



# NORTHWEST FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

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MEDICAL LABORATORY TECHNOLOGY

Clinical Practicum Handbook

2022-2023

## Revision Statement/Disclaimer

Created March 2022

NWFSC reserves the right to amend, alter, change, delete, or modify any of the provisions of this Handbook at any time and in any manner deemed to best serve the interests of the students and the college. Students will be notified of any changes.

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Roberta Mackey  
Executive Director of Human Resources, Equity Coordinator  
100 College Blvd. East, Building: 310, Niceville, FL 32578  
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To read the College's Title IX procedure, go to the College's Title IX website at <https://www.nwfsc.edu/about/compliance/>, or if viewing digitally, [click here](#).

## Table of Contents

Introduction .....	4
Essential Functions.....	5
Prerequisites .....	7
Required Documentation.....	7
Complio .....	9
Clinical Placement.....	10
Statement about Clinical Availability .....	10
Clinical Practicum Schedule .....	10
Service Work Policy.....	11
Attendance.....	11
Call-Out Procedures .....	11
Communication Policy .....	12
Transportation .....	12
Grading Policy .....	12
Evaluations.....	12
Academic Requirements .....	13
Professionalism .....	13
Incomplete .....	14
Withdrawal .....	14
Dismissal.....	14
Trajecsys.....	15
Recording Time Records in Trajecsys.....	15
Logging into Trajecsys .....	15
Clocking In and Out.....	15
Time Exceptions .....	17
Unmatched Time Records.....	17
Clinical Appearance.....	18
Dress Code .....	18
Exposure/ Accident Policy.....	19
Social Media.....	20
Interruption of Clinical Practicum Policy .....	20
Illness .....	20

COVID-19.....	21
Pregnancy.....	21
Licensure and Certification .....	22
Student Trainee License.....	22
Certification Examination .....	22
Substance Abuse Policy.....	23
Grievance Procedures .....	23
Teach Out Plan .....	24
Forms .....	25
Clinical Practicum Handbook Acknowledgement Form.....	25
Confidentiality Statement.....	26
Contract for Compliance with Confidentiality Statement .....	26
Student Pregnancy Declaration/ Withdrawal Form .....	27
Declaration of Pregnancy.....	27
Withdrawal of Pregnancy Declaration.....	27

## Introduction

Welcome to the last phase of Northwest Florida State College's Medical Laboratory Technology (MLT) program: the Clinical Education Phase. You have completed all of your foundation courses and will now begin your clinical practicum at our affiliated clinical sites. You should be proud of all of your hard work!

The purpose of this handbook is to help guide and give you a central location for the policies and expectations in place during your clinical practicum. It should be used in conjunction with the MLT student handbook and the NWFSC Student Handbook that is available in the College Catalog. Clinical education is a vital portion of your education in the medical laboratory field and a third of your curriculum is devoted to it. For the MLT student to obtain the greatest benefit in this program, it is important that they participate to the fullest.

The Clinical Education phase is made up of 15 credits. Students will complete three clinical practice internships and an online capstone course. Each clinical practicum is 4 credits, equating to 180 hours. Therefore, each student will complete 540 hours of internships over the course of 2 semesters.

As a student, you will rotate through each department bench in the clinical site's laboratory: Phlebotomy, Hematology/ Coagulation, Chemistry, Urinalysis, Microbiology, and Blood Bank. During your rotations, you will be able to observe and learn about the process of patient testing. At the end of the rotations, you will come out with practical skills that will readily prepare you to work in the laboratory field. Though students go to different clinical sites, we are dedicated to providing an equivalent clinical experience at each affiliated location.

During your time at the clinical site(s), you will be evaluated based upon pre-established competencies created and determined by the MLT Education Coordinator and the Program Director. The evaluations will be performed by the clinical site and are based upon your performance as a student. You will also be evaluated on your affective domain, meaning how you present yourself as a student at the clinical site. You will be able to evaluate the clinical site with the same standards.

It is imperative you are aware and acknowledge that, as a student, you are directly representing Northwest Florida State College's Medical Laboratory Technology program. You will also represent the facility in which the clinical rotations are taking place. In your student role, you are not an employee of nor eligible for any benefits due to the employees of the clinical institution but are bound by their rules and regulations since you will be encountering patients on their premise.

Congratulations again on your success in the MLT program and welcome to the last phase of your education!

Sincerely,

Sarah Loffreda  
MLT Education Coordinator

And

Caitlin Robertson  
Program Director

## Essential Functions

Healthcare professionals must be able to perform essential functions to provide safe care, gather accurate data, and communicate effectively. To effectively train phlebotomy professionals, these essential functions are incorporated throughout the MLT Program. Faculty and students are required to demonstrate proficiency of these functions in the campus, lab, and clinical activities. Essential functions (or technical performance standards) represent the critical non-academic requirements of the AS-MLT program that students must master to successfully participate in the program. To participate in a medical laboratory science education program, students must be able to comply with program's designated essential functions or request reasonable accommodations to execute these essential functions.

Neither the College nor the MLT Program discriminates on the basis of disability in admission or access to its programs, services, or activities for qualified individuals who meet essential functions requirements. The College will provide reasonable accommodations for documented disabilities of individuals who are otherwise eligible to receive or participate in College programs, services, or activities. For a student who cannot perform essential functions, whether they are a student who needs reasonable accommodations or a student who does not, the MLT Program reserves the right to deny admission or require withdrawal of any student who, in the judgment of the MLT Program Director, presents evidence of being unable to perform the responsibilities and tasks required of the medical lab profession as described by the essential functions in this section.

Requirements include:

1. A sound intellect

<b>COGNITIVE AND INTELLECTUAL STANDARDS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>THINK CRITICALLY:</b> To identify and solve problems; identify cause/effect relationships; to apply reading, lecture and laboratory information to case study preparation; to employ effective teaching, learning and test taking strategies.</li><li>• <b>COMPREHEND:</b> Relevant information regarding patient diagnoses, laboratory testing, indications and contraindications, human pathology and impairments from textbooks, medical records and professional literature.</li><li>• <b>PRIORITIZE:</b> Events to provide for safety; multiple tasks; integrate information and make decisions about sequence and progression.</li><li>• <b>MAKE CLINICAL DECISIONS:</b> To respond quickly and appropriately to changes in patient status; to analyze written, observed or verbal data about patients and make decisions to terminate, modify, progress or cancel laboratory tests; act safely and ethically in the lab and clinic.</li><li>• <b>SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM MEMORY:</b> To accurately and quickly remember data from the chart and information relayed in verbal exchanges with the healthcare staff; to access learned knowledge to include but not limited to diagnoses, safety precautions, emergency procedures; to participate successfully in the learning and evaluation of knowledge within the MLT curriculum.</li><li>• <b>THINK QUICKLY AND CLEARLY:</b> To execute all duties unimpaired by any condition or substance that alters mental processing, speed or quality of thought processes or judgment.</li></ul>

2. Motor skills, eye-hand coordination and dexterity, and visual acuity to perform macroscopic and microscopic analyses or to read procedures, graphs, etc.

### PHYSICAL STANDARDS

- **PHYSICAL, MENTAL, AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH:** Possess the physical, mental, and emotional health to maintain alertness and concentration during an 8-hour day under the stressful conditions of technical malfunctions, time constraints, and a distracting environment; move freely and safely around the laboratory and hospital.
- **HEARING:** Possess normal, or correctable hearing.
- **PHYSICAL:** Possess the ability to: bend, stoop, stand, lift and move objects of at least 20 pounds, grasp with one or both hands, reach laboratory bench tops, shelves, patients lying in bed or seated in a specimen collection chair, **perform moderately taxing repetitive tasks, often requiring prolonged sitting or standing over several hours.**
- **MANUAL DEXTERITY:** Possess sufficient hand-eye motor coordination to allow delicate manipulations of specimens, instruments and tools, grasp and release small objects (specimen tubes, pipette tips, pipettes, reagent vials, inoculating loops), twist and turn dials/knobs, utilize a computer keyboard and mouse to operate laboratory instruments and verify and transmit data.
- **VISION: Characterize the color, clarity, and viscosity of biological specimens, reagents, or chemical reaction end products. Discriminate color, shading, and fine structural differences of microscopic specimens using a clinical grade binocular microscope, identify and distinguish objects macroscopically, read text, numbers, and graphs both in print and on a video monitor, judge distance and depth accurately.**

### 3. Effective communication skills

### COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

- **SPEAK AND EXPRESS:** Clearly and understandably in the English language; information to peers, faculty, patients, their families and other health care providers; to explain conditions and procedures and teach home programs.
- **READ:** Typed, handwritten, chart data and computer-generated documents in the English language; at a level of competency that allows safe and timely execution of essential tasks or assignments.
- **UNDERSTAND/INTERPRET:** Medical terminology and information given; to follow simple and complex instructions (oral or written) regarding patient care and testing; and respond to non-verbal communication/behaviors of self and others.
- **FOLLOW DIRECTIONS:** Accurately and efficiently, seeking clarification where necessary.
- **WRITE:** To produce legible handwritten or computer word processed documents; use correct medical terminology, spelling, grammar and punctuation; organize and express thoughts in written form in the English language; to prepare accurate, thorough, legally defensible patient documentation.
- **INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:** To work collaboratively; interact professionally; to establish rapport with patients, colleagues and classmates; to resolve conflicts; with individuals from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds; maintain confidentiality in all interactions.

### 4. Professional skills such as the ability to work independently, to manage time efficiently, to comprehend, analyze, and synthesize various materials, as well as to hold sound psychological health and stability

## BEHAVIORAL/PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- FLEXIBILITY: To adjust to a constantly changing and very demanding full-time schedule.
- COOPERATION: To work as a member of a team; develop positive and effective relationships with faculty, clinicians, peers and patients.
- RECOGNIZE LIMITATIONS: To request assistance when needed; accept correction and constructive suggestions; assume responsibility for personal development; utilize resources effectively.
- **WILLINGNESS**: To wear required lab attire; to participate in lab activities that require **phlebotomy and other types of sample collection**.
- POSITIVE ATTITUDE: To demonstrate initiative, enthusiasm and appropriate peer and patient interactions.
- WORK ETHIC: To attend class and clinic promptly and regularly; to stay focused and on task in lecture and laboratory instructional time; to submit work products promptly when due; to submit to all classroom and clinical rules/policies; to comply with all legal and ethical standards of practice.
- STRESS MANAGEMENT: Coping skills for fast-paced clinical situations; to manage multiple academic deadlines; respond appropriately in a stressful environment; manage personal matters outside of class/workday.
- PLANNING AHEAD: To arrange transportation and living accommodations for/during off campus clinical assignments to foster timely reporting to the classroom and clinical center.
- SELF CARE: To maintain general good health and hygiene in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with whom one interacts in the academic and clinical settings.

## Prerequisites

Prior to the commencement of the clinical practicum, the Pre-MLT and Technical Education phases must be completed. A list of all the required courses can be found at [https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=27&poid=11777&hl=MLT](https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=27&poid=11777&hl=MLT). The courses in the Technical Education Phase must be passed with a grade of 75 or higher.

In addition to the required courses, the students must maintain an adequate professionalism grade. Professionalism is weighed as 10% of each of the Technical Education courses and included both the lecture and lab portions. **The Clinical Education Coordinator and Program Director hold the right to deny students from the clinical practicum if professionalism is a concern.**

## Required Documentation

Each clinical site has a list of required documentation needed from visiting students. These documents must be provided to the Clinical Education Coordinator by the expressed deadline. **Failure to provide timely documentation may lead to the student's inability to attend clinical rotations. The students are financially responsible for the acquisition of all of the following. Failure to meet and maintain immunization requirements could lead to dismissal from or ineligibility for certain third-party clinical sites, which set and enforce their own standards regarding immunization requirements.**



REQUIREMENT	COMMENTS
Varicella	Immunity verified by proof of varicella immunization or titer. History of chicken pox is not acceptable.
MMR (Measles, Mumps, and Rubella)	Proof of two doses or current titer; If immunized prior to 1980, must have laboratory evidence (Rubella screen or Rubella titer) of immunity. (It is usually less expensive to have the MMR repeated than to pay for a Rubella screen or titer.)
Hepatitis B	This vaccine is a series of three doses, with the second and third doses given 1 and 6 months respectively after the first dose. A declination form is available to students in Complio.
Tdap	One dose of Tdap is required even if you had DTaP as a child. Another vaccine, called Td, protects against tetanus and diphtheria, but not pertussis. A Td booster is required every 10 years. Tdap may be given as one of these boosters if you have never gotten Tdap before.
Influenza	The flu vaccine is mandatory at the clinical facilities ANNUALLY; however, some facilities allow the use of a mask if the flu shot is declined; a statement of declination must be submitted and is located in Complio.
Covid-19	Currently many clinical sites are requiring students to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19. The definition of “fully vaccinated” means obtaining the two-dose vaccination from Pfizer or Moderna, or the one-dose vaccination from Johnson and Johnson. A declination form is available for students in Complio, but please be aware that the clinical site may refuse students dependent upon their vaccination status and the College has no authority over those decisions. The College does not require students to receive the Covid-19 vaccinations to be a student, but the College has no authority over third-party facilities who set their immunization requirements without College oversight.
Tuberculosis Screen (PPD or QuantiFERON-TB Gold blood test)	The PPD skin test or the QuantiFERON-TB Gold blood test must be performed within 12 month of the start of student clinical rotations. A positive result requires a chest x-ray and report of physician’s recommendations.
Physical of Health	Students must be evaluated by a medical professional for physical and emotional ability to comply with the Essential Functions and Performance Standards in the program. A copy of the physical form can be found in Complio.
BLS CPR	You are required to have a current CPR-BLS certification through American Heart Association (AHA) or American Red Cross (ARC) BLS for Healthcare Providers (or providers who use AHA or ARC standards) prior to the start of student clinical rotations.
10 Panel Urine Drug Screen	Students are required to submit to a drug screen as a component of clinical rotation. Students may be asked by the Director of the MLT program, the MLT Education Coordinator, NWF State College, or the affiliating clinical agency to submit to individual, group, and/or random drug screening at any time. The college reserves the right to

	<p>determine the agency to conduct the drug screening. Refusal to comply with requested screening within the timeframe directed (usually 12-24 hours) may result in dismissal from the MLT program.</p> <p><b>NOTE: Dilute negative results require rescreening.</b></p>
Background Check	<p>A background check is required by clinical facilities and the state of Florida for all MLT students. Students will be checked for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SSN verification</li> <li>• Criminal search (7 years or up to 5 criminal searches)</li> <li>• Violent Sex Offender and Predator Registry Search</li> <li>• Healthcare Fraud and Abuse <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ HHS/OIG List of Excluded Individuals</li> <li>○ GSA List of Parties Excluded from Federal Programs</li> <li>○ U.S. Treasury, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), List of Specially Designated Nationals (SDN)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Applicable State Exclusion List</li> <li>• License or certification</li> </ul> <p>If a student is aware of any potential flags on their background check, they must disclose it to the Education Coordinator prior to registration. Additional documentation is required for the state of Florida and is outlined <a href="#">here</a>. <b>NOTE: There are certain violations that will prevent a person from obtaining any form of health care licensure, including a student license. Failure to pass a background check may result in the inability to complete the Clinical Education Phase of the MLT program.</b></p>
Student Training License	<p>MLT students are required by the state of Florida to register for a student trainee license. This license allows a student to attend and train at clinical sites while in school. The license extends through the duration of a student’s clinical rotations. Students must provide the following documents along with the application to the state in order to receive the trainee’s license:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transcripts mailed to the state of Florida board (\$10 transcript request fee) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Florida Board of Clinical Laboratory Personnel 4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin # C 07 Tallahassee, FL 32399-3257</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A nominal fee of \$45 in form of a check</li> </ul>

**Complio**

Complio is a website that provides tracking services to students. All of the documentation outlined above must be uploaded into Complio. Complio also provides a place to order the background check and urine drug screen, customized to the MLT program requirements. Together, the background check and drug screen cost \$100 and are the financial responsibility of the student.

## Clinical Placement

Students must be placed at a clinical site with an established affiliation agreement, with the exceptions detailed below. The student may give the MLT Education Coordinator a preferred clinical site or location, but ultimately the MLT Education Coordinator holds the ultimate decision in the placement of a student. The MLT Education Coordinator holds no sway over the decisions of clinical sites. The clinical sites may choose to accept or decline a student without any control of the College.

If a student requests to attend a clinical site that the College has no current affiliation agreement with, the student must get this request approved by the MLT Education Coordinator and the Program Director. The MLT Education Coordinator will need to form an affiliation agreement with that clinical site. Affiliation agreements take around 6 months to complete, so the MLT Education Coordinator must be informed as soon as possible. The student is responsible for gathering the following information **before** approaching the MLT Education Coordinator with the request:

- Name of the requested clinical site
- Documented consent by the requested clinical site to take on the student (email documentation is appropriate)
- Contact information of the point of contact at the requested clinical site
  - Name
  - Email
  - Phone Number
  - Clinical Site Address
- Departments offered at the requested clinical sites; must include:
  - Core lab (chemistry, urinalysis/body fluids, hematology/coagulation)
  - Full microbiology (including plate reading and susceptibility testing)
  - Full blood bank (including antigen typing, antibody testing, and blood product distribution)
  - Phlebotomy

**Failure to provide this information in a timely manner may result in not being able to graduate on time.**

### Statement about Clinical Availability

Resources at the clinical facilities may limit spaces for clinical experience. In the event that more students qualify for the clinical practicum than space allows, students will be placed on a clinical practicum waiting list according to GPA and number of absences in MLT classes. Those students on the list must wait for an available clinical site. If there are any questions regarding this policy, please contact the MLT Program Director.

### Clinical Practicum Schedule

The clinical rotations take place over 24 weeks. There are no part-time options. Clinical Practicums require a 5 day/week time commitment. Hours may vary between semesters and clinical sites, but students should plan to be in clinical rotations during normal business hours.

The 24 weeks of the clinical practicum are split into multiple segments; the first 3 weeks are spent on campus where students review common lab practice techniques. The following 19 weeks are spent at

the clinical site, where students will rotate through 1 week each of phlebotomy, urinalysis/body fluids, coagulation, 2 weeks of chemistry, 4 weeks of hematology, and 5 weeks each of blood bank and microbiology. After the completion of the 19 weeks, the students will have 1 “flex week”. The flex week is in place to make up any absences that occur during the full 24 weeks. Students are permitted to miss up to 4 days during the entire 24 week duration. If all 4 days are missed, then the student must make up that time in the 4 days of the flex week. If the student does not miss any days, the student is not required to attend the flex week. Students will be off on official school holidays and school closures, such as semester breaks.

The final week of the clinical practicum consists of a review week. Students will meet on campus for a cumulative review in preparation for the national certification exam. However, an online option may be available with approval from the MLT Education Coordinator and Program Director in a case-by-case basis.

### Service Work Policy

During their scheduled clinical rotation hours, **students are not be to used as part of the clinical facility’s work force and may not be paid**. Students may not be used to substitute regular employees as part of their clinical internship experience. Service work by students in a clinical setting outside of academic hours is not a requirement. If the student works for the laboratory outside of academic hours, it will not be counted towards the student’s clinical internship hours. Hours worked outside of the practicum experience should not interfere with the student’s progression in the MLT program. Examples of service work include but are not limited to working as a phlebotomist, laboratory assistant, or continuing to work evening shifts or weekends at a clinical affiliate during the student’s progression through the MLT program.

### Attendance

Full attendance and participation are required during the clinical practicum. Students may only have up to 4 absences out of the entire 24 week duration. Students will be off on official holidays and school closures, such as semester breaks. These official breaks do not count against the student’s attendance at the clinical sites. If a student misses more than 4 days, they must meet with the MLT Education Coordinator and/or the Program Director for a remediation meeting.

Students will utilize a program called Trajecsyst to track attendance. Trajecsyst is a website that records student and clinical site evaluations and provides a time clock service. Students will clock-in and clock-out at the clinical sites using Trajecsyst. This program records the time and also records a stamp of the location that the student clocked in and out at, therefore students must only clock in and out at their clinical site. If a student mistakenly forgets to clock in or out, then they must submit an exception request to be approved by the MLT Education Coordinator.

### Call-Out Procedures

If a student must be absent for any of the duration of the 24 weeks of the clinical practicum, they must follow the outlined call-out procedures. The student must notify the MLT Education Coordinator via email and call the clinical site to notify the department that they will be absent that day. The clinical sites prepare and save materials for the students to assist with and should be given the courtesy of communication. **Failure to notify the MLT Education Coordinator and the clinical site will result in a**

**remediation meeting, no exceptions. If the student continues this pattern, the student may be dismissed from the program.**

## Communication Policy

Communication is vital for the success of not only the clinical practicum, but also for future careers. The student's point of contact for the college is the MLT Education Coordinator. Email is the official means of communication for the college. Emails will be answered within 24 hours during the week. The instructor may respond to emails on the weekend but expect if an email is sent after 4:30 PM on Friday, you may not receive a response until Monday morning. If the student needs to contact the clinical site, they must call the lab directly.

## Transportation

The clinical education phase requires a more substantial in-person time commitment. Students will be required to commute to clinical sites (which can include travel to several counties in the regional area) and therefore must have dependable transportation. Clinical Practicums require a 5 day/week time commitment. Hours may vary between semesters and clinical sites, but students should plan to be in a clinical rotations during normal business hours. The student is solely responsible for arranging, maintaining, and paying any costs of their transportation.

## Grading Policy

The general grading policy is outlined in the current Northwest Florida State College Catalog <https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4470>. All non-MLT courses will be graded on the scale consistent with the college.

### Grading Scale for MLT classes:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	75-79
D	70-74
F	Below 70
I	Incomplete

## Evaluations

Students will be evaluated by each department of the lab at the end of their assigned time at that bench. The evaluations should be performed by the clinical preceptor that was with them the most at the bench. Students will be evaluated on their bench skills and their affective domain. It is important that students fully participate in the clinical rotations, therefore these evaluations will be graded. If the student receives a score of "Not Satisfactory" in any of the evaluation sections, they will be required to attend remediation sessions on campus until the MLT Education Coordinator and/or the MLT Program Director determines their skills are sufficient to move forward. Remediation sessions will be scheduled by the MLT Education Coordinator and/or the MLT Program Director and are mandatory. Failure to participate in the remediation session(s) may result in dismissal from the program.

Students will also have the opportunity to evaluate the clinical sites and preceptors. These evaluations will be returned to the education coordinator at the clinical sites for their own records. The evaluations are the same on the clinical and student side. The purpose of the evaluations is to monitor progress and address any problems as they appear. The evaluations are vital to the improvement of the MLT program clinical phase.

All activities at the clinical sites should be educational. Any concerns about non-education activities should be directed to the MLT Education Coordinator *and* the clinical site coordinator. Students are responsible for their education.

### Academic Requirements

Students must achieve a 75 or “C” or higher in all clinical classes to be eligible for graduation.\* The weighted points system will be outlined in the course syllabi.

\*Graduation is not contingent upon the passing of any type of external certification exam.

### Professionalism

Professionalism is an important part of the MLT curriculum. Therefore, it will be graded and weighted as 10% of the total grade in every MLT course. During the Clinical Practicum Phase, students will receive up to 5 points each week for professionalism. To receive all 5 points, students must:

- Turn in/complete all work on time unless prior approval has been granted. The homework itself will also be docked points for being late. See syllabus for late homework policy.
  - Check to ensure all uploaded files are correct and working properly.
  - Check to ensure all files are labeled and formatted correctly. All homework files should be named and formatted according to the guidelines in the course syllabus.
- Communicate effectively and appropriately in all course communications. All written and oral correspondence/communication must be respectful and professional.
  - For written communication (emails and discussion boards)
    - Use complete sentences
    - Check grammar and spelling
    - Use a salutation and a signature in emails
- Treat classmates, instructors, other professionals, and patients with respect, care, and thoughtfulness.
- Demonstrates efficiency and quality by using organizational skills.
- Maintain honesty, integrity, and adaptability and accept responsibility for own work and results.
- Arrive on time and ready to begin promptly at your clinical sites and on campus.
- Follow all universal precautions and all other safety rules.
- **Avoid cellphone usage at the clinical sites when not on a break.**

### Grading Rubric

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
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1 severe infraction or many minor infractions	1 moderate - severe infraction or more than 2 minor infractions	1 moderate infraction or 3 minor infractions	2 minor infractions	1 minor infraction	No infractions, demonstrated professional behavior all week
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Example of a **minor infraction**: mislabeling a homework assignment file

Example of a **moderate infraction**: having a cluttered work area or arriving tardy

Example of a **severe infraction**: disrespecting a classmate, drinking or eating at the bench

### Important Notes Professionalism Points:

Severe infractions are not to be confused with **critical incidents**. Occurrence of a critical incident, such as a serious breach of ethics, safety violation or endangering the health or welfare of a patient, or any other behavior that jeopardizes the reputation of the MLT Program and/or the College and may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

### Incomplete

In rare cases, a grade of "I" (incomplete) may be given at the discretion of the instructor(s) should course requirements not be completed during the prescribed time. Students should make every effort to avoid receiving an "I" grade in the MLT courses. The problems associated with this are numerous and can include possible interruption of financial aid and forfeiture of slot in following MLT courses.

A student must already be passing the course with a minimum grade of "C" in order to receive an incomplete. A student must have completed at least 70% of the coursework in order to be eligible for an incomplete. The incomplete is assigned only after a student makes arrangements with the instructor and program director for fulfilling the course requirements. All work must be completed before classes begin the following semester or the grade automatically becomes an "F." Thus, a student's progression in the program becomes jeopardized.

### Withdrawal

Withdrawing from the program is a voluntary action taken by the student. Students are encouraged to consult the MLT Program Director when considering dropping a class or withdrawing from the program.

If a student withdraws, there may not be a possibility of readmission. In order to be considered for readmission, students must withdraw in writing to the Program Director and include a reason for the withdrawal. The student must also complete withdrawal paperwork through Student Services. The student is responsible for notifying the clinical site about their withdrawal.

### Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from the MLT Program for the following reasons without limitation on any other reason stated in the College Catalog, this handbook, or College or program policy or procedure:

- Inability to progress

- If a student does not receive a “C” or higher in any 2 MLT courses
- Failure of a clinical practicum course
- Exceeding 4 years to complete the technical and clinical phases
  - Course work and graduation from the program must occur within 4 years of initial enrollment in the MLT Technical Phase. Failure to do so will create ineligibility for further participation and will require re-application to the program as a new student. Extenuating circumstances may be considered by the Program Director.
- Academic dishonesty violating Northwest Florida State College Academic and/or MLT academic integrity policy
- Conduct probation exceeding one semester
- Attendance Policy noncompliance
- Occurrence of a critical incident, such as a serious breach of ethics, safety violation or endangering the health or welfare of a patient, or any other behavior that jeopardizes the reputation of the MLT Program and/or the College and may result in immediate dismissal.

The MLT Program Director will administratively withdraw a student upon dismissal from the program.

## Trajecsys

Trajecsys is an online program NWFSC MLT now uses for student time records, scheduling, evaluations and more. Each student clinical site coordinator must register in order to complete evaluations. Students will be given procedures for registration by the MLT Education Coordinator.

### Recording Time Records in Trajecsys

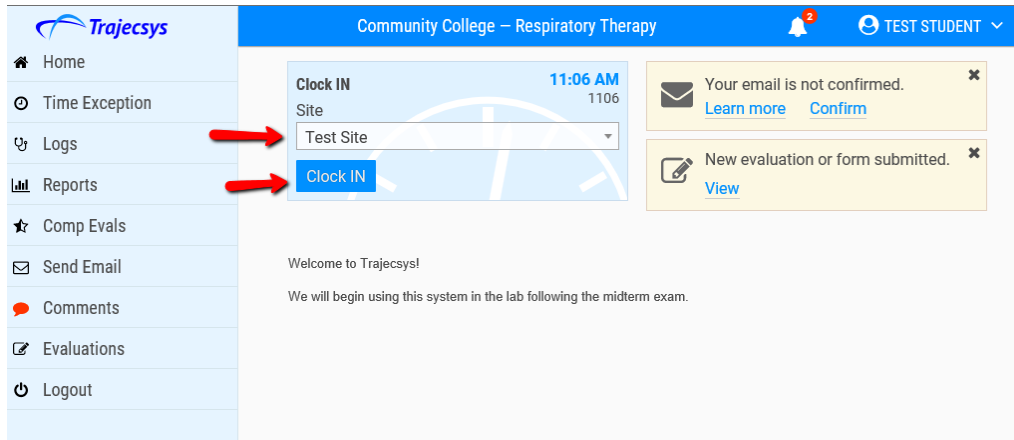
#### Logging into Trajecsys

Log into Trajecsys on a computer or on a smart phone (if your program allows smart phone clock records) at this link: <https://www.trajecsys.com/programs/login.aspx>. Students can choose to bookmark the Trajecsys Login page.

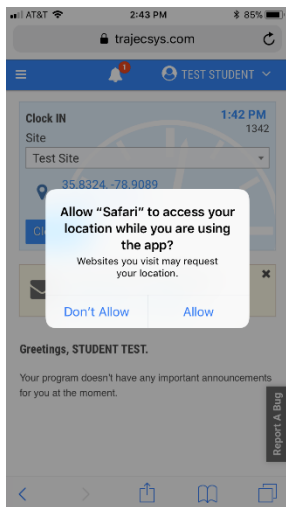
#### Clocking In and Out

Each day when students arrive at and depart from a clinical site, they will log in on a computer (or smart phone) and **select the clinical site** from a dropdown on the home page. Then the student will click the clock in / out button. This is the screen on a computer:





Students are automatically logged off from the system after clocking in/out on a computer; this is to protect records in case of failure to logout. If a student changes sites, they should remember to select the new site on this page; otherwise, times will be recorded for the wrong site.



After logging in on a **smart phone**, a message asking to share your location with Trajecsys will appear. **“Allow” should be clicked. It's important that this is selected correctly the first time because some phones do not present the option again without resetting location services in the phone Settings.** If "Don't Allow" is selected and no option is given the next time, the student should access the [GPS page](#) in the User Guide for information about resetting location services. Students should always check with the program administrator to determine program policies related to use of GPS / smart phone clock records. We recommend that students also read the pages related to [resetting location warnings](#) and [how to improve accuracy](#).

Students should see “Good Accuracy” on the phone screen before they click the clock in/out button. If the phone message states “Insufficient Accuracy,” students should wait until their phone has captured a good geolocation; this may require students (rarely) moving to another part of the building.

## Time Exceptions

If you don't file a clock in or out record, you must file a "time exception" instead. Using the clock in/out page is always preferred over filing time exceptions. A time exception is required for every missing clock record. If a student forgets to clock in AND forgets to clock out, this requires two separate time exceptions to correct the two missing clock records. One time exception is not sufficient to replace two missing clock records. Again, time exceptions should be used rarely; students should use the clock in / out button on the home page to record time records. **Enter time exceptions in 24-hour format (8:00 AM is 0800; 1:00 PM is 1300; hours; 9:00 PM is 2100).**

The screenshot shows the Trajecsys interface for filing a time exception. The left sidebar contains navigation links: Home, Time Exception, Logs, Reports, Comp Evals, Send Email, Comments, Evaluations, Logout, and Use Legacy App. The main content area is titled 'Time Exception' and includes the following fields and options:

- Site \***: A dropdown menu currently showing 'Test Site'.
- Date \***: A date picker showing '04/13/2018'.
- Time \***: A text input field containing 'hhmm'. A red arrow points to this field from a blue callout box that reads: 'Use 24-hour format (also called military time). If 2:30 p.m., enter 1430. If 8:45 p.m., enter 2045.'
- Reason \***: A list of radio button options: 'Finished Early', 'No Computer', 'No Internet', 'Forgot', and 'Absent'. A red arrow points to the 'Absent' option from a blue callout box that reads: 'Absence is for full day absence from clinic. System records two clock records for the day so that they may be approved.'
- Or explanation**: A text input field.
- Submit**: A blue button at the bottom.

## Unmatched Time Records

If a student has unmatched clock records in Trajecsys, these cannot be approved. Example, having only one clock record for a day OR clocking in from one site and clocking out from another site on the same date. Students can check for unmatched clock records by going to the Reports page in Trajecsys and clicking on Time Totals. Time records with a "U?" in the status column indicate that there is an unmatched time record (note that a status of U without the question mark just means it has not been approved yet; the question mark means that it is unmatched). This can be caused if a student already has a pair of records for the same site or another site on that date. Students should let the program coordinator or director know if a record needs to be deleted or edited.

Students are responsible for filing time exceptions for unmatched clock records. **Keep in mind that times after noon must enter the time in 24-hour format. For example, 1:30 p.m. would be entered as 1330.**

## Clinical Appearance

The MLT student is not only representing Northwest Florida State College during clinical rotations but is also a guest at the affiliated clinical sites. The MLT student also represent that clinical facility to which the student is assigned during his/her clinical hours. Therefore, it is the policy of the MLT Program to require students to appear professional at all times during their clinical rotations.

The purpose of a uniform is to identify members of a particular group. This is why all NWFSC MLT students are to wear the appropriate uniform available at the bookstore. Students need to remember that they are not only representing NWFSC but also the laboratory profession.

## Dress Code

### A. Uniform

- a. Required scrub pants selected by the program
  - i. Ankle length
  - ii. Pants worn at waist level
- b. Required solid scrub top selected by the program with designated insignias.
- c. Clinically appropriate shoes are required. (i.e. backless clogs, cloth shoes, or shoes with open toes are strictly prohibited. Non-cloth athletic shoes are acceptable).
- d. Name-badge issued by program or the clinical site must also be worn at collar level.
- e. A plain white or black long or short sleeve T-shirt is allowed to be worn under uniform top. **NO WRITING ON T- SHIRTS.**
- f. Lab coats will be provided by the clinical sites; **personal lab coats should not be worn at the clinical site.**
- g. Student must have a pen and pocket notebook on their person.

### B. Grooming

- a. For both male and female students: Hair should be well-groomed and worn in a conservative, professional style off the face, shoulders and back, arranged so it does not fall forward. Hair color must be kept to natural shades such as blonde, brunette, red, gray, etc. **Colors such as pink, purple, blue, etc., may not be acceptable by clinical sites.**

### C. Jewelry

- a. Wedding bands – be aware that mounted stones may become dislodged with the constant removal of gloves.
- b. Watches of professional appearance.
- c. Earrings must not be long enough to fall into patient samples, therefore they must not exceed 2 inches.

### D. Cosmetics and Scents

- a. Strong perfume and scented aftershave lotions are not acceptable.
- b. Nails must be clean and trimmed (no longer than fingertips). **CDC - Appropriate hand hygiene includes diligently cleaning and trimming fingernails, which may harbor dirt and germs and can contribute to the spread of some infections. Nail polish and artificial nails are prohibited.**
- c. Students may be required to cover any and all tattoos per facility. At a minimum, offensive tattoos **MUST** be covered at Clinic.
- d. Good hygiene is mandatory. Students presenting to clinic with offensive odors (perfumes, body odor, tobacco etc.) will incur a clinical absence when sent home.

- E. **Articles allowed to be carried on student during clinical hours:**
  - a. Electronic device, including:
- F. Cell phones or other communication devices. Students may be dismissed from the clinical site if the student is using personal electronic devices while at the clinical site. Exception: breaks and utilizing paperless system.
- G. **Students who use tobacco products** must take precautions to guard against transmission of tobacco smells to patients and others. The majority of college associated clinical sites are tobacco-free campuses. <http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/>
- H. **Other Dress Considerations**
  - a. Lab coats must not be worn outside the lab.
  - b. Students must abide by the dress code policies of the clinical facility in which they are obtaining experience.

## Exposure/ Accident Policy

The Northwest Florida State College MLT Program students must comply with OSHA standards for hazardous materials control, infection control and exposure to harmful substances, including, but not limited to, blood or other body fluids. **Students are responsible for their own healthcare.** Should they contract a communicable disease or be exposed to the same via body fluids or other means, they must report such exposure or condition to MLT Faculty, clinical instructor, or preceptor immediately. Should immediate assessment and treatment be deemed necessary (including emergency care), students must comply with all agency and college policies regarding the occurrence, which includes payment for any treatment or other required exposure procedures. Further, students must complete all documents regarding the occurrence via agency/site incident as well as appropriate college incident reporting.

[Click here for NWFSC Incident/Injury report form](#)

NWFSC carries Student Accident Coverage, which works with a student's primary insurance carrier or independently if they do not have insurance. This student accident program provides coverage for college students injured while participating in covered college classes, labs and/or training. Once the course or program of study ends, coverage ends. Please note that the policy only provides coverage for an injury to the student. An injury must be as a direct result of the accident which occurred during the covered activity and not from sickness or disease.

### Reporting:

1. Students should report to their instructor any complaint of injury as a direct result of an accident which occurred during a lab. Instructors will file Incident/Injury Report using the Maxient Reporting system (see the link provided above). The link to the form can be found above or in RaiderNet under the FORMS tab.
2. Students **MUST** check their college email or contact the college Risk Management Coordinator directly within 30 calendar days of the incident/injury to file an insurance claim. Students have 20 calendar days from the date of the injury/accident to file an insurance claim with the college by directly contacting the Risk Management Coordinator.
3. Failure to comply with this deadline may result in denial of claim.

4. Students should never give bills or invoices to instructors, the Program Director, or staff assistant. All documentation must be submitted directly to the college Risk Management Coordinator.
5. If a student seeks medical attention, they must provide a written medical clearance to their instructor or the MLT Program Director prior to returning to the clinical experience.

## Social Media

The use of social networking by students and healthcare professionals should be done with careful consideration. In order to avoid any potential biases, students are STRONGLY discouraged from initiating or accepting friend requests from anyone associated with the clinical experience or MLT program faculty while enrolled in the MLT Program. This includes but is not limited to clinical instructors, professional staff, patients, and/or family members of patients or staff. This allows students to be evaluated solely on clinical performance without any conscious or unconscious influence of personal information from social networking sites.

As both a professional, ethical, and legal requirement, students must maintain patient confidentiality. Due to the public nature of social networking sites, privacy and professionalism may be compromised. **All students are bound by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA).\*** **Students may not post anything that compromises patient or peer confidentiality.** This includes, but is not limited to, names, references to the clinical site or clinical staff, classmates, instructors, pictures of any part of the patient's body, and any information that may identify the patient or peer. No photographs should be taken or posted of any of the patients, staff, or facility. Students should refrain from posting any comments about their clinical experience, site, clinical instructor, patients, instructors, classmates, or any other staff member on their personal social networking profile, via text messaging, Twitter feed or any other electronic networking medium. Failure to comply with the policy stated above may result in immediate dismissal from the program as a substantive violation of programmatic standards.

\*For a review of HIPAA rules and polices, students can access their MediaLab "HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules" training module or go to <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html>

## Interruption of Clinical Practicum Policy

In the event of a natural disaster, in which the NWFSC MLT program would have to close for an indeterminate amount of time, the college will inform the students of a plan for continuation as soon as the information is available. Students impacted at clinical sites will be moved to alternative sites based on availability. Classes will resume as soon as possible.

## Illness

It is recommended that all students have insurance to cover personal illness while in the program. The college does not discriminate against any type of medical condition. All students must comply with the Essential Functions/Performance Standards for the Associate Degree MLT course of study. The student should report any health condition which may potentially harm peers (for example, a febrile illness or infectious skin lesion) or otherwise render the student unfit for duty. Students may be required to submit proof of medical assessment and/or interventions as determined by the instructor. Should a student be unable to meet the program standards with or without reasonable accommodations, they

may be dismissed from the program. The dismissal may be appealed through the appropriate channels within 24 hours.

### COVID-19

Read Northwest Florida State College's COVID-19 responses and answers to common questions here: <https://www.nwfsc.edu/coronavirus/>. Due to protect the safety of the program environment, which involves labs and patients, the NWFSC MLT program follows the recommendations of the CDC regarding quarantine periods, found here <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html>. **There will be a makeup lab date schedule for the end of the semester for students to make up any lab they missed due to quarantine.**

During student rotations at the clinical site, students must abide by the policies set at the clinical site. Failure to abide by those policies may result in immediate removal from the clinical site.

### Pregnancy

For pregnant students enrolled in the Program, the Program will take reasonable step to ensure the safety of the mother and the unborn child throughout the student's participation in the Program. Current infection control protection standards have demonstrated that, with proper protection, the student may work safely throughout the term of the pregnancy. The purpose of this policy is to provide the pregnant student with necessary notice and protection in accordance with all standards and regulations and also assure the performance of essential functions throughout the Program. Please note that the Clinical Essential Functions and Performance Standards must continue to be met.

When you confirm you are pregnant, you have two primary choices:

1. OPTION 1: You may choose to NOT declare the pregnancy in which case no changes will be made to your schedule. You are not required to disclose your pregnancy to the Program under this option.
2. OPTION 2: If you decide to declare the pregnancy, you must do so in writing. Once you complete a "Declaration of Pregnancy" (form can be found at the end of this handbook), you must meet with the MLT Education Coordinator to discuss your options. These include the following:
  - You may choose to withdraw from the program and re-enter with the next cohort after delivery to complete the MLT Program (space permitting).
  - You may choose to continue the program without interruption of the routine clinical rotations. You will work with your clinical instructor to arrange an alternate schedule to accommodate your expected delivery date and take appropriate precautions while in clinical rotations. If you develop complications during your pregnancy that require prolonged absences, you will have to withdraw from the clinical course and re-enter the program after delivery (space permitting).

If you wish to remain in the program after voluntarily disclosing pregnancy, a current letter from your physician or other health care professional must be on file and updated as your pregnancy progresses. The letter must indicate any restrictions and recommendations of the healthcare professional regarding your participation in class or clinical. A "return to clinical bedside care and class" is required for "fitness to return to duty" following delivery.

## Licensure and Certification

### Student Trainee License

The state of Florida requires all students entering into a clinical site for student clinical rotations to apply and obtain a “Trainee License”. All students must obtain this license no matter if they end up going to a clinical site outside of the state. This requirement is in place in case any last minute changes or reassignments must be made. It costs \$45 to apply for the license and is the students’ financial responsibility.

Students will create an account and apply online through the Florida Department of Health Division of Medical Quality Assurance Web Portal. Students will apply at the guidance of the MLT Education Coordinator. It is vital that the students wait to apply for the trainee license until instructed by the MLT Education Coordinator; the trainee license is only valid for the duration of the clinical practicum and should not be applied for earlier than indicated. The state of Florida has outlined the following statement regarding the student trainee license:

“Trainee registration may not be extended beyond its expiration date except upon recommendation of the program director and approval by the Board based upon one of the following circumstances:

- The approved training program failed to commence on the date indicated in the training program’s application for approval.
- The trainee withdrew from an approved training program and reentered the same or another approved training program at a later date.
- The training program ceased to operate after the trainee’s registration.
- The trainee is unable to complete the approved program requirements prior to the expiration date of the trainee’s registration because of extenuating circumstances.

If a student is unable to complete their training by the date indicated on the application for initial registration due to any of the above reasons, then the program director is responsible for ensuring that the “Request to Extend Trainee Registration” form is submitted to the Board.”

Students may not qualify for the trainee license if there are severe criminal or health care fraud history. Reasons for disqualification can be found here: <https://floridasclinicallabs.gov/licensing/trainee/>.

At the conclusion of the student’s education and upon graduation, the student is eligible to sit for a national certification exam. The details of the certification exam are listed below. If the student passes the certification exam, they may apply for the state of Florida Medical Laboratory Technician license. The Florida MLT license is required to work in any clinical laboratory in the state of Florida. The application and licensure fees total to \$55.

### Certification Examination

The Northwest Florida State College Medical Laboratory Technology program prepares students based upon the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification (ASCP BOC) standards. However, other common certifying organizations include the American Association of Bioanalysis (AAB) and American Medical Technologists (AMT). The NWFSO MLT program focuses specifically on the ASCP

certification because it is the most widely accepted certification across the nation. Northwest Florida State College's MLT program will pay for one certification exam based upon the student's choice. Registration for the certification exam will occur at the conclusion of the student's clinical rotations.

## Substance Abuse Policy

### Substance Use and/or Abuse

- Substance abuse is inconsistent with the ethics of Northwest Florida State College.
- Substance use/abuse adversely affects cognitive, sensory, affective and psychomotor behaviors which can be life threatening to self and others.
- You may be asked by the MLT Program Director, an authorized Northwest Florida State College employee, or an affiliating clinical agency to which you are seeking to be assigned to submit to individual, group, and/or random drug screening at any time. The College reserves the right to determine the agency to conduct the drug screening.
- You will be asked to submit to drug screening as a component of the admission or readmission procedure, and as required for clinical rotations at various healthcare facilities or community agencies. Dilute negative results require rescreening.
- You are responsible for drug screening costs for individual screening required for initial admission, dilute negative results, random screenings, or for readmission.
- Refusal to comply with requested screening within the time frame directed (usually 12-24 hours) will result in dismissal from the Program.

Per the NWFSC Student Handbook, Substance Abuse section, found in the NWFSC College Catalog, and Board Policy HR 4.00, NWFSC is a drug-free workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of alcohol or a controlled substance is prohibited in and on NWFSC owned and controlled property, except for events specifically approved to include alcohol. Students in violation will be subject to disciplinary action as stated in the Student Code of Conduct published in the Student Handbook/College Catalog and may be subject to criminal prosecution. Students must also comply with any and all drug-free workplace requirements imposed through course-mandated student activities, such as offsite work at clinical facilities.

Once admitted, students must also remain drug-free throughout their tenure in this program. Failure to do so shall be grounds for dismissal from the program. Students are required to be drug and/or alcohol free when reporting to school and while at affiliating agencies (including parking lots and grounds). For all affiliating agencies which require you to be subject to the agency's drug testing policies, including but not limited to reasonable suspicion that you may be impaired or are using or have used illegal drugs and/or alcohol, students may be tested in accordance with the affiliating agency's policies. Prior to being assigned to an affiliating agency, students will sign consent forms to allow the affiliating agency to release any drug testing results to the College. If tested by an affiliating agency, students will provide the Program Director with a copy of any test results. Failure to promptly do so shall be grounds for dismissal from the program. A positive drug or alcohol test result shall be grounds for dismissal from the program.

## Grievance Procedures

If you believe you have suffered an injustice that involves grades, the MLT Program or the College failing to follow its processes and procedures, behaving in an unprofessional or inappropriate manner, or other



matters that are not addressed by other complaint or grievance procedures, you may seek assistance using the procedures cited in the Student Handbook Student Complaints section of the College Catalog. Student grievances fall into two categories: academic and non-academic. While the grievance process is similar for both, different college offices are responsible for each category. Visit the Catalog at [catalog.nwfsc.edu](http://catalog.nwfsc.edu) for the details of how to file a complaint and how your complaint will be processed. The College prohibits any form of retaliation against any student filing a grievance, academic or non-academic.

## Teach Out Plan

NAACLS requires accredited MLT programs to have a “teach out” plan in the event of program closure. First, in the event of program closure, the circumstances will be communicated to all students immediately.

Clinical education phase students:

- Students will be allowed to complete the MLT courses.
- Students in clinical rotations will be allowed to complete their clinical hours.
- The MLT faculty will work with the clinical sites and other community colleges to facilitate the completion of the MLT courses and clinical practicum.

In the event of a natural disaster, in which the NWFSC MLT program would have to close for an indeterminate amount of time, the college will inform the students of a plan for continuation as soon as the information is available. Students impacted at clinical sites will be moved to alternative sites based on availability. Classes will resume as soon as possible.

## Forms

### Clinical Practicum Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have read the Northwest Florida State College Medical Laboratory Technology Clinical Practicum handbook. I agree to the terms outlined in the handbook and also agree that I am subject to the MLT Program Handbook and the Catalog's Student Handbook. I understand the consequences that will follow if I stray from the agreed terms of the handbook. If I have any questions or concerns regarding procedures, I will refer to the handbook for policies before reaching out to the MLT Program Director or Education Coordinator.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Confidentiality Statement

It is imperative that we maintain the confidentiality of our patients. You, as a Northwest Florida State College MLT student, provide services to patients that are private and confidential, and you are crucial in helping to respect the privacy rights of patients. Patients provide personal information while receiving health care. That information may exist in a variety of forms, such as electronic, oral, written, or photographic. All of this information is strictly confidential and protected by federal and state laws.

**Northwest Florida State College prohibits gathering any patient information.** Discussions about patients and their conditions, called Protected Health Information (PHI), will not occur in the Medical Laboratory Technology program. Students may discuss results they observed at clinical sites with the class, but must exclude any identifying patient information. Violation of this directly breaches patient HIPAA rights and is illegal.

## Contract for Compliance with Confidentiality Statement

In exchange for the educational opportunities provided to me through the clinical rotations, I agree that I will comply with all local, state, and federal requirements governing the privacy of medical information. If I, at any time, knowingly or inadvertently breach patient confidentiality policies, I agree to notify my clinical instructor immediately. In addition, I understand that any breach of patient confidentiality may require a review by the MLT Education Coordinator, MLT Program Director, and host facility managers, and may ultimately result in suspension, dismissal, or expulsion from the program and/or College. I also understand that a wrongful breach of patient confidentiality could personally subject me to criminal and civil penalties. I understand that I am bound to comply with all privacy requirements when I am not at the clinical site, including my conversations with family, friends, and peers. I will be held accountable for maintaining the privacy of any information I obtain, see, or am given during my clinical rotations. To uphold the privacy of such information, I agree to not post, share, communicate, transmit, or discuss any information, photographs, audio, or video regarding my clinical experience, the clinical agency, its staff, or its clients/patients verbally, in writing, through any means of publication, or on any internet social media (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, email, etc.). If I violate this privacy requirement, I may be prohibited from returning to the clinical site. Such violation may also result in a delay in completing my degree requirements and in further disciplinary action against me by Northwest Florida State College.

I understand that an electronic copy of this form is available to me in the *MLT Clinical Practicum Handbook*, which will serve as the copy for my records.

Name (printed): \_\_\_\_\_ College ID#: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Student Pregnancy Declaration/ Withdrawal Form

### Declaration of Pregnancy

To Whom It May Concern:

In accordance with current regulations, I wish to declare that I am pregnant. I understand that I am under no obligation to make this declaration. I believe I became pregnant in \_\_\_\_\_ (only the month and year need to be provided). In making this declaration, I understand that I must submit to the MLT Program Director a letter from my physician or other health care professional indicating any restrictions and recommendations regarding my participation in theory or clinical coursework. This letter must be updated as I progress through my pregnancy. I also understand that I must submit a "return to clinical beside care and class" documenting my "fitness to return to duty" following delivery.

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Student Name

Signature

Date

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### Withdrawal of Pregnancy Declaration

To Whom It May Concern,

Effectively immediately, I am withdrawing my previous declaration of pregnancy. I understand that, by submitting this form, I agree to the removal of any clinical scheduling changes due to my declaration of pregnancy.

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Student Name

Signature

Date