



## Medical Assistant Program Occupational Risks

Medical Assisting is a profession with many rewards, as practitioners can perform both administrative and clinical services, filling several roles in a variety of healthcare environments. The Bureau of Labor Statistics clearly outlines that it is a growth field, with an anticipated 18% growth from 2020 to 2030.

Medical Assistants work directly with providers and patients, with the goal of providing healthcare and ensuring patient safety. It is a position with a great deal of responsibility.

As with any healthcare position, there are certain occupational risks that come into play with being a medical assistant, and those hazards include the following:

- Exposure to infectious diseases (found in Northwood Tech, Health Sciences Policies HS-05, HS-06, and HS-07)
- Sharps injuries (found in Northwood Tech, Health Sciences Policy HS-07)
- Bloodborne pathogens and biological hazards (found in Northwood Tech, Health Sciences Policies HS-04 and HS-06)
- Chemical and drug exposure (found in Northwood Tech, Health Sciences Policies HS-05, HS-06, and HS-07)
- Ergonomic hazards from lifting, sitting, and repetitive tasks (found in Northwood Tech, MA Functional Abilities)
- Latex allergies (found in Northwood Tech, Health Sciences Policy HS-05)
- Stress (found in Northwood Tech, Health Sciences Policy HS-09 and HS-10)

At the same time, there are protections set up with the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA), and those protections are particularly important within a healthcare environment. OSHA has a series of standards that protect the safety of healthcare workers and patients.

Accredited medical assisting programs are required to teach students about the hazards that they face on the job and the protocols that can be put into place to ensure a workplace culture that prioritizes safety.

### **For further questions & concerns please contact the MA Program Director:**

Janel Ouimette CMA (AAMA), BS  
MA Program Director/Instructor  
Northwood Technical College  
1900 College Drive  
Rice Lake, WI 54868  
715-788-7057

[janel.ouimette@NorthwoodTech.edu](mailto:janel.ouimette@NorthwoodTech.edu)

(7/2023)