

Discover the rewarding opportunities of a **CAREER IN SIGHT.**



Become an Ophthalmic Professional

Ophthalmology is the practice of medicine concerned with the anatomy, diseases, and treatments of the eye. High school graduates and college students can discover a career working in Ophthalmology practices as part of the eye care team. Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) are highly skilled, specialty medical assisting professionals who are qualified by didactic and clinical ophthalmic training to perform ophthalmic procedures under the direction of a licensed ophthalmologist. They often perform a patient's initial exam, including evaluating eye muscle movements, and gathering information about a patient's health history. Some AOP are responsible for administering eye medications and assisting ophthalmologists in surgical settings.

AOP work in varied workplace settings and for organizations of all sizes, including private practices, medical centers, hospitals, and university clinics alongside ophthalmologists who provide medical and surgical treatment of eye conditions. They have a variety of responsibilities and work with patients of all ages, from babies and children to adults and the elderly. People who are compassionate, empathetic, respectful, and professional, with strong communication skills have the important characteristics of eye care team members.

There are two ways to enter the ophthalmic career field:

- 1 Attend an accredited academic educational program.
- 2 Begin working for an ophthalmologist now and learn the necessary skills through experience achieved under their supervision. Then take an approved independent study course.

Choose your path

Either path can prepare you for a career in ophthalmology. You will learn the skills needed to work with people who need spectacles or contact lenses, and those who have a variety of eye disorders such as cataracts, glaucoma, and diabetic eye disease.

4.2 MILLION

Americans ages 40 and older are visually impaired

Source: <https://nei.nih.gov/nehep/lvam>, 3/2018

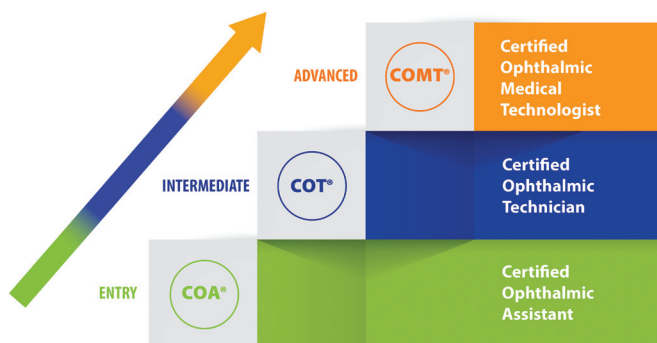
For more information: www.DiscoverEyeCareers.org • careers@jcahpo.org • 800-284-3937

Certification and Professional Development

After completing training, AOP qualify to take the International Joint Commission on Allied Health Personnel in Ophthalmology's (IJCAHPO) Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA) certification examination. Certification increases employment opportunities and earning potential, demonstrates mastery of specific skills, and promotes career advancement.

IJCAHPO offers a variety of certifications recognized worldwide for AOP:

- *Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA®)*
- *Certified Ophthalmic Technician (COT®)*
- *Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technologist (COMT®)*
- *Ophthalmic Surgical Assistant (OSA®)*
- *Registered Ophthalmic Ultrasound Biometrist (ROUB®)*
- *Certified Diagnostic Ophthalmic Sonographer (CDOS®)*
- *Corporate Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (CCOA®)*
- *Ophthalmic Scribe (OSC®)*



AOP lifelong learning is essential and is accomplished through continuing education and professional development. IJCAHPO offers educational opportunities through a wide range of programs and activities, including annual and regional meetings, lectures, workshops, distance and online learning opportunities, and independent programs approved for credit.

Factors That Determine Allied Ophthalmic Personnel Salaries

- Level of Training
- Experience
- Level of IJCAHPO Certification
- Location
- Supervisory Responsibilities

According to IJCAHPO's *International Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) Salary and Benefits Study*, average hourly wages for an Ophthalmic Medical Technician per level of training:

Entry
COA Level
\$21.99
hourly wage

Intermediate
COT Level
\$25.54
hourly wage

Advanced
COMT Level
\$31.41
hourly wage



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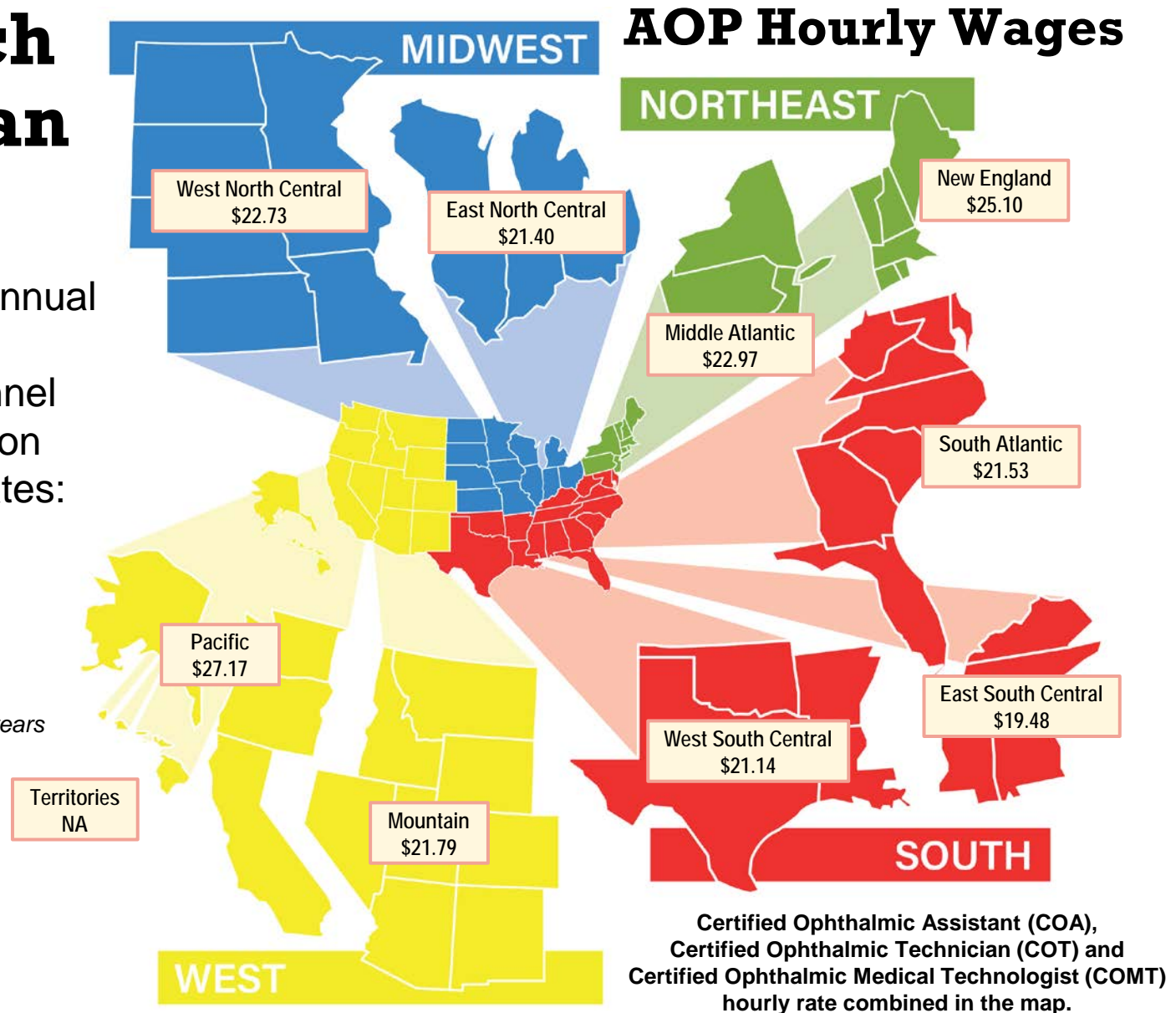
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How much money can I expect?

National average annual salaries for Allied Ophthalmic Personnel (AOP) by certification level* in United States:

- COA - \$51,880
- COT - \$51,439
- COMT - \$69,667

**For those in the AOP field 3-5 years*



Become a civilian Ophthalmic Technician today with IJCAHPO certification—a career that travels with you.



Veterans—

Transition to or continue Your Career as an Ophthalmic Technician



From one
great team
to another.

Job Demand

Ophthalmic Technicians are in high demand worldwide.

A Career with a Difference

A career as an Ophthalmic Technician is fulfilling. Each day is another opportunity to make a difference in a person's life.

- Support the gift of sight
- Maintain and restore vision
- Help improve quality of life

The Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a growth rate of 16% for the career through 2031, higher than the national average.

Job Benefits

- Rewarding profession with advancement potential
- Excellent salary and benefits
- Flexible hours in a comfortable office environment
- Immediate openings in clinics across the country...

...See our job board: careers.jcahpo.org

Your future as a civilian Ophthalmic Technician starts today!

IJCAHPO is proud to work with the Society of Military Ophthalmologists and other passionate caregivers serving their community at clinics, hospitals, and universities.

What Does an Ophthalmic Technician Do?

- Obtain patient medical history & perform initial exam
- Assess ocular diseases
- Determine whether corrective lenses or surgery is needed
- Conduct specialized diagnostic tests
- Assist ophthalmologists in a surgical setting
- Work with advanced medical technology
- Administer eye medications
- Participate in research
- Advocate for patients

"I have excelled in civilian and military practice, now running the ophthalmic practice in Tampa, FL, for the USAF. Due to the knowledge I gained in the ophthalmic military technical school and the IJCAHPO certification, I have been able to expand my career beyond my expectations. Becoming an ophthalmic professional has solidified my foundation for success."

—MSgt Andrew L., COA (Air Force Reserve)



Join us. Here's how:

Educational Programs: Enroll in an ophthalmic training program sponsored by colleges, universities, hospitals, medical schools, or other institutions that meet national accreditation standards.

—OR—

On-the-Job: Most Allied Ophthalmic Professionals (AOP) are trained on the job in an ophthalmologist's office. They complete an approved independent study course while gaining clinical experience.



"I currently serve as a Lead Ophthalmology Technician at a National Medical Center. I hold multiple certifications in Ophthalmology. I often tell my peers that we are in the heart of the clinic—meaning the core! As residents rotate and then graduate and active-duty physicians are deployed or out on TAD, we are the one constant in this clinic, and our patients appreciate it."

The eyes are the most sensitive spot on the body, and sight is the most treasured of the senses. It is rewarding to play a vital role in helping others to maximize and maintain their vision. I can honestly say that I LOVE what I do!"

—Latosha A., COA, OSA (GS-Civilian)

Avg Salary

**\$36,000–
\$42,000**

starting technicians

**\$68,000–
\$80,000**

experienced staff

IJCAHPO is a non-profit organization that offers continuing education and certification to Allied Ophthalmic Personnel.

90%

**Ophthalmic Technicians
trained on-the-job**

Previous experience in eye care is not required to start your career as an Ophthalmic Technician.

73%

**Employers pay for
continuing education**

Military personnel and veterans can apply for reimbursement of their education, continuing education, and certification expenses through the GI Bill.

For more information, visit: www.gibill.va.gov (US) or www.veterans.gc.ca/eng (CA)



IJCAHPO Mission

To promote global eye health and prevent blindness through training program accreditation, education, and the certification of Allied Ophthalmic Personnel.

Visit Us: www.discovereyecareers.org | Call Us: 1-800-284-3937