

Ministry of Health

Health Programs and Delivery
Division

Laboratories and Diagnostics Branch

438 University Ave, 4th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 1N3
Telephone: 416-326-2158

Ministère de la Santé

Division des programmes de santé
et de la prestation des services

Direction des laboratoires et des
services diagnostiques

438, av. University, 4e étage
Toronto ON M7A 1N3
Téléphone : 416-326-2158



**MINISTRY GUIDANCE ON DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A
LABORATORY TECHNICIAN**

*(otherwise known as a Medical Laboratory Assistant/Technician or MLA/T who are employed by a
licensed Laboratory and/or Specimen Collection Centre)*

Section 1 of Ontario Regulation 45/22 defines a "laboratory technician" as a person who under direct supervision performs laboratory tests which require limited technical skill and responsibilities.

Direct supervision is recognized as a situation in which a supervisor oversees the work of other persons. The supervisor has control over and professional knowledge of the work being done and provides constant direction, feedback, and assistance, ensuring that everything is done correctly. Supervisors can provide direct supervision remotely by being "immediately available" through virtual presence using real-time interactive audio and video technology rather than by being physically present in the office.

In accordance with this, a laboratory technician may, under the direct supervision of an appropriately qualified laboratory director, supervisor, medical laboratory technologist (MLT), or medical/scientific staff member, perform laboratory tests which require limited technical skill and responsibilities, and which do not require interpretation, assessment, or the exercise of independent judgement (i.e., resulting of tests and quality control). Specific work assignments should only be undertaken subsequent to thorough training and instruction by qualified supervisory personnel.

An MLA/T's duties and responsibilities may include, but is not limited to the following:

- blood sample procurement
- label and sort specimens for analysis (including referral specimens)
- load and operate lab testing equipment
- operation of automated instruments after proper functioning has been established by qualified staff as listed above
- prepare and stain slides of blood and other fluids for study under a microscope
- reagent and media preparation
- plant specimens to culture bacteria
- follow quality control and safety standards
- dispose of hazardous waste
- clean and disinfect lab benches and equipment
- maintain stock levels of lab supplies
- urinalysis (excluding microscopic) for resulting by a MLT
- running and recording quality control results for interpretation and approval by qualified

staff as listed above

- set up manual testing, e.g., occult blood, pregnancy test, ESR, Point of Care testing, etc. to be read and interpreted immediately by a MLT
- routine equipment maintenance
- temperature monitoring of thermally controlled equipment
- transcription of results from worksheets to reports for review by a MLT

participate in carrying out a well-documented validation plan under the supervision of an appropriately qualified laboratory director, supervisor, medical laboratory technologist, or medical/scientific staff member.

Qualifications:

For reference, under subsection 13(6) of O. Reg 45/22, the following requirement applies any person employed in a laboratory as a “laboratory technician”:

(6) A person is qualified to be a laboratory technician if the person has obtained an Ontario secondary school diploma or is able to produce evidence of equivalent standing and,

- (a) has worked for at least two years as a technical trainee in a laboratory or laboratories; or
- (b) has successfully completed relevant courses which, together with the person’s work experience, are equivalent to the experience set out in clause (a).

And subsection 14 (a)(b)(c) with regards to employees of a specimen collection centre states:

Qualifications — specimen collection centre employees

14. The owner and the operator of a specimen collection centre shall ensure that no person is employed in the specimen collection centre to take or collect specimens from the human body unless a member of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario has certified in writing to the owner or the operator that the person has,

- (a) competence in the techniques of taking and collecting specimens from the human body;
- (b) the ability to manage and care for individuals from whom specimens are taken or collected; and
- c) a high standard of personal cleanliness.

Requirements and Skills

- Valid MLA/T certificate and or proven experience as Lab Technician or relevant position
- Experience in operating electrical and nonelectrical laboratory equipment and potentially dangerous substances (flammable liquids, infectious bacteria, biohazards etc.)
- In depth knowledge of quality systems, preventative measures, and laboratory best practices
- Basic computer skills
- Ability to work autonomously and under pressure.

The above-noted list is not intended to be all-inclusive. It is recognized that there may be other laboratory activities that do not require interpretation, assessment or the exercise of independent judgement, which may be carried out by a MLA/T.