

What are career pathways?

There are many ways to think about and view career pathways. In general, career pathways outline the career opportunities available at various education levels, as well as the education and training needed to prepare for occupations within a given pathway. Some pathways focus on particular careers, while others are more inclusive of all opportunities within a pathway. Taking the latter approach can be most useful, as it provides a more global perspective on the pathway. Thus, rather than list occupations and training leading up to one or two careers, it is suggested that all careers within a pathway be included in the mapping process.

Creating Career Pathway Maps

1. Use the P2C Career Pathway Template.
2. Choose a career cluster and pathway. List the cluster and pathway titles at top of the template pages.

Helpful Tip: Pathways can be aligned to current programs of study. Crosswalks that link programs of study to clusters and pathways can be found at careertech.org/crosswalks (see Table 6).

3. Go to pathway2careers.com/login and locate the labor market data for your district. List the workforce region(s) for your district on the first page of the template on the line provided below the job zone table.
4. Use the instructions on the next page to complete the job zone table.



Job Zone 1 High School Diploma or Less	Job Zone 2 High School Diploma	Job Zone 3 Certificate or Associate's Degree	Job Zone 4 Bachelor's Degree	Job Zone 5 Master's or Doctorate Degree
Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$
Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$
Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$
Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$
Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$	Annual Openings = Median Wage = \$

5. To complete the job zone table...

- Locate the data for your chosen cluster in the P2C data system.
- Choose your district and pathway from the dropdown menus.
- Use the job zone filter to focus on a specific job zone, such as job zone 1.
- Review the first five occupations that appear at the top of the list.
- List these top five occupations in the table, along with the corresponding openings and wage data.
- If data is limited or not available for at least five occupations within a zone, you can add the statement, "Limited opportunity within this zone," in the table.
- Continue this process for the remaining job zones.

Note: This selection process focuses primarily on high-demand occupations (i.e., those with the highest annual openings). Selecting occupations that are both high-demand and high-wage within job zones has the potential of being too restrictive, often resulting in too few occupations within each zone. The identification of high-value occupations (i.e., high-demand + high-wage) for the pathway, as a whole, is included in the steps below.

6. After the occupations have been listed in the table, use the steps below to mark the top five high-value occupations for the pathway.

- Click the box for the Perkins V Report filter (this will focus the list on high-value careers).
- Select your chosen pathway from the pathway dropdown menu.
- Identify the top five high-value careers for the pathway that appear at the top of the list.
- Mark these careers in the job zone table with a ★ star. If a career is not in the table, replace one of the careers in the table with the high-value career.

7. Examine the completed job zone table. The resulting table should summarize the high-demand careers within each job zone and highlight the top five high-value careers for the pathway.

Job Zone 1 High School Diploma or Less	Job Zone 2 High School Diploma	Job Zone 3 Certificate or Associate's Degree	Job Zone 4 Bachelor's Degree	Job Zone 5 Master's or Doctorate Degree
Limited opportunity within this zone.	Home Health Aides Annual Openings = 187 Median Wage = \$23,800	Registered Nurses Annual Openings = 397 Median Wage = \$66,430 ★	Social & Human Service Assistants Annual Openings = 33 Median Wage = \$32,190	Medical & Health Services Managers Annual Openings = 49 Median Wage = \$88,940 ★
	Nursing Assistants Annual Openings = 122 Median Wage = \$27,850	Dental Assistants Annual Openings = 47 Median Wage = \$31,930	Limited opportunity within this zone.	Pharmacists Annual Openings = 37 Median Wage = \$116,840 ★
	Pharmacy Aides Annual Openings = 3 Median Wage = \$28,880	Pharmacy Technicians Annual Openings = 35 Median Wage = \$30,950		Nurse Practitioners Annual Openings = 30 Median Wage = \$105,910 ★
	Limited opportunity within this zone.	Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses Annual Openings = 29 Median Wage = \$47,720 ★		Speech-Language Pathologists Annual Openings = 27 Median Wage = \$72,540
		Respiratory Therapists Annual Openings = 18 Median Wage = \$56,110		Dentists Annual Openings = 20 Median Wage = \$155,790

Identifying Education Requirements

1. Examine your district’s high school course requirements.
2. List the required courses for each year in the course table. When choice is provided, select requirements that most directly align with the career pathway.
3. Review the completed course list. The list should display required courses for each high school year, with emphasis on courses that fit best within the pathway.

HS Year	English Language Arts	Math	Science	Social Studies	Other Courses	CTE Courses	Electives
9	English I	Algebra I	Biology	World History and Geography	World Language, Physical Education	See table below	See table below
10	English II	Geometry	Chemistry	U.S. History and Geography	World Language, Lifetime Wellness		
11	English III	Algebra II	Physics	Economics	Fine Arts		
12	English IV	Pre-Calculus or Statistics	Anatomy and Physiology	Psychology			

4. Identify the CTE courses and electives that correspond to the pathway.
5. List and review these courses in the appropriate table. When completed, this table should display the courses that are the most closely tied to occupations within the career pathway.

Year	CTE Courses	Electives
9	Health Science	Nutrition Science
10	Medical Terminology, Medical Therapeutics	Information Technology
11	Nursing Education, Rehabilitation Careers	Microbiology
12	Clinical Internship	

6. List the regional postsecondary institutions that offer certificates and degrees within the pathway.

Helpful Tip: This step can require extensive review of programs offered at local institutions. Crosswalks that link programs of study to clusters and pathways can be found at careertech.org/crosswalks (see Table 6).

Regional Postsecondary Schools	
Certificates and Associate’s Degrees	Bachelor’s and Advanced Degrees
Community Colleges <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pellissippi State Community College • Tennessee College of Applied Technology • Roane State Community College 	Colleges and Universities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maryville College • University of Tennessee • Lincoln Memorial University

7. Identify specific programs of study associated with each of the job zones in the pathway.

Helpful Tip: This step can require extensive review of programs offered at local institutions. Crosswalks that link programs of study to clusters and pathways can be found at careertech.org/crosswalks (see Table 6).

Postsecondary Programs / Majors

Certificate or AA	Nursing	Pharmacy Technician	Respiratory Care	Patient Care Technician	Medical Assistant
Bachelor's Degree	Nursing	Speech and Hearing Sciences	Dental Hygiene	Medical Laboratory Sciences	Radiological Sciences
Advanced Degree	Nurse Practitioner	Physician Assistant (PA)	Medicine	Pharmacy	Dental

Using the Pathway Maps

The purpose of career pathway maps is to provide an overview of career opportunities available at various education levels, along with the education needed to support successful progress toward careers within the pathway. The idea is for students to understand how levels of education are related to employment opportunity and gain a sense of the type of training available to support access to pathway careers. These pathways are best used with students as a career exploration resource and as a general academic planning guide that can assist in academic advising.

It is important to note that these pathways are not designed to provide a step-by-step roadmap to specific careers. Career-specific mapping, which occurs at the occupation level, is more prescriptive and focuses on the particular details related to individual careers (e.g., outlining the occupations and training associated with becoming a registered nurse). Instead, these pathways are intended to offer a more global perspective on the many career possibilities within a pathway. It is recommended that these pathways be used in the context of career exploration and as planning tool that can support initial stages of career preparation.

Help and Assistance

We're here to help! For questions or assistance in completing the career pathway maps, please visit pathway2careers.com or email us directly at dtallent@ns4ed.com.

Useful Websites

P2C Labor Market Data System	pathway2careers.com/login
National Career Clusters Framework	careertech.org/career-clusters
Career Clusters Crosswalks	careertech.org/crosswalks
North Carolina Career Clusters Guide (helpful overview)	nccareers.org/careerguide