

**Question:** *Do surgical technologists have to be certified to practice as surgical technologists in South Carolina?*

**Answer:** Yes, with some exceptions. To practice as a surgical technologist in South Carolina, the person must meet **one** of the following requirements:

- 1.) Successfully completed an [accredited educational program](#) for surgical technologists AND holds and maintains the Certified Surgical Technologist credential administered by the [NBSTSA](#); **or**
- 2.) Has completed an appropriate training program for surgical technology in the U.S. armed forces or the U.S. Public Health Service; **or**
- 3.) Was employed to practice surgical technology in a health care facility in South Carolina before January 1, 2008, **or**
- 4.) Is in the service of the federal government.

**Question:** *What are the continuing education requirements for individuals practicing as surgical technologists?*

**Answer:** Surgical technologists must complete 15 hours of continuing education each year to remain qualified for employment, unless the surgical technologist is in the service of the federal government. This requirement applies to Certified Surgical Technologists, individuals that were practicing in a South Carolina health care facility prior to January 1, 2008 and individuals who completed an appropriate training program in the U.S. Armed Forces or the U.S. Public Health Service. *For Certified Surgical Technologists, maintaining the CST credential is accepted under this law as proof of completion of the appropriate continuing education.*

**Question:** *What if a person recently graduated from an accredited program and has not passed the certifying exam yet?*

**Answer:** If a person recently graduated from an accredited educational program for surgical technologists, a health care facility may employ the individual from the date of graduation for three months. Three months after graduation, the individual may not continue to practice surgical technology without showing documentation to the health care facility that he or she holds the Certified Surgical Technologist credential.

**Question:** *Does the new law require hospitals to provide additional reporting to the Department of Health and Environmental Control?*

**Answer:** No. The law is enforced as a part of the regular hospital licensure process. During the normal licensure review process, employee files may be checked for documentation of the credentialing and continuing education as required by the law.



## SOUTH CAROLINA SURGICAL TECHNOLOGIST LAWS

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

***Question: Who is responsible for verifying CE credit completion?***

**Answer:** The health care facility is responsible for verifying that CE requirements are met or that the person has held and maintained the Certified Surgical Technologist credential. For Certified Surgical Technologists, maintaining the CST credential is accepted under this law as proof of completion of the appropriate continuing education.

***Question: Do the CE credits need to be AST-approved?***

**Answer:** No, the law does not require that the CE credits be AST-approved. However, individuals who maintain the CST credential must, according to the rules of the [National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting](#), complete [AST-approved CE credits](#).

***Question: Are hospital-based mandatory in-services AST-approved?***

**Answer:** Yes. Hospital in-services are accepted under AST's continuing education policies. The [AST CE policies](#) state CE credits may be earned in lecture, clinical demonstration, hospital-sponsored functions, independent home-study courses, writing for publications and instruction of health professionals. Hospital orientation is not accepted for CE credits for renewing CSTs.

***Question: How can a continuing education provider become AST-approved?***

**Answer:** Contact the Education Department at AST at 1-800-637-7433 for more information, or go to the website at [www.ast.org](http://www.ast.org) and click on "Educators."

Please note: The Association of Surgical Technologists provides this information on an educational basis and does not offer legal advice. AST recommends that individuals or health care facilities consult with their attorneys for answers to legal questions.