

PENNSYLVANIA CENTRAL SERVICE TECHNICIAN LAW

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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1) What does the Pennsylvania Central Service technician law require?

The Pennsylvania Central Service technician law requires new Central Service technicians to be certified and all Central Service technicians to maintain continuing education credits. Certain individuals are grandfathered in and do not have to be certified (“grandfathering” is a provision in which an old rule continues to apply to some existing situations, while a new rule will apply to all future cases). The law requires ten (10) hours of continuing education for all practicing Central Service technicians annually (even for those who were grandfathered in).

2) Which health care facilities are required to have certified Central Service technician?

Hospitals and ambulatory surgical facilities are required to have newly hired Central Service technicians certified; however, these healthcare institutions are subject to other conditions. Please see other questions below.

3) May a person who was employed as a non-certified Central Service technician prior to December 28, 2020 switch facilities without having to get certified?

Yes, provided the non-certified Central Service technician meets the grandfathering clause requirement. Health care facilities are required to keep documentation to verify that a central service technician meets the grandfathering clause. Individuals who had different job titles may not switch facilities by being grandfathered in as Central Service technicians. Individuals who had different job titles must be certified as a CRCST or CSPDT to switch facilities and work as a Central Service technician, unless they meet the scope of practice exemption.

4) May health care facilities require CRCST or CSPDT as a condition of employment, even if an individual is grandfathered?

Yes.

5) Who may health care facilities hire as Central Service technicians?

A Central Service technician must provide evidence to his/her employer of meeting one of the following requirements:

- a) Successfully passed a nationally accredited Central Service technician exam, and holds and maintains CRCST or CSPDT; or
- b) Provides evidence of employment as a Central Service technician in health care facilities prior to December 29, 2020.
- c) On December 29, 2020, a health care facility may employ a newly hired central service technician who has **not** passed the certification exam for 18 months from the date of hire. By the 18th month anniversary of the individual's hire date, he/she must obtain the CRCST or CSPDT.

4) May a health care facility hire a person who has not yet passed the certification exam?

Yes. On December 29, 2020, a health care facility may employ a newly hired central service technician who has **not** passed the certification exam for 18 months from the date of hire. By the 18th month anniversary of the individual's hire date, he/she must obtain the CRCST or CSPDT.

5) May a health care facility hire a person who is not certified, but has been employed as a Central Service technician in a healthcare institution prior to December 29, 2020?

Yes. A health care facility may hire someone as a Central Service technician if he or she was employed as a Central Service technician in a health care facility prior to December 29, 2020. Health care facilities may require Central Service technicians to hold CRCST or CSPDT credentials.

6) What if a Central Service technician holds a CRCST or CSPDT prior to December 29, 2020 but allows his/her certification to lapse after December 29, 2020, would this person fall under the grandfather clause and not have to get recertified?

It depends. Ultimately, health care facility attorneys will have to determine the outcome of this. There is a provision that requires a Central Service technician to hold and maintain CRCST or CSPDT.

7) Are nurses exempt from having to be certified?

Yes, as long as a nurse is acting within the scope of his or her practice, he/she does not have to hold a CRCST or CSPDT. Also, other health care practitioners that are licensed, permitted, certified, or registered by a Pennsylvania Commonwealth licensing agency or board will also be exempt from having to have the CRCST or CSPDT.

8) Are surgical technologists exempt from having to be certified?

Yes, surgical technologists are exempt from having to hold a CRCST or CSPDT as long as the surgical technologist holds and maintains a registration, certification or license by a nationally accredited credentialing organization to perform health services.

9) Are medical sonographers exempt from having to be certified?

Yes, medical sonographers are exempt from having to hold a CRCST or CSPDT as long as the medical sonographer holds and maintains a registration, certification or license by a nationally accredited credentialing organization to perform health services or is licensed, permitted, certified, or registered by a Pennsylvania Commonwealth licensing agency or board.

10) What other health care practitioners are exempt from having to hold the CRCST or CSPDT?

Other health care practitioners are exempt as long as these practitioners hold and maintain a registration, certification or license by a nationally accredited credentialing organization to perform health services or are licensed, permitted, certified, or registered by a Pennsylvania Commonwealth licensing agency or board.

11) Are students or interns exempt from having to be certified?

Yes, if you are a student or intern performing the job duties of a Central Service technician under the direct supervision of a healthcare provider, you are exempt from the certification requirement.

12) What if I do not work in a Central Service department but my job is similar to a Central Service technician will I have to be certified and maintain continuing education credits?

It depends. Ultimately, health care facility attorneys will have to determine if your job falls under the Central Service technician law or not.

13) Do endoscopy professionals have to be certified and/or maintain the continuing education of a Central Service technician under this law?

This will depend on the job requirement and job description for the professional. Health care facility attorneys will have to determine if this profession falls under the Central Service technician law or not.

14) Will a Central Service technician earn more money now that certification is required?

This is determined by your health care facility and is not addressed in the law. A word of caution: Central Service professionals should be aware that asking this question (or simply bringing the topic of monetary compensation into the discussion) in the presence of state elected officials or health care executives can jeopardize our efforts in other states.

15) How does a person earn the CRCST or CSPDT?

The pathway for earning the CRCST or CSPDT is taking their respective exams. Visit www.iahcsmm.org or www.sterileprocessing.org.

16) What are the continuing education requirements?

All Central Service technicians in Pennsylvania must earn 10 hours of continuing education each year, even if the individual maintains CRCST or CSPDT certifications. The requirement of 10 hours of continuing education is a minimum standard, meaning certifying bodies may require individuals to maintain more than 10 hours of credit. For example, the easiest way to comply with the law and simultaneously meet IAHCSMM's requirements for the CRCST credential is to complete 12 hours of continuing education each year.

17) When do the continuing education credits become required?

The continuing education requirement becomes effective December 29, 2020. Each health care facility human resources department will determine the exact date the first 10 hours of continuing education must be completed.

18) What about CBSPD's continuing education requirements?

You should contact CBSPD about how they are handling the continuing education requirements.

19) What happens to me if I do not get certified and/or attain my required continuing education credits?

After December 28, 2020, if you do not fall into the grandfathering clause, being certified is required in order to be employed as a Central Service technician in the state. All Central Service technicians, regardless of the grandfathering clause, will be required to maintain the continuing education credits. If you are grandfathered in and do not have a certification, you should talk to your human resources department about what happens if you fail to maintain the required continuing education credits.

20) Where do you send your continuing education credits in your health care facility?

Give them to your human resources department. In some cases, there are Central Service departments that are keeping them in the department.

21) Where can the text of the law be found?

Scroll down to Pennsylvania on this page and click on [PA Central Service Technician Law](#).

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