

# Medical Assistant FAQs

## Dreaming of a career as a Medical Assistant?

As a Medical Assistant (MA), you will work in a challenging, and rewarding profession. Graduates of the Pinnacle School of Nursing's Medical Assistant program possess an exceptionally broad, thorough knowledge of the field in which they will be working. Medical assistants are uniquely trained to work in both clinical and administrative settings. MAs give health care a human touch, helping patients to feel at ease in the doctor's office and to understand physician's instructions. If you have good communications skills and are often appreciated for your caring manner, then you might be well suited for a career in medical assisting.

## Do you offer online classes?

Yes we offer didactic courses online (on screen presence is required) and mandatory in person attendance is required for simulation, demonstrations, and practice lab.

## Where do medical assistants work?

Medical assistants may be employed in physicians' offices, hospitals, outpatient clinics, occupational health centers, long-term care facilities, and offices of other practitioners such as chiropractors and podiatrist.

## What are the job prospects for medical assistants?

Employment of medical assistants is expected to grow 29% through the years 2016- 2026 as the health care industry expands because of technological advances in medicine and the growth and aging of the population. Increasing utilization of medical assistants in the rapidly growing health care industry will further stimulate job growth. Job prospects should be best for medical assistants with formal training or experience, particularly for those with certification. Most medical assistants work in ambulatory care settings such as physician offices. Medical Assistants may work full-time or part-time. According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, there will be 15% job growth from 2023 and 2033. The average pay for a medical assistant is \$42,000 per year and \$20.19 per hour. More importantly, MAs have the satisfaction of knowing that they are helping others and making a positive difference in people's lives.

Source: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-assistants.htm> **How**

## will I practice my skills as a student?

Courses taught will provide hands-on experience in the classroom and lab. In addition, students will complete 100 hours of an unpaid clinical externship at an affiliated ambulatory health care center. Clinical site personnel will supervise student learning. Students will be apprised of the available externship assignments and efforts will be made to accommodate specialty requests. However, the ultimate decision for externship assignments rests with the Externship Program Coordinator.

### **Can I work full time while attending classes?**

If you are planning on working full-time it would be very difficult to attend full time. However, you can attend classes on a part-time basis in the evening. Students in the Medical Assistant Program are required to achieve and maintain a minimum grade of “C” in all courses in order to progress through the Medical Assistant Program. The number of hours spent in the classroom and amount of study time required outside class time is considerable to review and practice concepts. Students should plan to spend approximately 2-3 hours at home studying, reviewing and preparing for assignments. The 100 unpaid Medical Assistant Externship can be completed on a full or part time basis depending on which track you're in.

### **Do I need a physical exam?**

Yes, you will need a completed health history and physical examination form signed by a licensed health care provider. In addition, you will need proof of required immunizations. Student History and Physical Forms will be distributed upon acceptance into the program.

### **Do I need a drug screen?**

Yes, in order to comply with the school admissions policy and that of our externship affiliation requirements, students will be asked to submit to a 12-panel drug screening prior to the start of class and possibly externship. Positive drug screen results will prohibit a student from being accepted to the school, as well as denied placement at an externship site.

### **Am I compensated for my externship?**

Students shall not receive compensation/payment, monetary or otherwise, for the externship experience.

### **Can I complete my externship at my place of employment?**

No, students are not able to use their place of employment as an externship site.

### **Do I need a criminal background check?**

In order to comply with the school admissions policy, certain state statutes and/or externship affiliation agreements, students will be asked to complete a criminal background check. Information for criminal background checks will be given upon acceptance into the program.

### **Do I need to pass a certification exam before I can be employed?**

Graduates may be employed without having formal credentials. However, the trend is toward certification and we help prepare students as well as cover the cost of the study guide and certification tests, as long as you comply with the requirements. We strongly urge you to take the certification exam immediately upon graduation.

### **Can I transfer courses into the Medical Assistant Program?**

Currently we do not accept transfers into the program.

### **Will I be able to give shots and draw blood?**

As part of your program, you will learn to draw blood, test specimens and give injections.

### **How does a Medical Assisting student practice his/her skill?**

Students practice by demonstration, simulation and practice on classmates.

### **I am a high school student what courses should I take?**

Biology, accounting, typing, English and computer classes would be helpful.

If you have not taken any of those courses don't worry, we will teach you all the skills you need in the program.

### **I have been out of school for a while and I am very nervous, is tutoring available if I need it?**

Absolutely our small intimate class setting will help you thrive. We get to know our students that includes your strengths and weaknesses. If you need additional help, we are here for you, just sign up and most importantly show up.

### **After I become a Medical Assistant can I apply to the LPN program?**

Yes. We encourage all of our students to continue their education. You will be able to apply with advanced standing. **You will be able to transfer the Anatomy & Physiology 1 & 2, as well the Christian Ethics courses as transfer credit.** You will still have to take the entrance exam and fulfill all of the other entrance requirements.

### **Do you offer federal financial aid?**

No, we do not. But we offer Affirm which allows you to pay over time with no interest for the first two years, and a qualifying interest rate thereafter. You can also look into tuition reimbursement from your employer, or One Stop funding from your local unemployment agency.