

Psychiatric Technicians and Aides

SOC: 29-2053 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

\$42,200

Median Salary

182,900

Employment

+16.0%

Growth Rate

■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: See Requirements (BLS)

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 8.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.

This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■■ Work-Life Balance

7.3/10 - Good work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	5.4/10	Investigative	8.6/10
Artistic	4.8/10	Social	9.0/10
Enterprising	5.4/10	Conventional	6.2/10

■ Top Skills Required

Compassion, Interpersonal skills, Observational skills, Patience, Physical stamina

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Psychiatric Technicians and Aides are mental healthcare support professionals who assist in the **care, supervision, and treatment of individuals with mental illness, emotional disorders, or developmental disabilities**. Working under the direction of nurses, psychiatrists, and other clinicians, they help maintain safe environments and support patients' daily needs and therapeutic activities. This career is well suited for individuals who are compassionate, patient, and able to remain calm and supportive in challenging or emotionally intense situations.

What Do Psychiatric Technicians and Aides Do?

Psychiatric technicians and aides provide direct support to patients in mental health settings.

Common responsibilities include:

- Monitoring patients' behavior and mental status
- Assisting patients with daily living activities
- Supporting therapeutic and recreational activities
- Observing and documenting patient progress
- Helping maintain a safe and structured environment
- Following treatment plans and clinical instructions
- Communicating patient needs to nurses and clinicians

Difference Between Technicians and Aides

Although closely related, their roles differ slightly:

- Psychiatric Technicians: Typically have more formal training and may assist with clinical procedures.
- Psychiatric Aides: Focus primarily on basic care, supervision, and support tasks.

Skills and Abilities Needed

These professionals combine caregiving skills with emotional awareness and safety practices.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Training Pathway

Requirements vary by role and state:

- High School Diploma or Equivalent: Minimum requirement for aides
- Postsecondary Certificate or Associate Degree (common): Psychiatric or mental health technology for technicians
- On-the-Job Training: Learning facility procedures and patient care practices
- Certification or Licensure (where required): Varies by state
- Continuing Education: Ongoing mental health and safety training

Where Do Psychiatric Technicians and Aides Work?

They work in structured mental health and care environments:

- Psychiatric Hospitals and Mental Health Facilities
- Residential Treatment Centers
- State or Community Mental Health Programs
- Substance Use Treatment Facilities
- Correctional or Secure Care Institutions

Work may involve shifts, weekends, and overnight schedules.

How Much Do Psychiatric Technicians and Aides Earn?

Earnings vary by role, education, and work setting:

- Psychiatric Aides: Typically earn hourly wages
- Psychiatric Technicians: Often earn higher pay due to training
- Experienced or Specialized Staff: May earn more in secure or clinical settings

Compensation often includes healthcare benefits and shift differentials.

Is This Career Difficult?

This work can be emotionally and physically demanding. Professionals may encounter patients in crisis, aggressive behaviors, or emotionally intense situations. The challenge lies in maintaining compassion, safety, and professionalism while supporting patients through difficult moments.

Who Should Consider Becoming a Psychiatric Technician or Aide?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Want to support individuals with mental health needs
- Are patient, empathetic, and emotionally resilient
- Can work well in structured environments
- Are comfortable following clinical guidance
- Want a meaningful entry or support role in mental healthcare

How to Prepare Early

- Study psychology, mental health, or social sciences
- Volunteer in mental health or human services settings
- Learn crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques
- Build communication and observation skills
- Explore mental health technician or aide training programs

Psychiatric technicians and aides provide stability, safety, and compassionate support—helping individuals navigate mental health challenges while fostering dignity, structure, and healing in therapeutic environments.

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Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/psychiatric-technicians-and-aides.htm>