

Specialist in Blood Bank Technology

■ Job Description

Specialists in blood bank technology (SBBs) demonstrate superior technical proficiency and problem-solving abilities in such blood bank areas as (1) testing for blood group antigens, compatibility, and antibody identification; (2) investigating abnormalities such as hemolytic disease of the newborn, hemolytic anemias, and adverse responses to transfusions; (3) supporting physicians in transfusion therapy of patients with coagulopathies or candidates for organ transplant; and (4) blood collection and processing, including selecting donors, drawing and typing blood, and performing pre-transfusion tests to ensure the safety of the patient.

■ Job Settings

Specialists in blood banking work in community blood centers, private hospital blood banks, university-affiliated blood banks, transfusion services, and independent laboratories. They also may be part of a university faculty.

■ Projected Need

Average growth in the employment of all medical technologists can be expected nationally and in Illinois through 2010. Experienced technologists specializing in blood bank technology may expect to find job opportunities in areas other than blood bank centers, such as hospitals, universities and laboratories. There may also be a need for technologists willing to teach in this area.

■ Salaries

Nationally, entry-level salaries for specialists in blood banking average between \$32,000 and \$42,000 per year, depending on previous experience.

■ Related Careers

Cytotechnologist; pharmacist; physician; veterinarian; dentist; medical physicist; specialist in microbiology, chemistry, or hematology; clinical chemist (PhD); microbiologist; and microbial engineer. These careers vary in the amount and type of patient contact required.

■ Differences in Training

The one-year specialist in blood banking program requires a bachelor's degree in medical technology prior to entrance or a bachelor's degree with a major in any of the biological sciences or physical sciences and work experience in a blood bank. In Illinois, training is available at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

■ Related Educational Programs

The programs of study listed below are the recommended areas of study to pursue for this occupation. Clicking on these will lead to files that show in-state and national schools that offer these programs.

The following link(s) will take you to CIS for more information. CIS requires an ID and password that can be obtained at <http://cis.ilworkinfo.com/loginhelp/>. You must log into CIS prior to clicking on the links below.

[Medical Laboratory Science](#)

■ Credentials

Although national certification is voluntary, it is strongly recommended, since certification is usually required by employers. Passing a national certification exam by an agency such as the Board of Registry of the American Society for Clinical Pathologists (ASCP) or the National Credentialing Agency (NCA) for Laboratory Personnel will meet the requirements for most employers.

■ Resources

American Association of Blood Banks
8101 Glenbrook Road
Bethesda, MD 20814-2749
Phone: 301.907.6977
E-mail: aabb@aabb.org
Internet: <http://www.aabb.org>

The association makes available scholarships based on research, development, and continuing education of \$1,500 to students in a program leading to Specialist in Blood Banking certification.