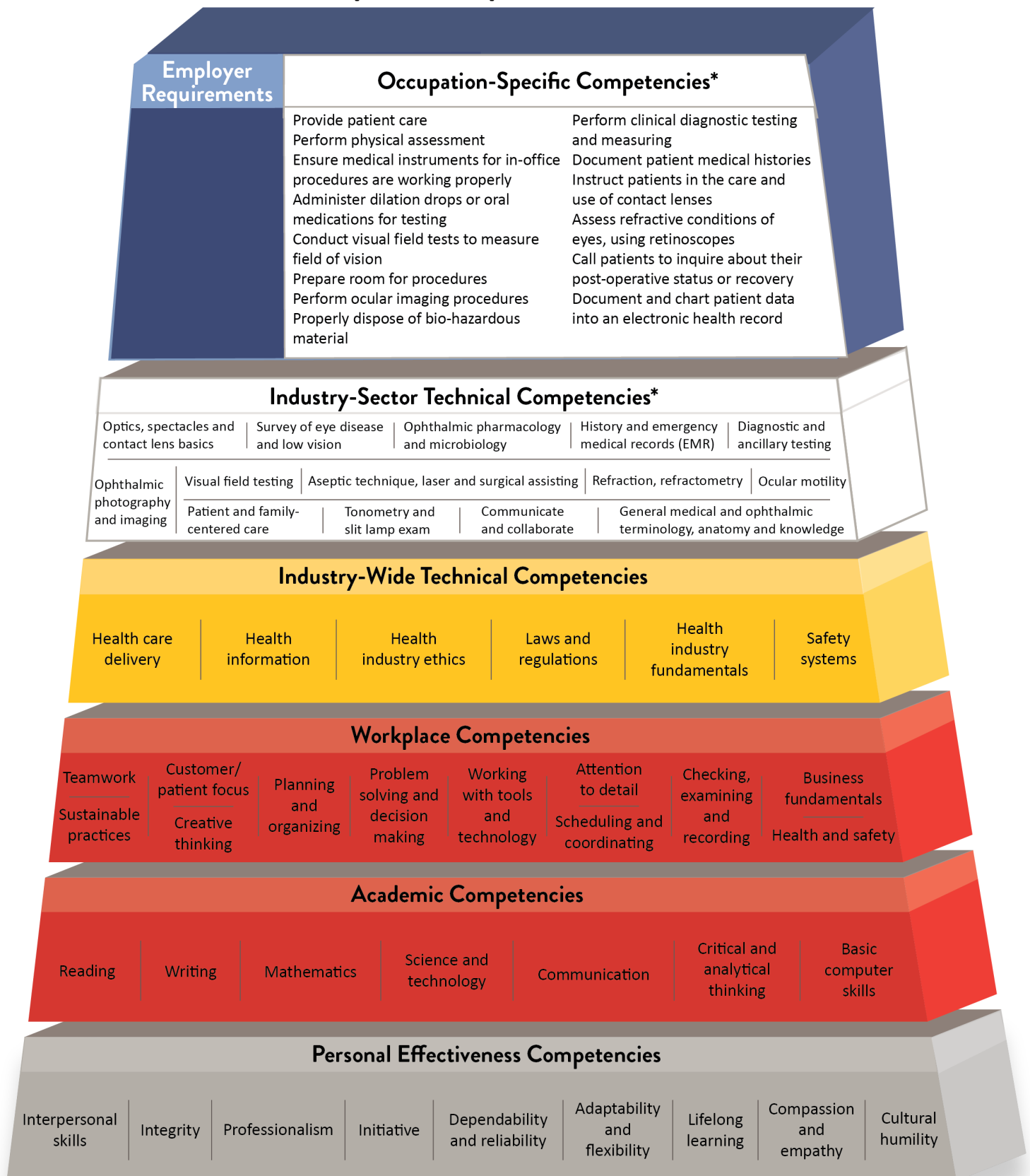


Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline

Competency Model for Health Care Services

Occupation: Ophthalmic Technician



Based on: Fundamentals of Health Care Competency Model, Employment and Training Administration, United States Department of Labor, February 2025. For more detailed information about competency model creation and sources, visit dli.mn.gov/business/workforce/health-care-services.

Competency Model for Ophthalmic Technician

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.

*Pipeline recommends the Industry-Sector Technical Competencies as formal training opportunities (provided through related instruction) and the Occupation-Specific Competencies as on-the-job (OJT) training opportunities.

Industry-Sector Technical Competencies

Related Instruction for dual training means the organized and systematic form of education resulting in the enhancement of skills and competencies related to the dual trainee's current or intended occupation.

- **Optics, spectacles and contact lens basics** – Understand key elements of vision correction.
- **Survey of eye disease and low vision** – Know the terms used to describe determining disease of the eye and of significant visual impairment that cannot be corrected fully with glasses, contact lenses, medication or eye surgery.
- **Ophthalmic pharmacology and microbiology** – Understand how drugs and medications are used for treating ocular patients and the effects of these substances.
- **History and emergency medical records (EMR)** – Be able to keep a log of patient medications, diagnosis and treatments.
- **Diagnostic and ancillary testing** – Knowledge of ophthalmic tests performed to detect, diagnose or monitor diseases.
- **Ophthalmic photography and imaging** – Understand specialized medical imaging dedicated to the study and treatment of eye disorders.
- **Visual field testing** – Understand the method of measuring an individual's entire scope of vision, that is their central and peripheral (side) vision.
- **Aseptic technique, laser and surgical assisting** – Know how to use sterile practices to avoid infection within laser and all ophthalmic surgery.

- **Refraction and refractometry** – Know about the bending of light that takes place within the human eye. Refractive errors include nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism.
- **Ocular motility**– Know about the study of the twelve extraocular muscles and their impact on eye movement.
- **Patient and family-centered care** – Understand the human values necessary to implement patient and family-centered care.
- **Tonometry and slit lamp exam** – Understand the 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.
- **Communicate and collaborate** – Be able to work closely and cooperatively with peers while communicating effectively to produce positive results.
- **General medical and ophthalmic terminology, anatomy, and knowledge** – Knowledge of terms and anatomical science within the ophthalmic field.

Occupation-Specific Competencies

On-the-Job Training is hands-on instruction completed at work to learn the core competencies necessary to succeed in an occupation. Common types of OJT include job shadowing, mentorship, cohort-based training, assignment-based project evaluation and discussion-based training.

- **Provide patient care** – Be able to assist with ophthalmic procedures, as well as scheduling, triage phone calls and appointment scheduling.
- **Perform physical assessment** – Understand the process of identification of the condition, needs, abilities and preferences of a patient.
- **Ensure medical instruments for in-office procedures are working properly** – Know how to properly work with and clean medical devices.
- **Administer dilation drops or oral medications for testing** – Know how to perform this task to enlarge pupils of the eye or aid with treatment and/or recovery.
- **Conduct visual field tests to measure field of vision** – Know how to perform tests to measure peripheral vision which is crucial for diagnosing eye conditions such as glaucoma.
- **Prepare room for procedures** – Be able to complete cleaning and turnover of rooms.
- **Perform ocular imaging procedures** – Know how to assist with ocular imaging procedures which offer a better view of the eye and early detection of various ocular diseases.

- **Properly dispose of bio-hazardous materials** – Know how to dispose of materials that are infectious waste that can be deemed a threat to public health or the environment.
- **Perform clinical diagnostic testing and measuring** – Knowledge of medical tests performed to detect, diagnose or monitor diseases.
- **Document patient medical histories** – Be able to keep a log of patient's medications, diagnoses and treatments.
- **Instruct patients in the care and use of contact lenses** – Know how to teach the application, removal and care and cleaning of contact lenses.
- **Assess refractive condition of eyes, using retinoscopes** – Be able to measure 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 enquire about their post-operative status or recovery** – Understand customer service for after surgery or treatment follow up.
- **Document and chart patient data into an electronic health record** – Know how to chart physician/patient encounters in real time, such as during ophthalmic medical examinations.

Updated October 2025