



# Occ Health Matters

## Training of Medical Assistants: What's Required and Recommended

### Who is responsible for training MAs?

Multifaceted. It's a team effort. Some programs use a supervisor of the MA, the clinical supervisor responsible for onboarding, as well as organizational manager. Orientation and training of MAs in those states with Practice Acts to support expanded MA roles are the future of occ med. Explore your state Practice Act and explore how you can use MAs.

### What should we look for when we recruit an MA – just experience?

Absolutely NOT! Look for customer service, career goals, willingness to go for training, role expectations, attention to detail, letter writing, and ability to send out reports. Look for someone who also is office oriented; computer skills are important. It's important to be more creative to recruit more MAs.

### What type of training is reasonable? Some come with no occ med knowledge and little clinical skills.

Look for ED training, primary care clinical training, and urgent care training.

### What are the core competencies for MAs?

Look for skills in phlebotomy and comfortability with patients interactions. Look at State Practice Acts for allowable tasks, certification of special tasks for DOT UDS collections, EKG certifications, NIOSH spirometry certification, audiology screening, fit testing, phlebotomy, bat, vs, depending on state, injections, TST. Utilize a skill inventory at end of questions.

### What is a reasonable time for training before starting to participate in care of patients?

Usually 90 day orientation is required to ensure core competencies. It depends on experience, mentoring with peers for one-two weeks, and evaluation of competencies. Determine the status at the end of 90 days. Core competencies are reviewed by the way your program does the tasks.

### How do we set up retaining after we train them?

Sign agreement for payback if they leave within two years. Do rounding with staff to discuss any issues and how you can make it a better environment for both the employees and the patients.

### What are the responsibilities of MAs?

This depends on your practice and their scope of practice. The following links are great for the MA role.

- [American Medical Technologists](http://americanmedtech.org)  
americanmedtech.org
- [AMT Case Studies](http://americanmedtech.org/employers/optimize-your-MAs)  
americanmedtech.org/employers/optimize-your-MAs
- [AMT White Paper](http://americanmedtech.org/portals/0/pdf/employers/physicians%20practice%20whitepaper%20feb%202018.pdf)  
americanmedtech.org/portals/0/pdf/employers/physicians%20practice%20whitepaper%20feb%202018.pdf

### If someone wants to be an MA, what is the first step?

Research certified MA program schools and see what is available.

**According to the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “The medical assistant profession is anticipated to be among the fastest growing occupations over the 2008–2018 decade. Job opportunities should be excellent, particularly for those with formal medical assistant training or experience, and certification. Much of this growth can be attributed to the growing population and continuing advances in health care and medicine, but medical assistant job growth is also growing due to the increasing number of group practices, clinics, and other healthcare facilities that need a high proportion of support personnel. The outlook is particularly strong for medical assistants who can handle both administrative and clinical duties.”**