

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services

BILL: SB 878

INTRODUCER: Senator Yarborough

SUBJECT: Clinical Laboratory Personnel

DATE: February 17, 2026 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Smith</u>	<u>Brown</u>	<u>HP</u>	Favorable
2.	<u>Gerbrandt</u>	<u>McKnight</u>	<u>AHS</u>	Pre-meeting
3.	_____	_____	<u>RC</u>	_____

I. Summary:

SB 878 specifies that applicants for clinical laboratory technologist and technician licensure who meet certain federal requirements are deemed to have satisfied Florida’s minimum licensure qualifications for performing high complexity or moderate complexity testing. This eliminates state specific regulations for various specialty licensure categories and may result in greater interstate mobility for technologists and technicians.

The bill has a significant, negative fiscal impact on state expenditures. **See Section V., Fiscal Impact Statement.**

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2026.

II. Present Situation:

Florida Regulation of Clinical Laboratory Personnel

A clinical laboratory is a facility in which human specimen is tested to provide information or materials for use in the diagnosis, prevention, or treatment of a disease or the identification or assessment of a medical or physical condition. Services performed in clinical labs include the examination of:

- Fluids or other materials taken from the human body;
- Tissue taken from the human body; and
- Cells from individual tissues or fluid taken from the human body.¹

¹ Section 483.803(2), F.S.

The Department of Health (DOH), through the Division of Medical Quality Assurance, and the Board of Clinical Laboratory Personnel (Board), regulates clinical laboratory personnel, trainees, and training programs under part I of ch. 483, F.S., ch. 456, F.S., and ch. 64B3, F.A.C.

Florida licensure for clinical laboratory personnel is subdivided by both level of licensure and specialty of practice. Individuals may be licensed as a director, supervisor, technologist, technician, or public health laboratory scientist. In Fiscal Year 2024-2025, Florida had 21,549 licensed clinical laboratory personnel, including 12,683 licensed technologists and 2,031 licensed technicians.² At each level, a licensee may hold one or more specialty licenses as provided in Rule 64B3-5, F.A.C.

Pursuant to ss. 483.809 and 483.823, F.S., the Board has adopted the minimum education, training, experience, and examination requirements for each level of licensure and for each specialty sought. Each licensure pathway requires national certification appropriate to the level of licensure and specialty areas of practice. The Board recognizes more than 40 certification types issued by 16 national certifying bodies.³

Florida is one of 10 states that require state licensure for clinical laboratory personnel.⁴ In the remaining states, personnel qualifications are generally determined by the laboratory director in accordance with federal Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) requirements or, when applicable, a state laboratory licensure program.

Rule 64B3-5.003(2), F.A.C., requires applicants for clinical laboratory technologist licensure to meet CLIA personnel qualification standards for high complexity testing. Rule 64B3-5.004(2), F.A.C., requires applicants for clinical laboratory technician licensure to meet CLIA personnel qualification standards for moderate complexity testing; however, the rule also permits technicians who meet CLIA standards for high complexity testing to perform high complexity testing. The DOH does not track which technician licensees are authorized to perform high complexity testing. The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) surveys federally certified clinical laboratories and verifies that personnel licensure is appropriate for the testing performed.⁵

Federal CLIA Oversight and Personnel Qualifications

The U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) regulates human laboratory testing, other than research testing, through the CLIA certification program. Federal personnel standards applicable to individuals working in CLIA-certified laboratories are set forth in 42 C.F.R. part 493, subpart M.

Newly amended CLIA personnel standards that took effect in 2024⁶ provide that an individual performing high complexity testing, regardless of specialty, is deemed qualified if the individual

² Department of Health, *Senate Bill 878 Bill Analysis* (Dec. 15, 2025) (on file with the Senate Committee on Health Policy).

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA) Fees; Histocompatibility, Personnel, and Alternative Sanctions for Certificate of Waiver Laboratories, 88 Fed. Reg. 89,976 (Dec. 28, 2023) (final rule) (effective Jan. 27, 2024).

meets one of several specified pathways, including being a licensed allopathic, osteopathic, or podiatric physician (M.D., D.O., or D.P.M.); holding a doctoral, master's, or bachelor's degree in chemical, biological, clinical, or medical laboratory science, or medical technology, from an accredited institution; holding an associate degree in laboratory science or medical laboratory technology from an accredited institution; completing an official U.S. military medical laboratory procedures training course of at least 50 weeks and holding the enlisted occupational specialty of Medical Laboratory Specialist (Laboratory Technician); or completing at least 60 semester hours (or equivalent) from an accredited institution with specified coursework in chemistry, biology, and laboratory sciences, together with completion of a laboratory training program and at least three months of work experience.⁷

With respect to moderate complexity testing, the amended regulations provide that an individual is deemed qualified if the individual meets the qualifications for high complexity testing; or has a high school diploma (or equivalent) and has successfully completed an official U.S. military medical laboratory procedures training course of at least 50 weeks and held the enlisted occupational specialty of Medical Laboratory Specialist (Laboratory Technician); or has a high school diploma (or equivalent) and documentation of laboratory training appropriate for the testing performed.

Florida licensure requirements exceed the federal CLIA baseline by basing qualifications on the specialty of testing performed, requiring national certification, and requiring applicants to have completed an approved training program or to demonstrate a specified amount of pertinent experience in one or more specialties.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 amends s. 483.815, F.S., to require an applicant who qualifies for licensure under Section 2 of the bill to provide proof of qualification, submit to the existing background screening requirement in s. 456.0135, F.S., and pay the fees already required under s. 483.807, F.S., to be eligible for licensure.

Section 2 amends s. 483.823, F.S., to revise the licensure requirements for clinical laboratory personnel. Under the bill:

- A technologist or technician applicant who satisfies 42 C.F.R. s. 493.1489 is deemed to have satisfied Florida's minimum qualifications to perform high complexity testing as a technologist or technician.
- A technician applicant who satisfies 42 C.F.R. s. 493.1423 is deemed to have satisfied Florida's minimum qualifications to perform moderate complexity testing as a technician.

Beginning July 1, 2026, new applicants would only need to demonstrate compliance with the applicable Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA) personnel standards to qualify for Florida licensure as a technologist or technician. Currently licensed technologists and technicians would be considered qualified under federal regulations because Florida licensure requirements already exceed the federal CLIA baseline.

⁷ Department of Health, *Senate Bill 878 Bill Analysis* (Dec. 15, 2025) (on file with the Senate Committee on Health Policy).

The Board of Clinical Laboratory Personnel will need to update multiple rules to implement the bill using existing rulemaking authority under s. 483.805(4), F.S.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2026.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

According to the Department of Health (DOH) the bill has a negative fiscal impact of \$55,680 in nonrecurring contracted services funding to update the Licensing and Enforcement Information Database System and Online Service Portal (Versa Online) to modify the processing of all clinical laboratory applications.⁸

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

⁸ Department of Health, *Senate Bill 878 Bill Analysis* (Dec. 15, 2025) (on file with the Senate Committee on Health Policy).

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 483.815 and 483.823.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
