



MedCerts
A Stride Company



**SP-3000
Sterile Processing
Technician
Clinical Handbook &
Clinical Requirements**



MedCerts
A Stride Company

Clinical Overview:

Sterile Processing Technicians prepare surgical instruments and devices. They clean, inspect, test, sterilize, store, and deliver devices needed for surgery in a healthcare facility. The Central Service Department (CSD) and/or the Central Sterile Reprocessing (CSR) Department of a health care facility is the hub of all activity surrounding supplies and equipment needed for surgery and patient care.

They assemble and ensure that devices are functioning safely and properly. Sterile Processing Professionals have a direct impact on patient care, quality and safety.

Typically, an instrument coming from the operation room arrives at the decontamination area to be manually cleaned, then places in an ultrasonic cleaner or sonic irrigator before being placement into a wash/disinfector.

Next, the instrument would be transported to a Prep & Pack Are to be prepared for sterilization. It will then be sterilized through one of many types of sterilization processes. Once sterilized, the instrument will either be sent back to the procedure room to be used again, or into sterile storage until it is needed again for a procedure.

Sterile processing Technicians are required to wear PPE as a safety precaution to prevent exposure to potentially infection bacteria.

The role of a technician varies and can change depending on their work environment. It can even change on a day-to-day basis, depending on where they work. In general, their responsibilities revolve around preventing infection in patients.

Program Overview:

Customer Service Professional Level 1	16 hours	1 week
Introduction to Human Anatomy and Medical Terminology	96 hours	6 weeks
Sterile Processing	96 hours	6 weeks

Exam Details:

Target Certification- CRCST (Certified Registered Central Service Technician) Professionals who earn the NCCT (National Center for Competency Testing) designation have the clinical skills and knowledge for maintaining asepsis during surgery, anticipating the surgeon's needs and remaining attentive to all aspects of the surgical procedure to ensure safe environment for the patient.

Issuing Authority-HSPA

Exam Certification- CRCST

Exam Questions- 125

Exam Time- 3 Hours

Testing Site- Exclusively Prometric

Renewal- Annually with 12 CE's required

Clinical Details and Clinical Case Documentation:

400 hours of hands-on experience is required for FULL CRCST certification.

Students must register with the Healthcare Sterile Processing Association (HSPA). Students may attempt exam BEFORE completing the required hours, but they must submit documentation to HSPA of the hands-on experience within 6 (six) months of passing the exam.

If students decide to take the exam before the hands-on experience, they will be considered 'provisionally certified'.

Students must log hours into these categories:

- Decontamination (120 Hours)
- Preparing & Packaging Instruments (120 Hours)
- Sterilization & Disinfection (96 Hours)

- Storage & Distribution (24 Hours)
- Quality Assurance Processes (24 Hours)
- Equipment (16 Hours)

Students can log their hours after creating an account at:

[Home - Healthcare Sterile Processing Association \(HSPA\) \(myhspa.org\)](http://myhspa.org)

MedCerts Assistance:

The MedCerts Career Services team is here to help, but *students are responsible for securing their own clinical sites to complete their certification requirements.*

Step 1: Create a list of potential clinical sites in your area. Clinical requirements can be completed at one of many different medical locations, such as, but not limited to:

- *Emergency Rooms*
- *Hospitals and Ambulatory Settings*
- *Outpatient Surgery Centers*
- *Cardiology, Neurosurgery or Patient Surgery Facilities*

Step 2: Contact potential sites and inquire about clinical opportunities. You may have the most success reaching the supervisor or manager if you call the site, but you can also try to send an email (see sample email language below).

Step 3: If the site is willing to host you, check to see if they require MedCerts sponsorship. Be sure to gather contact information for the site supervisor or manager (Name, email, phone number, address of site).

Step 4: Once you have secured a site, please complete the [Clinical Site Information Form](#).

Step 5: Complete any documents required by the clinical site and confirm your start date. You may be required to have a criminal background check and complete a drug screening assessment. Please see the section in this handbook below on “Criminal Background Check, Drug and Other Screenings.”

Step 6: Document your requirements within the HSPA website. You may contact Jason Priest (jpriest@medcerts.com) Clinical Coordinator, for more details and/or to assist with sponsorship.

Identifying and Securing a Clinical Site: Clinical site opportunities can be either unpaid volunteer positions or paid employment positions, depending on the site and their needs. Some healthcare facilities may prefer to hire you and give you the supervision you need to complete your clinical requirements upon employment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are some recommendations from the MedCerts Career Services team that you can utilize as you begin the process of locating and securing your clinical site. Some strategies for identifying appropriate clinical sites include:

- Search online job websites (Ex: Indeed, ZipRecruiter, Linked In, NHA.com) to find sites that may offer paid positions that would allow you to complete your clinical requirements.
- Network with friends and family to see if they have any connections to healthcare facilities.
- Healthcare professionals have many connections to a variety of facilities, and they may be able to refer you to their colleagues.
- Utilize social networking platforms (social media, Twitter, Facebook) to let people know that you're looking for a clinical site to complete your hands-on certification requirements.
- Consider volunteering or job shadowing at a hospital or clinic while going through your program, to build relationships there and make some key connections. (Remember that job shadowing does not count towards completing your clinical log as the requirement is to be done by the student on live persons.)

Approaching Employers

- Be well-prepared and treat this like you would a job search.
- Develop and polish your resume. Writing a resume may sound daunting, but these [Tips for Writing a Standout Resume](#) will help you to get started. You can also use this [Resume Rubric](#) (checklist) to make sure you've covered all the bases.
- Identify the appropriate department and person to approach, which may include the education department, volunteer department, or someone in human resources.
- Prepare customized cover letters for each site you approach. A cover letter is a way to briefly introduce yourself to the employer and share your goals. The

letter is a chance to demonstrate your professionalism and clarify your clinical requirements.

- Email or hand deliver your resume and cover letter.
- Communicate promptly and professionally with the site.
- Dress professionally for the meeting or interview (Look your best!)

If the site requires a letter of enrollment, please utilize the letter attached to this handbook (below)

Dear Preceptor/Trainer:

Thank you for your willingness and consideration to serve as a preceptor/trainer for one of MedCerts Sterile Processing Technician students. The faculty appreciates your interest in being an integral part in the education of future Sterile Processing Technicians. We recognize and appreciate the time it takes from your already busy schedule to precept and train our students. The purpose of this letter and handbook is to provide you with information about the Sterile Processing Technician requirements. It includes guidelines for the preceptor's role with regard to teaching, supervising and evaluating students. The expected clinical experiences for students follow the recommendations and requirements of the HSPA. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us. Should you have any questions regarding requirements or for clinical placements please contact our clinical coordinator at Jpriet@MedCerts.com. We will get back to you right away.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best Regards,

Jason Priest

Clinical Externship Coordinator

P 734-469-5196

F 734-655-9445

jpriest@medcerts.com

MedCerts' Professional Standards & Policies

Students are expected to adhere to MedCerts' professional standards as set forth in this section, as well as the standards set forth by the clinical site, at all times throughout the duration of a student's time at the clinical site. Students found violating these standards may be subject to disciplinary action to the severity of termination from the clinical site and dismissal from their MedCerts program.

MedCerts has established the following Professional Standards to ensure the success of the student and the continued professional relationship between MedCerts and the clinical site. Students receiving MedCerts sponsorship will be required to sign the MedCerts' Sponsorship Agreement, indicating the student understands and agrees to meet all Professional Standards set forth below.

Attendance: Take every precaution to avoid any absences from your Clinical Site position, since dependability is a professional expectation of all healthcare facilities. If you are unable to attend all scheduled shifts due to illness or emergency, please notify your clinical site's manager or supervisor as soon as possible. Clinical site leave must be approved based on the policies set forth by the clinical site.

Confidentiality: Students are required to maintain confidentiality of patient information in accordance with HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability).

Professional Dress Code: Appropriate dress standards have been established to present and maintain a professional appearance to patients, visitors, and the healthcare team. The standards allow comfortable performance of duties and promotion of safety and infection control.

- ID badge if required, must be worn at all times as required by the clinical site (i.e., above the waist with name visible).

- Hair must have a clean and neat appearance with shoulder-length hair pulled back. Facial hair must be clean, neat, and well groomed.
- Headgear, religious or culture in nature, may be worn.
- Jewelry must be appropriate and professional, and not present a safety hazard when working with patients or equipment. Students must be prepared to remove jewelry and/or piercings as required by the clinical site.
- Tattoos must be covered as required by the clinical site.
- Attire as required by the clinical site, i.e. clean and ironed scrubs or uniforms and OSHA-compliant shoes. No denim, short skirts, sweatshirts, low necklines, tank tops, halter tops or T-shirts with advertising or offensive graphics, sweatpants, jogging pants, leggings, or shorts (or any other attire deemed inappropriate by site).
- Fragrances, such as perfume or cologne, may cause allergic reactions in others and may not be worn.
- Fingernails must be neat, clean, and trimmed as not to extend beyond the tips of the fingers; no artificial nails are allowed.

Criminal Background Checks, Drug & Other Screenings Policy

Some clinical sites may require screening prior to placement. **Students are responsible for all required screening(s) and applicable fee(s).** The requirements and types of screening are dependent on the requirements of the site. Potential fees, which vary per state, include but are not limited to, a background check, drug screening, Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers, (CPR) certification, TB tests, and required immunizations. Students should speak with their clinical site for more information about potential screening(s) and applicable fee(s).

MedCerts does not perform criminal background checks, nor do we test students for illicit drug use. Please be advised that the student's drug, criminal, or immunization status may prevent future employment as a healthcare or IT (Information Technology) professional. Clinical sites, employers, and State Boards, or other regulatory boards have regulations about drug use and criminal

backgrounds. Regulatory boards, clinical sites, employers, and other organizations that may require these screenings for placement, and adverse results may prohibit you from completing the clinical requirements.

The student understands that MedCerts does not hold any control over the drug, immunization, criminal, or background screening processes or policies held by any organization outside of MedCerts.

The Role of a Preceptor/Trainer

A preceptor/Trainer guides the student's clinical learning experience while acting as a role model and supports the Sterile Processing Technician's role through facilitating student autonomy and promoting self-confidence leading to clinical competency for safe and effective practice.

- Directs overall progressive expectations and goals for the clinical experience
- Identifies and discusses learner needs to meet course objectives required by HSPA
- Assesses the nature of the patient care encounters to enable the student to meet their progressive expectations and requires clinical experiences
- Utilizes appropriate teaching methods to help the student meet their learning objectives
- Evaluates whether the student objectives have been achieved
- Provides ongoing feedback to the student
- Demonstrates attitudes and qualities consistent with the ethics of the health professions

Expectations of Preceptors/Trainers

- Review course description, outcomes, and progressive clinical expectations to structure the experience
- Assist the student to complete clinical requirements from HSPA and evaluations

- Orient the student to the clinical site and staff
- Advise the student of expectations with respect to communication, attire, documentation, and patient visits, teaching, and disposition
- May only work with one student in the clinical setting on a given day (1:1 ratio during clinical hours) and students should not be utilized as additional staff/clinician
- Promote a positive learning environment – encourage inquiry, critical analysis, and reflection
- Validate clinical findings and data reported by the student and review documentation in medical records
- Assist students in making decisions, offer a broad spectrum of treatment options from which they can choose, offer feedback to facilitate learning, and give homework assignments if desired
- Observe the student for steady improvement in critical reasoning, diagnostic thinking, exam techniques, plan development, and documentation

Other Restrictions:

Currently Require Certification-

New Jersey: Requires certification within 3 years of hire

New York: Requires certification within 18 months of hire

Connecticut: Requires certification within 2 years of hire

Tennessee: Requires certification within 2 years of hire