

Autopsy Technician



What do they do?

Autopsy Technicians are part of the larger Medical Assistant category of occupations and they assist Pathologists in autopsies by organizing and cataloguing forensic and medical autopsy tissue. Autopsy Technicians are also responsible for preparing and checking completeness of all required documentation.

Where do they work?

Autopsy Technicians typically work in hospitals or research centers. They may also work in morgues or funeral homes.

Pay:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average yearly income for Autopsy Technicians is \$35,850.

Education:

A high school diploma is required to become an Autopsy Technician. Many employers will train Autopsy Technicians on the job. To become a more advanced Autopsy Technician or to work in forensic settings, 2 to 4 year degrees may be required.

High School students interested in becoming an Autopsy Technician should take classes in biology, anatomy & physiology, health, and chemistry.

Potential for Advancement:

With continued education an Autopsy Technician could pursue the following roles:

Forensic Autopsy Technician:

ITT Tech: www.itt-tech.edu

Program: Associate Degree in Criminology and Forensic Technology

Pathologists' Assistant:

Rosalind Franklin University: www.rosalindfranklin.edu

Program: Masters degree, Pathologists' Assistant

Typical Duties of an Autopsy Technician:

- Assist with forensic and pediatric autopsies, collection of evidence and collection of laboratory specimens.
- Manage the storage and retrieval of archived materials.
- Maintain autopsy logs.
- Maintain autopsy equipment and instruments.
- Assist in transporting bodies to the morgue.
- Coordinate all agencies involved with a case including coroners, funeral homes, and families.
- Obtain autopsy permits and review completeness of death packets.

Important Skills, Knowledge and Abilities:

- Attention to detail
- Verbal and Written Communication
- Ability to work in a team and independently
- Knowledge of laboratory safety requirements
- Organization skills

Job Outlook:

Autopsy Technicians have a great outlook as they are always in need. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics includes Autopsy Technicians with Medical Assistants. Job outlook for this group is expected to grow 18 percent between 2020-2030, which is much faster than the average across all occupations.

Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Medical Assistants, www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/medical-assistants.htm (visited September 13, 2021)

