



Medical Assistant Technical Standards

The following is a general overview of the physical requirements, working conditions and job duties of a medical assistant. Every student must possess the physical, mental, and emotional capabilities required to complete the medical assisting program successfully and to pass the certification exam.

The role of a Medical Assistant requires the following functional abilities with or without reasonable accommodation.

Strength, Mobility and Balance are sufficient to perform patient care activities and emergency procedures.

- Ability to carry a minimum of 20 lbs., stand, sit, bend over, squat, and walk for intermittent periods.
- Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
- Assists providers with patient care workflow (wound care, surgical procedures, etc.)

Fine Motor Skills sufficient to perform psychomotor skills integral to patient care

- Accurately place and maintain the position of the stethoscope for detecting sounds of bodily functions.
- Manipulate small equipment and containers as used in CLIA procedures.
- Administering medications as per RCW 18.360.050.

Visual acuity is sufficient to assess patients and their environments.

- Detect changes in skin color or condition.
- Discriminating between the abnormal and normal color of body fluids or exudates.
- Adequate visual acuity, such as is needed in the preparation and administration of all forms of medication, the performance of diagnostic laboratory procedures, and for observation necessary in-patient assessment and care.
- Read fine print on vaccine vials and equipment labels.

Hearing ability is sufficient to assess patients and their environments.

- Detect sounds related to blood pressure using a stethoscope.
- Communicate clearly in telephone conversations.
- Communicate effectively with patients and other members of the health care team.

Tactile ability is sufficient to assess patients and their environments.

- Detect changes in skin temperature.
- Palpate pulse.

Ability to Communicate effectively to teach others, explain procedures, interact effectively with others, and convey information in writing.

- Ability to speak, comprehend, read, and write in English at a level that meets the need for accurate, clear, and effective communication.
- Ability to read, interpret, and communicate using proper medical terminology.

Emotional stability to function effectively under stress and emergencies, to adapt to changing situations, to follow through on assigned patient care responsibilities, and to withstand human trauma and its effects.

Mental and Cognitive ability to collect and analyze information; determine normal from abnormal and appropriately inform their team leader and/or supervising faculty.

- Analytical thinking is sufficient to transfer knowledge from one situation to another, prioritize tasks and use long-term and short-term memory.
- Sufficient intellectual and emotional functions to plan and implement assigned duties in a responsible manner.
- Function safely, responsibly, and effectively under stressful situations.
- Remain alert to surroundings and potential emergencies.
- Interact effectively and appropriately with patients, families, and coworkers.
- Display attitudes and actions consistent with ethical standards of medical assisting.
- Maintain composure while managing and prioritizing multiple tasks.
- Communicate with an understanding of the principles of confidentiality, respect, tact, politeness, collaboration, teamwork, and discretion.
- Handle difficult interpersonal situations in a calm and tactful manner.
- Maintain cleanliness and personal grooming consistent with close personal contact.
- Function without causing harm to others if under the influence of prescription or over-the-counter medication.
- Function without causing harm to others. This would include situations that may result from any mental or physical condition.

Medical Assistant Occupational Risks

As with any healthcare position, there are certain occupational risks that come into play with being a medical assistant, and those hazards include the following:

- Exposure to infectious diseases
- Sharps injuries
- Bloodborne pathogens and biological hazards
- Chemical and drug exposure
- Ergonomic hazards from lifting, sitting, and repetitive tasks.
- Latex allergies
- Stress

At the same time, there are protections set up with the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), and those protections are particularly important within a healthcare environment. OSHA has a series of standards that protect the safety of healthcare workers and patients.

Accredited medical assisting programs are required to teach students about the hazards that they face on the job and the protocols that can be put into place to ensure a workplace culture that prioritizes safety.