



1507.00. **JOB DESCRIPTION: SURGICAL TECHNOLOGIST**

1507.01. The *Standards & Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in Surgical Technology* have been approved by the Association of Surgical Technologists (AST), American College of Surgeons (ACS), Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (ARC/STSA), and Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP).

1507.02. Surgical technologists are allied health professionals, who are an integral part of the team of medical practitioners providing surgical care to patients. Surgical technologists work under the supervision and delegatory authority of a surgeon to facilitate the safe and effective conduct of invasive and non-invasive surgical procedures, ensuring that the operating room environment is safe, that equipment functions properly, and that the operative procedure is conducted under conditions that maximize patient safety. Surgical technologists are experts in the theory and application of the principles of asepsis and sterile technique to combine the knowledge of human anatomy, surgical procedures, and implementation and tools and technologies to facilitate a physician's performance of invasive therapeutic and diagnostic procedures.

1507.03. **Education**

Surgical technologists graduate from surgical technology programs accredited through ARC/STSA, a collaborative effort of AST and ACS, by CAAHEP. CAAHEP is a recognized accreditation agency of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). In addition, surgical technology programs are located in educational institutions that are institutionally accredited by agencies recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) or The Joint Commission. The ARC/STSA is also a member of the Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors (ASPA).

1507.04. **Credentials**

Certification is conferred by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA). Initial certification as a Certified Surgical Technologist (CST®) is based upon satisfactory performance on the national certifying examination following completion of a CAAHEP accredited program in surgical technology. CSTs maintain their credential by completing continuing education (CE) credits of AST approved continuing education during the two-year certification cycle or by successfully retaking the certifying examination at the end of the two-year period.

- 1507.05. The NBSTSA's CST certification program is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the accreditation division of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE) and is in compliance with NCAA's *Standards for the Accreditation of Certification Programs*. NCCA standards and accreditation services are referenced requirements in state and federal legislation pertaining to surgical technology certification. ICE is accredited by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) as a developer of American National Standards. ANSI accreditation provides third-party validation that NCCA's standards development process ensures openness and due process.
- 1507.06. **Professional Organization**
The professional organization for surgical technologists is AST. Formed in 1969 with the support of the ACS, American Medical Association (AMA), American Hospital Association (AHA), and Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN), AST represents the interests of more than 99,000 surgical technologists.
- 1507.07. AST's primary purpose is to ensure that surgical technologists have the knowledge and skills to administer patient care of the highest quality and is the principal provider in conjunction with AST state organizations of continuing education for surgical technologists. AST also works with ARC/STSA and NBSTSA to set standards for education and certification and represents the profession at state and national levels to ensure graduation from a CAAHEP accredited program in surgical technology and that all surgical technologists attain the CST credential as a condition of employment.
- 1507.08. **Statement on Surgical Technology Training and Certification**
The following statement was revised by the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Committee on Perioperative Care and the revision was reviewed and approved by the ACS Board of Regents at its June 2016 meeting. [Note: This statement approved by the Association of Surgical Technologists; American Association of Surgical Physician Assistants; American Association of Nurse Anesthetists; American Society of Anesthesiologists; and American Society of PeriAnesthesia Nurses.]
- 1507.09. Surgical technologists are individuals with specialized education who function as members of the surgical team in the role of scrub person. With additional education and training, some surgical technologists function in the role of surgical first assistant.
- 1507.10. Surgical technology programs are accredited by the ARC/STSA – a collaborative effort of AST and the ACS, under the auspices of CAAHEP. Accredited programs provide both didactic education and supervised clinical experience based on a core curriculum for surgical technology.
- 1507.11. Graduates of accredited surgical technology programs are eligible for certification

by the NBSTSA - a collaborative effort between AST and the ACS composed of representatives including CSTs, a surgeon, and a member of the public.

1507.12 Therefore the ACS strongly supports the following:

- Adequate education and training of all surgical technologists, the accreditation of all surgical technology educational programs, and the examination for certification of all graduates of accredited surgical technology educational programs

1507.13 **Role of the Surgical Technologist**

The following description of the surgical technologist has been approved by the Association of Surgical Technologists:

1507.14 **Surgical Technologist**

The surgical technologist in the first scrub role handles the instruments, supplies, and equipment necessary during the surgical procedure. He/she has an understanding of the procedure being performed and anticipates the needs of the surgeon. He/she has the necessary knowledge and ability to ensure quality patient care during the operative procedure and is constantly on vigil for maintenance of the sterile field.

Preoperative Duties are as follows:

1. Donning OR attire and personal protective equipment (PPE).
2. Gathers, checks and opens supplies and equipment needed for the surgical procedure.
3. Performs the surgical scrub, and donning gown and gloves.
4. Sets up the sterile back table and Mayo stand with instruments, supplies, equipment, and medications/solutions needed for the procedure.
5. Performs initial instrument, sharps and sponge counts with the circulator.
6. Assists the team members with gowning and gloving.
7. Assists with draping the patient and establishing the sterile field.
8. Participates in the surgical site and patient verification during the time out procedure.
9. Secures tubing, cords and other sterile accessories.

Intraoperative Duties are as follows:

1. Prepares and anticipates additional instrumentation, equipment and supplies for usage during the procedure.
2. Anticipates the needs of the surgeon by passing instruments and supplies to surgeon during procedure.

3. Measures and passes medications, hemostatic agents and irrigation solutions utilized during the surgical procedure.
4. Holds retractors or instruments as directed by the surgeon.
5. Sponges or suctions the operative site.
6. Applies electrocautery to clamps or forceps on bleeders.
7. Cuts suture material as directed by the surgeon.
8. Coordinates the camera or changes out robotic arms/instruments during endoscopic surgery as directed by the surgeon.
9. Maintains highest standard of sterile technique during the procedure.
10. Performs additional counts as necessary.
11. Prepares sterile dressings and/or immobilization devices.
12. Prepares and passes off specimen(s) as appropriate.
13. Cleans and prepares instruments for terminal sterilization.
14. Assists other members of the team with terminal cleaning of room.
15. Assists in prepping the OR for the next patient.
16. Participates in debriefing and quality improvement practices to ensure quality patient care.

1507.15.

Additional Duties:

The surgical technologist in the second scrub role assists the surgeon and/or surgical assistant during the operative procedure by carrying out tasks including sponging, suctioning, cutting suture, holding retractors and manipulating the endoscopic camera. This role is distinct from that of the first scrub and surgical first assistant.

The surgical technologist assisting in circulating obtains additional instruments, supplies, and equipment necessary while the surgical procedure is in progress. He/she monitors conditions in the operating room and constantly assesses the needs of the patient and surgical team.

1. Review the patient's chart, identifies patient, verifies surgery to be performed with consent forms, and brings the patient to the assigned operating room.
2. Assists with transferring patient to the operating room table.
3. Monitors the comfort of the patient and provides verbal and tactile reassurance to the patient.
4. Assists in maintaining normothermia.
5. Assists the anesthesia provider.
6. Assists with positioning the patient, using appropriate equipment and anatomical principles to avoid patient injury.
7. Applies the electrosurgical grounding pad.
8. Assists with applying tourniquets and monitors before the procedure begins.
9. Completes the patient skin prep prior to draping by the sterile surgical team.
10. Performs instrument, sharps, and sponge counts with the surgical technologist in the first scrub role prior to the operation and before the incision is closed.
11. Anticipates additional supplies needed during the procedure.
12. Keeps accurate records throughout the procedure.
13. Properly cares for specimens.

14. Secures dressings after incision closure.
15. Helps transport the patient to the post anesthesia care unit.
16. Performs urinary catheterization.
17. Updates and keeps accurate records of the surgeon's preferences.