

# The Phlebotomy Technician and Donor Phlebotomy Technician



Do you want to work directly with patients? Then a career as a phlebotomy technician (PBT) is a good choice. The laboratory depends on the phlebotomy technician to collect quality samples from the patient to produce quality laboratory results. To do this, the phlebotomy technician must create an atmosphere of trust and confidence with patients while drawing blood specimens in a skillful, safe, and reliable manner. A phlebotomy technician who collects units of blood from volunteer donors can become certified as a Donor Phlebotomy Technician (DPT), offering specialized expertise to blood centers.

Phlebotomy technicians must like challenge and responsibility. They must also be accurate, work well under pressure, and communicate effectively. Because the phlebotomy technician works directly with the patient, he or she must also act as the “eyes and ears” of the doctors, nurses, and laboratory professionals. The phlebotomy technician must notice and relay any important information gathered during interaction with patients. Phlebotomy technicians must set high standards for themselves, and they must be deeply committed to quality health care delivery.

#### **Related Careers:**

*Apheresis Technician,  
Hemapheresis Practitioner,  
Blood Banking Technologist*

*“As a phlebotomist, I interact with patients, so they see me as the ‘face’ of the laboratory. I work with patients in the hospital and those who are homebound. I love the variety of people I serve every day.”*

**Careers**  
in Pathology and Medical Laboratory Science

#### **Minimum Education Requirement: (PBT)**

A high school graduate with acceptable phlebotomy training or work experience.

#### **Minimum Education Requirement: (DPT)**

A high school graduate with acceptable training or work experience in donor phlebotomy.

## Career Preparation

To prepare for a career as a phlebotomy technician, one should get a solid foundation in high school science and math. A high school diploma and successful completion of an approved training program are prerequisites for certification as a phlebotomy technician.

## Scholarships

Through the generous contributions of its members and support from Dade Behring, Inc., the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) offers scholarships to qualified students enrolled in approved training programs. All scholarship selection criteria include academic achievement, leadership abilities and community activities, professional goals, and endorsements from faculty and community leaders.

## Certification

To be sure that phlebotomy technicians are capable and competent, the Board of Registry of the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) gives a national certification exam. Those who pass the exam may use the initials PBT(ASCP) after their names to show they are proficient in their field. Certification is valid for three years. To demonstrate competency throughout their careers after their initial certification, phlebotomy technicians must complete a Certification Maintenance Program every three years.

## Job Opportunities

Jobs are available for phlebotomy technicians in hospital laboratories and reference laboratories across the country.

## Salaries

According to the ASCP Wage and Vacancy Survey, phlebotomy technicians in the United States earned an average annual salary of \$24,350. Phlebotomy supervisors made \$35,000.

## Opportunities to Advance

Dedicated phlebotomy technicians can enhance their employability by becoming certified as Donor Phlebotomy Technicians, which qualifies them to work in blood collection centers. Phlebotomy technicians also have opportunities to advance to supervisory positions.

## Do you have what it takes

All medical technologists have certain common characteristics. They are problem solvers. They like challenge and responsibility. They are accurate, reliable, work well under pressure and are able to finish a task once started. They communicate well, both in writing and speaking. They set high standards for themselves and expect quality in the work they do. Above all, they are deeply committed to their profession, and are truly fascinated by all that science has to offer. For someone who chooses a career as a medical technologist, the exploration never ends.

## Key Contacts

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The American Society for Clinical Pathology provides excellence in education, certification, and advocacy on behalf of patients, pathologists, and laboratory professionals. Founded in 1922, ASCP is a professional society with 140,000 member pathologists and medical laboratory professionals.