



Guide for

Orderlies in California

May also be called: Lift Team Technicians; Patient Care Technicians; Patient Escorts; and Transporter Orderlies

What Would I Do?

Orderlies are commonly referred to as Patient Care Technicians in California. They routinely lift, transport, and assist patients and nursing home residents. Orderlies help lift patients with the assistance of a hydraulic patient lift. They then transport patients by wheelchair or gurney to and from medical facility departments, such as surgery and rehabilitation, as needed. Orderlies may provide general care of patients. Orderlies may be responsible for the assembly, transportation, and maintenance of some medical equipment. Other duties may include transporting and delivering supplies and specimens. Orderlies may also be responsible for cleaning and sanitizing patient rooms. They work under the direction of nursing and medical staff. Orderlies' duties depend on training, experience, and type of health care facility.

Tools and Technology

Orderlies use a variety of tools and technology in their work. They may use automated external defibrillators, hydraulic patient lifts, medical gurneys, wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, shower chairs, and electronic medical thermometers. They may also use electronic medical record software.

Important Tasks and Related Skills

A formal survey to determine specific skills requirements for Orderlies has yet to be completed. Therefore, the sample skills shown below are common for the two closest occupations to Orderlies: Home Health Aides and Medical Assistants. Each task is matched to a sample skill required to carry out the task.

Task	Skill Used in this Task
Lift or assist others to lift patients to move them on or off beds, examination tables, surgical tables, or stretchers.	Static Strength
Provide physical support to patients to assist them to perform daily living activities, such as getting out of bed, bathing, dressing, using the toilet, and standing, walking, or exercising.	Response Orientation
Transport patients to treatment units, testing units, operating rooms, or other areas using wheelchairs, stretchers, or moveable beds.	Multilimb Coordination

Transport portable medical equipment or medical supplies between rooms or departments.	Operation and Control
Transport specimens, laboratory items, or pharmacy items, ensuring proper documentation and delivery to authorized personnel.	Information Ordering
Answer patient call signals, signal lights, bells, or intercom systems to determine patients' needs.	Oral Comprehension
Clean equipment, such as wheelchairs, hospital beds, or portable medical equipment, documenting needed repairs or maintenance.	Equipment Maintenance
Clean and sanitize patient rooms, bathrooms, examination rooms, or other patient areas.	Service Orientation

Sources: U.S. Department of Labor [Occupational Information Network \(O*NET\)](http://online.onetcenter.org) at online.onetcenter.org.

Working Conditions

Orderlies work in a variety of environments, including acute and residential care, skilled nursing facilities, and clinics. Most facilities are well lit, air-conditioned, and have modern equipment. The work can be emotionally and physically demanding. Orderlies walk or stand most of the day. They need to be able to lift 50 pounds or more. They must take precautions to guard against back strain or other injuries from lifting patients and equipment. They must also protect against exposure to radiation and caustic chemicals as well as diseases, such as tuberculosis and hepatitis. Using proper safety procedures reduces personal risk. Most full-time Orderlies work about 40 hours a week, but because patients need care 24 hours a day, some Orderlies work nights, weekends, and holidays. Employers generally provide or pay for uniforms and supplies.

Union membership is not common in this occupation; however, Orderlies who work for government agencies may belong to the Service Employees International Union.

Will This Job Fit Me?

This job may appeal to those with social natures who enjoy helping people and providing health care services. Orderlies need to be able to communicate effectively with coworkers and supervisors in order to help meet the needs of their patients.

What Wages and Benefits Can I Expect?

Wages

Orderlies were previously grouped into the Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants occupational cluster; therefore, a formal salary survey is not available. However, the median wage in 2011 for Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants was \$26,820 annually or \$12.90 hourly. All salaries vary by employer. Generally, workers in large cities earn higher wages than those who work in small towns and rural areas. The median is the point at which half of the workers earn more and half earn less.

Annual Wages for 2011	Low (25th percentile)	Median (50th percentile)	High (75th percentile)
California	\$22,735	\$26,820	\$32,278

Source: EDD/LMID [Occupational Employment Statistics Survey, 2011](http://www.edd.ca.gov/employment_statistics) Wages do not reflect self-employment. Wages displayed are for Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants.

Benefits

Employee benefits vary by employer. Some Orderlies receive holiday and sick leave, medical and dental benefits, extra pay for late-shift work, and pension plans.

What is the Job Outlook?

The elderly population, a group with much greater-than-average health care needs, will grow faster than the total population. This growth will increase the demand for health services in places such as nursing homes and long-term care facilities.

In addition, the high replacement rate means that many job openings will likely occur in the foreseeable future. Some Orderlies leave the occupation to attend training programs for other health care occupations. Persons who are interested in, and suited for, this work should have job opportunities.

How Do I Qualify?

Education, Training, and Other Requirements

Most employers prefer to hire applicants with a high school diploma or equivalent. In order to work in California, Orderlies typically need Basic Life Support (BLS) certification from an American Heart Association (AHA) approved training provider. Some experience in the health care field may be beneficial for employment. However, employers typically provide on-the-job training for inexperienced workers.

Early Career Planning

High school preparation courses in biology, chemistry, English, mathematics, and health science can be helpful for job preparation. Strength training may also be helpful, as Orderlies are responsible for repositioning and lifting patients. Volunteer work in a hospital or long-term care facility can be valuable exposure to the work setting. Regional Occupational Programs (ROPs) providing related training for Orderlies may be available in the local area. To find an ROP program near you, go to the California Association of Regional Occupational Centers and Programs website at www.carocp.org/carocps.html.

Continuing Education

Orderlies must renew their BLS certification every two years.

Certification

To become certified in the state of California, applicants must contact an AHA-approved training provider to receive instruction for BLS training. After completing web-based or classroom coursework, prospective Orderlies must pass an exam to receive the BLS certification. The cost for training and subsequent certification varies by provider; however, most textbooks and instruction fees are relatively inexpensive. For more information, go to the U.S. Department of Labor's Career InfoNet website at www.acinet.org/ and scroll down to "Career Tools." Select "Certification Finder" at www.acinet.org/certifications_new/default.aspx and follow the instructions to locate certification programs.

Where Would I Work?

Most Orderlies work in nursing care facilities and general medical and surgical hospitals. A small number work in community care facilities, as well as residential care facilities for those with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues.

Finding a Job

Direct contact with employers is a good way to find a job in this field. Temporary employment agencies may also help with finding a job. Some applicants find jobs through newspaper or online classified advertisements. **Online job opening systems** include JobCentral at www.jobcentral.com and CalJOBSSM at www.caljobs.ca.gov.

To find your nearest One-Stop Career Center, go to [Service Locator](http://www.servicelocator.org) at www.servicelocator.org. View the [helpful job search tips](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/ocguides/JobSearchTips.pdf) at www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/ocguides/JobSearchTips.pdf for more resources (requires [Adobe Reader](#)).

Yellow Page Headings

You can focus your local job search by checking employers listed online or in your local telephone directory. Below are some suggested headings where you might find employers of Orderlies.

- Health Clinics
- Home Health Care Services
- Hospitals
- Nursing & Convalescent Homes
- Nursing Homes
- Temporary Agencies

Find Possible Employers

To locate a list of employers in your area, use “Find Employers” on the LaborMarketInfo website at www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/aspdotnet/databrowsing/empMain.aspx?menuChoice=emp.

- Select the search for employers by occupation.
- Select a geographic area.
- Search for an occupation by keyword, occupation, or category.
- Select one of the top industries that employ the occupation. (This will give you a list of employers in that industry in your area.)
- Select “View Filter Selections” to limit your list to specific cities or employer size.
- Select an employer for the street address, telephone number, size of business, website, etc.
- Contact the employer for possible employment.

Where Could This Job Lead?

The job of Orderly is one of the entry-level jobs in the health care field. It sets the foundation, skills, and knowledge that could lead to other health care occupations. With additional training and education, an Orderly can advance along a career pathway that includes home health aide, certified nursing assistant, medical assistant, licensed vocational nurse, and registered nurse.

Related Occupations

Below is a list of occupations related to Orderlies.

- Home Health Aides (SOC 31-1011)
- Medical Assistants (SOC 31-9092)
- Nursing Assistants (SOC 31-1014)
- Physical Therapist Aides (SOC 31-2022)
- Physical Therapist Assistants (SOC 31-2021)
- Psychiatric Aides (SOC 31-1013)

Other Sources

- American Heart Association
www.heart.org

- National Association of Health Care Assistants
www.nahcacaes.org

These links are provided for your convenience and do not constitute an endorsement by the EDD.

For the Career Professional

The following codes are provided to assist counselors, job placement workers, or other career professionals.

System	Code
SOC – Standard Occupational Classification at www.bls.gov/soc	31-1015
O*NET – Occupational Information Network at online.onetcenter.org	
Orderlies	31-1015.00

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