

# Pathologists' Assistant



## What do they do?

Pathologists' Assistants (PAs) are expertly trained allied health professionals that process a variety of laboratory specimens, under the supervision of a Pathologist. Most PA's examine, dissect and prepare surgical tissues. They are also trained to conduct all aspects of autopsies with the exception of diagnosis.

## Where do they work?

Most Pathologists' Assistants work in academic and community hospitals. They can also be employed in private pathology laboratories, forensic pathology laboratories and morgues.

## Pay:

According to [salary.com](http://salary.com), the average yearly income for a Pathology Assistant is \$82,946.



## Education:

A master's degree is required to become a Pathologists' Assistant. An applicant should already have a bachelor's degree and some healthcare related experience.

### Pathologist Training Program:

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science:  
[www.rosalindfranklin.edu](http://www.rosalindfranklin.edu)

High School students interested in becoming a Pathologists' Assistant should take classes in biology, anatomy & physiology, math, microbiology, physics, and health.

## Accreditation:

Education programs for Pathologist Assistants are accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS).

[www.naacls.org](http://www.naacls.org)



## Important Skills:

These skills are necessary to become a Pathologists Assistant.

- Strong critical thinking and problem solving skills.
- Ability to work independently and on a team.
- Good written and verbal communication skills.
- Attention to detail and accuracy.
- Efficient time-management skills.

## Certification:

ASCP Certification is not a requirement however it is a preferred credential. Currently the only state that requires licensure is California.

Graduates of an accredited Pathologists' Assistant education program may take the national certification exam with the ASCP Board of Certification to become certified.

The BOC administers the below exam:

- Specialist Certification for Pathologists' Assistant (PA)



The exam is a 2 hour and 30 minute computer based exam that includes 100 questions. For more information about the exam visit the website below.

<https://www.ascp.org/content/board-of-certification/get-credentialed>

## Advancement:

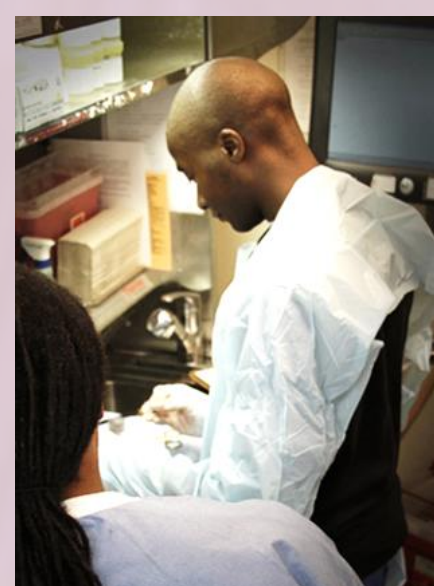
With experience and clinical knowledge, Pathologists' Assistants can earn higher wages and responsibilities, like supervising other staff and PA students.

Many go on to teach PA students and Pathology Residents proper grossing techniques and quality assurance. In some cases PAs can be promoted to a faculty position.

## Professional Association:

Interested Pathologists' Assistants can join the American Association of Pathologists' Assistants:

[www.pathassist.org](http://www.pathassist.org)



## Job Outlook:

According to <http://pathology.duke.edu>: "With the increased pressures on healthcare systems to control costs, Pathologists' Assistants contribute to the overall efficiency of the laboratory or pathology practice in a cost effective manner. The demand for qualified Pathologists' Assistants is growing every year, making the outlook for a career as a Pathologists' Assistant to be very optimistic."

