

Frequently Asked Questions

Medical Laboratory Technicians (MLTs) in California

What is a Medical Laboratory Technician (MLT)?

A MLT is mid-level laboratory professional who has obtained an associate degree and completed a NAACLS accredited MLT training program, a California approved MLT training program or United States of America military program.

What can MLTs do in the Laboratory?

In California, MLTs can perform waived and moderately complex testing with the exception of moderately complex microscopy and immunohematology. They can also perform phlebotomy, supervise LPT's and CPT1's, and report patient test results.

For example, MLTs can:

- ⌚ Prepare, perform and accept calibrations and QC for moderately complex test procedures
- ⌚ Analyze and report patient test results on waived and moderately complex test procedures
- ⌚ Conduct maintenance
- ⌚ Method Validations

What is the training for MLTs?

MLT training includes didactic courses in clinical chemistry, clinical hematology, coagulation and urinalysis, clinical microbiology and clinical immunology, followed by a 6 month clinical externship in CLIAA certified laboratories.

General academic requirements are an associate degree, including 36 semester units of physical and biological sciences of which 6 semester units are in chemistry and 6 semester units are in biology.

How much do MLTs earn?

The entry level salary range for a MLT is approximately 75-80% of a starting CLS salary or an estimated \$24-27/hour.

Do MLTs have to be Supervised?

Yes. Under California law clinical laboratories must maintain a CLS to MLT ratio of 1:4; onsite supervision is required when moderately complex testing is being done by a MLT.

Are MLTs Licensed?

Yes. In California, MLTs must obtain a license and pass the MLT certifying organization exam administered by the American Association of Bioanalysts (AAB) or American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP), and the self-administered exam on California clinical laboratory law.

How do MLTs become licensed?

Applications for licensure are available online at <https://secure.cps.ca.gov/ctlreg/>. Information on fees, requirements, official documents needed, and timing are also posted here.

How do I verify MLT licensure for current and prospective employees?

MLT licenses may be verified on the Laboratory Field Services website at: <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/lfs/Pages/PersonnelWEbsiteLookup.aspx>.

Does out-of-state training or work experience count for MLT licensure?

Yes, with restrictions. Please carefully review the information posted by Laboratory Field Services on their website at <http://ww2.cdph.ca.gov/programs/lfs/Documents/MLT%20FAQ-07.pdf>

Do MLTs have continuing education requirements?

Yes, MLTs must complete 12 contact hours of CE/year or 24 hours/2 years to maintain licensure.

Additional Questions?

For further information regarding MLT licensure or requirements, please consult the Laboratory Field Services website at: <http://ww2.cdph.ca.gov/programs/lfs/Pages/default.aspx>.