



HISTOTECHNICIAN

What do I do?

I process tissue samples from patients for staining on a glass microscope slide used by the pathologist to diagnose cancers, infections and other diseases.

My typical day includes:

- **Embedding processed tissue** samples into paraffin wax blocks.
- Rotary microtomy (**cutting**) of tissue samples.
- Operating and maintaining laboratory equipment used in the **processing or staining of tissue** samples, such as H&E stainers, microtome/cryostat, tissue processors, or coverslippers.
- Entering **patient information** to corresponding case number of the tissue sample.
- **Filing of glass slides** and/or paraffin wax blocks for archival purposes.
- Performing **special staining techniques** for further **diagnostic testing**.

Necessary Skill Sets



PROBLEM SOLVING
Ability to troubleshoot equipment, staining, or processing issues that may occur within the course of the day.



CONVENTIONAL
Requires following set laboratory procedures and processes.



FLEXIBLE
Able to adjust to the volume and unpredictability of the workflow in the laboratory setting.



ATTENTION TO DETAIL
Ability to recognize inaccuracies in tissue processing, microtomy, and staining.

Salary

Mean Annual Salary*: \$83,900 (Median: \$79,800)

Certification

[Earn certification as a Histotechnician \(HT\) from the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification \(ASCP BOC\).](#)

Education Requirements

Successful completion of a NAACLS (National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences) accredited Histotechnician program.

or

60 semester hours of academic credit from an accredited college/university that includes 12 semester hours of chemistry and biology or an Associate degree from an accredited college/university with a combination of 12 semester hours in biology and chemistry and one year of full time acceptable work experience in a histopathology (clinical, veterinary, industry, or research) laboratory or an accredited laboratory within the last five years or successful completion of a 50-week US military histotechnician training course within the last ten years.

* Salaries are based on a national average and will vary by location and years of service and other factors.