

Medical Records Specialist

Turn what happened to a patient into codes and clean records. Office work, health pay, and no bedside.

TYPICAL PAY

\$51,140

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$37k to \$81k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

1 to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Very high

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Hospitals, clinics, insurers, billing companies, home offices

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Biology and English help most. A diploma or equivalent is the entry requirement.
- 2 Accredited program** 1 to 2 years
An associate degree in health information management, or a shorter coding certificate. Accreditation decides which exams you can sit.
- 3 Learn the code sets properly** Inside the program
Anatomy, disease processes, medical terminology, and then the diagnosis and procedure coding systems themselves.
- 4 Certification exam** One sitting
The Registered Health Information Technician exam is 150 questions over three and a half hours at a testing center, with a passing score of 300.
- 5 First job** Year 1
Records handling, release of information or apprentice level coding, checked by a senior coder until you are accurate.

Pros and cons

- + One or two years of cheap training
- + One of the few genuinely remote healthcare jobs
- + Weekday hours and no clinical placement
- Starting pay is low and the climb takes a few years
- Production targets and accuracy scores are tracked closely
- Sitting at a screen all day, alone, is not for everyone

Good to know

The exam is 150 questions and about three in four pass

The Registered Health Information Technician exam has 150 questions, 130 of which are scored, over three and a half hours. In 2025, 74% of 1,630 first-time candidates passed, at a fee of \$229 for members.

The codes change twice a year

The diagnosis codes are maintained by the national health statistics center and the inpatient procedure codes by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Both are updated on October 1 and...

Optional boosts

Inpatient hospital coding. Specialty coding. Coding auditor. Cancer registry.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Medical Records Specialists (29-2072.00)

AHIMA: Registered Health Information Technician certification

Commission on Accreditation for Health Informatics and Information Management Education

AAPC: medical coding certifications

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in United States dollars, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics wage data and published pay scales. They vary by state, employer and experience. Tuition is for in-state students at public schools unless the card says otherwise. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/us/careers/medical-records-specialist>



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