

Medical Laboratory Technologists: Alternative Careers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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Alternative Careers: Medical Laboratory Technologist (MLT)

Medical laboratory technologists conduct medical lab tests to assist in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease. Although medical laboratory technologists (MLTs) are not regulated in BC, certification through the Canadian Society of Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) is usually required by employers.

You may find that your international training and experience as a Medical Laboratory Technologist are not immediately accepted in B.C. The skills you have already acquired as an MLT (chemical and blood analysis, interpreting, evaluating and assessing test results, and good communication skills) can be used in these alternative careers:

- Medical laboratory technician
- Blood donor clinic assistant

Alternative Careers:

Medical Laboratory Technicians

Also referred to as Medical Laboratory Assistants or Aides, Clinical Laboratory Technicians

Medical laboratory technicians collect blood samples, conduct routine laboratory tests, and set up and maintain medical laboratory equipment.

Requirements

- Completion of a Medical Laboratory Assistant training program approved by the British Columbia Society of Laboratory Science (BCSLS) is required.
 - A list of approved programs is available at: <http://www.bcsls.net/pages/ed-training.html>
- Certification with the BCSLC is currently voluntary; however, certification may be preferred by employers.

Skills

- must be detail oriented and able to follow strict procedures
- requires a high level of accuracy, both in work procedures and in maintaining concise records
- must have good interpersonal skills
- must be able to work independently and as part of a team

Wages

- median hourly wage: \$22.60

Source: <https://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3212>

Blood donor clinic assistants

Blood donor clinic assistants set up equipment; maintain cleanliness of collection areas; order supplies; record information on donors; monitor donors throughout procedure and assist with post-donation care under supervision of a registered nurse.

Requirements

- secondary school and related experience; some positions may require Medical Laboratory Assistant diploma

Skills

- Know and follow sterilization techniques
- Listen to donors and make sure accurate information is recorded
- Use first aid techniques when necessary

- Understand and use medical terminology
- Have excellent customer service and organizational skills

Wages

- median hourly wage: \$19.05

Additional details available from:

www.workingincanada.gc.ca/occupation_search-eng.do

Other Job Titles to Investigate

- Laboratory assistant
- Laboratory helper

Employment Outlook

British Columbia's population is growing and ageing, which increases the demand for health-care services and health-care professionals. Also, a significant number of those currently employed are expected to retire over the next few years.

Additional openings will also come available due to worker turnover. Many workers are attracted to this occupation as a step towards obtaining employment in more skilled positions. For assistants who have taken specialized training, turnover rates are generally low.

Job Openings Outlook – Medical Laboratory Technicians (NOC 3212)

% of job openings from replacement	59%
% of job openings from expansion	41%
Average annual growth rate of employment (2014-2024)	1.8%
Expected cumulative job openings (2014-2024)	2,060

Chart from WorkBC

Retraining

BCIT Medical Laboratory Science Program

Two-and-a-half year, full-time, Diploma program

<http://www.bcit.ca/study/programs/6580diplt#overview>

Medical Communications for Healthcare Professionals

This course will help internationally educated professionals develop your oral, listening, writing and reading skills so that you may accurately communicate medical and scientific information to other medical professionals.

www.bcit.ca/study/courses/mlsc1700

Medical Laboratory Assistant Training Programs

List of programs approved by the BC Society of Laboratory Science

<http://www.bcsls.net/pages/ed-training.html>

Searching for Jobs

B.C. Health Authorities

Regional services including publicly funded hospitals and residential care facilities

www.health.gov.bc.ca/socsec/ (select link for each region and then go to 'Careers')

B.C. Provincial Health Services Authority Job Postings

Lists jobs available in specialty institutions such as BC Transplant, Women's Hospital, BC Children's Hospital

<http://jobs.phsa.ca/>

Providence Health Care

www.providencehealthcare.org/careers

Indeed.ca

www.indeed.ca

Neuvoo

<https://neuvoo.ca/>

Volunteering in the Field

Volunteering in health care facilities can help you to explore a new career and learn more about the health care system in BC. You will meet new people and build a network of contacts that can lead to information on job openings and inside connections with potential employers.

The following organizations accept volunteers in hospitals, residential care facilities, palliative care and other community settings such as blood donor clinics.

Canadian Blood Services

<https://www.blood.ca/en/volunteers>

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority

<http://www.vch.ca/get-involved/volunteer/>

Fraser Health Authority

<http://www.fraserhealth.ca/about-us/volunteer/>

Providence Health Care

www.providencehealthcare.org/volunteers

Community Care Facilities, BC Ministry of Health

Other volunteer opportunities may be available from individual care facilities across BC:

www.health.gov.bc.ca/ccf/survey/index.php/displaycommunity/index

Helpful Resources

British Columbia Society of Laboratory Science

www.bcsls.net/

Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science

www.csmls.org/

Health Match BC

<https://www.healthmatchbc.org/Allied-Health/Medical-Laboratory-Technologists>

Click on 'Job Search Resources' at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca> for help on:

- resumes & cover letters
- getting Canadian work experience
- networking for employment
- online social networks
- Canadian workplace culture

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.