

## South Arkansas Community College Medical Coding Program

### Important Information for Medical Coding Students

While completing Medical Coding program courses the student must be aware of the following items:

- This program is taught from the perspective of professional and real-world coding expectations.
  - Your signature and coding credential represents high ethical and professional standards.
  - You will be expected to maintain an accuracy level of 95% or better in the medical coding profession - thus the program's untypical grading scale.
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- There will be a fair amount of research involved during course work.
- Late assignment policy for all didactic course work.
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- Proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation are required for all course work.
- Professionalism will be expected when interacting with practicum site (because professionalism is expected at work sites once you graduate).
  - Must follow practicum site requirements.
    - Attendance
    - Dress Code and Presentation of self to patients, families, community members, and employees
    - Confidentiality with patient and employee information
    - Personal history information such as, but not limited to: immunizations, vaccinations, drug screen, background check, finger printing, and fraud check.
- Passing course exams and practice certification examinations are NOT equivalent to professional work in medical coding. Coursework at the college-level is a foundation and the graduate must build on learned knowledge to be successful in their chosen career.
- We are puzzle solvers! We are researchers! We hold true to ethics and integrity! We pursue knowledge! We love change!

Medical Coding students must understand the importance of learning healthcare and medical coding information and then transferring that information to the professional work world of medical coding:

- Guidelines are everything! You are entering a career with precise and highly specific expectations.
  - Medical Coding work requires a high level of concentration and attention to detail.
- This career involves a high-level of self-investment.

- Membership dues in a professional organization to secure and retain certification in the profession.
- Cost of annual coding books and resources (these are revised every year).
- Continuing education coursework to remain up to date on new medical coding rules.
- Accepting that medical coding professionals' knowledge must continue to grow and this growth requires intentional actions on the part of the medical coding professional.
  - Growth comes from years of experience.
    - An increase in salary occurs over time. A high-level salary is not guaranteed for new graduates.
    - Students should bear in mind that salary averages and ranges are dependent on a multiple of variables, including but not limited to: geographic area need and cost of living (which is typically lower for Arkansas than for costal states).
      - ❖ Average hourly salary in South Arkansas: \$13.72.\*
      - ❖ Annual mean salary in Arkansas: \$21,980 to \$35,420.\*\*
      - ❖ Average pay, taking in account the entire U. S. A.: \$45,240.\*\*\*
    - Remote work is realistic as the professional medical coder gains experience and further knowledge (through continuing education courses and additional certifications).
  - Constant research and learning of new medical coding initiatives.
  - Finding the right company for you is key and that is where the rewards and benefits will begin.

\* <https://www.medicalbillingandcoding.org/arkansas/>

\*\* [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/map\\_changer.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/map_changer.htm)

\*\*\* <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-records-and-health-information-technicians.htm>