

Find Your Place in Medical Coding and Billing



- Top 3 Reasons to Become a Medical Coding and Billing Professional:**
- ☑ Vital role in healthcare
 - ☑ Promising career in a growing industry
 - ☑ Steady income and benefits

VITAL ROLE OF A MEDICAL CODER

Medical coders play a vital role in the growing healthcare industry, translating medical records into standardized numeric codes used to bill patients and third-party payers, such as Medicare and insurance companies. All medical treatments, tests, and procedures must be coded, and the healthcare system requires competent medical coders. Medical coders can find job opportunities in hospitals, clinics, physicians' offices, medical labs, insurance companies, and a variety of other healthcare facilities.

PROMISING CAREER IN A GROWING INDUSTRY

A nationwide shortage of medical coders has increased the demand on employers to fill medical coding positions. Entrants into the medical coding field can expect a promising career outlook in the growing healthcare industry. The 2008-2009 edition of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* published by the U.S. Department of Labor estimates:

- **30,000 new coding-related jobs** between 2006 and 2016
- **18 percent increase** to the medical records and health information field
- **Higher rate of growth** than the average for other occupations

A 2006 study conducted by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA) reported that **over half of coding employers had open coding positions** in the previous year.

PROFESSIONAL JOB SATISFACTION AND SALARY

Most coders work in comfortable, professional office environments and interact as valued team members alongside doctors and other healthcare professionals. A range of organizations hire coders, including large national companies and small, local physicians' practices. Coders can also find a wide variety of career opportunities, including specialty disciplines and a small number of at-home positions. In June 2009, Salary.com reported that the middle 50 percent of coders made between **\$36,560** and **\$49,957**, but like other industries, experience, credentials, and knowledge of specialties can lead to higher salaries.



Both inpatient and outpatient medical coding are promising fields in the growing healthcare industry. The Career Step programs have been specifically tailored to each career path to ensure that students are well prepared for the field that best fits their preferences and career goals.

CHOOSE YOUR CAREER PATH

Inpatient Coding and Billing	What is the difference between the fields?	Outpatient Coding and Billing
Inpatient coders use different coding guidelines and separate sets of procedural codes to code records for longer inpatient visits. These records are generally more complex than outpatient records, increasing the time spent on each report.		Outpatient coders use different procedural codes and usually code short-visit medical records. Coding these records is often faster paced and increases the number of reports the coder can work on in a day.
Inpatient coders are primarily certified by the American Health Information Management Association (AHIMA), and, with very few exceptions, employers require certification. Career Step's program prepares students to take the CCA exam. Graduates may also sit for the CCS exam (AHIMA recommends on-the-job coding experience before taking this exam.)	Do I have to be certified?	Outpatient coders are primarily certified by the American Academy of Professional Coders (AAPC). According to a 2008 AAPC survey, only about half of outpatient coders are certified, but this percentage is increasing every year. Career Step's program prepares students to take the CPC exam, which is one of the most common outpatient certifications.
CCA certified coders (entry-level exam): \$36,800* annually CCS certified coders: \$57,800* annually <i>*From 2008 AHIMA salary survey</i>	How much can I expect to earn?	Entry-level coders: \$30,600* annually CPC certified coders: \$43,100* annually <i>*From 2008 AAPC salary survey</i>
Inpatient coders primarily work in acute care hospitals.	Where will I work?	Outpatient coders primarily work in physicians' offices, clinics, and other outpatient facilities.
Hospitals nationwide have demand for inpatient coders. AHIMA's 2006 study reported that over half of coding employers had open coding positions in the previous year.	Are there a lot of job opportunities?	The larger outpatient coding market has created a variety of work opportunities in physician practices, hospitals, government facilities, ambulatory surgical centers, billing companies, and a variety of other healthcare facilities.
Inpatient coders have opportunities for advancement to medical records management and supervisory positions in hospitals, insurance companies, and various other healthcare facilities.	Are there opportunities for career advancement?	Outpatient coders have opportunities to advance within clinics, physician practices, and other outpatient facilities.
Inpatient and Outpatient Medical Coding and Billing	Which Career Step program should I choose?	Outpatient Medical Coding and Billing



What You Get With the Career Step Program

ONLINE TRAINING

The Career Step curriculum is offered entirely online, providing 24/7 access to all program materials. Each student will have the freedom and flexibility to train at his or her own pace. Students will focus their study on:

- Medical terminology
- Coding standards
- Specific medical code sets

The program also includes interactive learning tools, such as games, a student forum, chat rooms, and hundreds of exercises that simulate the professional coding experience.

INDUSTRY-STANDARD RESOURCES

In both of the Career Step medical coding programs, students will gain experience coding authentic medical reports with industry-standard codebooks during the extensive practical sections of the programs.

In the final practical section of the Inpatient program students will also have access to **3M encoding software**, which is used in many inpatient settings. Hands-on training with this industry-standard resource will help students acquire the skills necessary to seek employment as an inpatient coder.

CERTIFICATION PREPARATION

The Career Step medical coding programs will help students prepare to take many key industry certification exams. Both programs prepare students for:

- CCA (Certified Coding Associate)
- CPC (Certified Professional Coder)

Graduates of the Inpatient program may also sit for the CCS exam (AHIMA recommends on-the-job coding experience before taking this exam).

With Career Step, students will have the preparation necessary to earn industry-recognized professional credentials.

STUDENT AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT



Career Step has support teams dedicated to student success. The student support team counselors have professional experience in both inpatient and outpatient coding and can answer questions about the curriculum and the industry. The technical support team will help students with any technical or computer issues they may encounter within the program. Support teams are accessible during regular and extended business hours and are quick to respond to student questions and concerns.



Want More Info?

See the program in action! Check out demos at: careerstep.com/demo.outpatient careerstep.com/demo.inpatient

Find current tuition and payment options at: careerstep.com/tuition



*"Employment of medical records and health information technicians is expected to increase by 18 percent [30,000 jobs] by 2016—faster than the average for all occupations—because of rapid growth in the number of medical tests, treatments, and procedures that will be increasingly scrutinized by health insurance companies, regulators, courts, and consumers . . . **Technicians with a strong background in medical coding will be in particularly high demand.**"*

The U.S. Department of Labor



Medical Coding and Billing Programs

Graduate Experiences

"I wanted to tell you how much I love this course. It's so simple to use, so thorough and well written. I expected a good solid course from your website, but you exceeded my expectations. Every day I look forward to learning more."

Janet – Lake Oswego, Oregon

"The experience with Career Step was a wonderful one. I was working two jobs and raising my newborn son while taking these courses, and the program is so convenient that even I was able to find the appropriate time."

Stephen – Smithfield, Rhode Island

"When I was called in to test for a position, I was very well qualified to take [their pre-employment] test and did get the first job I was called in for. My employers are very satisfied with my level of knowledge, especially considering I had never been a 'coder' before. I learned so much in the course, and all of it has served me well."

Penny – Commerce City, Colorado

"I attended a CPC exam preparation course held by an AAPC chapter here in Ohio and thought I would be way out of my league among the coders attending the class and working in the field. However, I found that my knowledge and ability to understand the coding procedures was on par with, and sometimes exceeded, those who have been working as coders. Career Step's course gave me a thorough grounding in all aspects of the various coding scenarios. I would highly recommend Career Step."

Teresa – Huber Heights, Ohio

"Thanks again for your program. I took the AHIMA certification exam and passed easily. Thanks for the preparation!"

Dennis – Sheridan, Wyoming

"I wasn't sure how prepared I was for coding until I was actually out there working, and your program more than prepared me for working in the coding field. I love my new job and feel confident entering this new field thanks to the wealth of information I got from your program."

Lisa – O'Fallon, Missouri



"I wanted to let you know that I do have a new job! . . . I would not have this job if I hadn't gone through the Career Step coding program. This job requires medical coding knowledge as well as medical terminology. I'm very happy with my new career and want to thank you for your assistance and encouragement while I was working my way through the course. Thanks again!"

Elizabeth – Baldwinsville, New York

ENROLL TODAY!

1-800-246-STEP
careerstep.com

SEE THE DEMOS AT:

careerstep.com/demo.outpatient
careerstep.com/demo.inpatient