

Medical Laboratory Technician Essential Functions

Health care professionals require the performance of essential functions, with or without reasonable accommodations, in order to provide safe care, generate accurate data and communicate effectively to patients and other health care personnel. To effectively train medical laboratory technology professionals, the performance of these functions is incorporated throughout the program. Faculty and students are required to demonstrate proficiency of these functions in the campus lab and applied experience. The essential functions include, but are not limited to:

The Physical and Sensory Demands required include:

- ✓ Physical abilities to move about freely and safely in small spaces, walk, stand or sit for long periods of time, ability to lift and move 40 pounds.
- ✓ Physical ability to travel to clinical sites for applied experience.
- ✓ Fine motor and visual abilities sufficient to obtain, manipulate, and measure specimens safely and with precision. Manipulate reagents, materials; adjust instruments and analytical equipment safely and with speed and accuracy.
- ✓ Vision sufficient to discern colors, microscopic structures and shapes, observe patients, specimens and demonstrations, observe and respond to emergency lights, read charts, graphs, and instrument scales.
- ✓ Visual acuity sufficient to read and interpret test requests and physician orders in print and on monitor/computer screens and the ability to read small print for patient identification
- ✓ Sufficient hearing ability to answer phones, beepers and alarms, respond to questions and receive directions.

The Intellectual Demands required include:

- ✓ Ability to master relevant content in both didactic and applied courses delivered in a variety of different learning formats.
- ✓ Read, comprehend and accurately remember and apply oral and written procedures
- ✓ Measure, calculate, interpret, analyze, reason, evaluate and explain lab results and quality control.
- ✓ Solve problems, make critical judgments and initiate corrective action to ensure accuracy and reliability of results in a timely fashion.
- ✓ Organize and prioritize one's work for completion in a timely fashion.

The Behavioral and Emotional Demands required include:

- ✓ Interpersonal abilities sufficient to effectively communicate, both verbally and non-verbally, in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner with patients, physicians other health care and non-health care employees, students, and laboratory personnel.
- ✓ Emotional stability to recognize and respond quickly and efficiently in unsafe and emergency situations in order to minimize injury to patients, self and nearby individuals.
- ✓ Exhibit compassion and tolerance for others, respect cultural diversity.
- ✓ Emotional stability to function effectively in stressful situations and complete all responsibilities, exercise sound judgment, is flexible and adapts to sudden unpleasant situations common in the clinical setting.
- ✓ Project a professional appearance by being well-groomed and punctual.
- ✓ Ability to maintain patient confidentiality and to exercise ethical judgment, integrity, honesty, dependability, and accountability in the performance of one's laboratory responsibilities.
- ✓ Evaluate own performance, accept constructive criticism and seek performance improvement.
Maintain a cooperative and productive working relationship with fellow students, patients and other health professionals.

Note: Both Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 29 U.S.C.A. Sect. 794 and the new Americans with Disabilities Act prohibit discrimination against 'otherwise qualified' persons with a disability. If an applicant can perform those 'essential functions', he or she is 'otherwise qualified' under the law and must be treated the same as people without a disability. A person who cannot perform the 'essential functions' is not 'otherwise qualified' and may be denied access to the program without being subject to legal action for discrimination. (From NAACLS NEWS, Volume 50, fall 1991)