



# Health Careers In Alaska

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## Occupational Therapist

Occupational therapy focuses on enabling people to do the activities of daily life. Occupational therapists help people with disabilities learn or regain the skills they need to live independent, productive, and satisfying lives. They often work as a member of a team of professionals who combine their individual fields of expertise to meet the needs of the client.

Occupational therapists select appropriate activities suited to the physical and mental capability, developmental level, and interests of each client. Goal-

directed activities are designed to facilitate recovery and to improve independence in daily living or work related skills. Occupational therapists must also have an in-depth knowledge of the techniques used for redesigning living and working settings to provide accessibility for people with disabilities. Specialty areas in occupational therapy include hand rehabilitation, pediatrics, physical rehabilitation in areas such as neurology and orthopedics, school system practice, mental health, community-based practice, gerontology.

## Occupational Therapist Facts:

### Where do occupational therapists work in Alaska?

Occupational therapists work in many different types of environments, including: hospitals, rehabilitation centers, community centers, home health care, nursing homes, mental health centers, school systems, and private practice. In rural Alaska, occupational therapists are employed by health care facilities, educational organizations, school systems, infant learning programs, and city, state, or federal agencies.

### Educational Requirements

- Graduation from high school with coursework in English, science, and math.
- A bachelor's degree in any field and completion of required pre-requisites for the occupational therapy program you will be entering.
- A master's degree or doctoral degree in occupational therapy is needed to enter the profession and to be eligible to sit for the national certification examination.
- Students who have successfully completed an accredited degree program may be eligible to sit for the Occupational Therapist Registered OTR examination administered by the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT).

### Hourly Wage Range:

\$25.58-\$51.69 (Mean \$36.83)

*\*based on Alaska DOL data*

### Years in School:

6 to 7 years (after high school graduation).

### Academic Programs in Alaska

There is an occupational therapy professional doctorate (OTD) program at the University of Alaska Anchorage (UAA). This program is the result of a collaborative arrangement between Creighton University in Nebraska and UAA. Students are accepted into Creighton University, but attend courses online and at the UAA campus. This program is only open to students who live in Alaska. The program is full time only, and is approximately 3.5 years in length. For more information, contact:

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Website: <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/collegeofhealthandsocialwelfare/departments/ot/index.cfm>

### State Contact:

**Alaska Occupational Therapy Association**

PMB 1616, 3705 Arctic Blvd.

Anchorage, AK 99503

Email: [akotapresident@akota.org](mailto:akotapresident@akota.org)

Web site: <http://www.akota.org>

### National Contact:

**The American Occupational Therapy Association**

Phone: (301) 652-2682

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Web site: <http://www.aota.org>

