

Respiratory Therapist Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: What is an RT's work schedule like?

A: Most respiratory therapists work full-time. They typically work in medical facilities that are always open, such as hospitals; they may have shifts that include nights, weekends, or holidays. And can also work per diem at healthcare facilities.

Q: What other jobs can I acquire with an RT degree?

A: Respiratory therapists who seek out leadership roles find great career ladders in most settings. RTs who excel on the job often advance from staff therapist to shift supervisor to department manager. Some therapists have ascended to the highest levels of hospital administration.

RTs specializing in home care often branch out even further, establishing their own respiratory home care companies to provide equipment and clinical services. Others have started successful businesses providing respiratory diagnostics services, patient care education, and other related services. Some therapists also venture into the corporate world, taking positions with equipment manufacturers as product or marketing specialists. With the knowledge gained through years of experience as an RT, their technical and patient care know-how is considered invaluable to these firms.

If you have a passion for education, you can parlay a successful career as an RT into a faculty position at a respiratory therapy school or as a clinical education coordinator for a hospital or other respiratory therapy department. These therapists also get involved in respiratory care research, conducting the clinical studies that form the scientific basis for the progression.

Q: What is the work environment like for respiratory therapists?

A: Most respiratory therapists work in hospitals, but some practice in skilled nursing facilities and physicians' offices. Other work environments include home health agencies, respiratory therapy clinics, rehabilitation centers, and diagnostics labs. Within hospitals, respiratory therapists work in various areas, including emergency departments, neonatal intensive care units, and critical care units.

Q: What is the job outlook for Respiratory Therapists?

A: The job outlook for respiratory therapists in Georgia is highly promising, with projected growth significantly above the national average. Nationally, the field is

expected to grow by around 12–13% through 2034, and Georgia may see even faster growth; estimated at over 30% by some sources. This demand is driven by an aging population, increased respiratory conditions, and expansion in healthcare services. With over 150 active job listings statewide and strong replacement needs due to retirements, respiratory therapy offers excellent career stability and opportunity in Georgia.

Q: What is the average salary earned by a Respiratory Therapist?

A: The salary outlook for respiratory therapists in Georgia is strong, with average annual earnings around \$60,000, and a typical range between \$47,000 and \$77,000 depending on experience, location, and certification. Those holding the Registered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential can earn significantly more, with average salaries nearing \$98,000 according to recent estimates. With growing demand and competition among healthcare employers, salaries in Georgia are expected to remain competitive and may continue to rise, especially in urban centers like Atlanta.

Q: Are there opportunities for degree advancement?

A: Respiratory therapists in Georgia have several degree advancement opportunities that can significantly enhance their careers. Many start with an Associate of Science in Respiratory Therapy (ASRT), but can advance to a Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Therapy (BSRT), often through flexible online bridge programs designed for working professionals. For those seeking leadership, education, or specialized clinical roles, a Master's in Respiratory Therapy or related fields (like healthcare administration or public health) is also an option. These advanced degrees can open doors to higher-paying roles, teaching positions, and managerial tracks within hospitals and health systems.