

California Association of Psychiatric Technicians



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The latest update is on CAPT's website
at www.psych-health.com/blood16.htm

Blood Withdrawal Certification for Psychiatric Technicians

After licensure and fulfillment of specified training requirements, Psych Techs are allowed to receive certification that permits them to draw blood. This option became available in 1999 as a result of a law sponsored by CAPT.

So far, the use of Psych Techs to draw blood has been limited. As of this time, there are only a few Psych Techs who have applied for and received the certification. However, we expect the use of Psych Techs for this procedure will expand.

There are two ways to get blood withdrawal certification from the Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians (BVNPT):

(1) Complete a Psych Tech blood withdrawal course

This method requires completing a blood withdrawal course that the BVNPT has approved specifically for training Psych Techs. The instructor will report your completion to the BVNPT, as explained below.

However, as of May 2004, only two providers have been approved to train Psych Techs. And they only train Psych Techs who work at Pelican Bay State Prison near the Oregon border and the Canyon Springs DDS facility near Palm Springs.

If additional providers are approved, they will be added to the BVNPT's list of approved Psych Tech providers at www.bvnpt.ca.gov/ptbwprov.htm. Meanwhile, all Psych Techs with prior blood withdrawal experience can use the competency verification method as explained below.

(2) The "competency verification" method

A Psych Tech can get trained anywhere and by any person who is competent in blood withdrawal (such as a nurse or phlebotomist). Then the Psych Tech has his/her competence certified by a "verifying professional," who can be either an MD, RN or clinical laboratory scientist (technologist).

To be a "verifying professional," this person must have at least six months' experience performing or teaching blood draw within the previous five years. But this person does not have to be a BVNPT-approved blood draw course instructor.

If there is not such a qualified person in the facility where you work, one suggestion is to go to a large acute care facility and check with the staff development people in the Department of Nursing. They may be willing to conduct the competency evaluation,

although there may be a charge. Or they may be able to refer you to someone else locally.

Incidentally, Psych Techs can learn blood draw by an instructor who is approved to teach LVNs, but that instructor is not authorized to certify a Psych Tech's course completion to the BVNPT. After completing the course, the Psych Tech must use the "competency verification" method described above.

Applying for certification

No matter which method you use, you must phone the Psych Tech section of the BVNPT at (916) 263-7830 and request Form 56-C1, "Application to be Certified in Blood Withdrawal for Psychiatric Technicians." Be sure to specify the Psych Tech form, because the separate form for LVNs won't do.

If you use the competency verification method, you list the verifying professional's name and address on the form and mail it to the BVNPT along with a one-time \$20 fee. After the board receives your application, they mail the verifier Form 56-C2 directly to the verifier for him/her to attest that you have demonstrated the required knowledge and skills. The verifier then mails it back directly to the BVNPT.

If you complete a BVNPT-approved course for Psych Techs, the instructor fills in the back of the form and you mail it in with the \$20 fee.

When a licensee is first certified for blood draw, the BVNPT issues a certificate. When the Psych Tech's license is next renewed, the blood draw certification will be indicated on the plastic license.

BVNPT Regulations for Psych Tech Blood Withdrawal

California Code of Regulations, Division 25
Chapter 2. Psychiatric Technicians
Article 8. Blood Withdrawal

Section 2593. Blood Withdrawal

A licensed psychiatric technician applying for certification by the Board to withdraw peripheral venous blood from a patient with a mental illness or developmental disability shall complete and submit an application form supplied by the Board entitled "Application to be Certified in Blood Withdrawal for Psychiatric Technicians" (Form 56C-1, 9/98) hereby incorporated by reference. Applicants may qualify for certification in one of the following ways:

- (a) Written verification as submitted to the Board by one of the persons specified in Section 2593.3 that the licensed psychiatric technician is competent in the performance of blood withdrawal procedures according to the subject areas specified in Section 2593.2. Written verification shall be provided on a form entitled "Blood Withdrawal Verification for Psychiatric Technicians" (Form 56C-2, 9/98) hereby incorporated by reference.

- (b) Satisfactory completion of a course in blood withdrawal, as defined in Section 2593.2 and taught by an approved course provider as specified in Section 2593.3.

2593.1. Procedure for Course Provider Approval

- (a) A person or institution applying for approval of a course in blood withdrawal shall complete and submit an application form supplied by the Board entitled "Application to be a Course Provider in Blood Withdrawal for Psychiatric Technicians"(Form 56C-3. 9/98) hereby incorporated by reference that indicates compliance with the course of instruction delineated in Section 2593.2.
- (b) A blood withdrawal course of instruction shall be approved by the Board before a course in blood withdrawal is offered to licensees by the provider.
- (c) Approval of a psychiatric technician blood withdrawal certification course may be withdrawn if the Board later discovers misrepresentation in an advertisement or in any information required by the Board in accordance with this Article.

2593.2. Approval of Courses Content

- (a) A course of instruction in blood withdrawal shall be taught by an instructor approved as provided in Section 2593.3 and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - (1) Anatomy and physiology pertinent to peripheral venous blood withdrawal.
 - (2) Specimen handling:
 - (A) Container and preservative selection;
 - (B) Amount of specimen required;
 - (C) Test requirements, including, but not limited to, acceptable time periods from specimen collection to laboratory processing, temperature requirements, and effect of container motion; and
 - (D) Patient and specimen container identification techniques.
 - (3) Selection of appropriate equipment:
 - (A) Lancet;
 - (B) Syringe;
 - (C) Vacuum tube;
 - (D) Needle (The term "needle" does not include the equipment, methods and procedures used outside of peripheral venous blood withdrawal.); and

- (E) Safety measures related to equipment.
 - (4) Methods of blood withdrawal:
 - (A) Capillary blood withdrawal; and
 - (B) Venipuncture.
 - (5) Withdrawal site:
 - (A) Selection;
 - (B) Preparation;
 - (C) Technique (including safety measures to protect patients and staff);
and
 - (D) Post-procedure care.
 - (6) Sterile technique.
 - (7) Universal and standard precautions for infection control;.
 - (8) Possible complications.
 - (9) Psychological preparation of the patient.
 - (10) Practice in peripheral venous blood withdrawal shall include at least 5 successful individually supervised venipunctures on live human subjects and 3 successful individually supervised capillary blood withdrawals on live human subjects.
- (b) The course shall consist of 10 hours theory and 6 hours clinical practice.
 - (c) A course will not be approved for more than a two-year period.

2593.3. Qualifications of Blood Withdrawal Course Instructors

To be approved by the Board, a course in peripheral venous blood withdrawal for licensed psychiatric technicians shall be taught by one of the following persons:

- (a) A physician and surgeon licensed by the Medical Board of California who within the last five years has had a minimum of 6 months of experience:
 - (1) Performing blood withdrawal; or
 - (2) Teaching courses in blood withdrawal.
- (b) A nurse licensed by the California Board of Registered Nursing who within the last five years has had a minimum of 6 months of experience:
 - (1) Performing blood withdrawal, or

- (2) Teaching courses in blood withdrawal.
- (c) A clinical laboratory scientist (technologist), licensed by the California Department of Health Services who within the last five years has had a minimum of 6 months of experience:
 - (1) Performing blood withdrawal; or
 - (2) Teaching courses in blood withdrawal.

2593.4. Reports to the Board that the Licensee is Eligible for Board-Certification

- (a) The course provider in blood withdrawal for licensed psychiatric technicians shall submit to the Board verification of course completion, which shall include:
 - (1) Course title;
 - (2) Date of course completion;
 - (3) Licensee's name, address, telephone number and psychiatric technician license number;
 - (4) Course number issued by the Board; and
 - (5) Number of course hours, specified as theory and clinical hours.
- (b) The course provider shall maintain a list of all psychiatric technician licensees who have completed the blood withdrawal course within the preceding four years.
- (c) A licensed psychiatric technician is deemed to be Board-certified to withdraw peripheral venous blood upon written notification from the Board.

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