

Radiologic Technologist

You take the x-rays and scans doctors use to work out what is wrong. Two years of school and you are working in a hospital.

TYPICAL PAY

\$80,110

a year, full time

PAY RANGE

\$56k to \$119k

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY

2 to 3 years

after high school

DEMAND

Moderate

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED

Yes

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK

Hospitals, imaging centers, urgent care clinics, mobile x-ray services

How you get there

- 1 High school diploma** Grade 12
Biology, physics, math and anatomy if your school offers it. Some programs want a health course or volunteer hours too.
- 2 Get into an accredited program** Apply a year ahead
Look for accreditation by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology. Admission is competitive and cohorts are small.
- 3 Associate degree in radiography** 2 years
Anatomy, positioning, radiation physics and protection, plus clinical rotations in hospitals from your first semester.
- 4 Pass the national exam** After graduation
The radiography certification exam from the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists, which also has an ethics review before you may sit it.
- 5 State license and first job** Weeks
Most states license anyone who operates radiation equipment on people. Then hospitals hire, often from their own clinical students.

Pros and cons

- + A real health career in two years for under \$10,000
- + Hospitals everywhere hire, so you can move
- + Clear pay increases from stacking credentials
- Nights, weekends and holidays, especially early on
- Physically hard: standing, lifting and moving patients
- Repetitive once you have done ten thousand chest films

Good to know

You wear a badge that measures your dose

Technologists wear a small monitoring badge that records radiation exposure, read on a schedule and kept on record. The guiding rule of the profession is to keep every dose as low as reasonably achievable.

The first x-ray was of a hand

In 1895 Wilhelm Roentgen imaged his wife's hand, wedding ring and all. She is said to have reacted by saying she had seen her own death. The whole profession grew out of that one photograph.

Optional boosts

Computed tomography. Magnetic resonance imaging. Mammography. Interventional radiography.

Where these numbers come from

My Next Move: Radiologic Technologists and Technicians (29-2034.00)
American Registry of Radiologic Technologists: radiography credential
Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology
American Society of Radiologic Technologists: careers

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/radiologic-technologist>



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