WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE

JOB PROFILE: LABORATORY

Clinical laboratory professionals use sophisticated biomedical instrumentation and technology, as well as highly skilled manual techniques, to support physicians in making medical diagnoses. They examine and analyze body fluids, tissues and cells; identify microorganisms; analyze the chemical constituents of body fluids; and evaluate test results for accuracy and help interpret them for physicians.

Laboratory assistants focus on performing laboratory procedures and collecting, processing and analyzing specimens.

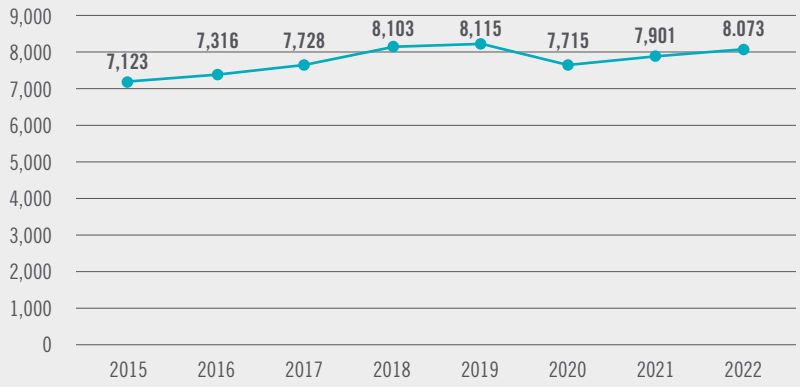
Laboratory technicians can collect specimens, with a focus on moderate-complexity testing, quality control and instrument maintenance.

Laboratory scientists and technologists focus on high-complexity testing (often in a specialized area), quality control and instrument maintenance. Job responsibilities vary based on state regulations. Since opening in 2016, Kaiser Permanente's state-of-the-art Chino Hills lab has increased clinical lab scientist positions by 23%.

OUTLOOK

Highly specialized laboratory jobs are expected to grow faster than average through 2028, with COVID-19 boosting demand even more. Many of those positions will require an associate degree or higher. Lab professionals will constantly need to update their skills. As more technology is introduced, workers will need to know how to use and troubleshoot analyzer machines, complete complex analysis of results, and possess strong communication and customer service skills.

RISING DEMAND: Kaiser Permanente's laboratory jobs have grown 13% since 2015.



EDUCATION AND ADVANCED TRAINING

- Accredited phlebotomy program
- Community colleges (associate degree)
- Colleges and universities (bachelor's degree)
- U.S. military medical laboratory training

  Note: School laboratory program must be accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS)
- Education trust funds: Biology, chemistry, etc.

CREDENTIALS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Clinical lab assistant or phlebotomist

- Phlebotomy technician or medical assistant training, including phlebotomy and certification

Medical laboratory technician

- Associate degree and certification

Medical (clinical) laboratory scientist or medical technologist

- Bachelor's degree and one year of clinical experience, certification exam and accreditation (which can be completed in a hospital system, university or outpatient setting)

Professional associations

- Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute
- American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification
- American Medical Technologists
- The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

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NATIONAL WORKFORCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LABOR MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE

JOB PROFILE: LABORATORY

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Care settings

- Inpatient/hospital
- Outpatient/ambulatory

Care anywhere

- More home testing with shipment to a central processing location
  - Genetics (genealogy, health risks)
  - Fecal immunochemical test (FIT) kits
- Virtual monitoring of home testing directly to physician without the use of laboratory services
  - Blood pressure monitoring
  - Blood glucose monitoring
- Home monitoring
  - Traveling phlebotomist (focus on high-risk patients)
  - Warfarin and anticoagulant program

TAKE ACTION

Employees: Explore career paths at kpcareerplanning.org/paths. Partnership union members can talk with an education trust career counselor: Ben Hudnall Memorial Trust (bhmt.org/career-coaching), SEIU UHW-West and Joint Employer Education Fund (theedfund.org/cc), or SEIU Healthcare 1199NW Multi-Employer Training Fund (healthcareerfund.org/programs-services/career-counseling).

Managers: Adapt to emerging trends. Talk with a Workforce of the Future implementation specialist to discuss training and education opportunities (kpcareerplanning.org/prd/contact_us.php).

CURRENT CORE JOB SKILLS

- Compassionate customer service
- Good communication skills with providers and peers
- Proper use of computer and laboratory equipment
- Obtain correct quality/quantity of specimens
- Chart accuracy and attention to detail
- Assess quality/quantity, process and transport specimens
- Assist physicians and/or lab scientists with exams (for some specialty areas)
- Working knowledge of laboratory procedures and terminology
- Validate and report accurate test results
- Calibrate and maintain laboratory instruments and equipment
- Quality/safety skills

FUTURE CORE SKILLS

- Proper use of analyzer and quality assurance over machines
- Increased demand for cross-training and multiple modality certifications
- Critical skills: digital fluency, consumer focus, collaboration
- Adaptability
- Specialty training or certifications:
  - Blood banking
  - Chemistry
  - Cytogenetics
  - Cytotechnologist
  - Hematology
  - Histotechnologist
  - Histotechnician
  - Microbiology
  - Genetics
  - Molecular biology

EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES

- Performance improvement and quality skills may lead to other positions in safety and quality
- Additional focus on monitoring and fixing errors in automated systems and biomedical maintenance
- Growing opportunities in genetics and molecular biology

UPDATED JANUARY 2024

NATIONAL WORKFORCE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

LABOR MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP