

Phlebotomist

Draw blood, label it right, keep the patient calm. The fastest way into a hospital job in the country.

TYPICAL PAY

\$45,230

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$36k to \$59k

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, doctor's offices,
diagnostic labs, blood donation c...**

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
A diploma or equivalency is required by every certifying body and most employers.
- 2 Phlebotomy training** 4 to 8 months
A program of roughly 4 to 8 months at a community college or vocational school, covering anatomy, safety, labeling and the order of draw.
- 3 Hands-on sticks** During the program
To sit the national exam you must prove at least 30 venipunctures and 10 capillary or finger sticks on live people, not on a practice arm.
- 4 Pass the certification exam** One sitting
A multiple choice exam on procedure, safety and specimen handling. Employers treat it as the baseline.
- 5 First job** Year 1
Clinics and draw stations hire new certificate holders. Hospitals usually want a year of experience first.

Pros and cons

- + Inside a hospital in under a year, with almost no debt
- + A concrete skill that transfers to every state
- + Constant patient contact without years of school
- Pay flattens out fast without more training
- Very early starts and a lot of weekend shifts
- Needlestick risk and exposure to infection are real

Good to know

You have to stick real people to qualify

The national certification requires proof of at least 30 venipunctures and 10 capillary or finger sticks performed on living individuals. A practice arm does not count, which is why every program must find...

There is a work experience route

You do not have to take a course. The certification board also accepts a year of supervised phlebotomy work in the last three years, or two years in the last five. If a clinic will hire and train you, the classroom is...

Optional boosts

Apheresis and donor collection. Pediatric and neonatal draws. Forensic phlebotomy. Travel contracts.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Phlebotomists (31-9097.00)
National Healthcareer Association: Certified Phlebotomy Technician requirements
Washington State Department of Health: credentialed health professions
National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences

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/phlebotomist>



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