

Office Administrator

Run the machinery of an organization: schedules, records, vendors, payroll, the people at the front desk. You can start at eighteen and work your way up.

TYPICAL PAY

\$76,590

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$51k to \$110k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

up to 2 years

after high school

DEMAND

Limited

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

No

anyone can do it

WHERE YOU WORK

Corporate offices, hospitals, school districts, government agencies, s...

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
 The one real requirement for most openings. Take business, accounting and computer courses if your school offers them.
- 2 First office job** Right after school
 Receptionist, file clerk, scheduler, data entry. Temp agencies are a normal and effective way in.
- 3 Optional certificate or associate degree** 1 to 2 years
 A one-year certificate or two-year associate degree in office administration or business from a community college. Often taken at night while working.
- 4 Become the one who knows the systems** 2 to 4 years
 Learn the scheduling, billing and records software better than anyone. This, more than any credential, is what gets you promoted.
- 5 Office manager or executive assistant** 5 years in
 Running the office, managing vendors and budgets, or supporting a senior leader directly.

Pros and cons

- + You can start at eighteen with no debt
- + Every industry needs this, so you can work anywhere
- + Real hours, real weekends, low physical demand
- Employment in the field is projected to shrink as software absorbs routine tasks
- The work is often invisible until something goes wrong
- Pay at the entry level is low and rises slowly at first

Optional boosts

Bookkeeping. Payroll. Human resources basics. Project coordination.

Good to know

The job used to be a man's job

Clerk and secretary were male professions through most of the 1800s. The typewriter and the two world wars changed that, and by the middle of the 20th century the work had been recoded as women's...

The wage survey counts the top of the ladder

The federal occupation used for this career is executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants. It deliberately excludes general office clerks and receptionists, who are counted separately a...

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants (43-6011.00)

International Association of Administrative Professionals

Austin Community College: tuition rates

Apprenticeship.gov, the United States Department of Labor apprenticeship site

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/office-administrator>



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