

Health Information Management Technician

■ Job Description

The daily operations of the medical record department may be handled by a health information management technician (medical record technician). The technician reviews medical records for completeness and accuracy, sees that information in the patient's record is arranged properly, and translates the names of diseases and treatment procedures into standard coding systems. The medical record technician microfilms and files records; compiles statistics and data for the medical staff; types medical reports; retrieves records upon request; and releases information to attorneys, third-party payers, and other authorized parties.

■ Job Settings

Hospitals, clinics, health planning agencies, insurance companies, nursing homes, health maintenance organizations, and ambulatory care centers

■ Projected Need

Medical records technician is one of the top 20 fastest growing occupations in the state. Nationally, employment in this occupation is also expected to grow much faster than average through 2010. Much of the demand for health information technicians is due to rapid growth in the health care industry. The number of medical tests, treatments, and procedures that are performed each year is growing rapidly. The demand for technicians will also rise because medical records will be examined by third-party payers, courts, and consumers. Hospitals will continue to employ the most health information technicians. The fastest growth, however, will be in medical offices, nursing homes and home health agencies.

In Illinois, there were about 6,360 people employed in this small occupation in 2000.

■ Salaries

Nationally, the median wage for health information technicians is \$11.31 per hour. Half of all health information technicians earn between \$9.28 and \$14.36 per hour.

In Illinois, the median wage is \$10.78 per hour. Beginning wage for health information technicians is

\$8.14 per hour. Experienced technicians earn \$13.47 per hour. Wages in selected cities are given below:

City	Median Hourly Wage
Bloomington-Normal	\$10.03
Champaign-Urbana	\$ 9.54
Chicago	\$11.47
Decatur	\$ 9.00
Kankakee	\$13.71
Moline-Rock Island	\$ 9.07
Peoria-Pekin	\$11.00
Rockford	\$ 8.89
Springfield	\$10.24
St. Louis	\$11.52

■ Related Careers

Occupations involving similar tasks include medical secretary, health unit coordinator, hospital station secretary, ward clerk, biostatistician, and health sciences librarian. With a bachelor's degree that includes coursework in science and statistics, one can complete the medical records administrator's program.

■ Differences in Training

Most health information technicians have an associate's degree in medical records technology. These programs include courses in anatomy and physiology, medical terminology, and statistics. Courses in database management and coding are also helpful. Employers prefer to hire technicians who have completed formal training programs. They also prefer to hire technicians who are registered.

Community colleges in Illinois that offer accredited programs are as follows:

College of DuPage - Glen Ellyn
College of Lake County - Grayslake
John A. Logan College - Carterville
Moraine Valley Community College - Palos Hills
Oakton Community College - Des Plaines
Rend Lake College - Ina
Shawnee Community College - Ullin
Southeastern Illinois College - Harrisburg
Southwestern Illinois College - Belleville

■ Related Educational Programs

The programs of study listed below are the recommended areas of study to pursue for this

occupation. Clicking on these will lead to files that show in-state and national schools that offer these programs.

The following link(s) will take you to CIS for more information. CIS requires an ID and password that can be obtained at <http://cis.ilworkinfo.com/loginhelp/login.asp>

[Health Records Technology](#)
[Medical Coding and Billing](#)

■ **Credentials**

The American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) offers the Registered Health Information Technician (RHIT) credential. To qualify, applicants must have completed an associate degree program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) of the American Medical Association and pass a national exam. Technicians trained in non-CAAHEP accredited programs, or on the job, are not eligible to take the exam.

■ **Advanced Training**

Health information technicians can pursue a bachelor's degree in management or computer systems. Many elect to enter health information administration programs designed for RHITs wishing to pursue the Registered Health Information Administrator (RHIA) credential.

■ **Resources**

American Health Information Management Association
233 N. Michigan Avenue, Suite 2150
Chicago, IL 60601-5800
Phone: 312.233.1100
E-mail: info@ahima.org
<http://www.ahima.org>
Click on "HIM Careers" then on "Careers."

The association offers a variety of academic scholarships and financial resources to students enrolled in health information administration, and health information technology programs.