

MEDICAL LABORATORY SCIENTIST (MLS)



What do I do?

A Medical Laboratory Scientist conducts a full range of laboratory tests, from routine to complex, in blood banking, chemistry, hematology, immunology, microbiology, molecular biology, and/or urinalysis on biologic specimens to provide information necessary for the diagnosis and treatment of disease. Problem solves issues with specimens, testing, and instrumentation. Evaluates, develops, and validates diagnostic testing and instrumentation.

My typical day includes:

- **Conducting chemical analysis of body fluids**, including blood, urine, or spinal fluid, to determine presence of normal or abnormal components.
- **Analyzing laboratory findings** to check the accuracy of the results.
- **Assessing blood samples** to determine the number and type of cells; or blood group and compatibility for transfusions.
- Performing microbiologic culture and other methods to diagnose infections.
- Recording data from medical tests and entering results into a patient's medical record.
- Discussing results and findings of laboratory tests and procedures with physicians.
- **Calibrating, operating, and maintaining equipment** such as spectrophotometers, centrifuges, microscopes, thermocyclers and automated pipetting equipment and analyzers.
- Perform **quality control** to ensure test accuracy and continuous quality.

Necessary Skill Sets



ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Perform routine laboratory procedures and complex analyses that require a high level of cognitive understanding with skill and efficiency, producing accurate and precise results within a specified period of time.



COMMUNICATION

Describe and relate the theoretical and practical aspects of each test performed in the laboratory. Relate normal, abnormal and critical values with their significance by demonstrating correct follow-up actions.



ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

Exhibit attitudes of honesty and integrity in the performance of all laboratory procedures, with an understanding of the ultimate consequences gained from the practice of strong medical ethics.



PROBLEM SOLVING

Ability to troubleshoot instrumentation and assess abnormal results.

Education Requirements

Master's or Bachelor's degree in Medical Laboratory Science from an accredited institution.

Note: For examination eligibility requirements, including alternate education/training routes, refer to the link provided under certification section.

Certification

[Earn certification as a Medical Laboratory Scientist \(MLS\) from the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification \(ASCP BOC\).](#)

Salary

Mean Annual Salary*: \$86,900 (Median: \$83,200)

* Salaries are based on a national average and will vary by location, years of service and other factors. [\(ASCP Data\)](#)