
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 81 Session of
2019

INTRODUCED BY KAUFFMAN, MURT, PYLE, ZIMMERMAN, READSHAW, HILL-
EVANS AND JOZWIAK, JANUARY 28, 2019

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, JANUARY 28, 2019

AN ACT

1 Providing for certification of central service technicians;
2 imposing continuing education requirements on central service
3 technicians; providing for duties of hospitals and ambulatory
4 surgical facilities and the Department of Health; and
5 regulating the practice of surgical technology and surgical
6 technologists.

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5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 CHAPTER 1

8 PRELIMINARY PROVISIONS

9 Section 101. Short title.

10 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Central
11 Service Technician and Surgical Technologist Regulation Act.

12 Section 102. Definitions.

13 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
14 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
15 context clearly indicates otherwise:

16 "Ambulatory surgical facility." As defined in section 802.1
17 of the act of July 19, 1979 (P.L.130, No.48), known as the
18 Health Care Facilities Act.

19 "Central service technician." An individual who provides the
20 services of inspecting, assembling, decontamination,
21 preparation, packaging and sterilization of reusable medical
22 instruments or devices in a hospital or an ambulatory surgical
23 facility.

24 "Department." The Department of Health of the Commonwealth.

25 "Health care facility." A hospital, ambulatory surgical
26 center or freestanding surgical outpatient facility.

27 "Health care practitioner." As defined in section 103 of
28 the Health Care Facilities Act.

29 "Hospital." As defined in section 802.1 of the Health Care
30 Facilities Act.

1 "Surgical technologist." An individual who is employed or
2 contracted by a health care facility to perform surgical
3 technology tasks and functions.

4 "Surgical technology." Surgical patient care that includes,
5 but is not limited to, the following tasks or functions:

6 (1) preparing the operating room and the sterile field
7 for surgical procedures by ensuring that surgical equipment
8 is functioning properly and safely and preparing sterile
9 supplies, instruments and equipment using sterile technique;
10 and

11 (2) as directed, performing tasks at the sterile field,
12 including:

13 (i) maintaining asepsis and correcting breaks in the
14 sterile field;

15 (ii) passing supplies, equipment or instruments
16 according to the needs of the surgical team;

17 (iii) sponging or suctioning an operative site;

18 (iv) preparing and cutting suture material;

19 (v) transferring and irrigating with fluids;

20 (vi) transferring but not administering drugs within
21 the sterile field;

22 (vii) handling specimens;

23 (viii) holding retractors and other instruments;

24 (ix) applying electrocautery to clamps on bleeders;

25 (x) connecting drains to suction apparatus;

26 (xi) applying dressings to closed wounds; and

27 (xii) performing sponge, needle, supply and
28 instrument counts with the registered nurse circulator.

29 CHAPTER 3

30 CENTRAL SERVICE TECHNICIANS

1 Section 301. Certification.

2 (a) Requirements.--An individual shall not function as a
3 central service technician in a health care facility, and a
4 health care facility shall not employ or otherwise contract for
5 the services of a central service technician unless the
6 individual has successfully passed a nationally accredited
7 central service exam for central service technicians and holds
8 and maintains one of the following credentials:

9 (1) Certified registered central service technician
10 credential.

11 (2) Certified sterile processing and distribution
12 technician credential.

13 (b) Exemption.--The certification requirement under
14 subsection (a) shall not apply to an individual who has been
15 employed or otherwise contracted for services as a central
16 service technician in a hospital or ambulatory surgical facility
17 on or before December 31, 2019.

18 Section 302. Employment and continuing education.

19 (a) New employees.--A central service technician who does
20 not meet the requirements under section 301 shall have 18 months
21 from the date of hire to comply with section 301.

22 (b) Continuing education.--An individual who qualifies to
23 function as a central service technician in a hospital or an
24 ambulatory surgical facility under section 301 shall annually
25 complete 10 hours of continuing education to remain qualified as
26 a central service technician. The continuing education required
27 under this subsection shall be in areas related to the functions
28 of a central service technician.

29 (c) Facility responsibility.--

30 (1) A hospital or ambulatory surgical facility shall

1 maintain documentation to verify that an individual meets the
2 certification requirements under section 301(a).

3 (2) If an individual does not meet the certification
4 requirements under section 301(a), a hospital or ambulatory
5 surgical facility shall maintain documentation of a central
6 service technician's dates of employment or the contract
7 period when the central service technician provided services
8 to the hospital or ambulatory surgical facility to verify
9 that the central service technician meets the exemption
10 requirements under section 301(b).

11 Section 303. Scope of practice.

12 Nothing in this chapter may be construed to prohibit any of
13 the following individuals from performing the tasks or functions
14 of a central service technician:

15 (1) A health care practitioner.

16 (2) A dental assistant or an individual who is licensed
17 or registered under the act of May 1, 1933 (P.L.216, No.76),
18 known as The Dental Law.

19 (3) A student or intern performing the functions of a
20 central service technician under the direct supervision of a
21 health care practitioner as part of the student's or intern's
22 training or internship.

23 Section 304. Departmental duties.

24 The department shall administer the provisions of this
25 chapter and promulgate and adopt such regulations as may be
26 necessary to implement this act.

27 CHAPTER 5

28 SURGICAL TECHNOLOGIES

29 Section 501. Requirements for health care facilities.

30 The following apply:

1 (1) A health care facility shall not employ or otherwise
2 contract for the services of a surgical technologist in a
3 health care facility unless the individual meets at least one
4 of the following:

5 (i) has successfully completed a program accredited
6 by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health
7 Education Programs or other nationally accredited
8 educational program for surgical technologists and holds
9 and maintains the Certified Surgical Technologist
10 credential administered by the National Board of Surgical
11 Technology and Surgical Assisting or its successor;

12 (ii) has successfully completed an appropriate
13 training program for surgical technology in the United
14 States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps or Coast Guard
15 or in the United States Public Health Service;

16 (iii) provides evidence that the individual was
17 employed to practice surgical technology in a health care
18 facility on the effective date of this act or was
19 employed to practice surgical technology during the two
20 years immediately preceding the effective date of this
21 act; or

22 (iv) is in the service of the Federal Government, to
23 the extent that the individual is performing duties
24 related to that service.

25 (2) A health care facility may employ or contract an
26 individual to practice surgical technology during the 12-
27 month period immediately following successful completion of a
28 surgical technology program, but may not continue to be
29 employed or contracted with beyond that period without
30 documentation that the employee or contractor holds and

1 maintains the Certified Surgical Technologist credential
2 required under paragraph (1)(i).

3 Section 502. Continuing education.

4 (a) General rule.--An individual who qualifies to practice
5 surgical technology in a health care facility under section
6 501(1)(i) or (ii) must annually complete 15 hours of continuing
7 education to remain qualified to practice as a surgical
8 technologist.

9 (b) Verification.--A health care facility that employs or
10 contracts with an individual to practice surgical technology
11 shall verify that the individual meets the continuing education
12 requirements under subsection (a) or, if applicable, that the
13 individual holds and maintains the Certified Surgical
14 Technologist credential as required under section 501(1)(i).

15 Section 503. Exception.

16 A health care facility may employ or otherwise contract with
17 an individual who does not meet the requirements of section 501
18 to practice surgical technology in a health care facility if:

19 (1) after a diligent and thorough effort has been made,
20 the health care facility is unable to employ or contract with
21 a sufficient number of qualified surgical technologists who
22 meet the requirements of section 501; and

23 (2) the health care facility makes a written record of
24 its efforts under paragraph (1) and retains the record at the
25 health care facility.

26 Section 504. Scope of practice.

27 Nothing in this chapter may be construed to prohibit any of
28 the following individuals from performing the tasks or functions
29 of a surgical technologist:

30 (1) A health care practitioner.

1 (2) A dental assistant or an individual who is licensed
2 or registered under the act of May 1, 1933 (P.L.216, No.76),
3 known as The Dental Law.

4 (3) A student or intern performing the functions of a
5 central service technician under the direct supervision of a
6 health care practitioner as part of the student's or intern's
7 training or internship.

8 Section 505. Applicability.

9 Nothing in this chapter shall prohibit any licensed
10 practitioner from performing surgical technology tasks or
11 functions if the practitioner is acting within the scope of the
12 practitioner's license.

13 Section 506. Departmental duties.

14 The Department of Health shall enforce the provisions of this
15 chapter.

16 CHAPTER 21

17 MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

18 Section 2101. Effective date.

19 This act shall take effect in 60 days.