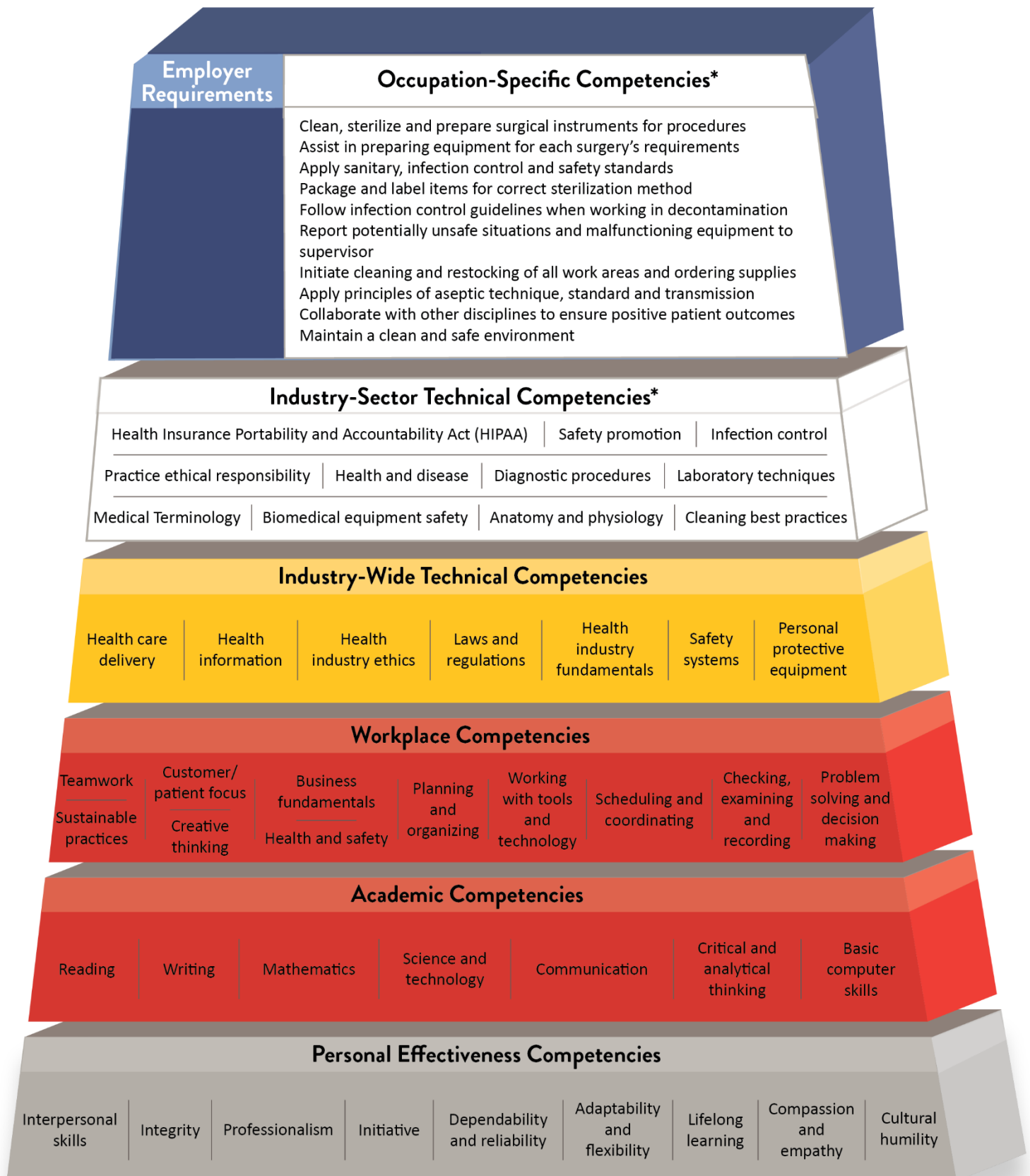


Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline

Competency Model for Health Care Services

Occupation: Sterile Processing 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 Sterile Processing Technician

Sterile Processing Technician – A healthcare professional responsible for cleaning, sterilizing, and maintaining medical instruments and equipment to ensure patient safety and prevent infections.

*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.

- **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)** – Understanding of legislation that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information, and how it translates into daily medical practice.
- **Safety promotion** – Understand and adhere to standardized protocols and procedures, including rigorous guidelines for sterilization, disinfection, and handling of medical instruments.
- **Infection control** – Understand and practice infection control to ensure a sanitary environment for clients. Knowledge of gowning and gloving, waste disposal and infection containment procedures.
- **Practice ethical responsibility** – Understand medical ethics that allow for people, regardless of race, gender, or religion to be guaranteed quality and principled care.
- **Health and disease** – Understand the overall condition of an organism at a given time; disease is a disorder or malfunction of the mind or body, which destroys good health.
- **Diagnostic procedures** – Knowledge of medical tests performed to detect, diagnose, or monitor diseases and determine a course of treatment.
- **Laboratory techniques** – Understand the processing of blood samples and other bodily fluids for evaluation.
- **Medical terminology** – Understand language used to describe the human body, including its components, processes, conditions affecting it, and procedures performed upon it.

- **Biomedical equipment safety** – Understand the measures taken to ensure the safe and accurate operation of medical equipment that is used in patient care.
- **Anatomy and physiology** – Understand basics of the structure and relationship of body parts and the function of body parts and the body as a whole.
- **Cleaning best practices** – Understand key practices including precleaning, environmental cleaning, training and education and quality assurance to ensure the safety and efficacy of medical instruments.

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.

- **Clean, sterilize and prepare surgical instruments for procedures** – Understand the process to ensure the instruments are safe and ready for surgical use.
- **Assist in preparing equipment for each surgery's requirements** – Know how to set up the operating room to ensure all necessary instruments and supplies are ready for use.
- **Apply sanitary, infection control and safety standards** – Understand the standards that ensure the safety and effectiveness of medical instruments including decontamination protocols, inspection and assembly requirements, sterilization parameters, and storage and distribution standards.
- **Package and label items for correct sterilization method** – Understand the steps that are crucial for maintaining the sterility of medical devices and ensuring patient safety during procedures.
- **Follow infection control guidelines when working in decontamination** – Ability to clean and disinfect surgical instruments according to established health facility protocols.
- **Report potentially unsafe situations and malfunctioning equipment to supervisor** – Understand that notifying the supervisor is necessary to prevent unsafe or unhealthful risks.
- **Initiate cleaning and restocking of all work areas and ordering supplies** – Understand the complex task where numerous resources must be synchronized in order to achieve efficiency in cleaning, restocking and supply ordering.
- **Apply principles of aseptic technique, standard and transmission** – Ability to maintain sterility throughout the surgical procedure by following proper cleaning and disinfecting protocols.

- **Collaborate with other disciplines to ensure positive patient outcomes** – Ability to work closely and cooperatively with peers while communicating effectively to produce positive outcomes.
- **Maintain a clean and safe environment** – Understand the need to prevent healthcare-associated infections and ensure optimal patient care through regular cleaning, separation of clean and dirty areas, environmental cleaning and regulatory compliance.

Updated December 2025

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