Position Description

Specimen Reception Laboratory Assistant

Classification:	IV9 Grade 3 – Laboratory Assistant
Business unit/department:	Pathology – Central Specimen Reception
Work location:	Austin Hospital ☒ Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital ☐ Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre ☐ Other ☐ (please specify)
Agreement:	Victorian Public Health Sector (Health and Allied Services, Managers and Administrative Officers) (Single Interest Employers) Enterprise Agreement 2025-2027
Employment type:	Full-Time
Hours per week:	38 (+ ADO)
Reports to:	CSR Supervisor
Direct reports:	Central Specimen Reception Supervisor
Financial management:	Budget
Date:	November 2026

Position purpose

The Specimen Reception Laboratory Assistant is a vital role within our pathology services, reporting directly to the CSR Supervisor. This position involves the efficient and accurate processing of pathology requests and specimens, ensuring they are registered into the laboratory information system (LIS) promptly. The laboratory assistant is responsible for preparing specimens for analysis according to strict laboratory protocols and accreditation standards, managing and maintaining the confidentiality and integrity of patient information. Additionally, this role requires handling enquiries from patients, healthcare providers, and other stakeholders with professionalism and empathy, providing clear and accurate information to enhance their experience. The laboratory assistant will also assist with specimen courier deliveries to ensure timely transportation of samples between healthcare facilities, laboratories, and clinics.

About the Pathology Department

Austin Health Pathology is a department of Austin Health, delivering high quality, comprehensive, and evidence-based pathology services to Austin Health, the co-located Mercy Hospital for Women, and a broad network of metropolitan and regional healthcare providers. The department is committed to providing exceptional patient care through routine and complex diagnostic services, expert advice,

and dedicated support for teaching and research. As an accredited laboratory with the National Association of Testing Authorities Australia (NATA), the Royal College of Pathologists of Australasia (RCPA), and other key regulatory bodies, Austin Health Pathology maintains rigorous standards in all aspects of service delivery. The department is managed by a Pathology Executive, ensuring laboratory testing aligns with the needs of a university teaching hospital and the strategic directions of Austin Health. Through continuous review and innovation in testing methodologies, instrumentation, and work practices, Austin Health Pathology seeks to remain at the forefront of analytical and clinical pathology services, supporting both clinical care and research excellence.

Position responsibilities

Role Specific:

- Available to work a range of shifts, including evenings, weekends, and overnight, as required to meet service demand. Shift patterns and hours may vary depending on site operational requirements.
- Register patient information and specimen details into the Laboratory Information System (LIS) with high accuracy and efficiency.
- Sort and distribute samples according to laboratory protocols.
- Prepare samples for analysis by centrifuging, aliquoting, and ensuring they meet requirements for manual or automated equipment as applicable.
- Ensure accuracy in sample identification and documentation at all stages of processing.
- Respond to telephone and in-person inquiries, directing calls and information appropriately to healthcare professionals and other staff.
- Co-ordinate with other laboratory personnel to ensure smooth workflow and timely processing of samples.
- Receive and store laboratory consumables, ensuring adequate supply and correct storage for laboratory operations.
- File request forms and maintain accurate documentation of laboratory activities.
- Operate, monitor, and maintain pre-analytical equipment, ensuring adherence to maintenance schedules, troubleshooting, and quality standards as required by the laboratory site.
- Perform both manual and automated specimen handling tasks as required by the specific laboratory setting,
- Support specimen reception activities at both central and remote/outreach laboratory sites as needed.
- Collect specimens and deliver reports as needed, ensuring timely and secure transportation, including between sites if required.
- Complete all tasks in accordance with departmental and organisational policies and procedures.
- Adhere to the pathology quality system requirements, including proper handling of hazardous materials and infection control protocols.
- Aid across the network, including central and remote/outreach sites, during system downtimes or high-demand periods to minimize disruption and maintain workflow.
- Participate in ongoing training and competency assessments to maintain high standards across all laboratory sites.
- Contribute to the continuous improvement of processes and procedures.
- Undertake additional duties as required by the manager

Selection criteria

Essential skills and experience:

- Experience in handling, sorting, and preparing pathology specimens.
- Strong attention to detail to ensure accuracy in specimen identification, documentation, and data entry.
- Effective verbal and written communication skills, including the ability to respond professionally to telephone and in-person inquiries from patients, healthcare providers, and colleagues.
- Ability to accurately register patient and specimen information into a Laboratory Information System (LIS) or equivalent system.
- Willingness and availability to work a range of shifts as required by service demand and site operational requirements.
- Capability to operate and maintain laboratory equipment according to protocols.
- Ability to follow strict protocols and accreditation standards for specimen processing and patient confidentiality.
- Proven ability to work collaboratively within a team to ensure efficient workflow and timely processing of samples.
- Ability to adapt to changing priorities, including assisting during system downtimes or periods of high demand.
- Demonstrated professionalism, empathy, and confidentiality in all interactions with patients and stakeholders.
- Possess basic computer skills, including accurate and fast typing, confident navigation of computer systems, and the ability to quickly learn new software applications

Desirable but not essential:

- Previous experience working in a pathology or clinical laboratory environment.
- Formal qualifications in laboratory techniques, pathology collection, or a related field.
- Familiarity with a range of Laboratory Information Systems (LIMS) and/or manual specimen tracking processes.
- Knowledge of accreditation standards and quality systems relevant to pathology laboratories.
- Experience in courier or specimen transport logistics within a healthcare or laboratory setting
- Basic understanding of the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) and/or experience with clinical systems relevant to risk management.
- Experience in basic laboratory techniques and/or operating pre-analytical automation equipment.
- Customer service experience in healthcare or laboratory environments.
- Multilingual skills or experience working with culturally diverse populations.

Professional qualifications and registration requirements

- Formal qualifications are not required for this position.

Quality, safety and risk – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Maintain a safe working environment for yourself, colleagues and members of the public by following organisational safety, quality and risk policies and guidelines.
- Escalate concerns regarding safety, quality and risk to the appropriate staff member, if unable to rectify yourself.
- Promote and participate in the evaluation and continuous improvement processes.
- Comply with the principles of person-centered care.
- Comply with requirements of National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards and other relevant regulatory requirements.

Other conditions – all roles

All Austin Health employees are required to:

- Adhere to Austin Health's core values: *our actions show we care, we bring our best, together we achieve, and we shape the future.*
- Comply with the Austin Health's Code of Conduct policy, as well as all other policies and procedures (as amended from time to time).
- Comply with all Austin Health mandatory training and continuing professional development requirements.
- Provide proof of immunity to nominated vaccine preventable diseases in accordance with Austin Health's immunisation screening policy.
- Work across multiple sites as per work requirements and/or directed by management.

General information

Cultural safety
Austin Health is committed to cultural safety and health equity for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People. We recognise cultural safety as the positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. It empowers people and enables them to contribute and feel safe to be themselves.

Equal Opportunity Employer
We celebrate, value, and include people of all backgrounds, genders, identities, cultures, bodies, and abilities. We welcome and support applications from talented people identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, people with disability, neurodiverse people, LGBTQIA+ and people of all ages and cultures.

Austin Health is a child safe environment
We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. Austin Health has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and commits to protect children. We take allegations of abuse and neglect seriously and will make every effort to mitigate and respond to risk in line with hospital policy and procedures.