

Medical Assistant (MA)

Career Comparisons

	Certified Community Health Worker (CHW)	Medical Assistant (MA)
Position Summary	A Certified CHW is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables the worker to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. [1]	Medical assistants are cross-trained to perform administrative and clinical duties. Duties can include but are not limited to: aseptic procedures, blood withdrawal and non-intravenous injections, administering basic first aid, collecting routine laboratory specimens, performing basic laboratory procedures, and performing general administrative duties. [4]
Training and Prerequisites	- Completion of an approved training program for CHW Certification in South Dakota (200 hours of training and 40 hours of shadowing). - Obtain Certification as a Community Health Worker or Community Health Representative in South Dakota. [2]	- Schools offering Medical Assistant training: Globe University, National American University, Lake Area Technical Institute, Mitchell Technical Institute, and Presentation College. [5] - High School Diploma or GED required. [4] - Medical assistants who do not have postsecondary education certificates learn their skills through on-the-job training. It can take several months for an assistant to complete training, depending on the facility. [4]
Certificate/Licensure	CHWs and CHRs are certified through the Community Health Worker Collaborative of South Dakota (CHWSD) on behalf of the South Dakota Department of Health and South Dakota Department of Social Services, Division of Medical Services. [2]	- Registered with the Board of Medical and Osteopathic Examiners or South Dakota Society of Medical Assistants for medical assistant certification. [4] - Optional certification includes Certified Medical Assistant (CMA), Registered Medical Assistant (RMA), National Certified Medical Assistant (NCMA), Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CCMA), and Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA). [4]
Typical Supervisors	CHWs are primarily supervised by a clinic manager, nursing manager, or other organizational manager.	Supervised by physicians, physicians' assistants, nurse practitioners, or nurse midwives. [4]
Median Hourly Wage (National) [3], [6]	Certified Community Health Worker (CHW) – \$24.54	Medical Assistant (MA) - \$21.25

Sources:

[1] American Public Health Association. *Community Health Workers*. 2026. [Link](#)

[2] Community Health Worker Collaborative of South Dakota. *CHW and CHR Certification*. 2026. [Link](#)

[3] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Community Health Workers*. August 2025. [Link](#)

[4] American Association of Medical Assistants. *Medical Assisting*. 2024. [Link](#)

[5] Online Medical Assistant Programs. *Medical Assistant Schools and Careers in South Dakota*. n.d. [Link](#)

[6] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Medical Assistants*. August 2025. [Link](#)