

Santa Monica College

Respiratory Care (AS) Program Information



Updated Summer 2024 (information subject to change)

Compiled by SMC Health Sciences Counseling

Topics/Information Areas


- Career Exploration and Outlook
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- SMC Area of Interest and Program Map
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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>

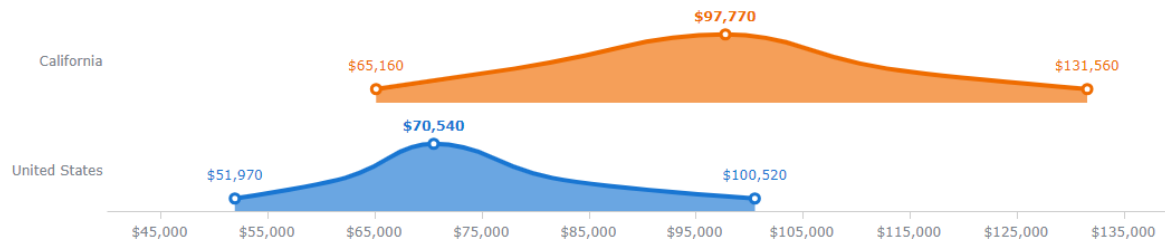
California Wages

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

Wages for state: California

Wages near ZIP Code:

Annual Wages



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)



Important Notice

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

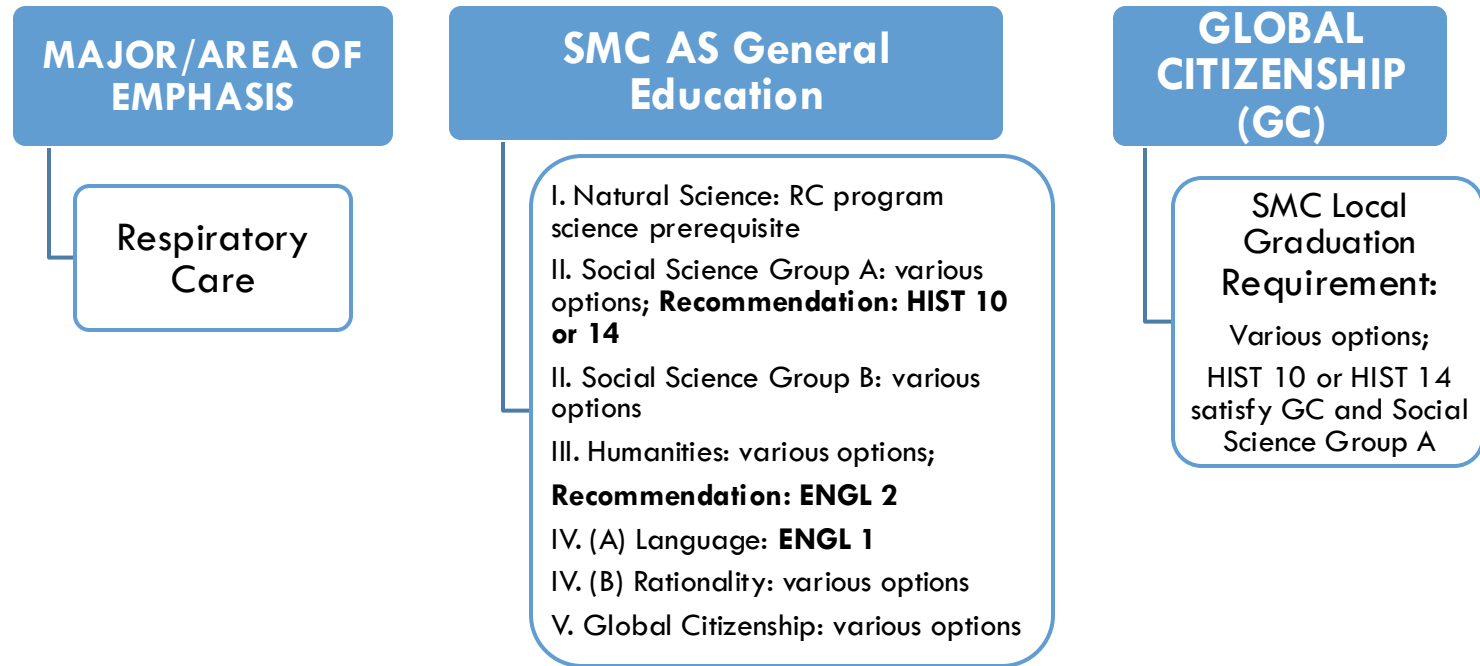
- Connect with a SMC Counselor for [prerequisite waiver](#) to enroll into ENGL 1, ANATMY 1
- Connect with the SMC [Life Science Department](#) for prerequisite waiver to enroll into PHYS 3, MCRBIO 1

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/areas-of-interest/health-and-wellness/health-sciences/resiratory-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!