

Santa Monica College

Respiratory Care (AS) Program Information



Updated Summer 2024 (information subject to change)

Compiled by SMC Health Sciences Counseling

Topics/Information Areas


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Explore Respiratory Care/Therapy:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xu-z0lib_W0
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18jhWdYPNh4>
- <https://youtu.be/1uC9I02SsIA>
- <https://www.smc.edu/student-support/career-services/careers-majors/career-and-major-online-resources.php>

Career Information: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>

Respiratory Therapists

PRINTER-FRIENDLY 

Summary

What They Do

Work Environment

How to Become One

Pay

Job Outlook

State & Area Data

Similar Occupations

More Info

Summary

Quick Facts: Respiratory Therapists

2022 Median Pay ?	\$70,540 per year \$33.91 per hour
Typical Entry-Level Education ?	Associate's degree
Work Experience in a Related Occupation ?	None
On-the-job Training ?	None
Number of Jobs, 2022 ?	133,100
Job Outlook, 2022-32 ?	13% (Much faster than average)
Employment Change, 2022-32 ?	16,700



What Respiratory Therapists Do

Respiratory therapists care for patients who have trouble breathing—for example, because of a chronic condition such as asthma.

Work Environment

Most respiratory therapists work full time. Because they may work in medical facilities that are always open, such as hospitals, they may have shifts that include nights, weekends, or holidays.

How to Become a Respiratory Therapist

Respiratory therapists typically need an associate's degree in respiratory therapy. Some employers prefer to hire candidates who have a bachelor's degree. Respiratory therapists must be licensed in all states except Alaska; requirements vary by state.

Pay

The median annual wage for respiratory therapists was \$70,540 in May 2022.

Job Outlook and Pay

- The projected average annual earnings working in the U.S. is \$70,540 and in CA \$97,770. <https://www.onetonline.org>

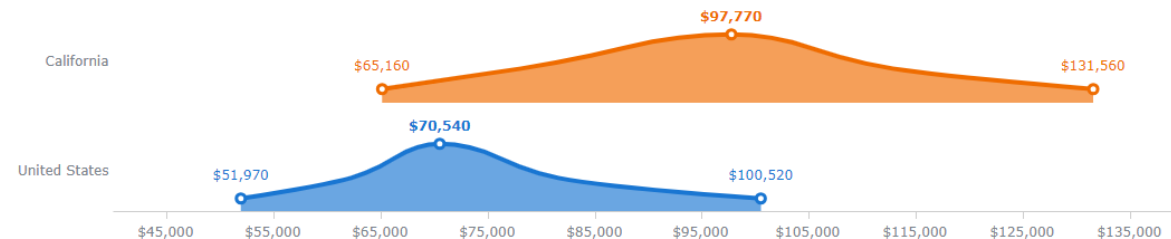
California Wages

29-1126.00 - [Respiratory Therapists](#) 🌟 Bright Outlook

Wages for state: California

Wages near ZIP Code:

Annual Wages [Hourly Wages](#)



In California:

- Workers on average earn **\$97,770**.
- 10% of workers earn **\$65,160 or less**.
- 10% of workers earn **\$131,560 or more**.

In the United States:

- Workers on average earn **\$70,540**.
- 10% of workers earn **\$51,970 or less**.
- 10% of workers earn **\$100,520 or more**.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics [2022 wage data](#) [e](#).

SMC Support Services

- SMC General Counseling and Transfer Services <https://www.smc.edu/student-support/academic-support/counseling/>
- SMC Career Services Center* <https://www.smc.edu/student-support/career-services/> (careerservices@smc.edu)

* Must be currently enrolled in 3 units (at SMC) or currently enrolled in COUNS 12 course to schedule a Career Services counseling appointment.

- Volunteer Opportunities <https://www.smc.edu/student-support/career-services/get-the-job/health-wellness/hw-experiential-opportunities/>
- SMC Student Clubs (scroll to Health and Wellness) <https://www.smc.edu/community/office-of-student-life/student-government/clubs.php>

Area of Interest and Program Map

SMC Area of Interest: Health and Wellness Information

- <https://www.smc.edu/academics/areas-of-interest/health-and-wellness/>

SMC Health and Wellness Program Maps

- <https://www.smc.edu/academics/classes/program-maps.php#hw>
- Note: program maps serve as a course guide and do not replace an educational plan. Please connect with an SMC counselor.

SMC Student Success Support Courses

- COUNS 12: Exploring Careers and College Majors
- COUNS 20: Student Success Seminar

Respiratory Care: Program Information

- Prepares students to take examinations:
 - ▣ TMC: Therapist Multiple Choice Examination
 - ▣ CSE: Clinical Simulation Exam
 - ▣ Passing both exams awards the graduate the RRT (registered respiratory therapist) credential
 - ▣ RRT credential is required for licensure in the State of California

Graduates will receive eligibility to sit for other specialized exams such as:

- ▣ Certified Pulmonary Function Technologist
- ▣ Registered Pulmonary Function Technologist
- ▣ Neonatal/Pediatric Respiratory Care Specialist
- ▣ Sleep Disorders Testing and Therapeutic Intervention Respiratory Care Specialist

Respiratory Care Board of California:

- <https://www.rcb.ca.gov/>

Respiratory Care Education Programs:

- https://www.rcb.ca.gov/applicants/edu_programs.shtml

Respiratory Care Program Prerequisites

-Reflective of prerequisites as outlined in Fall 2023 Respiratory Care Degree Audit and Program Map

-Completion of Respiratory Care Program Prerequisite courses with grade C or better

****Requirements for admission are subject to change.****

Respiratory Care Program Prerequisites (effective Fall 2022)

- ❑ CHEM 19 (preferred) or CHEM 10 (5 semester units)
- ❑ ANATMY 1 (4 semester units): Prerequisite ENGL 1
- ❑ PHYS 3 (4 semester units): Prerequisites (CHEM 19 or CHEM 10) & ANATMY 1
- ❑ MCRBIO 1 (5 semester units): Prerequisites (CHEM 19 or CHEM 10) & PHYS 3
- ❑ HEALTH 61 (3 semester units)

***Starting Fall 2022, the SMC Respiratory Care program will resume requiring science prerequisite courses (Chemistry 19 or Chemistry 10, Human Anatomy, Human Physiology, and Microbiology) be completed with an on-ground lab. Science prerequisite courses completed fall 2022 or later are required to have an on-ground lab.**

SMC General Education Associate Degree Requirements:

<https://www.smc.edu/student-support/academic-support/transfer-center/areas-of-study/documents/associate-degrees-sheets/associate-degree.pdf>

Program Prerequisites (cont'd)



For prerequisite waivers for courses completed at other colleges/universities:

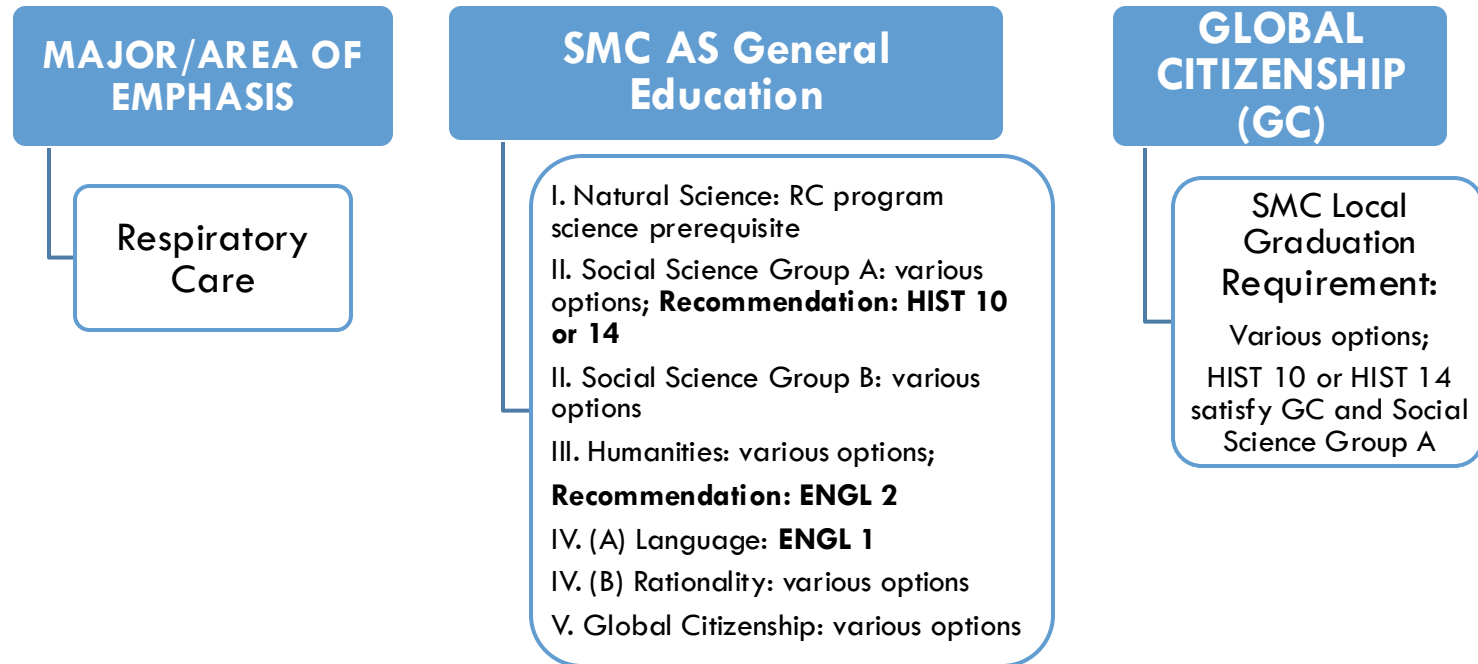
- Connect with a SMC Counselor for [prerequisite waiver](#) to enroll into ENGL 1, ANATMY 1
- Connect with the SMC [Life Science Department](#) for prerequisite waiver to enroll into PHYS 3, MCRBIO 1

To transfer courses completed at other colleges/universities or AP exam scores:

- Request official transcript(s) and/or AP Score Report be sent to SMC Admissions & Records Office
- Connect with a Health Sciences Counselor regarding “Transcript Evaluation for GE’s”
 - Transcript Evaluation Request: course description required, course syllabus recommended.
- Connect with a Health Sciences Counselor regarding “(Major) Course Substitution/Equivalence Request”
 - (Major) Course Substitution/Equivalence Request: Provide course description and course syllabus.

RC Major & AS GE Requirements

ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN RESPIRATORY CARE



- SMC AS General Education requirements: <https://www.smc.edu/student-support/academic-support/transfer-center/areas-of-study/documents/associate-degrees-sheets/associate-degree.pdf>
- SMC Respiratory Care prerequisites and major requirements: <https://www.smc.edu/student-support/academic-support/transfer-center/areas-of-study/documents/associate-degrees-sheets/respiratory-care-as.pdf>

RC Program Application

- Application Information (click on Admission Process) <https://www.smc.edu/academics/academic-departments/health-sciences/respiratory-care.php>
- SMC student ID# for needed for application to be processed.
- Official transcripts from other colleges/universities must be on file with SMC Admissions and Records Office.
- AP college credit: request the College Board send an official AP score report to SMC Admissions and Records Office if you received a 3 or better on an AP high school exam.
- Prerequisite and major courses completed at other institutions may require additional documentation such as a course syllabus.
- Schedule a counseling appointment with a SMC Health Sciences Counselor if you have questions.

RC Clinical Site Information

- ❑ Applicants for the program must have a negative/clear criminal background check and pass a drug screening procedure to participate in any clinical classes.
- ❑ Competency-based model.
- ❑ Varying clinical experiences.
- ❑ Opportunity to be on different floors & exposure to difference scenarios such as ER, Trauma, Pediatric.
- ❑ Generally scheduled 2x a week, 12-hour shifts.
- ❑ Paired with a Respiratory Care Practitioner, conducting a variety of treatment modalities under their supervision.

Next Steps



Life & Breath

Learn about respiratory care

Next Steps:

- ✓ Meet with a Health Sciences Counselor to review your Respiratory prerequisite progress.
- ✓ Complete Respiratory Care program prerequisites.
- ✓ Obtain appropriate waivers, if needed.
- ✓ Complete course equivalence/substitution request, if needed.
- ✓ Explore SMC Student Clubs and Volunteer opportunities.

SMC RC Program Information

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Health Sciences Counseling Appointments

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Thank You!