



**Germannanna Community College**  
**Center for Workforce & Community Education**  
**Medical Office Specialist Program – Student Pre-Registration Packet** (5.13.21)

Thank you for your interest in the Workforce Medical Office Specialist program. This program provides students with the entry level office skills needed for providing support services in a health care office setting and prepares students for the National Healthcareer Association (NHA) Certified Billing and Coding Specialist (CBCS) exam.

Medical office jobs are among the fastest growing professions. There is a demand in the healthcare industry for individuals with knowledge of the office operations needed to support the multitude of administrative functions required in a health care setting. Depending on the health care setting, duties may range from front desk reception and appointment-making to diagnostic and procedural coding and insurance form processing. This program helps students gain foundational skills needed for entry-level positions.

**Is the Medical Office Specialist program right for you?**

Working in the medical office field offers an exciting and rewarding career. It is a growing field and certified specialists may find employment opportunities in various settings including hospitals, clinics, doctors' offices, nursing homes, insurance companies, financial management companies, consulting agencies and many more. Income and salary ranges will vary, depending on education level, certifications, additional skills, and level of experience. Career advancement prospects in this field are excellent, as you gain experience and earn advanced certifications.

This is an intensive, fast-paced course. Instructional topics include: Fundamentals of the Medical Office; Health Information Management; Introduction to Anatomy and Physiology and Medical Terminology; Introduction to Coding Basics (ICD-10 and CPT); Reimbursement; and CBCS Exam and Certification Preparation.

**Prospective students are advised to closely review the program information and requirements within this pre-registration packet and take time to evaluate whether the Medical Office Specialist program is right for you.**

To secure work in a health care setting, a clear criminal background is required. You will also need to be self-disciplined in working through the self-paced instructional materials. You'll need to be able to consistently set aside adequate study time, participate in online class meetings, and have consistent access to the internet. Anticipate spending about 16 hours per week, to work through class assignments. Please evaluate these considerations to decide whether the online Medical Office Specialist program is a good for you, and your work and career goals. Thoroughly read the information below; you will be asked to sign, date, and submit to us the last page to acknowledge you have read and understand the program requirements.

Healthcare offices are structured and operate in a variety of ways, depending on their size (large, small, and in-between), the services they offer, their patient base, and entry level skill requirements. Staff in small offices may perform a wide variety of different job duties; and staff in larger operations may be more specialized in the duties they perform. Jobs in this field generally require excellent customer service, good computer skills, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, adaptability and flexibility, and great attention to detail. Job titles of positions may include: Medical Office Front Desk Specialist; Health Information Specialist; Billing Specialist; Patient Service Specialist; Patient Account Specialist; Medical Receptionist; and Patient Access Specialist, among

others. Job duties for entry level positions may include gathering/reviewing essential patient information; reviewing and answering practice correspondence; operating computer systems to accomplish office tasks; answering calls, scheduling appointments; interacting with patients and maintaining files; verifying required documentation; supporting coding and billing process; and submitting claims for reimbursement, among others.

**Job Opportunities and Career Growth:** Prior to enrolling in this program, you are encouraged to research and review medical office occupations to familiarize yourself with jobs in the Germanna region, throughout VA, and nationally. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS.gov) provides statistical and pay scale information for numerous occupations. For **Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants**, an average annual salary of \$36,580 is listed, visit <https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes436013.htm#st>. For **Medical Records and Health Information Technicians**, an average salary of \$42,630 per year is listed, visit <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-records-and-health-information-technicians.htm>. Also visit **O-Net Online** (OnetOnline.org) for career exploration and job analysis, and detailed descriptions of the occupations and projected job demand. O-Net is a good resource for identifying high demand and fast-growing occupations. Jobs for Medical Records Specialists are forecast to grow much faster than average (8%), visit <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/29-2072.00>. Jobs for Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, are also forecast to grow much faster than average (8%), visit <https://www.onetonline.org/link/summary/43-6013.00>. Indeed.com can also be a good source of information on available medical office jobs. Other resources for job search include ZipRecruiter, LinkedIn, Monster, Dice, Glassdoor, Handshake, CareerBuilder Job Board, and Idealist.

### **Clear Background and Drug/Substance Use Screening**

Because of state regulations and healthcare industry hiring requirements, a clear criminal background is critical to securing work in this field. At most healthcare facilities, you will generally not be eligible for employment if any of the following apply:

- You have a felony conviction on your criminal background check (regardless of how long ago it was)
- You have a conviction for any of the crimes listed in the “barrier crimes” list (see page 8 of this packet)
- You have multiple misdemeanor convictions, and in some employment settings, a single misdemeanor conviction
- You may also be denied employment at some medical offices based on other background investigation requirements they may have

Some employers may also require that employees undergo urine drug screening tests to ensure that there is no use of non-prescribed drugs.

Unless you have a clear criminal background and you do not use non-prescribed substances, it is strongly recommended that you do not pursue the Medical Office Specialist program as it is unlikely you’ll be able to secure work in this field. Other programs and careers can be considered, and college advisors can assist you in identifying programs and fields of study that would work well for you.

### **Steps required to register for in the Medical Office Specialist program**

**Pre-requisite class:** Prospective students interested in the Medical Office Specialist course must take the *Health Care Orientation* class. After completing the *Health Care Orientation* class and carefully reading through this entire pre-registration packet, and you are ready to enroll, please submit the last page (the signed Acknowledgement of Program Requirements, on page 9) of this packet to the Center for Workforce & Community Education at [gccworkforce@germanna.edu](mailto:gccworkforce@germanna.edu). You may email scan it or take a photo and email that

photo to us. Please ensure the image is large enough for us to clearly see your name and contact information. Within two business days of receiving your form, our staff will contact you to assist you with registration. If at any time you have questions about the program itself, please contact Ms. Angel Wagoner, Health Care Coordinator, at [awagoner@germanna.edu](mailto:awagoner@germanna.edu). She can also schedule a phone conference with you if need be.

**Note:** We recommend that you submit your signed Acknowledgement of Program Requirements Document page at least seven (7) calendar days prior to the class start date, to help ensure adequate time to process your registration, and receive your instructional books and materials.

### **Tuition Payment and Tuition Assistance**

Full tuition payment is required at the time of registration. While the Medical Office Specialist program is not eligible for Federal Financial Aid through the college's financial aid office, you may qualify for other assistance. WIOA tuition assistance may be available through the Virginia Career Works Center; for information call 540-419-2190 and/or Email: [wioapd16@fredgoodwill.org](mailto:wioapd16@fredgoodwill.org). Note that it may take several weeks to apply for and qualify for WIOA assistance. You may also apply for Workforce tuition scholarship funds through the college's Educational Foundation, as some funds may be available to help with Workforce program tuition. Note that it may take several days to apply for and hear notice of your eligibility to qualify for GCC Educational Foundation Scholarship funding. Be sure to apply early and allow enough time, if seeking tuition assistance. **GCC Workforce Tuition refund policy:** Students may request course transfers or withdrawals seven or more calendar days prior to the start of class. No course transfers or refunds will be made fewer than seven calendar days prior to the class start date.

**Class start-up information:** When the class is confirmed to "go," the instructor will contact the students by email, a few days prior to class start date, to provide information on logging into the Canvas instructional platform and provide orientation information.

### **Program requirements:**

**English language proficiency is required.** The course is taught in English and the NHA CBCS exam is available only in English. To maximize your chances of passing the certification exam, proficiency in English is necessary. Lack of proficiency will not prevent you from taking your certification exam; however, this could affect the outcome of your certification test results.

**Technology access:** Access to a high-speed internet connection, Adobe Flash Player, Adobe Reader, and computer speakers are needed to access the curriculum and instructional materials.

**Study time needed:** The instructional material is primarily self-paced, and students are expected to keep up with regular assignments and quizzes. Students will need to be disciplined in completing the course content and meeting course deadlines, to stay on track with program assignments. Anticipate approximately 12-16 hours of week of self-study time.

**Education:** Earned High School diploma or GED is recommended, as this is a requirement for taking the CBCS certification test\* and for finding work in the field. (\*Some exemptions may apply, allowing high school students to obtain Provisional Certification, valid for 12 months. Provisional certifications may be converted to full **certifications** by meeting all certification eligibility requirements. For more information, visit <https://www.nhanow.com/help-center/faq> and search Provisional Certification.)

### **What to expect with regards to the course material and related resources:**

This is a fully online class instructed by an experienced healthcare billing and coding professional. Most of the program is self-paced, meaning you will log in to the course online, and independently work your way through the instructional materials; you will need to schedule your time to study and practice, to keep pace, and to help master the skills taught. There will be periodic quizzes and skills checks embedded in the course materials to help ensure you are keeping pace. The instructor will meet periodically with the class, “live online” to review course content, check student progress, and to answer questions. Generally, the “live online” portions will be scheduled as needed, and the dates and times are coordinated with the students and instructor. The instructor is also available to answer student questions and concerns. Our staff are here to answer questions, as well. Please contact Health Care Coordinator Ms. Angel Wagoner, at [awagoner@germanna.edu](mailto:awagoner@germanna.edu) with questions you may have about this program. Your success is important to us.

***What’s included in your tuition:*** Course curriculum accessed through Canvas, the college’s online learning management system. Instructional materials are provided: Medical Office Administration eBook; SimChart for the Medical Office: Learning the Medical Office Workflow. The NHA online CBCS study Guide, and the NHA online Practice Test will be provided as well and made available closer to the end of class.

***Certification preparation:*** When you are ready to sit for your CBCS certification visit [NHAnow.com](http://NHAnow.com) for information on test sites and the CBCS test registration process.

***What students need to purchase and provide themselves:*** (A) Coding Books: Both ICD-10 and CPT, from American Medical Association, and (B) Medical Terminology books (3). Total estimated student costs for books is approximately \$240 for new books. Contact our office as soon as your registration is complete, for book information, as it is very important that you purchase the specific books we’ve identified.

## **Overview of Course Instructional Modules**

Module #1: Fundamentals of the Medical Office (est. 1 weeks’ time)

Students will be introduced into the medical office environment and will review the aspects of professional behavior in a medical office, customer service, communication with patients, and scheduling appointments. Students will review the job descriptions for medical office assistants and review the skillset needed to perform this job. They will participate in virtual office exercises to assist in gaining an understanding of the job requirements.

Module #2: Health Information Management (est. 2 weeks’ time)

Students will learn the documentation and completion requirements for medical records as well as learn the details Patient Health Information (PHI) security and safeguarding under HIPAA regulations. Students will also gain knowledge of the requirements and limitations of the release of patient information and record retention.

Module #3: Introduction to Anatomy and Physiology and Medical Terminology (est. 4 weeks’ time)

Students will be introduced to the basics of anatomy and physiology by review of body systems and organization to understand body system function. Understanding of medical terminology in reference to documentation in the patient’s medical record and in completion of coding and billing functions for professional services provided in an office setting.

Module #4: Introduction to Coding Basics (est. 6 weeks’ time)

Students will learn the details of the medical classification systems used for coding and billing of patient claims in the medical office. Students will gain an introductory level understanding of ICD-10-CM diagnosis coding and CPT procedural coding.

Module #5: Reimbursement (est. 2 weeks’ time)

Students will gain an understanding of types of health insurance plans as well as the types of bills and the electronic billing process. They will also gain knowledge of medical necessary and NCCI Edits, pre-certification requirements, and managing payment and collections of patient claims.

Module #6: Certification and Exam Prep (est. 1 weeks' time)

Students will review the various professional organizations who administer medical office and coding and billing certifications. They will discuss the continuing education requirements of each. Review exam preparation and study skills necessary to prepare for a certification exam.

**Additional resources:**

Visit [NHAnow.com](http://NHAnow.com) for more information on the Certified Billing and Coding Specialist (CBCS) certification.

**Books:**

As mentioned above, the Medical Office Administration book and SimChart is included in your tuition and will be provided to you. Contact our office at [gccworkforce@germanna.edu](mailto:gccworkforce@germanna.edu) for details on the additional books/materials you need to purchase.

## Essential Functional Abilities

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. has determined that the following categories of functional abilities are essential for job performance for workers in the health care field. A brief description and examples of representative activities/attributes are included for your reference. Successful students/employees should possess all listed essential functions.

<u>Category</u>	<u>Description</u>
Gross Motor Skills	Gross motor skill sufficient to provide the full range of safe and effective health care activities, such as moving within confined spaces, reaching above shoulders, reaching below waist, standing and maintain balance.
Fine Motor Skills	Fine motor skills sufficient to perform psychomotor skills, such as grasping small objects with hands, keying/typing, pinching, picking, twisting, and squeezing with fingers.
Physical Endurance	Physical stamina sufficient for entire length of work role, such as standing during health care procedures or performing CPR (if needed).
Mobility	Physical abilities sufficient to move from place to place in a quick manner and to maneuver by twisting, squatting, climbing, and walking.
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of client health care needs, which includes hearing faint body sounds, faint voices, hearing in situations when not able to see lips, and hearing auditory alarms.
Visual	Visual ability sufficient for accurate observation, which includes seeing objects up to 20 inches away and 20 feet away, depth perception, peripheral vision, and ability to distinguish color and color intensity.
Tactile	Tactile ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of health care needs, which includes feeling differences in surface characteristics, sizes, and shapes.
Smell	Olfactory ability sufficient to detect significant environmental and client odors

Reading	Reading ability sufficient to comprehend the written word at a minimum of a tenth-grade level.
Arithmetic	Arithmetic ability sufficient to do computations at a minimum of an eighth-grade level which includes reading and understanding columns of writing, reading graphic printouts and digital displays, calibrating equipment, converting numbers to and/or from the Metric System, measuring time, counting rates, using measuring tools, reading measurement marks, computing fractions, and using a calculator.
Emotional Stability	Emotional stability sufficient to assume responsibility/accountability for actions, which includes establishing therapeutic boundaries, dealing with the unexpected, adapting to a changing environment/stress, focusing attention on a task, performing multiple responsibilities concurrently, and handling strong emotion.
Analytical Thinking	Reasoning skills sufficient to perform deductive and inductive thinking for health care decisions, which includes transferring knowledge from one situation to another, processing information, problem solving, evaluating outcomes, prioritizing tasks, and using short term and long-term memory.
Critical Thinking	Critical thinking skill sufficient to exercise sound judgment, which includes identifying cause-effect relationships, planning/controlling activities for others, synthesizing knowledge and skills, and sequencing information.
Interpersonal Skills	Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families and groups respecting social, cultural, and spiritual diversity.
Communication Skills	Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in written and oral form, which includes teaching, explaining procedures, giving oral reports, and conveying information through writing.

**This Excerpt is one example of many Barrier Crimes**  
**Excerpt from Code of Virginia**

*Below is a list of convictions that will prevent an individual from  
obtaining employment in nursing homes.*

**§ 32.1-126.01. Employment for compensation of persons convicted of certain offenses prohibited; criminal records check required; suspension or revocation of license.** A licensed nursing home shall not hire for compensated employment, persons who have been convicted of murder or manslaughter as set out in Article 1 (§ [18.2-30](#) et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2, malicious wounding by mob as set out in § [18.2-41](#), abduction as set out in subsection A of § [18.2-47](#), abduction for immoral purposes as set out in § [18.2-48](#), assaults and bodily woundings as set out in Article 4 (§ [18.2-51](#) et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2, robbery as set out in § [18.2-58](#), carjacking as set out in § [18.2-58.1](#), threats of death or bodily injury as set out in § [18.2-60](#), felony stalking as set out in § [18.2-60.3](#), sexual assault as set out in Article 7 (§ [18.2-61](#) et seq.) of Chapter 4 of Title 18.2, arson as set out in Article 1 (§ [18.2-77](#) et seq.) of Chapter 5 of Title 18.2, drive by shooting as set out in § [18.2-286.1](#), use of a machine gun in a crime of violence as set out in § [18.2-289](#), aggressive use of a machine gun as set out in § [18.2-290](#), use of a sawed-off shotgun in a crime of violence as set out in subsection A of § [18.2-300](#), pandering as set out in § [18.2-355](#), crimes against nature involving children as set out in § [18.2-361](#), incest as set out in § [18.2-366](#), taking indecent liberties with children as set out in § [18.2-370](#) or § [18.2-370.1](#), abuse and neglect of children as set out in § [18.2-371.1](#), failure to secure medical attention for an injured child as set out in § [18.2-314](#), obscenity offenses as set out in § [18.2-374.1](#), possession of child pornography as set out in § [18.2-374.1.1](#), electronic facilitation of pornography as set out in § [18.2-374.3](#), abuse and neglect of incapacitated adults as set out in § [18.2-369](#), employing or permitting a minor to assist in an act constituting an offense under Article 5 (§ [18.2-372](#) et seq.) of Chapter 8 of Title 18.2 as set out in § [18.2-379](#), delivery of drugs to prisoners as set out in § [18.2-474.1](#), escape from jail as set out in § [18.2-477](#), felonies by prisoners as set out in § [53.1-203](#), or an equivalent offense in another state. However, a licensed nursing home may hire an applicant who has been convicted of one misdemeanor specified in this section not involving abuse or neglect, if five years have elapsed following the conviction.

Any person desiring to work at a licensed nursing home shall provide the hiring facility with a sworn statement or affirmation disclosing any criminal convictions or any pending criminal charges, whether within or without the Commonwealth. Any person making a materially false statement when providing such sworn statement or affirmation regarding any such offense shall be guilty upon conviction of a Class 1 misdemeanor. Further dissemination of the information provided pursuant to this section is prohibited other than to a federal or state authority or court as may be required to comply with an express requirement of law for such further dissemination.

A nursing home shall, within 30 days of employment, obtain for any compensated employees an original criminal record clearance with respect to convictions for offenses specified in this section or an original criminal history record from the Central Criminal Records Exchange. The provisions of this section shall be enforced by the Commissioner. If an applicant is denied employment because of convictions appearing on his criminal history record, the nursing home shall provide a copy of the information obtained from the Central Criminal Records Exchange to the applicant. The provisions of this section shall not apply to volunteers who work with the permission or under the supervision of a person who has received a clearance pursuant to this section.

Similar language is found in other sections of the Code of Virginia relating to employment in home care organizations (§ 32.1-162.9:1), licensed homes for adults (§ 63.1-173.2), licensed district homes for adults (§ 63.1-189.1) and licensed adult day care centers (§ 63.1-194.1).

**Medical Office Specialist Program  
Acknowledgement of Program Requirements Document**

~When you are ready to enroll, please submit this completed form to request program registration~

**Please print clearly:**

Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Today's date \_\_\_\_\_

Your email address \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone number \_\_\_\_\_

Class start date \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to enroll in the Workforce Medical Office Specialist Program. I have read and understand all information provided in this Medical Office Specialist Pre-registration packet. And I acknowledge I have read though all information related to course information, steps to registration, job requirements when working in the medical field, Essential Functional requirements, the importance of clear background, the List of Barrier Crimes, and the Tuition Refund Policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please submit this signed page to:

**By email to:** gccworkforce@germana.edu

**Please use email Subject line:** Medical Office Specialist

Germana Community College is currently operating virtually, due to the Covid 19 pandemic

When restrictions ease and face to face operations resume, mail and in-person services will become more readily available. You may also contact us by phone with any time with questions you may have about your registration status for the Medical Office Specialist program  
(540) 891-3012

Thank you for your interest, we look forward to working with you and helping you start your medical office career!

Below is for GCC staff use only \*\*\*\*

GCC Workforce staff tracking:

Date received	Date reviewed	Comments