PIPELINE Program
Competency Model for Health Care Services
Occupation: Ophthalmic Technician

Based on: Health: Allied Health Competency Model Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor, December 2011.

* The PIPELINE Program recommends the Industry-Sector Technical Competencies as formal training opportunities (provided through related instruction) and the Occupation-Specific Competencies as on-the-job training opportunities.
Competency Model for Health Care Services

Ophthalmic Technician – a valuable member of the health team working to preserve and improve vision. This individual performs various diagnostic tasks and measurements under the direction and supervision of a licensed physician who specializes in ophthalmology.

Occupation-Specific Competencies*

- **Patient Care** – assist with ophthalmic procedures, as well as scheduling, triage phone calls and appointment scheduling.
- **Patient Assessment** – process of identification of the condition, needs, abilities and preferences of a patient.
- **Care of instruments for minor in-office procedures** – proper cleaning of medical devices is a critical step in decontamination, prior to disinfection and sterilization.
- **Administer dilation drops or oral medications for testing** – to enlarge pupils of the eye or aid with treatment and/or recovery.
- **Visual assessment and eye exam** – a series of tests that measure a person’s ocular health and visual status, to detect abnormalities in the components of the visual system, and to determine how well the person can see.
- **Room preparation** – complete cleaning and turnover of rooms
- **Perform ocular imaging procedures** – offers a better view of the eye and early detection of various ocular diseases.
- **Disposal of bio-hazardous materials** – procedures of infectious waste that can be deemed a threat to public health or the environment.
- **Clinical diagnostic testing and measuring** – knowledge of medical tests performed to detect, diagnose or monitor diseases.
- **Scribing** – charting physician/patient encounters in real time, such as during ophthalmic medical examinations.
- **Document patient medical histories** – log of patients medications, diagnosis’ and treatments.
- **Instruct patients in the care and use of contact lenses** – the application, removal and care and cleaning of contact lenses.
- **Assess refractive conditions of eyes, using retinoscopes** – measuring the sharpness or clarity of close-up and distance vision by testing with different lenses to determine if vision can be improved or corrected with glasses or contact lenses.
• Call patients to inquire about their post-operative status or recovery – customer service for after surgery or treatment follow up.

**Industry-Sector Technical Competencies***

• **Patient and family-centered care** – training in the human values necessary to implement patient and family-centered care.

• **Survey of eye disease and low vision** – terms used to describe determining disease of the eye and of significant visual impairment that can’t be corrected fully with glasses, contact lenses, medication or eye surgery.

• **Ophthalmic pharmacology and microbiology** – how drugs and medications are used for treating ocular patients and the effects of these substances.

• **Ophthalmic photography imaging** – specialized medical imaging dedicated to the study and treatment of eye disorders.

• **Ocular motility** – study of the twelve extraocular muscles and their impact on eye movement.

• **Refraction and refractometry** – the bending of light that takes place within the human eye. Refractive errors include nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism.

• **Visual field testing** – method of measuring an individual’s entire scope of vision, that is their central and peripheral (side) vision.

• **Optics, spectacles and contact lens basics** – key elements of vision correction.

• **History and emergency medical records (EMR)** – log of patient medications, diagnosis and treatments.

• **Aseptic technique, laser and surgical assisting** – using sterile practices to avoid infection within laser and all ophthalmic surgery.

• **General medical and ophthalmic terminology, anatomy and knowledge** – knowledge of terms and anatomical science within the ophthalmic field.

• **Tonometry and slit lamp exam** – parts of a comprehensive eye test that can detect changes in eye pressure and that observes eyes in detail to determine if there are abnormalities that need treatment.

• **Diagnostic and ancillary testing** – knowledge of ophthalmic tests performed to detect, diagnose or monitor diseases.

• **Communicate and collaborate** – working closely and cooperatively with peers while communicating effectively to produce positive results.

*The PIPELINE Program recommends the Industry-Sector Technical Competencies as formal training opportunities (provided through related instruction) and the Occupation-Specific Competencies as on-the-job training opportunities.*
Possible Certifications
- Certified Ophthalmic Medical Technician (COMT)
- Certified Ophthalmic Technician (COT)
- Certified Ophthalmic Assistant (COA)
- Certified Paraoptometric Technician (CPOT)
- Certified Paraoptometric Assistant (CPOA)

**Ophthalmic Technician Training Plan**

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<th>List Course/Training Name and Title</th>
<th>Description of Courses and/or Training Program</th>
<th>List Responsible Provider: Company, College, Trainer, or other</th>
<th>Anticipated Completion Date</th>
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**Related Instruction Competencies**

- Patient and family-centered care
- Survey of eye disease and low vision
- Ophthalmic pharmacology and microbiology
- Ophthalmic photography imaging
- Ophthalmic equipment
- Ocular motility
- Refraction and refractometry
- Visual field testing
- Optics, spectacles and contact lens basics
- History and emergency medical records (EMR)
- Aseptic technique, laser and surgical assisting
- Tonometry and slit lamp exam
- Diagnostic and ancillary testing
- Communicate and collaborate