

# PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

Physical therapist assistants (PTAs) provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist. PTAs help people of all ages who have medical problems, or other health-related conditions that limit their ability to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives.

Some of the care provided by a PTA may include teaching patients or clients exercises for mobility, strength and coordination, training for activities such as walking with crutches, canes, or walkers, massage, and the use of physical agents and electrotherapy such as ultrasound and electrical stimulation. PTAs also observe the patient's abilities and report their observations to the physical therapist. Unlike a physical therapist, the PTA cannot evaluate a patient, update a plan of care, or discharge a patient.

## Where do physical therapist assistants work in Alaska?



Generally, physical therapist assistants are employed wherever physical therapists work. Hospitals, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, home and public health agencies, schools, private physical therapy practices, and the armed forces are major employers. Opportunities in rural Alaska are generally found in hospitals located in the regional centers.



### Hourly Wage Range\*

**\$8.50-\$28.90 (Mean \$17.18)**

\*based on Alaska DOL data



### Years in School: 2\*

\*after high school graduation

## Educational Requirements



- Graduation from high school with coursework in English, math, and science.
- Graduation from an accredited PTA Associate's degree program.
- PTA licensure is required by the State of Alaska and most other states. After graduation, candidates must pass a state-administered national exam and be approved by their state's licensing board.

## Academic Programs in Alaska

There are currently no physical therapist assistant programs in Alaska. For a list of accredited physical therapist assistant programs in the United States, visit the American Physical Therapy Association's website: <http://www.apta.org/> (see Education Programs: Student Resources: PTA programs). Programs are sorted by state.

## State and National Contacts

### State Contact:

Alaska Physical Therapy Association  
P.O. Box 140351  
Anchorage, AK 99514  
Phone: (907) 566-3749  
Email: [admin@akapta.org](mailto:admin@akapta.org)  
Website: <http://www.akapta.org/>

### National Contact:

American Physical Therapy Association  
1111 North Fairfax Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
Phone: (703) 684-2782  
Toll free: (800) 999-2782  
Web site: <https://www.apta.org/>

Information from: [www.healthcareersinalaska.info](http://www.healthcareersinalaska.info) Updated: September 29, 2009



developed by Alaska Center for Rural Health-Alaska's AHEC: <http://nursing.uaa.alaska.edu/acrh/>