



Orthotech Professional

Volume 2, Issue 4
July/August 2005
Special Symposium Issue

A publication of the National Association of Orthopaedic Technologists

NAOT Releases 2005 Salary Survey Results

JULY 29, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(PHOENIX, AZ) - The National Association of Orthopaedic Technologists (NAOT) has released results from its 2005 Salary Survey for orthopaedic technologists. The study, based on data provided by over 300 participants from around the country, suggests the continued elevation of the orthopaedic technology professional as evidenced by a 3% average increase in reported salaries since the association's last survey in 2003.

The NAOT report provides average salaries based on years of experience, geographic region, type of employment, level of education and certification. In addition, valuable data on after-hour call pay, health and life insurance benefits, flex time and average amount of employer-funded continuing education has been collected.

For instance, the NAOT Salary Survey indicates that the current average salary for orthotechs is \$43,419 per year, with 34% of respondents making between \$30,000 - \$40,000 and 26% between \$40,000 - \$50,000 per year. Orthotechs with 1-3 years of experience averaged \$34,512 in annual salary; 4-5 years - \$38,076; 6-10 years - \$43,604; 11-15 years - \$43,658; 16-20 years - \$43,977; 21-24 years - \$46,206; 25 years and higher - \$50,416. With regard to employment status, 77% indicated that they were full-time, but paid hourly.

Orthopaedic technologists working in a hospital environment earned an average of 5% more than their counterparts in private practice and 8% more than those who work in the clinic setting. Not surprising was the trend that the Western US techs earned the highest average income (\$48,108 per year), however employee compensation on the West Coast can also be directly linked to the high cost of living in this area. Perhaps more surprising was that the Midwest/Central region ranked second at \$46,686 per year. The Southeast ranked last at \$38,405 per year.

The survey found that professional certification does make a significant difference as it relates to salary. Professionals holding the Orthopaedic Technologist Certified (OTC) credential given by the National Board for Certification of Orthopaedic Technologists made an average of \$45,106 per year, while their non-certified counterparts made almost \$10,000 per year less. One interesting, yet unexpected finding, is that the average salary for orthotechs tended to level off between 6 - 20 years of professional experience and between 6 - 15 years with their current employer.

With regard to benefits, 96% stated that their employer offered health insurance with 65% of employees paying a portion of the insurance premium that averaged \$134 each month. 38% indicated that they had some sort of flex time provision at work. Nearly 75% said that their employer pays for professional education and conferences with an average amount per year of \$1,089. The survey did show that employers tended to pay almost \$600 per year more for education for newer techs (1-5 years of experience) versus those with more than 10 years under their belt.

AVERAGE SALARY BY GEOGRAPHIC AREA		
West	17%	\$48,108
Midwest/Central	6%	\$46,686
Southwest	24%	\$44,861
Northeast	12%	\$44,400
Northwest	27%	\$43,823
Southeast	13%	\$38,405

NO OF HOURS WORKED PER WEEK BY AREA	
Southwest	45
Midwest/Central	44.5
Northwest	44
Southeast	44
Northeast	42
Northeast	42

PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT		
Hospital	27%	\$44,873
Private Practice	46%	\$42,500
Clinic	21%	\$41,129
Other	5%	\$52,666

AFTER HOUR CALL PAY?	
Yes	38%
No	62%
<i>If yes, call pay increases salary by:</i>	
Less than \$1,000 per year	27%
\$1,000 - \$3,000 per year	25%
\$3,000 - \$5,000 per year	18%
More than \$5,000 per year	29%

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION		
High School	7%	\$45,000
Some College	45%	\$41,297
Associate Degree	21%	\$45,166
Bachelor Degree	15%	\$47,111
Other	12%	\$42,714

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS		
Health Insurance		
Yes		81%
No		19%
<i>Ave. contributory amt per month</i>		\$134
Life Insurance		
Yes		82%
No		18%
<i>Employee contributes?</i>		41%
Flex Time		
Yes		38%
No		62%
Professional Organization Dues		
Yes		49%
No		51%
Professional Education/Conferences		
Yes		72%
No		28%
<i>Ave. amount paid per year</i>		\$1,089
Retirement Plan		
Yes		88%
No		12%
Employment Contract		
Yes		18%
No		82%

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE		
1 - 3 years	14%	\$34,512
4 - 5 years	10%	\$38,076
6 - 10 years	15%	\$43,604
11 - 15 years	14%	\$43,658
16 - 20 years	15%	\$43,977
21 - 24 years	11%	\$46,206
25+ years	21%	\$50,416

YEARS CERTIFIED AS AN OTC		
Not Certified	18%	\$36,250
Certified	82%	\$45,106
2 years or less	24%	\$36,818
3 - 5 years	16%	\$44,736
6 - 10 years	15%	\$44,864
11 - 15 years	20%	\$45,212
16 - 19 years	13%	\$51,896
20+ years	12%	\$54,655

YEARS WITH CURRENT EMPLOYER		
1 - 2 years	22%	\$35,862
3 - 5 years	20%	\$41,792
6 - 10 years	19%	\$45,100
11 - 15 years	17%	\$45,909
16 - 19 years	8%	\$48,611
20+ years	14%	\$50,769

HOURLY vs. SALARIED	
Full-time/hourly	77%
Full-time/salary	23%