

MEDICAL LABORATORY ASSISTANTS



CERTIFICATION INFORMATION

Revised: October 2008

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MEDICAL LABORATORY ASSISTANT CERTIFICATION

INFORMATION PACKAGE

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

BRITISH COLUMBIA SOCIETY OF LABORATORY SCIENCE (BCSLS)

The BCSLS is a recognized provincial, professional association representing Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLT's) and Medical Laboratory Assistants (MLA's). The BCSLS's mission is to provide leadership and opportunities that meet the needs of its members for Education, Representation and Fellowship. BCSLS established a voluntary certification program for medical laboratory assistants in 1996 which relies on the cooperation of employers, educational institutions and medical laboratory professionals. As members of the BCSLS, MLA's will have a voice in their future, the opportunity to plan their role within the laboratory, and participate in the Continuing Education Programs offered by the Society.

BCSLS POSITION STATEMENT ON MEDICAL LABORATORY ASSISTANTS

There is a role in laboratory medicine for support personnel to perform tasks requiring skills that do not require laboratory test evaluation, interpretation or assessment. These support functions have a direct effect on the health and well-being of patients; therefore it is necessary for people who perform these functions to be appropriately trained.

The BCSLS recognizes these support functions and the role of the MLA within the field of laboratory medicine. The BCSLS has established a curriculum and basic standards for the training of MLA's. To gain BCSLS endorsement, training programs must follow the curriculum guidelines as outlined in a separate document.

The BCSLS encourages MLA's to join the Society, and benefit from the advocacy, fellowship and professional development opportunities offered by the Society.

Laboratory test results have a direct impact on the diagnosis of disease and on patients' treatment and follow-up. In the interests of patient safety, trained and qualified individuals should perform laboratory testing.

2. **DEFINITIONS**

Certification:

Certification is a process in which an individual's training/education is formally evaluated and recognized as meeting certain predetermined standards. The certification process is usually undertaken by a professional organization. The purpose of certification is to assure that certified individuals meet specified standards to ensure the safe, ethical practice of a profession or service.

General Certification (Medical Laboratory Assistant)

For the purposes of certification a Medical Laboratory Assistant is a person employed in a medical laboratory who has been trained in phlebotomy, specimen processing and electrocardiography. A certified Medical Laboratory Assistant has demonstrated theoretical knowledge and practical competence for the procedures and tasks they perform.

Subject Phlebotomy Certification (MLA)

For the purposes of certification, an MLA – Subject Phlebotomy – is a person employed in a medical laboratory who has been trained in phlebotomy and specimen processing. A certified (subject phlebotomy) MLA has demonstrated theoretical knowledge and practical competency for the procedures and tasks they perform.

3. **CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS:**

In order to become certified, individuals must qualify under one of the following two categories:

ONE: successful completion of a BCSLS approved MLA program which includes a practicum and/or work experience of a minimum of 120 hours in a Canadian laboratory. The MLA programs offered by the following schools have been BCSLS approved:

1. Vancouver Community College (1998)

2. Thompson Rivers University (2003)
3. Stenberg College (2003)
4. Camosun College (1998)
5. West Coast College of Health Care (1998)
6. MTI Community College (2006)
7. CDI College (2008)
8. University College of the Cariboo (1998 - 2004)

TWO: Successful completion of a program deemed to be equivalent to BCSLS approved Medical Laboratory Assistant Program that includes a practicum and/or work experience. Applicants with diplomas from these Medical Laboratory Assistant programs will be considered on an individual basis.

4. **APPLICATION PROCESS**

1. Complete application (On-line or Mail in form) and attach all required documentation.
2. Send the completed application form, with fees, to the BCSLS office. Please note that the application fee is **NON REFUNDABLE**.
3. The BCSLS will review all applications to determine whether the requirements have been met.
4. When the application has been approved, the applicant will be issued a certificate.
5. When an application is denied, the applicant will be informed in writing of the reasons for refusal.
6. The Ontario Society of Medical Technologists (OSMT: 1-800-461-6768) offers a certification process including a challenge examination. BCSLS will grant MLA certificates to individuals recognized by the OSMT program.

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS FOR MEDICAL LABORATORY ASSISTANT TRAINING

Curriculum Outline:

- The role of the Medical Laboratory Assistant
- Professionalism and Customer Service
- Confidentiality, Medical Legal and Ethical Issues
- Interpersonal Communications
- Quality Assurance/Improvement
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Laboratory Terminology and Measurement
- Safety, including WHMIS and Infection Control
- Specimen collection: Terminology and Conditions
- Blood collection
 - Venipuncture
 - Micro collection
- Urine and Miscellaneous Specimens
- Patient Preparation
- Sample Requirements
- Specimen Handling, Transport, Including TDG, Storage and Disposal
 - Protocols and procedures for Chemistry, Hematology
Microbiology Immunohematology, Histology
 - Laboratory Equipment
 - Documentation Requirements
 - Test Libraries
- Cardiology
 - Anatomy of the Heart and Conductive System
 - Lead Theory
 - Electrocardiogram Equipment
 - Recording Electrocardiograms
 - Identification of normal/abnormal Electrocardiograms