

# Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLT): Alternative Careers

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## 1. Medical Laboratory Technologist: Alternative Careers

Medical laboratory technologists conduct medical lab tests to assist in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease. Although medical laboratory technologists (MLTs) are not regulated in BC, certification through the Canadian Society of Medical Laboratory Science (CSMLS) is usually required by employers.

You may find that your international training and experience as a Medical Laboratory Technologist are not immediately accepted in B.C. The skills you have already acquired as an MLT (chemical and blood analysis, interpreting, evaluating and assessing test results, and good communication skills) can be used in these alternative careers:

- Medical laboratory technician
- Blood donor clinic assistant

### Alternative Careers:

#### **Medical Laboratory Technicians [NOC 2021: 32120 / NOC 2016: 3211]**

*Also referred to as Medical Laboratory Assistants or Aides, Clinical Laboratory Technicians*

Medical laboratory technicians collect blood samples, conduct routine laboratory tests, and set up and maintain medical laboratory equipment.

#### **Requirements**

- Completion of a Medical Laboratory Assistant training program approved by the British Columbia Society of Laboratory Science (BCSLs) is required.
  - A list of approved programs is available at: <https://www.bcsls.net/schools-and-lab-programs>

## Medical Laboratory Technologists: Alternative Careers

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- Certification with the BCSLC is currently voluntary; however, certification may be preferred by employers.

#### ***Skills***

- must be detail oriented and able to follow strict procedures
- requires a high level of accuracy, both in work procedures and in maintaining concise records
- must have good interpersonal skills
- must be able to work independently and as part of a team

#### ***Wages***

- median hourly wage: \$25.00

Source: [WorkBC Career Profile](#)

### **Blood donor clinic assistants**

Blood donor clinic assistants set up equipment; maintain cleanliness of collection areas; order supplies; record information on donors; monitor donors throughout procedure and assist with post-donation care under supervision of a registered nurse.

#### ***Requirements***

- secondary school and related experience; some positions may require Medical Laboratory Assistant diploma

#### ***Skills***

- Know and follow sterilization techniques
- Listen to donors and make sure accurate information is recorded
- Use first aid techniques when necessary
- Understand and use medical terminology
- Have excellent customer service and organizational skills

#### ***Wages***

- median hourly wage: \$22.25

Additional details available from: [WorkBC Career Profile](#)

### **Other Job Titles to Investigate**

Laboratory assistant

Laboratory helper

## 2. Employment Outlook

British Columbia's population is growing and ageing, which increases the demand for health-care services and health-care professionals. Also, a significant number of those currently employed are expected to retire over the next few years.

Additional openings will also come available due to worker turnover. Many workers are attracted to this occupation as a step towards obtaining employment in more skilled positions. For assistants who have taken specialized training, turnover rates are generally low.

### Job Openings Outlook – Medical Laboratory Technicians

[NOC 2021: 32120 / NOC 2016: 3211]

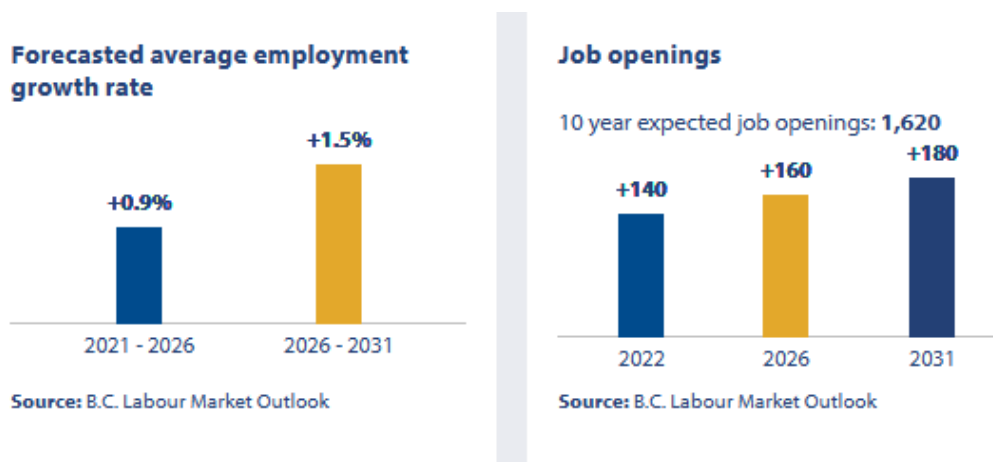


Chart from WorkBC

## 3. Retraining

### BCIT Medical Laboratory Science Program

Two-and-a-half year, full-time, Diploma program

<https://www.bcit.ca/programs/medical-laboratory-science-diploma-full-time-6615dipma/>

### Medical Communications for Healthcare Professionals

This course will help internationally educated professionals develop your oral, listening, writing and reading skills so that you may accurately communicate medical and scientific information to other medical professionals.

<https://www.bcit.ca/courses/medical-communications-for-healthcare-professionals-mlsc-1700/>

### **Medical Laboratory Assistant Training Programs**

List of programs approved by the BC Society of Laboratory Science

<https://www.bcsls.net/schools-and-lab-programs>

## **4. Searching for Jobs**

### **B.C. Society for Laboratory Science Careers**

<https://www.bcsls.net/careers-page>

### **B.C. Health Authorities**

Regional services including publicly funded hospitals and residential care facilities

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/partners/health-authorities/> (select link for each region and then go to 'Careers')

### **B.C. Provincial Health Services Authority Job Postings**

Lists jobs available in specialty institutions such as BC Transplant, Women's Hospital, BC Children's Hospital

<https://jobs.phsa.ca/>

### **Providence Health Care**

<https://careers.providencehealthcare.org/>

### **Indeed.ca**

<https://www.indeed.ca>

## **5. Volunteering in the Field**

Volunteering in health care facilities can help you to explore a new career and learn more about the health care system in BC. You will meet new people and build a network of contacts that can lead to information on job openings and inside connections with potential employers.

The following organizations accept volunteers in hospitals, residential care facilities, palliative care and other community settings such as blood donor clinics.

**Canadian Blood Services**

<https://www.blood.ca/en/volunteers>

**B.C. Society for Laboratory Science**

<https://www.bcsls.net/volunteer>

**Vancouver Coastal Health Authority**

<https://www.vch.ca/en/about-us/get-involved/volunteer>

**Fraser Health Authority**

<https://www.fraserhealth.ca/about-us/volunteer-opportunities>

**Providence Health Care**

<https://www.providencehealthcare.org/volunteers>

**Long Term Care and Assisted Living Directory**

Other volunteer opportunities may be available from individual care facilities across BC:

<https://www.seniorsadvocatebc.ca/quickfacts/location/>

## 6. Helpful Resources

**British Columbia Society of Laboratory Science**

<https://www.bcsls.net/>

**Canadian Society for Medical Laboratory Science**

<https://www.csmls.org/>

**BC Health Careers**

<https://www.bchealthcareers.ca/>

**Allied Health Jobs BC**

<https://alliedhealthjobsbc.ca/>

***Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.***

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <https://www.vpl.ca/siic/>.

