



OPPORTUNITY FOR CAREER EXPLORATION





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CHW CAREER PATHWAY RESOURCE



Table of Content

Introduction: What is a Community Health Worker?	3
Purpose/Use	4
Career Wheel	5
Career Matrix	6
Career Pathways	7
Education Glossary	25



Introduction: What is a Community Health Worker?

Community Health Workers (CHWs) are frontline public health workers who have a deep understanding of the community they serve. They act as professional liaisons between the community and healthcare and social service systems, offering culturally appropriate health education, advocacy, and support. Their mission is to improve health outcomes by addressing social determinants of health and increasing access to healthcare services. CHWs provide a wide range of services and expertise that are applicable to various healthcare models. The history of CHWs dates back several decades and can be traced to grassroots movements and community-based health initiatives. CHWs have been recognized as a valuable resource for underserved populations, promoting health equity and reducing health disparities.

To be effective as a CHW, individuals should possess certain skills and qualities. Strong communication and interpersonal skills are crucial for building trust and rapport with community members. Cultural competency and sensitivity enable CHWs to navigate diverse communities effectively. They should also have a solid understanding of public health principles, basic medical knowledge, and resource navigation. Experience working with diverse populations and a passion for community health are valuable assets for CHWs. In Texas, CHWs are certified by the Texas DSHS after completing 160 hours of training or verification of 1000 hours experience (at least 16 years of age and a resident of Texas). For more information, visit [CHW Certification](#). There is not a minimum educational requirement for certification, however individuals are often required to have at least a high school diploma to work as a community health worker and certain positions may necessitate some level of postsecondary education.



Purpose/Use

This toolkit is designed to outline the wide range of career opportunities for Community Health Workers (CHWs), agencies, and organizations. It serves as a resource for CHWs to navigate their career exploration journey.

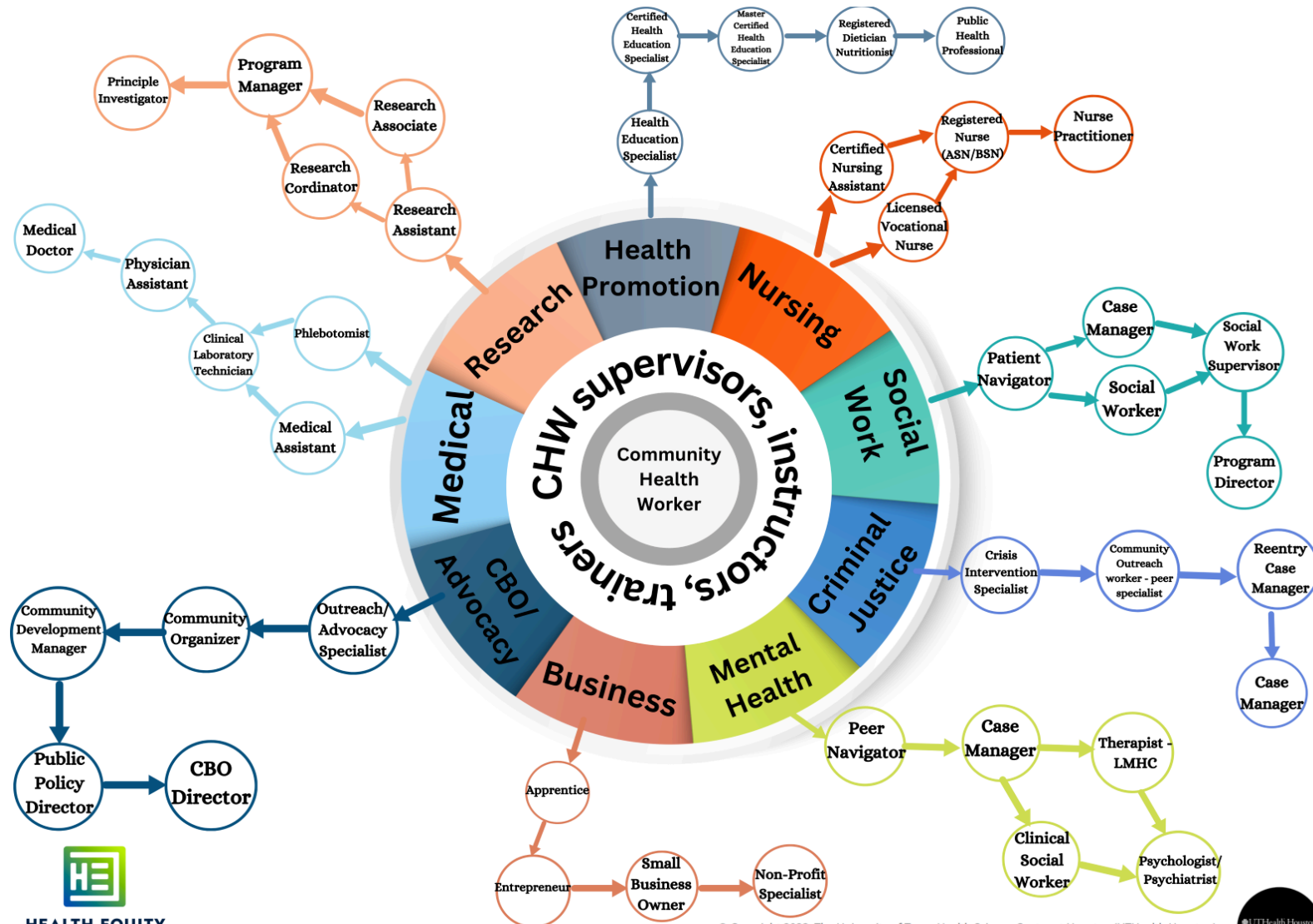
Structure of the toolkit includes a career wheel, a career matrix, a comprehensive career pathways write-up, and an educational glossary for reference.



CHW Career Wheel



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CHW Career Matrix

Tracks	Nursing	Social Work	Mental/Behavioral Health	Business	Health Promotion	Medical	Research	CBO/Advocacy	Criminal Justice
Level 1	Certified Nurse Assistant	Patient Navigator	Peer Navigator/Specialist	Apprentice	Health Education Specialist	Medical Assistant	Research Assistant	Outreach and Advocacy Specialist	Crisis Intervention Specialist
Level 2	Licensed Vocational Nurse	Case manager	Case Managers	Entrepreneur	Certified Health Education Specialist	Phlebotomist	Research Coordinator	Community Organizer	Peer Outreach Specialist
Level 3	Registered Nurse/ASN	Social Worker - LMSW	Clinical Social Worker	Small Business Owner	Master Certified Health Education Specialist	Clinical Laboratory Technician	Research Associate	Community Development Manager	Reentry Case Manager/Specialist
Level 4	Registered Nurse/BSN	Social Work Supervisor	Therapist - LMHC	Non-profit Specialist	Nutritionist/Registered Dietician	Physician Assistant	Program Manager	Director of Research and Policy	Social Worker/Case Manager
Level 5	Nurse Practitioner/DPN	Program Director	Psychologist/Psychiatrist		Public Health Professional – Health Department	Physician	Principle Investigator	CBO Director	

The levels in the tracks above are categorized generally based on educational level, with the lowest level representing the minimum education, experience, and skill requirements, and the highest level indicating the maximum education, experience, and skill requirements.



CHW Career Pathways

Nursing

1. Certified Nursing Assistant

Description: Pursuing a career as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) can be advantageous for those interested in the nursing profession, but it is not essential for CHWs. CNAs thrive in clinical environments and should possess excellent verbal, written, and interpersonal skills.

Responsibilities of CNAs include assisting patients with daily activities and monitoring vital signs.

The median pay for CNAs in 2021 was \$30,290 per year according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Educational Requirements: To become a CNA, one must complete a state- approved [nursing aide training programs](#) and pass the competency evaluation examination or qualify through waiver/reciprocity.

State-approved nursing aide training programs are available, typically taking 4-8 weeks at varying costs.

Resources: More information on CNA requirements in Texas can be found at [CNA requirements in Texas](#).

Financial aid and scholarships may be available for CNA training, see [CNA funding](#) for details.

2. Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)/Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs):

Description: Licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and licensed vocational nurses (LVNs) deliver basic healthcare under the supervision of advanced nurses like RNs. LPNs are called LVNs in Texas, while other states use the term LPN.

Success as an LPN/LVN requires compassion, organizational skills, and quick decision-making. The median annual wage for LPNs/LVNs was \$48,070 as of May 2021.

Educational Requirements: LPNs/LVNs must complete an approved educational program, typically available as certificates or diplomas. These programs are offered at community colleges, technical schools, and some high schools, taking approximately one year to complete.

After completing the educational program, aspiring LPNs/LVNs must pass the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-PN).



Resources: More information on NCLEX-PN can be found at the [National Council of State Boards of Nursing](#).

Nursing scholarships are available for funding, see [nursing scholarships](#) for details.

LPNs/LVNs can transition to other healthcare professions, such as pursuing an LPN-to-RN program to become a registered nurse.

3. Registered Nurse (RN):

Description: Registered nurses (RNs) deliver and organize patient care, provide health education and emotional support to patients and families. The median annual wage for registered nurses was \$77,600 as of May 2021.

Educational Requirements: Three primary education paths for RNs: Bachelor's degree in nursing (BSN), associate degree in nursing (ADN)/associate of science in nursing (ASN), or diploma from an approved nursing program.

After completion of degree, RNs must obtain a license to practice, visit the [National Council of State Boards of Nursing](#) for more information.

BSN programs generally take 4 years, ADN/ASN programs take 2 to 3 years, and diploma programs take 2 to 3 years to complete, and some employers prefer or require a bachelor's degree for entry-level positions, especially in hospitals.

ADN, ASN, or diploma-holding RNs can pursue an RN-to-BSN program to earn a bachelor's degree.

Master's degree programs in nursing (MSN) and doctorate programs such as Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) are available for advanced nursing careers.

DNP is the highest level of education attainable for nursing, taking 2 to 5 years depending on the starting point.

Resources: Some employers offer tuition reimbursement programs to support nurses' continuing education.

Funding opportunities can be found [here](#).

[ANA's mentoring program](#) provides mentorship opportunities for nurses.

Social Work

4. Community Health Worker (CHW)/Patient Navigator:

Description: CHWs deliver basic health services and social support, advocating for and educating individuals.



Patient navigation is a crucial responsibility for CHWs. Patient navigators, also known as patient advocates, help patients navigate the healthcare system.

Essential skills for patient navigators include exceptional listening and communication abilities, empathy, and a passion for patient care. The median annual wage for community health workers was \$46,590 as of May 2021.

Educational Requirements: Obtaining a Board Certified Patient Advocate (BCPA) certification is recommended for those interested in a career as a patient advocate.

For more information, visit [BCPA Certification](#).

Resources: See [here](#) for mentorship opportunities

5. Social Worker/Case Managers:

Description: Social workers assist individuals, groups, and families in managing daily life challenges. Compassion and empathy are essential qualities for effective social workers.

Case management is a common role for social workers, providing support to individuals in need.

Clinical social workers diagnose and treat mental, behavioral, and emotional issues and they may hold titles such as CSW or LCSW, depending on state requirements.

CSWs collaborate with clients, doctors, and healthcare providers to develop and modify treatment plans. The median annual wage for social workers was \$50,390 as of May 2021.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's or master's degree in social work from a Council on Social Work Education-accredited program is typically required. The bachelor's degree takes four years, while the master's degree takes two years to complete.

Clinical social workers require a master's degree in social work.

Licensure is often necessary to practice social work, with specific requirements varying by state.

Resources: Funding opportunities for social work can be found at [social work scholarships](#).

Mentorship opportunities can be found [here](#).



6. Social Work Supervisor:

Description: Social work supervisors oversee and evaluate a team of social workers.

Ideal candidates possess experience as social workers and demonstrate leadership, communication, and organizational skills.

The average salary for a Social Work Supervisor in the United States is \$90,492.

Educational Requirements: A master's degree in a social work discipline is typically required, along with two to three years of social work experience.

Resources: For information about funding opportunities, see [social work scholarships](#).

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) offers mentorship opportunities for professional growth. More information about NASW membership can be found [here](#).

7. Program Director:

Description: Mental Health Program Directors oversee the development, implementation, and evaluation of mental health programs and services. Their responsibilities include strategic planning, budgeting, program management, and stakeholder collaboration.

Clinical expertise, leadership skills, and deep understanding of mental health issues are crucial.

Excellent communication, organizational, and problem-solving skills are essential.

The estimated total pay for a Mental Health Program Director is \$74,648 per year in the United States.

Educational Requirements: A master's degree in a mental health discipline is typically required for this role, along with multiple of work experience.

Resources: Funding opportunities in mental health can be found at [scholarships opportunities](#).

See [here](#) for information about a mentorship program.

For information about certificate options, see [certifications](#).

Criminal Justice

8. Crisis intervention specialist:



Description: Crisis Intervention Specialists evaluate and provide care for individuals dealing with mental, emotional, or substance abuse issues, including alcohol, tobacco, and other drug-related problems. Their responsibilities encompass individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, case management, client advocacy, prevention, and education. Mediation ranked as the most sought-after hard skill by employers. Skills in contract management, dispute resolution, social work, finance, and public policy were also in high demand. The median salary for crisis intervention specialists in the United States in 2021 was \$48,714.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree in psychology, social work or a related field is typically required. Pursuing a master's degree in similar fields may be preferential for some employers.

Resources: Funding opportunities can be found at [scholarships](#).

9. Peer Outreach Specialist:

Description: A peer outreach specialist typically possesses personal experience and receives training to provide support, engage, motivate, and facilitate meaningful discussions with the individuals they serve. This assistance helps individuals explore, establish, and attain their own recovery objectives. These specialists promote and uphold a recovery culture where every individual's perspective and preferences are acknowledged, recognized, understood, respected, and integrated into services and self-help programming.

Educational Requirements: A high school diploma/GED with at least 2 years of work experience is typically the minimum requirement for this role. Some employers may prefer candidates with an associate's degree. For information about certificate opportunities visit [peer specialist programs](#).

10. Reentry case manager/specialist

Description: Reentry case managers/specialists offer comprehensive case management services, guidance and assistance to individuals returning to communities following incarceration or facing challenges after release. The average salary for Reentry Case Manager is \$40,779 per year in the United States.



Educational Requirements: A high school diploma/GED with a few years of work experience is typically the minimum requirement for this role. Some employers may prefer candidates with an associate's degree in social sciences, human services, criminal justice, psychology or related field.

Some employers require a peer specialist certification for this role. For information about this visit [peer specialist programs](#).

Mental Health

11. Peer Navigator/Specialist:

Description: A peer navigator/specialist is responsible for providing support, guidance, and advocacy to individuals navigating specific challenges or systems. They have an elevated level of recovery experience and training and use their work and life experience to provide guidance, education, and support. Peer navigators may support peers with various challenges such as peers with cancer, HIV/AIDS, physical challenges, substance use disorder, etc.

Educational Requirements: A high school diploma or equivalent is the minimum educational requirement for entry into the role of a Peer Navigator. While formal education beyond this level is not mandatory, additional training, certifications, or workshops related to peer support may be beneficial. For more information about a training program, see [peer specialist training program](#), [Texas certification board certification application](#). The estimated total pay for a Peer Navigator is \$36,360 per year in the United States.

12. Licensed Mental Health/Behavioral Counselors - Therapist:

Description: Mental health/behavioral counselors provide guidance and assistance for various concerns like alcoholism, addictions, and depression. As of May 2023, the average annual pay for Clinical Mental Health Counseling in Texas is \$67,047.

They support clients in addiction recovery, behavior modification, and improved mental well-being.

Empathy, strong listening skills, and professional conduct are essential for counselors.

Educational Requirements: Typically, a minimum of a bachelor's degree is required to pursue a career in mental health counseling. Undergraduate studies in fields like psychology, public policy, social services, and social science are common for aspiring counselors. Funding opportunities for counseling can be found at [counseling scholarships](#). Information about a counseling mentorship program can be found [here](#).



13. Psychologist/Psychiatrist:

Description: Psychologists and psychiatrists both work with mental health issues but there are distinct differences in their education and practices.

Psychiatrists primarily administer treatment to patients through medication prescriptions, whereas psychologists predominantly rely on talk therapy and/or behavioral therapy as their primary approach.

Psychologists analyze the cognitive and social elements that impact an individuals' actions and reaction. They utilize diverse therapeutic approaches to aid patients in recovering from trauma and enhancing their mental well-being.

Educational Requirements: Licensed psychologists must earn a bachelor's degree, master's degree, and doctoral degree in psychology, totaling around 8-10 years of education.

Psychiatry, however, is a branch of medicine focused on diagnosing and treating mental health disorders.

To pursue psychiatry, one must complete a bachelor's degree in psychology or a pre-med related field. Afterward, medical school is required to earn a Doctor of Medicine (MD) or Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) degree. The total educational journey for psychiatry typically takes about 12 years.

Resources: For funding opportunities for psychology and psychiatry, see [counseling scholarships](#) and [medical school scholarships](#) respectively.

See [here](#) for information about a *counseling* mentorship program and see [here](#) for *medical* mentorship opportunities.

Psychiatrists earn an average of \$253,100 while clinical psychologists earn a median of \$81,040.

Business

14. Entrepreneurship (Cooperative, Apprentice, Small Business Owner):

Description: A cooperative (co-op) is a jointly owned and democratically controlled organization formed by a group of individuals to fulfill shared needs and aspirations. Co-ops are usually small businesses that prioritize providing services to their members rather than focusing on investment opportunities.

Educational Requirements: Educational Apprenticeships offer individuals the opportunity to learn valuable skills and earn a wage through practical training and educational experiences.



Apprenticeships can be a steppingstone for those interested in starting their own business. While no specific educational requirement exists for starting a cooperative or small business, relevant knowledge, skills, and experience are beneficial. Pursuing a certification or degree in business can provide valuable skills and knowledge for cooperative management and small business establishment.

Resources: Information about apprenticeship programs can be found [here](#). Scholarships for business education can be found at [scholarships](#). Mentorship opportunities for business can be found at [business mentoring programs](#). Business certifications are available for those seeking specialized training, see [business certificates](#).

15. Non-profit Specialist:

Description: Nonprofit Specialists oversee various aspects of nonprofit activities, including fundraising, program development, community outreach, and volunteer management.

Strong organizational and interpersonal skills, excellent communication abilities, and the ability to work with diverse stakeholders are essential for success.

The estimated total pay for a Nonprofit Development Specialist is \$54,870.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree in Nonprofit Management, Public Administration, or Business Administration is a solid foundation for a career in this field, typically taking four years to complete.

A master's degree in Nonprofit Management, Public Administration, or a related field can provide advanced knowledge and skills and typically takes one to two years to complete.

Resources: Funding opportunities for Nonprofit Management can be found through [Non-profit Management scholarships](#). Joining a Nonprofit Association can provide access to mentorship programs, networking opportunities, and peer support. More information about Nonprofit Associations can be found at the [Association of Nonprofit Specialists](#).

CBO/Advocacy



16. Outreach and Advocacy Specialist:

Description: An outreach specialist actively promotes and advocates for a cause or organization through various communication channels. Their main role is to connect with communities, stakeholders, and individuals to raise awareness and encourage participation.

Strong interpersonal and communication skills are essential for success in this role.

The average Outreach Specialist salary in the United States is \$62,767.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree in public health, health education, or a related field is typically required to pursue a career as an outreach specialist.

Certain employers may give preference to individuals with an advanced degree or certification from the [National Commission for Health Education Credentialing](#).

Resources: Information about scholarship opportunities can be found [here](#).

See [here](#) for mentorship program opportunities.

17. Community Organizer:

Description: A community organizer engages and mobilizes the community for a cause or social change.

Strong leadership, interpersonal, public speaking, and community engagement skills are important for success in this role.

The average community organizer salary in the United States is \$47,257

Educational Requirements: While there are no strict educational requirements, most employers prefer candidates with at least a high school diploma or GED certificate.

It is common for candidates to hold a bachelor's degree or higher in fields like social work or public health, which can enhance qualifications and prospects.

Resources: See [here](#) for scholarship opportunities.

18. Community Development Manager:



Description: A community development manager coordinates local events and builds connections with community members for economic growth.

This role varies based on the organization and industry.

To pursue a career as a community development manager, a Master's degree in business administration, community planning, public administration, urban studies, or a related field is typically required.

The average Community Development Manager salary in the United States is \$126,879

Educational Requirements: A Bachelor's degree in a similar field may also be considered.

Relevant work experience can be beneficial for job opportunities in this field.

Obtaining certifications such as a [Certified Economic Developer \(CED\)](#) certification through organizations like the International Economic Development Council can further enhance credentials and professional standing.

Resources: See [here](#) for funding opportunities.

For information about mentorship programs, see [here](#).

19. Public Policy Director

Description: The Public Policy Director creates and implements a strategic government relations plan for their organization at various levels.

This role requires strong communication skills, qualitative researching abilities, and critical thinking skills. The average Public Policy Director salary in the United States is \$210,900.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree in political science is typically the starting point for this career path. Pursuing a graduate degree in political science, international relations, or a related field is a potential option for advancement. Obtaining a professional degree in disciplines such as law, education, or journalism can also be beneficial.

A minimum of five years of managerial experience is usually required to work as a Public Policy Director.

Resources: See [here](#) for funding opportunities.

Information about mentorship opportunities can be found [here](#).



20. CBO Director:

Description: Directors of community-based organizations oversee organizational activities and staff. They collect information to assess the impact of community programs for fundraising purposes. They also manage budgets and allocate funds to specific programs. The average salary for a Director CBO is \$188,420 per year in the US.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree in social work or public administration is preferred for director positions, while a master's degree may be required for some roles.

This role typically requires extensive management experience.

Long-term employment and service engagements provide opportunities for leadership development in various capacities.

Resources: For scholarship opportunities, see [here](#).

Medical

21. Medical Assistant (MA):

Description: Medical assistants (MAs) perform administrative and clinical duties in healthcare settings.

MAs should not be confused with physician assistants who have a different scope of practice. The median annual wage for medical assistants was \$37,190 as of May 2021.

Educational Requirements: Postsecondary education is common for MAs, usually in the form of a certificate. However, high school diploma holders can gain practical knowledge through on-the-job training.

Although formal educational requirements for MAs are not mandated in most states, such as Texas, employers often prefer to hire candidates who have completed these programs.

Medical assisting programs are available at community colleges, vocational schools, and universities, typically taking about one year to complete.

Programs lead to a certificate, diploma, or in some cases, an associate degree.

Resources: For more information on MA programs in Texas [visit medical assistant program in Texas](#).



22. Phlebotomist:

Description: Phlebotomists extract blood for diagnostic tests, research, or blood donations. This role is ideal for someone who enjoys working in a clinical setting.

They work in hospitals, medical and diagnostic laboratories, or outpatient care centers. The median annual wage for phlebotomists was \$37,380 as of May 2021.

Educational Requirements: Phlebotomy programs are available at community colleges, vocational schools, or technical schools, typically taking less than 1 year to complete.

Some employers provide on-the-job training for phlebotomy positions, often requiring a high school diploma while professional certification is preferred by other employers and can be obtained through recognized organizations.

Certification requirements vary but typically involve education, clinical experience, examination, and practical skills assessment.

Resources: Find phlebotomy programs by state at [phlebotomy program](#)
Funding opportunities for phlebotomy can be found at [phlebotomy scholarships](#).

23. Clinical Technician:

Description: Clinical Technician (also known as Clinical Laboratory Technician or Medical Laboratory Technicians) carry out diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive medical laboratory tests to aid in the detection, management, and prevention of diseases. This role is best suited for someone who is detail oriented and has excellent interpersonal and analytical skills. To pursue a career as a clinical laboratory technologist or technician, a bachelor's degree in related life sciences field, such as biology or chemistry, is typically required. However, in some cases, technicians may be eligible for employment with an associate degree. Certain states mandate licensure for technicians, although Texas does not. Certification is often preferred by employers when selecting candidates for these roles.

Clinical Technicians perform diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive medical laboratory tests. They aid in the detection, management, and prevention of diseases.

Ideal candidates for this role are detail-oriented with excellent interpersonal and analytical skills.



The median annual wage for clinical laboratory technicians is \$57,800.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree in a related life sciences field is typically required for clinical laboratory technologists or technicians. In some cases, an associate degree may be sufficient for employment as a technician.

Licensure requirements for technicians vary by state, but it is not mandated in Texas. Certification is often preferred by employers when selecting candidates for these roles.

See the following for certification opportunities the [American Association of Bioanalysts](#), [American Medical Technologists](#), and the [American Society for Clinical Pathology](#).

Resource: For information about mentorship opportunities see [ASCP mentorship](#).

For funding opportunities, see [Medical Technology scholarship](#).

24. Physician (Medical Doctor):

Description: Physicians diagnose and treat injuries, illnesses, and provide health maintenance. They conduct patient examinations, prescribe medications, and interpret diagnostic tests.

Communication, leadership, problem-solving, patience, and attention to detail are important qualities for physicians.

There are two types of physicians: M.D. (Medical Doctor) and D.O. (Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine). Both medical training has equal rights and responsibilities in healthcare.

Physicians can specialize in various fields such as Anesthesiology, Family Medicine, Dermatology, Cardiology, etc.

The median wage for physicians is approximately \$208,000 per year.

Educational Requirements: The educational path includes a four-year bachelor's degree, followed by a four-year medical school program, a residency program of three to nine years, and fellowships of one to three years may be required for specialization.

Licensure is mandatory for physicians, with the USMLE for M.D.s and COMLEX-USA for D.O.s.

Resources: For funding opportunities, see [Medical School scholarships](#).

See [here](#) for mentorship opportunities for aspiring physicians.



25. Physician Assistant:

Description: Physician assistants (PAs) assess, diagnose, and provide treatment to patients under physician supervision. Ideal candidates have excellent interpersonal and problem-solving skills, emotional stability, and attention to detail. The median annual wage for physician assistants is \$121,530.

Educational Requirements: A master's degree from an accredited program is typically required for becoming a physician assistant, which takes about two to four years. Applicants usually hold a bachelor's degree in a relevant field and have direct patient care experience. Physician assistants can pursue postgraduate education in specialties such as emergency medicine or psychiatry.

Resources: Information about accredited PA programs can be found at [PA programs](#).

Funding opportunities for aspiring PAs can be found through the [PA Foundation](#).

Licensing is mandatory for physician assistants in all states. Information about licensing can be found at the [National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants](#).

For information about mentorship opportunities, see [PAMP mentorship program](#).

Research

26. Research Assistant:

Description: Research assistants support research teams by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data. They work in academic or private research institutes.

Skills needed: detail-oriented, curious, strong analytical and critical thinking skills.

The median salary for a research assistant is \$41,662.

Educational Requirements: Most employers require at least a bachelor's degree in a related field. This typically takes four years to complete.

27. Research Coordinator:

Description: Research coordinators oversee and manage activities related to research studies. They formulate research plans, arrange participant schedules, supervise data collection, and ensure adherence to protocols and guidelines.



Strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and multitasking abilities are important for this role.
The average base salary for a clinical research coordinator is \$69,765 per year.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree in health science, biological sciences or related field is typically required for entry into this field. Pursuing a master's degree in clinical research or a related field can lead to supervisory or management positions. Prior experience in the field is preferred by employers for entry-level clinical research coordinator roles.

Resources: See [here](#) for certification information for clinical research professionals.
Mentorship programs can provide valuable opportunities for professional development. See [here](#) for more information.

28. Research Associate:

Description: Research coordinators and research associates have overlapping responsibilities but differ in their daily tasks. Research associates primarily focus on analyzing data gathered from participants and drawing conclusions. They often communicate their findings to researchers or other relevant individuals.
Research associates earn an average salary of \$65,171 per year.

Educational Requirements: Research associates typically hold a bachelor's degree in a scientific field. Some employers may prefer candidates with a master's degree or higher, but it is not always mandatory. Additionally, certification from organizations like the [American Board of Clinical Chemistry \(ABCC\)](#) might be required for certain research associate positions.

Resources: See [here](#) for mentorship opportunities.

29. Program Manager:

Description: Program Managers oversee the planning, execution, and evaluation of programs within an organization. They coordinate teams, monitor progress, manage budgets, and communicate with stakeholders.
Strong organizational, leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills are essential for this role.
Program managers in the US earn an average annual salary of \$93,72



Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree is typically the minimum educational requirement for a program management role. Degrees in relevant fields such as program management, business administration, or business management are preferred. Pursuing a master's degree may be necessary for advancement into senior positions or to enhance career prospects. See [program management certification](#) for certification training.

Resources: See [mentorships program](#) for program management mentorship opportunities. See [here](#) for program management scholarship opportunities.

30. Principle Investigator:

Description: A Principal Investigator (PI) is a leading researcher responsible for designing, implementing, and managing research projects. PIs are typically faculty members or senior scientists who guide research teams from conception to completion. They play a crucial role in securing funding, ensuring research integrity, analyzing data, and disseminating findings. The average Principal Investigator salary in the United States is \$90,467.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree in a relevant field is typically the minimum educational requirement to become a PI. Although, many institutions and organizations require PIs to hold a master's or doctoral degree. It is important to align your major or specialization with your research interests.

Progressing in a PI career may involve pursuing a post-doctoral fellowship, securing a research assistant position, or obtaining a faculty appointment.

These pathways offer opportunities for professional growth and advancement in research.

For more career advancement opportunities, consider [receiving the CPI credential](#) from the Association of Clinical Research Professionals (ACRP).

Resources: See [MassCONNECT mentorship program](#) for information about mentorship opportunities. See [NSF scholarships](#) for scholarships opportunities.

Health Promotion



31. Health Education Specialist:

Description: Health education specialists educate individuals on behaviors for overall wellness. They develop strategies to enhance well-being for individuals and communities. The median annual wage for health education specialists was \$60,600 as of May 2021.

Educational Requirements: A minimum of a bachelor's degree in health education or health promotion is typically required. Bachelor's degrees in other fields like social science and healthcare may be considered.

Some positions may require a master's or doctoral degree in community health education, public health education, or health promotion.

Resource: Funding opportunities for health education can be found at [health education scholarships](#).

Employers may require or prefer certification such as CHES or MCHES from the [National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc.](#)

32. Dietician/Nutritionist:

Description: Dietitians and nutritionists use food and nutrition to improve health and manage medical conditions. They assess clients' health through nutrition evaluation and diagnostic testing. The median annual wage for dietitians and nutritionists was \$61,650 as of May 2021.

Educational Requirements: A bachelor's degree in fields like dietetics or food and nutrition is typically required. This degree in nutrition takes around four years to complete. Additionally, holding an advanced degree in the field is common.

Licensing requirements vary by state, but Texas does not require licensing.

Funding opportunities for nutrition can be found at [nutrition scholarships](#).

Professional credentials like RD/RDN or CNS may be preferred by employers. More information on this is available at the [Commission on Dietetic Registration](#).

Resources: Information about a nutrition mentorship program can be found [here](#).

33. Public Health professional/Health Promotion:



Description: Public health professionals assess and develop programs to protect the well-being of individuals, families, and communities. They play a crucial role in emergency preparedness and response. Public health offers diverse career opportunities in government, research, non-profit organizations, and healthcare settings. Examples of public health jobs include Health Program Coordinator, Public Health Researcher, and Healthcare Policy Analyst. The annual wage of public health professionals varies based on their area of expertise.

Educational Requirements: A minimum of a bachelor's degree in public health or a related field is typically required. Pursuing a master's degree in public health (MPH) is recommended for advanced roles. A Doctorate degree (Ph.D., DrPH) in Public Health is beneficial for research, teaching, or leadership positions. This career path is suitable for those passionate about improving population health, health education, and community engagement.

Resources: The American Public Health Association offers a mentorship match program for networking and career development. Information about the mentorship program can be found at [APHA Mentoring](#). Funding opportunities for public health can be found through [ASPPH Scholarship opportunities](#).



Education Glossary

Associate degree: this is a higher education program pursued at an undergraduate level, following completion of high school. Its purpose is to equip students with fundamental, technical and academic knowledge, and transferable skills, to prepare them for employment opportunities or advanced studies in their desired field. It typically takes two years to complete.

Bachelor's degree: this is an undergraduate program offered by academic institutions that allows you to specialize in a subject of your choosing. Obtaining a bachelor's degree can broaden your employment prospects, expose you to fresh perspectives and concepts, and significantly increase your earning potential. It typically takes 4-5 years to complete. Bachelor's degree programs often require an SAT or ACT score in addition to a high school diploma or a GED.

Master's degree: this is an advanced educational credential awarded at the postgraduate level to individuals who have successfully completed a program showcasing exceptional knowledge and proficiency in a particular field of study or professional domain. It usually takes one to three years to complete. Master's programs typically require students to have completed a bachelor's degree. Many programs look for GRE scores, work experience, personal essays, letters of recommendation, and official transcripts.

Doctorate degree: A doctorate is the most prestigious qualification attainable in an academic discipline or profession. Obtaining a doctorate can propel your career forward, augment your earning potential, and establish you as a recognized authority in your area of expertise. It usually requires a commitment of four to seven years to complete the program.