

MEMORANDUM

TO: CTE Administrators
School Counselors

FROM: Josh Black
Interim Director, Office of Career Readiness

DATE: August 4, 2026

RE: Medical Assisting Program Approval Requirements and New Health Science
Clinical Certification Course Codes

Medical Assisting Program Approval Requirements

Pursuant to Section 40-47-20(58) of the South Carolina Code of Laws, any Medical Assisting program offered in a South Carolina secondary school must be approved by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE).

Schools wishing to offer Medical Assisting certification must submit an application for approval. The following requirements and deadlines apply:

- Applications for the 2026–2027 school year are due August 14, 2026.
- Applications are available on the [Health Science Program page](#) of the SCDE website under Additional Resources & Information.
- All teachers who will be instructing the Medical Assisting course must be identified on the application.
- Program approval is required on an annual basis.
- Beginning with the 2027–2028 school year, applications will be due April 15 annually.
- At this time, Healthcare Science Clinical Study – Medical Assisting (5564) is the only clinical certification course requiring an application and SCDE approval.

Required Teacher Credentials for Medical Assisting Programs

Beginning in the 2026–2027 academic year, teachers with the following healthcare licensure or certification may teach Medical Assisting without additional preparation.

To be eligible to teach **Health Science Clinical – Medical Assisting (5564)**, instructors must be Health Science Technology (HST) certified and hold one of the following approved licensures or certifications: **Registered Nurse (RN)**, **Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)**, or **Medical Assistant (MA)** certification.

Additional Teacher Certification Options

Individuals who have taught the Medical Assisting certification for at least four years prior to the 2026–2027 school year and who have an average pass rate of 75% or higher may continue to offer the certification without additional requirements. Data must be provided to the SCDE along with the application to be considered for this exemption.

Health Science Technology teachers who do not hold one of the healthcare licenses or certifications above, but do have appropriate hands-on skills experience, may teach the Medical Assisting course after passing a Medical Assistant exam and maintaining current certification from a certifying body offering a certification program that is:

- (a) approved by the Board of Medical Examiners and the Board of Nursing; and
- (b) accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies or another accreditation body recognized by the Board of Medical Examiners and the Board of Nursing.

New Health Science Clinical Certification Course Codes

To support compliance with Section 40-47-20(58) and improve program identification and monitoring, SCDE has established new Health Science Clinical Certification course codes based on the certification being offered.

The new course codes are:

- 5561 – Healthcare Science Clinical Study – Healthcare Documentation and Coding
- 5562 – Healthcare Science Clinical Study – EKG Technician
- 5563 – Healthcare Science Clinical Study – Patient Care Technician
- 5564 – Healthcare Science Clinical Study – Medical Assisting
- 5565 – Healthcare Science Clinical Study – Phlebotomy
- 5566 – Healthcare Science Clinical Study – Certified Nurse Aide

Course Code Implementation

Schools offering Medical Assisting during the 2026–2027 academic year must use:

- 5564 – Healthcare Science Clinical Study – Medical Assisting

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The use of course code 5564 is required to ensure proper program identification and monitoring by SCDE.

Transitional Flexibility

While schools are encouraged to begin using the remaining new course codes during the 2026–2027 school year, the original Health Science Clinical Study course code (5560) may continue to be used during this transition period.

This transitional flexibility will allow schools time to prepare for full implementation of the new clinical certification course codes, which will become required beginning with the 2027–2028 school year.

Moving forward, course code 5560 should only be used:

- For certifications that do not yet have a designated course code; or
- In conjunction with one of the specific clinical certification courses listed above.

For questions regarding the Medical Assisting application or new Health Science Clinical course codes, please contact Anna Snipes at alsnipes@ed.sc.gov.

