Medical assistants perform administrative and clinical tasks in medical offices. They should not be confused with Physician assistants, who examine, diagnose, and treat patients under the direct supervision of a physician.

Medical assistants may perform administrative tasks such as updating and filing patients' medical records, filling out insurance forms, and arranging for hospital admissions and laboratory services. They also may answer telephones, greet patients, handle correspondence, schedule appointments, and handle billing and bookkeeping.

Duties vary according to what is allowed by state law for clinical medical assistants. Some common tasks include taking medical histories and recording vital signs, explaining treatment procedures to patients, preparing patients for examinations, and assisting physicians during examinations. Medical assistants may collect and prepare laboratory specimens and perform basic laboratory tests, dispose of contaminated supplies, and sterilize medical instruments. They may instruct patients about medications and special diets, prepare and administer medications as directed by a physician, authorize drug refills as directed, telephone prescriptions to a pharmacy, draw blood, prepare patients for x-rays, take electrocardiograms, remove sutures, and change dressings.

## Salary Information

The median wage in 2021 in California was $41,113 annually ([labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/](https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/data/oes-employment-and-wages.html)). The median is the point at which half of the workers earn more and half earn less.

## Recommended Websites

| **Website** | **Website address** |
| --- | --- |
| American Association of Medical Assistants | [aama-ntl.org/index](http://www.aama-ntl.org/index) |
| Career Cornerstone | [careercornerstone.org/healthcare/healthcare.htm](http://www.careercornerstone.org/healthcare/healthcare.htm) |
| Explore Health Careers | [explorehealthcareers.org/career/allied-health-professions/medical-assistant/](https://explorehealthcareers.org/career/allied-health-professions/medical-assistant/) |

## Select Program School Websites

| **Website** | **Website address** |
| --- | --- |
| American Career College | [americancareercollege.edu/](https://americancareercollege.edu/) |
| Casa Loma | [casalomacollege.edu/](https://casalomacollege.edu/) |
| National Career College | [nccusa.edu/](https://nccusa.edu/) |
| Pasadena City College | [pasadena.edu/academics/divisions/health-sciences/medical-assisting/index.php](https://pasadena.edu/academics/divisions/health-sciences/medical-assisting/index.php) |
| UEI College | [uei.edu/](https://www.uei.edu/) |
| West LA College | <http://www.wlac.edu> |

Note: Information is subject to change without notice. Check with the individual campus for the most up-to-date information. *Web site links are provided as a convenience and for informational purposes only; they do not constitute an endorsement or an approval by the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) and/or Los Angeles Pierce College (LAPC) of any of the products, services or opinions of the corporation or organization or individual. The Los Angeles Community College District and/or Los Angeles Pierce College bears no responsibility for the accuracy, legality or content of the external site or for that of subsequent links. Contact the external site for answers to questions regarding its content.*