

“The opportunity to have an individual with a background in health and knowledge of pharmacy would enhance the quality of healthcare that a pharmacy could provide.”

Gary Bandy, R. Ph.

Pharmacy Tech Definition

The exact definition of a pharmacy technician varies based on the state you live in however the basic definition is a person who works under the direct supervision of a licensed pharmacist and performs many pharmacy-related functions. Pharmacy technicians are used in a wide variety of practice settings, including community pharmacies, hospitals, the military, in home health care, long term care, mail service facility, managed health care facilities, educational/training programs. For the purposes of national voluntary certification, pharmacy technicians are defined as individuals working in a pharmacy, who under the supervision of a licensed pharmacist, assist in pharmacy activities not requiring the professional judgement of a pharmacist. The pharmacy technician is accountable to the supervising pharmacist, who is legally responsible by virtue of state licensure for the care and safety of patients served by the pharmacy. The pharmacy technician performs activities as the result of having certain knowledge and skills.

Job Duties

Specific responsibilities will depend on the pharmacy setting and scope of practice. Below is a list of duties that a pharmacy technician might find in many practice settings:

- Assist pharmacist in labeling and filling prescriptions
- Assist patients in dropping off and picking up prescriptions
- Entering prescriptions into the computer
- Verify that customer receives correct prescription(s)
- Compound oral solutions, ointments, and creams
- Scheduling and Maintaining Workflow
- Prepackage bulk medications
- Screen calls for pharmacists
- Medication ordering
- Work with insurance carriers to obtain payments and refilling authority
- Prepare medication inventories
- Prepare Chemotherapeutic agents
- Compound total parenteral nutrition solutions
- Compound large-volumes of intravenous mixtures
- Assisting in outpatient dispensing
- Assisting inpatient dispensing

- Preparing IV mixtures
- Purchasing and billing

Knowledge, Skills, Training, and Education

State practice acts and employer policies determine training and education requirements. Below is a list of some characteristics that may be desired.

- Professional Attitude
- Strong Communication Skills
- Ability to work in teams
- Previous customer service experience
- Ability to type 35 words a minute
- Understanding of medical terminology and calculations
- Attention to detail
- Outgoing
- Hard Working
- Be a quick learner
- PTCB Certification may be desired or mandatory

Salary Surveys

The pay of technicians depends on many factors, including PTCB certification, previous experience, employment setting, area of the country, and years practicing as a pharmacy technician. The average pay range anywhere from \$6.50 to \$13.00 an hour usually based upon certification and length of employment, however we have quite a few number of CPhTs who earn over \$15 an hour.

Growth in the Pharmaceutical Industry

Working as a pharmacy technician is a great place to start if you are interested in having a career in the pharmaceutical industry. Starting as a pharmacy technician gives the person the type of background training that would be necessary to become a pharmacist or work elsewhere in the pharmaceutical industry.