

Pathologist Assistant

Overview	A pathologist assistant prepare for autopsies by obtaining patients' medical records and arranging for radiographic examinations. They also assist with or perform autopsies and surgical specimen examinations under pathologists' supervision. They dissects, examines, weighs and photographs organs and specimens, collects tissue samples for chemical analysis and record findings. Pathologist assistants are also responsible for discarding specimens according to established safety procedures. Cleaning and maintaining dissection, microscopes, and other instruments and equipment is also their responsibilities. Learn more											
NOC Code	Medical laboratory technicians and pathologists' assistants (3212)											
Alias Job Titles	Autopsy technologist - medical laboratory; Cytogenetics technologist - medical laboratory; Cytology technologist; Cytotechnologist - medical laboratory; Electron microscopy technologist - medical laboratory; Hematology technologist - medical laboratory; Histology technologist; Histology technologist - medical laboratory; Histopathology technologist; Histotechnologist - medical laboratory; Immunohematology technologist; Immunohematology technologist - medical laboratory; In-charge technologist - autopsy services; Medical laboratory supervisor; Medical laboratory technical supervisor; Medical laboratory technologist - anatomical pathology; Medical technologists supervisor; Serology technologist; Tissue technologist - medical laboratory; Pathology technician											
Qualifications Required	A 2 years master’s/diploma program on ‘Pathology Assistant’ available in a handful of universities/colleges in Canada.											
Salary Range	<table><tr><td>Average hourly</td><td>Range hourly</td><td>Average yearly</td><td>Range yearly</td></tr><tr><td>\$35.82</td><td>\$18.57 - \$60.90</td><td>\$69,854</td><td>\$36,208 - \$118,752</td></tr></table>				Average hourly	Range hourly	Average yearly	Range yearly	\$35.82	\$18.57 - \$60.90	\$69,854	\$36,208 - \$118,752
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Job Demand	<p>Medium</p> <p>Employment outlook is mostly good across most provinces. More information is available here.</p>
Growth Opportunity	<p>Depending on the work settings i.e., private laboratory, hospital, community and public health clinic, institutional research labs, biotechnology/ pharmaceutical companies, management positions are usually achievable. Some Pathology Assistants go into teaching and training and become instructors in institutions, and others go to research.</p>
Years' Experience Required	<p>0-1 year</p>
Training Options (if available)	<p>Programs available at universities across countries. For examples:</p> <p>Master of Pathologists' Assistant at University of Calgary</p> <p>MSc Pathologists' Assistant at University of Alberta</p> <p>MCISc Pathologists' Assistant Graduate Program at Western University</p> <p>MSc. in Anatomy and Cell Biology at University of Saskatchewan</p> <p>Master Of Science In Pathology And Laboratory Medicine (MSc) at University of British Columbia</p> <p>Find more</p>
Personal Qualities	<p>Manual dexterity, Patience, Precise in work, diligent, communication skills; leadership; time management; medical terminology knowledge; Interest to spend long time in lab settings; ability to work in stressful situations at times; very diligent and careful; reasonable physical stamina; must be detail oriented and able to follow strict procedures; must be able to work both independently and as part of a team; should have good interpersonal skills.</p>

Notes/Other Information

Pathology assistants may need to work long time sitting or standing. They are required to be diligent and often need prolonged visual focus and repetitive motions.

There is risk of being exposed to strong chemicals, biological hazards, infectious diseases and the potential for needle prick injuries. They need to be extremely cautious and careful to follow laboratory safety procedures to be safe from contracting infection, and ensure the safety of patients and co-workers, Pathology assistants practise safe work procedures.

They may work full-time or part-time hours or on a call-in (casual) basis.

This is currently regulated but employers generally prefer certification from [Canadian Certification Council of Pathologists' Assistants \(CCCPA\)](#).

Difference between Autopsy Assistant/Morgue Technicians and Pathology Assistant

Pathology assistants generally work in hospital laboratories, private research labs and teaching facilities, according to the [AAPA](#). They also work in morgue settings, especially when they assist forensic pathologist where they may work with organs and tissues of dead bodies. Morgue technicians/Autopsy Assistants work in hospital and city morgues. While Pathology Assistants are required to have college/university degrees, morgue technicians/autopsy assistants generally only need a high school or equivalent diploma. The salaries between the two professions also differ greatly. Pathologists' assistants earn an average yearly salary of \$69,854, according to [Neuvoo](#). According to Canada's National Occupational Classification (NOC) system autopsy assistants/morgue technicians are classified as 'Other assisting occupations in support of health services (3414)', while pathology assistants are classified as 'Medical laboratory technicians and pathologists' assistants (3212)'. The average salary for autopsy assistants is listed at \$44,989 per year.

Steps towards capacity building to become competitive for this job

1. Get admitted into Master's program for Pathology Assistant program. The admission into some universities maybe competitive.
2. Certification from the [Canadian Certification Council of Pathologists' Assistants \(CCCPA\)](#).
3. Getting admission into the Master's program may be challenging as they are highly competitive. However, taking some open courses related to laboratory technology may facilitate the admission. For

example, some such [courses are available in NAIT](#). Also, some can start with other certificate or diploma program for laboratory technology such as Medical Laboratory Assistant (MLA) certificate to increase chance for the admission

References and resources

- i. [Alberta Learning Information Service](#)
- ii. [Job Bank Canada](#)
- iii. [National Occupation Classification ESDC](#)
- iv. [Neuvoo](#)
- v. [Indeed](#)