

CAREER GUIDE FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY TECHNICIAN

SOC Code: 29-9012

Pay Band(s): 2 and 3 ([Salary Structure](#))

Standard Occupational Description: Collect data on work environments for analysis by occupational health and safety specialists. Implement and conduct evaluation of programs designed to limit chemical, physical, biological, and ergonomic risks to workers.

Occupational Health & Safety Technician positions in the Commonwealth are assigned to the following Roles in the [Public Safety Compliance Career Group](#):

[Compliance/Safety Officer I](#)

[Compliance/Safety Officer II](#)

While Occupational Health & Safety Technicians within the Commonwealth are all located within the Public Safety Compliance Career Group, individuals may want to pursue other opportunities within the Commonwealth depending upon individual training, education, knowledge, skills, abilities, and interests.

Other Career Group(s) that may be of interest are:

[Health Care Technology](#)

[Direct Services](#)

[Laboratory and Research Services](#)

[Engineering Technology](#)

[Training and Instruction](#)

SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE, ABILITIES AND TASKS

(Technical and Functional Expertise)

Skills

Note: *The technical and functional skills listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Occupational Health & Safety Technicians commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the skills listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.*

1. Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
2. Talking to others to convey information effectively.
3. Using scientific rules and methods to solve problems.
4. Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
5. Using logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
6. Using mathematics to solve problems.
7. Communicating effectively in writing as appropriate for the needs of the audience.

Knowledge

Note: The technical and functional knowledge statements listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Occupational Health & Safety Technicians commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the knowledge listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

The **Knowledge** of:

1. Relevant equipment, policies, procedures, and strategies to promote effective local, state, or national security operations for the protection of people, data, property, and institutions.
2. Structure and content of the English language including the meaning and spelling of words, rules of composition, and grammar.
3. Plant and animal organisms, their tissues, cells, functions, interdependencies, and interactions with each other and the environment.

Abilities

Note: The technical and functional abilities listed below are based on general occupational qualifications for Occupational Health & Safety Technicians commonly recognized by most employers. Typically, you will not be required to have all of the abilities listed to be a successful performer. Recruitment and selection standards for an individual state job must be based on the specific knowledge, skills, and abilities for that job as indicated in the job announcement and job description in the Employee Work Profile.

The **Ability** to:

1. Communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.
2. Tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.
3. Communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.
4. Combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions (includes finding a relationship among seemingly unrelated events).
5. Listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
6. See details at close range (within a few feet of the observer).
7. Apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.
8. Read and understand information and ideas presented in writing.
9. Arrange things or actions in a certain order or pattern according to a specific rule or set of rules (e.g., patterns of numbers, letters, words, pictures, mathematical operations).

Tasks

Note: The following is a list of sample tasks typically performed by Occupational Health & Safety Technicians. Employees in this occupation will not necessarily perform all of the tasks listed.

Tasks

1. Conduct surveys by performing sample collection of environmental media to determine if there is a potentially toxic material.
2. Survey properties that store, handle, and use hazardous materials to ensure compliance with laws, codes, and regulations.
3. Identify corrective actions necessary to bring properties into compliance with applicable codes, laws, regulations, and standards, and explain these measures to others.
4. Inspect, calibrate and maintain equipment used to collect and analyze samples. Recommend measures to specialists to ensure maximum employee protection.
5. Collaborate with specialists and others to institute control and remedial measures for hazardous and potentially hazardous conditions of equipment.

6. Participates in educational meetings to instruct employees in matters pertaining to occupational health and prevention of accidents.
7. Prepares reports including observations and sample results of contaminants.

INTERESTED?

Like people, occupations have traits or characteristics. These characteristics give important clues about the nature of the work and work environment, and give you an opportunity to match your own personal interests to a specific occupation. When you choose a job in an occupation that matches your own interests you have taken an important step in planning a successful and rewarding career.

The occupation of Occupational Health & Safety Technician has **Conventional** and **Realistic** characteristics as described below:

Conventional — Conventional occupations frequently involve following set procedures and routines. These occupations can include working with data and details more than with ideas. Usually there is a clear line of authority to follow.

Realistic — Realistic occupations frequently involve work activities that include practical, hands-on problems and solutions. They often deal with plants, animals, and real-world materials like wood, tools, and machinery. Many of the occupations require working outside, and do not involve a lot of paperwork or working closely with others.

LICENSURE, REGISTRATION, OR CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Generally this is not required for Occupational Health & Safety Technician positions in state government.

Certification as a Radiation Technician or Nuclear Medicine Technician may be required for Occupational Health & Safety Technician positions in state government.

For information on the Occupational Health and Safety Technologist credential, contact:

- Council on Certification of Health, Environmental, and Safety Technologists:
<http://www.cchest.org>

EDUCATIONAL, TRAINING, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Department of Labor provides the following information:

Occupational health and safety technicians collect data on work environments for analysis by occupational health and safety specialists. Usually working under the supervision of specialists, they help implement and evaluate programs designed to limit risks to workers.

All occupational health and safety specialists and technicians are trained in the applicable laws or inspection procedures through some combination of classroom and on-the-job training. In general, people who want to enter this occupation should be responsible and like detailed work.

The Commonwealth may require that the Occupational Health and Safety Technician graduate from an accredited associate degree program or equivalent with major course work in health

and safety programs, radiological health or comparable field. Experience in health and safety program or radiation control agency may be required.

COMMONWEALTH COMPETENCIES

Competencies are a set of identified behaviors, knowledge, skills, and abilities that directly and positively impact the success of employees and the organization. Competencies can be observed and measured. When consistently demonstrated, competencies make employees particularly effective in their work. Competencies help lay out a road map to career success. You can use the Commonwealth Competencies to help improve your individual performance by adopting behaviors that make high performing employees successful in their jobs. In this way, you can use the Commonwealth Competencies for your further professional development.

The Commonwealth Competencies are:

1. Technical and Functional Expertise
2. Understanding the Business
3. Achieving Results
4. Serving the Customer
5. Teamwork
6. Interpersonal and Communication Skills
7. Leadership and Personal Effectiveness

The above competencies may be applied to employees throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. They can be rank-ordered by agencies and hiring managers to represent the needs of a specific job. The rank ordering will change depending upon the occupation, an organization's priorities, the actual job requirements, and the supervisor's preferences.

Career success is both about what you do (applying your technical knowledge, skills, and ability) and how you do it (the consistent behaviors you demonstrate and choose to use) while interacting and communicating with others. Hopefully, by studying the Commonwealth competencies, identifying your developmental opportunities, and working to refine your own competence, you can take charge of your career!

For additional information about the **Commonwealth Competencies** go to: http://jobs.state.va.us/cc_planningctr.htm. For the competencies, we first list the competencies and then define each. Finally, we list competency indicators; to describe what successful performance looks like.

COMMONWEALTH CAREER PATH

Career opportunities in the Commonwealth are not limited to moving “up” to the next highest role and pay band, changing positions, or to becoming a supervisor. That’s because most roles describe a broad group of occupationally related positions that perform a range of work that requires increased knowledge and skills. For that reason, Commonwealth roles describe the career paths within the same or higher-level role for the same or different Career Group. The broad salary range and the Commonwealth’s pay practices provide flexibility in recognizing career development and advancement. ([Salary Structure](#))

For example: **Occupational Health & Safety Technician**

PAY BAND	PRACTITIONER ROLES
2	Compliance/Safety Officer I
3	Compliance/Safety Officer II
4	Compliance/Safety Officer III
5	Compliance/Safety Officer IV

PAY BAND	MANAGER ROLES
5	Compliance Manager I
6	Compliance Manager II
7	Compliance Manager III

Sample Career Path

Compliance/Safety Officer I

The Compliance/Safety Officer I role provides career tracks for inspectors that perform routine inspections checking from a predetermined list or set of well defined procedures for obvious safety violations, hazardous conditions, or non-compliance with established laws or standards.

Compliance/Safety Officer II

The Compliance/Safety Officer II role provides career tracks for compliance officers that perform routine to moderate level investigations, reviews and/or inspections but is expected to judge compliance against more complex standards requiring interviews, collection and analysis of data, evidence accumulation, testing and/or computation of results. May assist others in proper management of hazardous materials. May interpret and communicate regulatory requirements to industry, consumers and the general public.

Compliance/Safety Officer III

The Compliance/Safety Officer III role provides a career track for compliance officers who perform advanced level investigations or inspections of assigned cases and/or compliance audits. Responsibilities include interviewing, analyzing or sampling various processes or records in complex manufacturing or commercial enterprises, enforcing strict compliance with federal, state and local regulation and law.

Compliance/Safety Officer IV

The Compliance/Safety Officer IV role provides career tracks for compliance officers whose responsibilities include acting as a subject matter expert and/or first-line supervisor. Employees perform the most complex evaluations and may recommend changes in the law to accommodate new or variable processes or procedures.

Compliance Manager I

The Compliance Manager I role provides career tracks for managers who administer a program area and is responsible for the attainment of pre-established goals and objectives. Evaluates results as compared to standards and recommends remedial action. Requests and assigns resources and evaluates results attained.

Compliance Manager II

The Compliance Manager II role provides career tracks for managers that administer multiple programs of compliance and safety, providing for shifts of resources when needed as problems arise. Provides overall program support and evaluation of effectiveness as related to plans and objectives. Reports policy issues to executive management and recommends changes as appropriate.

Compliance Manager III

The Compliance Manager III role provides career tracks for executive level managers who serve as the agency Deputy or in a very large organization manages multiple programs, or serves as the Compliance and Safety Program Director, reporting to the agency executive. Plans, directs, evaluates and controls compliance/safety programs. May draft legislation and formulate policy under the direction of the chief executive.

ADDITIONAL OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT:

O*NET (Occupational Information Network)

http://online.onetcenter.org/gen_search_page

Virginia Employment Commission

<http://www.alex.vec.state.va.us/>

Career One Stop

<http://www.careeronestop.org/>

Virginia Career Resource Network

<http://www.vacrn.net/>