



Pathology Clinical Ladder Requirements

MT or Path Spec

- Able to perform basic clinical testing procedures with routine workloads and under the direction of more senior staff
- Must complete 10 continuing education hours per fiscal year

MT III or Path Spec III

- Minimum of 3 years of clinical experience
- Satisfies the requirements of a MT or Path Spec
- Participating member beyond membership of a professional organization or of a VCU Health, Department of Pathology committee. For example, contributing to a newsletter, ad hoc member of a committee, attends meetings, actively engaged in some form of administration, or holds an office.
- Prepare and present one continuing education annually. Presentation may be given internally (i.e., staff meeting, etc.) or externally (i.e., RSCLS, etc.) and can be either an oral presentation, poster, article, or the development of a training module with post-test.
- Must complete 18 continuing education hours per fiscal year for two years.

MT IV or Path Spec IV

- Minimum of 5 years clinical experience
- Satisfies requirements of MT III or Path Spec III
- Possesses broad technical skills in multiple areas of the laboratory
- Active participation in protocol development, assay validation and/or process improvement projects throughout the laboratory
- Must complete 20 continuing education hours per fiscal year for two years.

Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Pathology Clinical Ladder

The Pathology Clinical Ladder will provide eligible VCU Department of Pathology employees with an opportunity to be recognized and rewarded for professional development and development of technical skills. It is a voluntary process to encourage our staff to assume higher levels of responsibility without transitioning to management positions. It is our hope that this ladder will encourage professional pride, promote a team management concept, and result in greater job satisfaction for our staff.

Purpose

Laboratory services at VCUHS are dedicated to excellence in patient care, education, and research. In recognition of the sophisticated levels of practice required to fulfill this commitment, a clinical ladder was created to support the professional and clinical development of Pathology employees.

Objectives

The objectives of the clinical ladder are to (1) improve the quality of laboratory service and increase the satisfaction of patients, physicians, nurses and other members of the healthcare team; (2) to encourage professional development of the laboratory staff and provide recognition of accomplishments; (3) to increase the number of technically expert staff who can support complex services; and (4) to implement a strategy that will stabilize the laboratory workforce and reduce the cost associated with high staff turnover rates.

Description

The Clinical Ladder has three (3) levels. Within each level there are four domains with progressively complex behaviors and responsibilities. The four domains are Professional Development/Education, Clinical Operations, Leadership/Problem Solving and Quality.

Advancement for levels MT/PS III and IV is (1) voluntary and (2) requires the individual staff member to prepare a comprehensive portfolio illustrating how their level of expertise adheres to specific, well-defined elements.

Portfolios are submitted to a review board. After being approved to either the MT/PS III or IV level, the employee must maintain compliance with the requirements of the current job description.

Notice of Intent Due	Portfolio Due	Challenge Cycle Month
February 1 st	March 1 st	March-April
July 1 st	August 1 st	August-September
October 1 st	November 1 st	November- December

Guidelines for Eligibility

1. Must be an employee of VCU Health System or MCV Physicians.
2. Must be employed for 24 months as a benefited position for a minimum of 20 hours per week.
3. Must have 80% clinical related experience in their job responsibilities. Medical Technologist and Pathology Specialist supervisors, Education Coordinators, MT Client Services Representatives and MT Point of Care Testing Sr. positions are not eligible to challenge the ladder.
4. The most recent performance appraisal must have an overall rating of Fully Meets or above. The performance appraisal must have no individual rating of less than fully meets.
5. **Must have no Corrective Action within the previous 12 months prior to challenging the clinical ladder.**
6. A MT who has advanced to the MT III/PS III level must complete one year at that level (1 year from the date of promotion to MT III/PS III in the current human resource system) before turning in notice of intent to challenge.

Selection Process and Review Board

The Review Board will evaluate clinical ladder challenge candidates. The Review Board is an open board, with a minimum of 5 voting members and additional non-voting members. The voting members consist of available managers and supervisors from different lab areas, and an additional AD HOC member, if needed to allow representation by any area with a challenge candidate. The non-voting members consist of the Board Chair (Director of Laboratory Operations) and Board Administrator (Associate Director of Laboratory Operations). The Lab manager and/or the Director of the challenger will also be non-voting members of the board. Human Resources Classification and Compensation will be fully appraised of all challenges. In cases where all board members cannot participate, there will be a minimum of five board members for each portfolio review.

The Board will first review the candidate's portfolios to identify the elements are met in each domain. All of the elements in each domain require a minimum average score of three (3 - proficient). The second step is a personal interview that will also be conducted by the Board. The Board will then decide whether or not to recommend the applicant for advancement based on the portfolio and interview scores. Each candidate will receive specific feedback regarding his/her technical strengths and weaknesses. Candidates who are not recommended for advancement should utilize this feedback and guidance from a mentor (manager or supervisor) to further prepare them for a future challenge cycle

Application Process

Eligible employees who are applying for advancement to the MT III/PS III or IV should complete the following steps and submit the necessary documentation listed below.

1. Notice of Intent:
 - Discuss your intention to apply for advancement with your manager or supervisor.
 - Submit the letter of intent to your section manager. No late submissions will be accepted.
2. General Instructions
 - Gather self-evaluation checklists, MT III/PS III and IV job descriptions and other items needed
3. Portfolio Submission
 - Submit electronic copies of your portfolio to the Board Administrator by the due date. Electronic portfolio must be organized by sections.
 - The portfolio will not be accepted if it is late or not complete. The portfolio will be returned within 1 week and will not be further reviewed during that challenge cycle.
 - All handwritten original documents must be included. All sections of the portfolio should be legible. Typed renditions of handwritten documents are encouraged.

Review Cycle

- The clinical ladder process is confidential. The board, as well as the applicant, is expected to maintain confidentiality throughout the review cycle.
- Each board member will carefully review portfolios submitted. The board members will not discuss individual portfolios with each other.
- The applicant will be interviewed by the board to answer any questions the board members may have regarding information in the portfolio.
- Final scoring will be completed after the interview and will be based on the portfolio and the interview.
- The Board Chair will review the scores submitted at the board review meeting, determine if the applicant successfully challenged, and if applicable, forward required paperwork to Human Resources.

Notice of Intent To challenge the VCUHS MT/PS Clinical Ladder

- I would like to be reviewed for advancement to the level of _____ in the VCUHS MT/PS Specialist Clinical Ladder.
- I certify that I am currently actively employed by VCUHS as a benefited employee in the Department of Pathology and that I currently work 20 or more hours per week.
- I certify that I have reviewed the entire Clinical Ladder document and the corresponding job descriptions. I understand the requirements for submitting a portfolio to challenge the next level of the ladder including the expectation of utilizing personal time and work time is not guaranteed for preparation of my portfolio.
- I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that my portfolio including all documentation necessary for the panel review is completed and turned in to the Board Administrator by the appropriate deadline for portfolio submission and that no late submissions will be accepted.
- I authorize the VCUHS Pathology Clinical Ladder Review Board to request any additional information, including review of my personnel file, which is relevant to their evaluation and decision about my application to advance.
- I certify that all of the information is accurate and is my work only. I will give credit to any individual who has contributed to this portfolio.
- I understand that this entire process is to remain confidential.

I authorize the VCUHS Pathology Clinical Ladder Review Board to publish any portion of my portfolio, for educational purposes, provided confidentiality is maintained.

Signature

Date

Name (Print)

Employee #

Authorize, Acknowledge and Approve Intent to Challenge Pathology Clinical Ladder

Manager Signature

Manager Name (Print)

Date

Laboratory Director Signature

Laboratory Director Name (Print)

Date

Portfolio Components

Your portfolio must demonstrate an ongoing level of practice consistent with the level of challenge. You may use other evidence from the two years prior to the challenge date as appropriate. The evidence supplied to the board should demonstrate that you meet all behaviors outlined for the appropriate challenge level. Falsification of any documentation will disqualify you from the Pathology Clinical Ladder challenge process and may result in disciplinary action.

Presentation Summary Forms are available for you to record the professional presentations you have given. The Presentation form is used to describe the format (department in-services, department grand rounds, poster presentation, etc.) of the presentation, the target audience (department, peers, students, residents, regional, state, or national conference, etc.) and the material presented.

Speaker Evaluation forms, letters from course organizers, posters, handouts, an abstract form, course brochures and/or other supporting evidence describing the quality of your presentation are to be included in your portfolio. Alternative forms may also be used if desired but should contain similar information to the forms provided on the following pages.

Please label and place the portfolio documents in the following order before submitting electronically to the board administrator:

Table of contents (generated by challenger)

1. Notice of intent
2. Challenger Checklist
3. Performance Evaluation
Please submit a copy of your most recent performance evaluation from the Current Performance Evaluation System.
4. Leadership and Development: leadership courses, conferences, teaching, training, mentoring less experienced staff; STAR Service (fosters team spirit, initiative, and positive morale).
5. Curriculum Vitae Format

▪ Name
▪ Address
▪ Education
▪ Work/Professional Experience
▪ Professional Associations/Certifications
▪ Lectures and Presentations
▪ Honors and Awards
▪ Publications
▪ Research

6. Recommendation Letters:
 1. Section Director and Manager Letter (within last 6 months): 1
Lab Section Director Letter
1 Manager Letter
 2. Peer Evaluation Letters:
2 peers at an equal or higher level (job title)

7. Evidence of Professional Advancement

This section is used to demonstrate you have fulfilled requirements to challenge Pathology Clinical Ladder. Requirements for each level is listed on page 1 of the Pathology Clinical Ladder.

Continuing Education

Documentation of attendance hours (depending upon level challenged) of continuing education experiences for the past two fiscal years are required. These experiences should be related to your area of clinical testing. Document with a printout of your ASCP transcript or certificates of completion

MT/PS III Challenger Checklist Evidence of Professional Advancement

- Minimum of 3 years of Clinical experience in a VCUH laboratory
- Participating member beyond membership of a professional organization or of a VCU department of Pathology committee
- Prepare and Present one CE annually
- Completed 18 hours of CEs per fiscal year

Application Process

- Letter of Intent submitted and discussed with Manager
- Review job description of the level being challenged
- Portfolio Assembled electronically according to Guidelines and table of contents
- Electronic submission of Portfolio

MT/PS IV Challenger Checklist

Evidence of Professional

Advancement

- Minimum of 5 years of Clinical experience AND 1 year experience at the MT/PS III
- Participating member beyond membership of a professional organization or of a VCU department of Pathology committee
- Prepare and Present one CE annually
- Completed 20 hours of CEs per fiscal year
- Active participation in protocol development, assay validation and/or process improvement projects throughout the laboratory

Application Process

- Letter of Intent submitted and discussed with Manager
- Manager Checklist
- Review job description of the level being challenged
- Electronic submission of Portfolio

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

Manager Signature _____ Date _____

MANAGER'S CHECKLIST: MT III/Path Spec III

Performance Standard	Proficient (Yes/No)	Method of Challenge (Completed by Challenger)	Comments (Completed by Manager)
MT III/Path Spec III Completed requirements for MT or Path Spec plus ASCP or equivalent certification/ASCP categorical certification			
MT III/Path Spec III Completed required number of Continuing Education hours per year for ladder level challenge			
MT III/Path Spec III Performs clinical testing on all lab benches without supervision, with consistent high productivity rate and low error rate			
MT III/Path Spec III Demonstrates the ability to assess and interpret test data reflective of patient diagnosis, clinical status, age, gender, etc.			
MT III/Path Spec III Demonstrates the ability to perform preventive and routine maintenance on all lab equipment			
MT III/Path Spec III Able to address and resolve more complex troubleshooting instruments/assay issues, generally without assistance			
MT III/Path Spec III Participate in reagent/test validations and assist with			

documentation/analysis of data.			
MT III/Path Spec III Monitors reagents/supplies ordering process to assure adequacy			
MT III/Path Spec III Collaborates and performs research/development protocols per instructions			
MT III/Path Spec III Participating member beyond membership of a professional organization or of a VCUH Department of Pathology committee			
MT III/Path Spec III Prepare and present one continuing education annually (oral, poster, article, or the development of a training module with post-test)			
MT III/Path Spec III Sets the standard in the laboratory as a positive role model by adhering to policies and procedures			
MT III/Path Spec III Promotes positive image of the laboratory utilizing STAR Service. Communicates in a mature, positive, and professional manner with team members and external customers. Recognizes and understands needs and concerns of others and recommend solutions.			

MANAGER’S CHECKLIST: MT IV/Path Spec IV

MT IV/Path Spec IV
Must meet the MT III/Path Spec III requirements in addition to the below requirements

<p>MT IV/Path Spec IV</p> <p>Assist in the development, implementation and provide instructions of new procedures/techniques. Serves as the technical expert</p>			
<p>MT/Path Spec IV</p> <p>Promotes teamwork and positive morale by effectively serving on department committees and teams. Assumes complex tasks. Promotes teamwork through effective communication and feedback.</p>			
<p>MT/Path Spec IV</p> <p>Demonstrates the skills necessary to analyze and solve problems. Supports the development of team members and provides feedback to encourage thoroughness, accuracy, and efficiency</p>			
<p>MT/Path Spec IV</p> <p>Coordinates, manages, and compiles data for special projects under the guidance of supervisor/manager/director</p>			
<p>MT/Path Spec IV</p> <p>Effectively express ideas both orally and in writing as required to perform job responsibilities. Positive role model for the laboratory team by communicating effectively with team members and external customers in a mature, positive, and professional manner.</p>			

Functions as a liaison between lower-level staff and management.			
MT/Path Spec IV Actively participate in laboratory meetings, openly and constructively giving and receiving ideas for lab improvements. Proactively provide technical communication with Client Services and Pathology Safety and Compliance when testing schedules or patient results are affected as appropriate			

Presentation Summary Form	
Date:	
Speaker Name:	
Topic/Title:	
Location:	
Number of Attendees	
Audience Demographic (Techs, Residents, Supervisors, etc.)	
Purpose of Presentation (Circle one)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presenting/Sharing course information 2. Researching a “new” area to gain knowledge 3. Asked to present in-service in area of expertise 4. Other-Please specify
Brief Summary of Presentation	

9. Did the in-service provide you with additional knowledge in the subject presented?

____ Yes, ____ No ____ Helpful Review

10. Any additional comments?