

Occupational Profile: Pharmacy Tech

GENERAL OCCUPATION DESCRIPTION

Prepare medications under the direction of a pharmacist. May measure, mix, count out, label, and record amounts and dosages of medications.

Specific tasks include:

- Receive written prescription or refill requests and verify that information is complete and accurate.
- Maintain proper storage and security conditions for drugs.
- Answer telephones, responding to questions or requests.
- Fill bottles with prescribed medications and type and affix labels.
- Assist customers by answering simple questions, locating items or referring them to the pharmacist for medication information.
- Price and file prescriptions that have been filled.
- Clean, and help maintain, equipment and work areas, and sterilize glassware according to prescribed methods.
- Establish and maintain patient profiles, including lists of medications taken by individual patients.
- Order, label, and count stock of medications, chemicals, and supplies, and enter inventory data into computer.
- Receive and store incoming supplies, verify quantities against invoices, and inform supervisors of stock needs and shortages.

Source: O*NET online. <http://online.onetcenter.org>

REQUIRED EDUCATION

As shown in the table (right), the majority of employers (65.9%) reportedly required a high-school diploma or less, and 33.8% required a 2-year degree or the equivalent for this occupation.

Required Education	
Percent of Employers Requiring HS Diploma or Less	65.9%
Percent of Employers Requiring 2-Year Degree or Equiv	33.8%
Percent of Employers Requiring BS Diploma or More	0.3%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

WAGES

Pharmacy Technician is generally considered a low to medium-wage occupation, with above average possibility for wage advancement with experience. This occupation is generally paid higher for entry level positions in the Greater Phoenix MSA as compared with the overall United States.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Location	Pay Period	2005				
		10%	25%	Median	75%	90%
United States	Hourly	\$8.22	\$9.66	\$11.73	\$14.26	\$16.90
	Yearly	\$17,100	\$20,100	\$24,400	\$29,700	\$35,200
Phoenix-Mesa, AZ	Hourly	\$10.93	\$12.11	\$13.99	\$15.81	\$16.89
	Yearly	\$22,745	\$25,201	\$29,113	\$32,901	\$35,148
Arizona	Hourly	\$9.37	\$10.66	\$12.41	\$14.45	\$16.96
	Yearly	\$19,500	\$22,200	\$25,800	\$30,100	\$35,300

As shown in the table to right, a comparison of wages for this occupation by State reveals Arizona ranks 16st in terms of median wages.

RANK	Location	Median Wage 2005	
		Hourly	Annual
1	Alaska	\$15.86	\$33,000
2	California	\$15.75	\$32,800
3	Washington	\$15.52	\$32,300
4	Columbia	\$14.48	\$30,100
5	Oregon	\$14.33	\$29,800
16	ARIZONA	\$12.41	\$25,800

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

The table below provides a comparison of wages by industry for the Greater Phoenix MSA (2005). As shown, the two main employment sectors do not differ substantially in terms of wages.

Wages by Industry: Greater Phoenix MSA	Rounded Employ-2005)ent	Mean Wage	10th Percentile Wage	25th Percentile Wage	Median Wage	75th Percentile Wage	90th Percentile Wage
Ambulatory Health Care Services	NR	\$13.99	\$11.11	\$12.29	\$14.17	\$15.86	\$16.85
Hospitals	510	\$13.72	\$10.75	\$11.93	\$13.80	\$15.76	\$16.93

EMPLOYMENT

As shown in the table below, this occupation has a projected 44% growth over 10 years (between 2003 and 2013) for the Greater Phoenix MSA. There is an average projected 135 job openings each year, comprised of 135 new jobs and 104 positions vacated by individuals leaving the field (due to retirement, death, career changes, or other reasons).

	10-YEAR CHANGE			AVERAGE ANNUAL		
	Employment		Percent Change	Job Openings	Growth	Separations
United States	2004	2014				
Pharmacy Technicians	258,200	331,900	29%	10,740	n/a	n/a
Arizona	Employment		Percent Change	Job Openings	Growth	Separations
	2002	2012				
Pharmacy Technicians	2,860	4,270	50%	180	n/a	n/a
Greater Phoenix MSA	Employment		Percent Change	Job Openings	Growth	Separations
	2003	2013				
Pharmacy Technicians	2,369	3,411	44%	135	104	31

Job Openings refers to the average annual job openings due to growth and net replacement.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

An additional source of information regarding this occupation can be provided by analysis of employer survey data collected for the Maricopa County Community Colleges by the ERISS Corporation in 2004. As shown, the ERISS survey data shows a projected 1-year growth rate of 3%, which is comparable to the average of 4.4% per year reflected by the BLS data above.

Additionally, the ERISS data provides an indicator of turnover for this occupation, which is reported to be 19%. This high turnover rate is somewhat typical for lower paying occupations within the Health Services industry.

ERISS Occupational Survey Data (2004)			
Greater Phoenix MSA	Growth	Turnover	Demand
Pharmacy Technicians	3.0%	19.0%	22.0%

Source: 2004 ERISS occupational survey

Comparison of employment projections for top five regions for Pharmacy Technicians

As shown in the table to right, a statewide comparison reveals the State of Arizona ranks 2nd in terms of projected 10-year growth for this occupation between 2002 and 2012 (78%).

RANK	Location	Employment		Percent Change
		2002	2012	
1	Idaho	950	1,730	81%
2	ARIZONA	10,950	19,540	78%
3	Arkansas	1,200	2,070	72%
4	Georgia	11,130	18,770	69%
4	Utah	3,300	5,590	69%
4	Virginia	7,210	12,150	69%
5	New Hampshire	1,060	1,770	68%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Employment by Industry

The table below shows the industries that most commonly employ Pharmacy Technicians, and the proportion of employment accounted for at the national level. As shown, Pharmacies and Drug Stores account for the great majority of employment.

Percent of Employment Nationally by Industry	
Percent	Industry
53.8%	Pharmacies and Drug Stores
15.1%	General Medical & Surgical Hospitals
6.4%	Grocery Stores
4.6%	Other General Merchandise Stores
4.5%	Department Stores
2.3%	Local Government Hospitals

Geo-Location General and Surgical Hospitals (n = 32)

(note: Overlay represent employers in the Health Services sector only. The main employer for this occupation (Pharmacies and Drug Stores) has too numerous locations to map)



