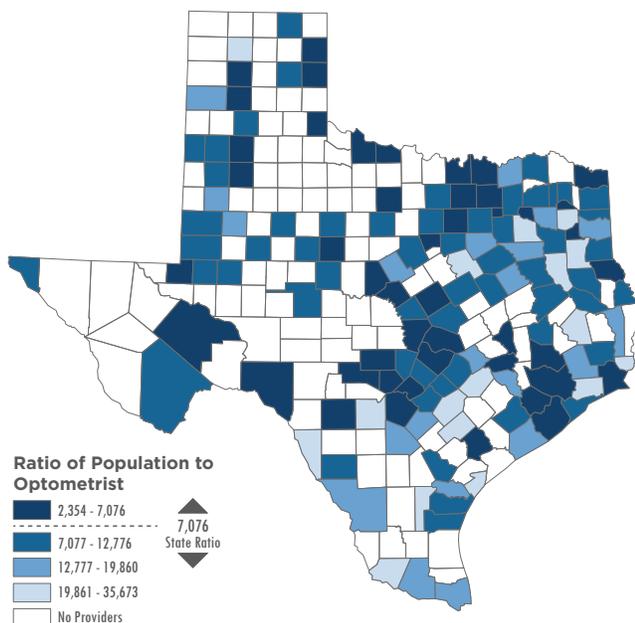


Table 1. Ratio of Texas Population to Optometrist by Geographic Designation

Geographic Designation	Ratio of Population to Optometrist
Metropolitan	6,714
Non-metropolitan	13,101
Border	13,851
Non-border	6,728
Texas	7,076

Optometrists were not evenly distributed throughout the state.

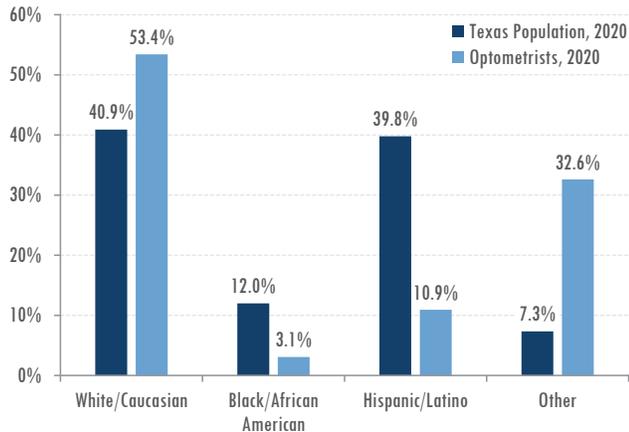
- Per capita, metropolitan counties had 2.0 times as many optometrists as non-metropolitan counties.
- Per capita, non-border counties had 2.1 times as many optometrists as border counties.

Demographics of Optometrists

Race/Ethnicity of Optometrists

Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino optometrists were underrepresented when compared to the Texas population.²

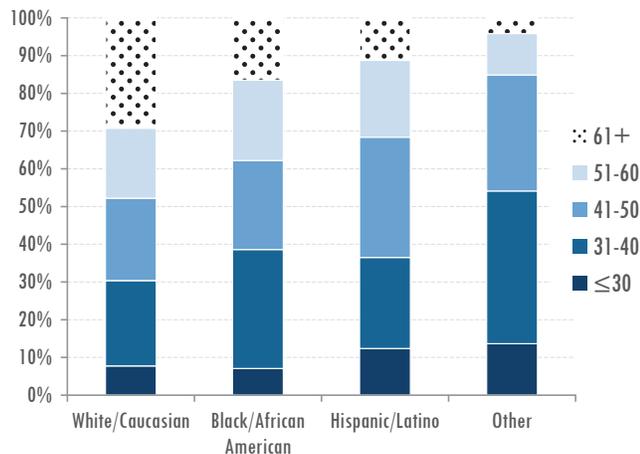
Figure 4. Race/Ethnicity of Texas Population and Optometrists



Age Distribution of Optometrists by Race/Ethnicity

- 30.3% of white/Caucasian optometrists were aged 40 years or under, and 29.3% were 61 years of age or over.³
- 38.6% of black/African American optometrists were aged 40 years or under, while 16.5% were 61 years of age or over.
- 36.5% of Hispanic/Latino optometrists were aged 40 years or under, while 11.3% were 61 years of age or over.

Figure 5. Age Distribution of Optometrists by Race/Ethnicity



Gender of Optometrists

- In 2020, 52.4% of optometrists were female and 47.6% were male.
- In 2010, 43.3% were female and 56.7% were male.
- Among optometrists aged 40 years or under in 2020, 68.0% were female and 32.0% were male.⁴

Age Distribution of Optometrists by Gender

Within 10 years, 25.8% of the current Texas optometrist workforce will be over 65 years of age.⁵

- 10.9% of active optometrists in Texas were over 65 years of age in 2020.
- 39.3% were aged 40 years or under.
- Among optometrists over 55 years of age, males comprised 76.8% of the optometrist workforce.

Table 2. Age Distribution of Optometrists by Gender

Age Group	Female	Male	Total
≤30	310	129	439
31-35	428	202	630
36-40	384	196	580
41-45	312	215	527
46-50	318	240	558
51-55	195	182	377
56-60	105	198	303
61-65	84	238	322
>65	62	395	457
Total	2,198	1,995	4,193

² Race/ethnicity data were available for 4,140 of 4,194 optometrists.

³ Age and race/ethnicity data were available for 4,139 of 4,194 optometrists.

⁴ Age data were available for 4,193 of 4,194 optometrists.

⁵ The earliest retirement age for social security is 62.



Employment Characteristics of Optometrists

Figure 6. Primary Specialty of Optometrists⁶

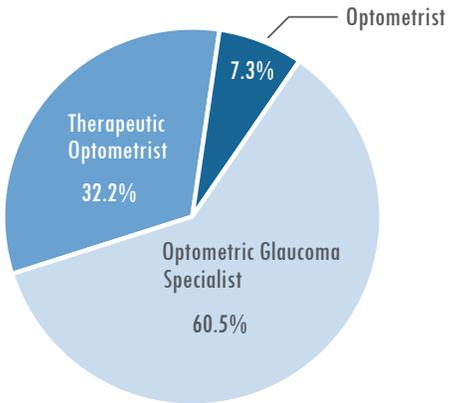


Figure 7. Primary Practice Hours of Optometrists⁷

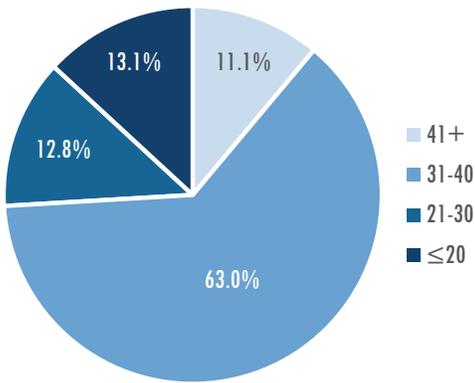


Table 3. Primary Practice Setting of Optometrists

Setting	Number of Optometrists
Private Office	3,609
Public Clinic College or University	143
Government Facility	60
Hospital	45
Military Facility	26
Drug and/or Ophthalmic Device Company	19
Nursing Home	19
Research Facility	1
Total	3,922⁸

⁶ Primary specialty data were available for 3,942 of 4,194 optometrists.

⁷ Primary practice hours data were available for 3,886 of 4,194 optometrists.

⁸ Primary practice setting data were available for 3,922 of 4,194 optometrists.

