

Pharmacy Technician

■ Job Description

Pharmacy technicians perform a variety of duties related to the preparation and distribution of drugs. They prepare and distribute medications under the direct supervision of a pharmacist. They replenish drugs and pharmaceutical supplies in the pharmacy and patient care areas; price and order drugs; and maintain records. Pharmacy technicians should like working with details and in a scientific or laboratory-type setting.

■ Job Settings

Hospitals, community pharmacies, nursing homes, and home health care pharmacies

■ Projected Need

Both nationally and in Illinois, the number of jobs for pharmacy technicians is expected to increase faster than average through 2010.

Much of the increase in jobs for pharmacy technicians will be due to the growing number of middle-aged and elderly people. These groups tend to use more prescription drugs than younger people. In addition, insurance companies and pharmacies are concerned about costs. They will rely on technicians to perform tasks once done by pharmacists. This trend will also increase the number of jobs for technicians.

Job opportunities will be good, especially for technicians who have formal training or previous experience.

In Illinois, there were about 9,430 people employed in this medium-sized occupation in 2000.

■ Salaries

Wages vary by shift, employer, and the technician's level of training. Technicians may receive higher wages for working evenings or weekends. Certified technicians may earn more.

Nationally, the median wage for pharmacy technicians is \$10.40 per hour. Half of all technicians earn between \$8.52 and \$12.82 per hour.

In Illinois, wages range from \$8.04 per hour for entry-level technicians to \$11.88 per hour for those with experience. Median wage is \$10.14 per hour.

■ Differences in Training

A high school diploma or equivalent (GED) is required. Most workers receive three to six months of training on the job. Pharmacy technician training programs are available at some Illinois colleges.

The following community colleges in Illinois offer pharmacy technician programs:

Black Hawk College - Moline
Harper College - Palatine
Harry S. Truman College - Chicago
Illinois Central College - Peoria
Kennedy-King College - Chicago
Malcolm X College - Chicago
Olive-Harvey College - Chicago
Richard J. Daley - Chicago
Richland Community College - Decatur
South Suburban College - South Holland
Wilbur Wright College - Moline

■ 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/>. You must log into CIS prior to clicking on the links below.

[Pharmacy Technician](#)

■ Related Careers

Medical assistant, dental assistant, and optometric assistant

■ Credentials

Pharmacy technicians must be registered by the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation. Voluntary certification is available from the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board.

■ Resources

American Association of Pharmacy Technicians
P.O. Box 1447
Greensboro, NC 27402
Phone: 877.368.4771
E-mail: aapt@pharmacytechnician.com
<http://www.pharmacytechnician.com>

Pharmacy Technician Certification Board
2215 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: 202.429.7576
<http://www.ptcb.org>
Click on “Career Resource Center” in the left side bar.

Pharmacy Technician Educators Council
20122 Cabrillo Lane
Cerritos, CA
Phone: 562.860.1927
<http://www.rxptec.org>
Click on “General Information” in the left side bar.
Select “A Career in Pharmacy Technology.”