



Health Information Technology Program Information

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What will the program prepare me to do?

The graduate is immediately employable as a Health Information Management specialist. HIM jobs are expected to grow by 20% over the next 8 years.

2. What is the expected salary of a graduate of the HIT program?

Salaries often begin at an average of \$35,000 per year but may reach well over \$60,000 per year in some management positions.

3. What are the duties of a Health Information Technologist?

The field of health information management contains a wide range of distinct occupations. The HIM professional will find opportunities in hospitals and outpatient centers as well as in insurance companies and other areas. Coding is one aspect of the job. The following is a list of environments who hire HIM professionals:

- *Hospitals*
- *Physicians' offices*
- *Clinics*
- *Surgery Centers*
- *Billing companies*
- *Home care*
- *Government agencies*

The health information technician is responsible for reviewing medical charts to check for completion and accuracy. The professionals also generate reports and assign diagnosis and procedure codes to medical records for insurance claims and data collection purposes.

If you love working with computers and the medical field intrigues you, your skills and interests could come together in the perfect job. But you need to have a degree. Because the field is expected to grow so fast, competition for the best positions and the highest salaries will be intense. A degree in health information technology can help you land one of these in-demand occupations.

4. Is there room for advancement in this field?

As technology advances, more employers will seek highly trained health information professionals with an associate's degree. Certification is required.

5. When are students admitted to the program?

Students will be admitted once a year, for Fall admission. The application date is May 1.

6. Is there limited admission to the program?

Yes, due to the need to limit class size for an instructor and clinical space, the program is limited to an admission of 25 students. In the event that the number of qualified applicants exceeds available clinical space, a point system will be used to rank applicants.

7. What are the criteria for admission?

In addition to the admission requirements for the College, the following are requirements for admission to the HIM Program:

- a. Graduation from high school or receipt of a General Educational Development certificate (GED).*
- b. Completion of admission requirements to Florida SouthWestern State College.*
- c. Completion of Learning Assistance courses, if required, by the start of the Program.*
- d. Completion of prerequisites coursework during year one.*
- e. Attainment of a minimum grade of "C" or above in all general education courses, including prerequisites, required in the HIT program.*
- f. Cumulative grade point average of 2.5.*
- g. Submission of Official transcripts from post-secondary institutions showing completion of any of the prerequisite or co-requisite courses.*
- h. Completion of the HIT Application along with the \$15.00 application fee receipt*
- i. Application deadline: May 1*

8. How will I know if I have been admitted to the program?

Notification letters of the status of each applicant will be mailed during the third week in June. Provisional acceptance will be offered. A physical examination, 10-panel drug screen and criminal history background check will be required prior to full acceptance to the program.

9. What part does the Criminal Background Check play for my admission to the HIT Program?

Each applicant is required to inform the Program Coordinator, in writing, of any criminal charges on his/her record in any state or national jurisdiction upon submission of an application for enrollment to the program. This information needs to include an explanation of circumstances for possible review by an admissions committee.

Applicants, notified of provisional acceptance into the HIT program are required to register with Certified Background to begin the process of submission of a criminal background check and 10 panel drug screen. This criminal background screening ensures consistency with the requirements of Chapter 435, Florida Statutes, by health care agencies with which Florida

SouthWestern State College has clinical affiliation agreements. Background screening must be completed before final acceptance to the HIT program can be approved. The registration with Certified Background costs approximately \$145.00 and is payable by the applicant.

Applicants with criminal records are forewarned that the Florida Department of Health-Division of Medical Quality Assurance requires any licensure applicant who has ever been convicted or found guilty of a felony, regardless of adjudication, to explain the circumstances. The same is true for other states with licensure statutes as well as national certification boards. These individuals will need to gain clearance from these agencies before they are allowed to take state licensure and national certification examinations that are required by employment.

Criminal History Findings:

Any applicant or enrolled student who has been found guilty of, regardless of adjudication, or entered a plea of nolo contendere, or guilty to, any offense under the provisions of Florida Statutes or under similar statutes of another jurisdiction may be disqualified from admission or continued enrollment in the HIT program.

Those offenses are:

- *Murder*
- *Manslaughter*
- *Vehicular homicide*
- *Killing of an unborn child by injury to the mother*
- *Assault, if the victim of the offense was a minor*
- *Aggravated battery*
- *Kidnapping*
- *False imprisonment*
- *Sexual battery*
- *Prohibited acts of persons in familial or custody authority*
- *Lewd and lascivious behavior*
- *Arson*
- *Theft, robbery, and related crimes, if the offense is a felony*
- *Incest*
- *Abuse or neglect of a disabled adult or elderly person*
- *Exploitation of disabled adult or elderly person*
- *Aggravated child abuse*
- *Child abuse*
- *Negligent treatment of children*
- *Sexual performance by a child*
- *Alcohol or Drug offenses which were a felony, or if the offense involved a minor*
- *Offenses indicating unfitness to serve as a healthcare professional*

Upon notification of provisional acceptance into the HIT program, each applicant will be provided with a detailed procedure for completing the registration with Certified Background..

Health Record/Ability to Meet Technical Standards

A completed medical health form and self assessment of Program Technical Standards must also be submitted and approved by the program director prior to admission to the HIT program. This health record will contain results from a physical examination and laboratory tests including immunization records. An updated health record verified by a licensed physician or designee must be submitted on a yearly basis or as required by health facilities before attending clinical courses.

Student drug screens, criminal history reports, and medical records, when submitted will become the property of Edison State College, and will not be available for copying or for use to meet the requirements of outside employers or other agencies/persons. Students who are out of the program for six months or more must submit new records.