

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

California Phlebotomy Regulations

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Note: Contents are subject to change

CA State Dept.of Health Services-Laboratory Field Services (LFS), Phlebotomy Program

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QUESTION	ANSWER
What is the status of the regulations?	The phlebotomy regulations were adopted into law and signed by the Secretary of State on January 9, 2003 with an effective date of April 9, 2003. See next question and answer.
When will the regulations take effect?	LFS has requested that the regulations become effective and enforceable 90 days after the "signing" date (January 9, 2003). The effective date will be April 9, 2003.
What does LFS stand for?	LFS is Laboratory Field Services, the branch of the CA Dept. of Health Services that administers and enforces the laws related to phlebotomy and phlebotomists.
What are the new certification requirements?	It depends upon whether the person has any training and work experience. A "new" student needs to obtain: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High school graduate transcripts or GED• 40 hours classroom (didactic) instruction• 40 hours practical training• 50 venipunctures & 10 skin punctures A person with previous training and work experience should refer to the "How To Obtain a Phlebotomy Certificate" chart for the necessary requirements and required documents.
What if a current phlebotomist didn't complete high school or take a GED test?	That person needs to complete one of these within the next 3 years. Taking an "Ability to Benefit" test will not satisfy this requirement.
What do I do if my high school transcripts are unavailable?	Contact LFS in writing to explain your situation. Solutions will be based on an individual basis.
What does the "grandfathering" clause mean?	This means that a phlebotomist who has any work experience during the last 5 years from the effective date of the regulations (April 9, 2003) will have 3 years to obtain a new "state phlebotomy certificate".
Will experienced or employed phlebotomists automatically be given state certification?	No – there are no exceptions. Every phlebotomist must fulfill the new requirements to obtain a state certificate. That means one must take classroom instruction, pass a written certification exam and apply to the state.

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Frequently Asked Questions CA Proposed Phlebotomy Regulations

QUESTION	ANSWER
How do I obtain a state certificate?	It is a 3 step process: 1) take classroom instruction from an approved phlebotomy training program, 2) pass a written examination given by an approved certifying organization, 3) submit an application form to LFS with the required documents and \$54. See the "How To Obtain a Phlebotomy Certificate" chart for details.
Does an experienced or currently working phlebotomist need to obtain a state certificate immediately after the regulations go into effect?	No – an experienced or currently working phlebotomist has 3 years (grandfathering clause) to obtain a state certificate, unless the employer requests one sooner.
I've already taken a national phlebotomy certification exam. Will I need to take it again?	Yes – California law requires the certifying organizations (who will be administering the exam) to be approved by the Dept. "on and after" the effective date of the regulations. Prior certification fails to meet this requirement.
Do I need to take an examination every time I renew my certificate?	No – this is a "one time only" examination that must be taken and passed before a phlebotomist applies for a state certificate.
Do I also need to renew my membership with the certifying organization (whose exam I took) to keep my state certification in good standing?	No – renewal with the certifying organization is optional. Although there are benefits to membership with these organizations, such ongoing membership is not related to maintaining your state certification.
Do I need to take Continuing Education (CE) ?	Yes – a phlebotomist will need to obtain 3 hours per year . CE documentation must be submitted with the first <u>renewal</u> application and for each renewal thereafter. Each 2-year renewal will require that the applicant phlebotomist submit proof of having completed 6 CE hours.
How long will it take to get a certificate from the state once the regulations become effective?	It depends on how long it takes an individual to go through the 3 steps – training program, examination and application to LFS. Once a complete application and the required documents are received by LFS, the processing time should take an average of 90 days.
When can the phlebotomy training programs/schools begin offering courses based on the new regulations?	In general, the programs can begin instruction only after they apply for and receive approval from LFS after the regulations take effect. Note: Under certain conditions, programs may be able to offer a training course based on the new requirements between January 9 and April 9, 2003. Contact LFS immediately to discuss this possible option.
Do the new laws apply to Medical Assistants and Emergency Room Technicians?	Yes – if they intend to work as phlebotomists employed by a clinical laboratory or hospital, then they are working beyond their original scope of practice as an EMT or MA. They must obtain a state phlebotomy certificate to be qualified to perform phlebotomy with a clinical laboratory or acute care employer.