

Nursing Assistants and Orderlies

SOC: 31-1131 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$39,430

Median Salary

1,495,400

Employment

+2.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: See Requirements (BLS)

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Medium Risk - 48.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job has some routine elements but still requires human judgment and interaction.

■ Work-Life Balance

6.0/10 - Good work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.8/10	Investigative	6.0/10
Artistic	4.4/10	Social	8.4/10
Enterprising	4.6/10	Conventional	7.4/10

■ Top Skills Required

Communication skills, Compassion, Patience, Physical stamina

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Nursing Assistants and Orderlies provide **basic patient care and support to nurses and healthcare staff**. They assist patients with daily activities, monitor vital signs, and ensure comfort and safety. Their work is critical in hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other healthcare settings.

This career is well suited for individuals who enjoy healthcare, patient interaction, and providing hands-on care.

What Do Nursing Assistants and Orderlies Do?

These professionals help patients with daily living activities, observe health conditions, and support nursing staff in delivering care.

Common responsibilities include:

- Assisting patients with bathing, dressing, grooming, and mobility
- Taking and recording vital signs, weight, and other health indicators
- Helping patients eat, drink, and take medications as directed
- Turning, positioning, and transporting patients safely
- Maintaining cleanliness and sanitary conditions in patient rooms
- Reporting changes in patients' conditions to nurses or healthcare providers
- Supporting medical procedures and providing comfort to patients

Key Areas of Nursing Assistance

Nursing assistants and orderlies may focus on specific patient populations or care settings:

- Long-Term Care: Assisting elderly or disabled patients in nursing homes or assisted living
- Hospital Support: Providing care to inpatients, post-surgical patients, or critical care
- Patient Mobility and Daily Activities: Helping with movement, hygiene, and basic needs
- Monitoring and Observation: Tracking patient health and reporting concerns
- Sanitation and Safety: Ensuring clean, safe, and comfortable patient environments

Skills and Abilities Needed

Nursing assistants and orderlies combine caregiving, observation, and interpersonal skills.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Career Pathway

This role typically requires formal training and certification:

- Postsecondary Certificate or Training Program: Nursing assistant or patient care programs
- State Certification: Required to practice as a certified nursing assistant (CNA) in most states
- On-the-Job Training: Learning patient care routines, safety procedures, and healthcare protocols
- Continuing Education: Staying current with healthcare standards, patient safety, and clinical procedures
- Specialty Training (optional): Geriatric care, critical care support, or rehabilitation assistance

Where Do Nursing Assistants and Orderlies Work?

They are employed in organizations that provide healthcare and patient support:

- Hospitals and Acute Care Facilities
- Long-Term Care and Nursing Homes
- Rehabilitation and Assisted Living Centers
- Home Healthcare Services

- Hospice and Community Health Programs

Work environments include patient rooms, hospital wards, rehabilitation facilities, and patient homes.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career requires physical stamina, emotional resilience, and interpersonal skills. Nursing assistants and orderlies must handle patient needs, support healthcare staff, and maintain safety standards.

Who Should Consider This Career?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Enjoy helping patients with daily activities and healthcare needs
- Are patient, empathetic, and caring
- Can work in fast-paced and physically demanding environments
- Have strong communication and observation skills
- Want a career supporting patient care and improving quality of life

How to Prepare Early

- Take courses in health sciences, biology, and anatomy
- Volunteer or intern in hospitals, clinics, or long-term care facilities
- Develop communication, empathy, and patient care skills
- Explore accredited nursing assistant training programs
- Gain hands-on experience through clinical practice or supervised internships

Nursing assistants and orderlies provide essential support to patients and healthcare staff, promoting comfort, safety, and quality care in various healthcare settings.