



PENINSULA COLLEGE
MEDICAL OFFICE ASSISTING

Medical Office Assisting Program

Student Handbook 2025-2026

1502 E. Lauridsen Blvd.
Port Angeles, WA 98362
(360) 417-6414

<https://pencol.edu/program/medical-office-assisting>

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Land Acknowledgement

Peninsula College formally acknowledges that we are on traditional nəxʷsłáyəm' (Klallam/S'Klallam) territory. We honor and respect the sovereign status of Tribes and uphold our relationship with the Tribal governments of the Olympic Peninsula. In partnership with these Tribes, we wrap our arms around all Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

Introduction

Welcome Letter

Peninsula College
Medical Office Assisting Program
1502 E Lauridsen Blvd
Port Angeles, WA 98362
(360) 417-6414

Dear Student,

Welcome to the Medical Office Assisting Program! This program is energetic and packed with information. In the next few months, you will study, write, learn, and make great friendships. Consider this the beginning of a very good part of your life, and the beginning of your new career in the exciting, challenging, and rewarding field of administrative medical office assisting.

The Medical Office Assisting Program is approved by the Washington State Higher Education Board and provides you with the training you need to find employment in the administrative areas of medical offices, clinics, hospitals, home health companies, extended care facilities, and other healthcare settings. You can enjoy these careers upon graduation from the Medical Office Assisting Program, or you can pursue an advanced degree to access a wider range of career opportunities in healthcare. Upon graduating, you will be eligible to take one or more national credentialing exams, and you will pass at least one of these exams as part of your capstone course project.

It is with anticipation that we begin our new academic year. The Program Director, faculty, and I-BEST Instructors are here to assist you on your journey. Please do not hesitate to schedule an appointment to speak with them and be sure to look through this handbook. It contains information you will need from application through graduation.

Thank you, and good luck!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel Pairsh". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Rachel" and the last name "Pairsh" clearly legible.

Rachel Pairsh, MA-C, NCMA, CPI, BSHCM, MHL
Director, Medical Assisting Programs
Peninsula College

Description of the Medical Office Assisting Profession

Medical office assistants perform administrative duties in medical facilities such as hospitals, medical offices, extended care facilities, and clinics.

Job Responsibilities*

Here is a quick overview of the duties that a medical office assistant would likely perform:

- Greet patients
- Manage payment arrangements and overpayments
- Maintain the petty cash fund
- Complete and submit claims for different types of commercial healthcare insurance plans
- Apply Health Savings Account and Flexible Spending Account funds to patient billing
- Welcome, screen, and prioritize patients and other visitors to the office
- Check out patients after the visit
- Manage and explain patient statements, bills, and other financial invoices
- Prepare monthly financial reports
- Obtain signed documentation of financial responsibility and clean claim submission
- Maintain fee schedules for the medical office
- Post remittance advice and explanation of benefits to patient financial records
- Follow up on suspended claims and claim denials
- Manage the collections process in compliance with state and federal regulations
- Receive phone messages and email, and route them to the appropriate team member
- Place outgoing calls using effective telephone techniques
- Respond to medical office email and e-fax
- Use software to compose medical office related correspondence
- Send medical office correspondence via the appropriate shipper and postage classification
- Complete and submit claims for different types of commercial and government insurance plans, Worker's Compensation, or disability, and auto or personal liability insurance

National Credentialing

Students of the Medical Office Assisting Program are eligible and strongly encouraged to take a national credentialing exam.

The National Center for Competency Testing (NCCT) administers the following credentialing exams:

- National Certified Medical Office Assistant (NCMOA)
- National Certified Insurance and Coding Specialist (NCICS)

Information about NCCT exams can be found at <https://ncctinc.com>.

* Job duties as described by the National Center for Competency Testing NCMOA detailed test plan at <https://ncctinc.com>

Allied Health Career Comparison*

	Clinical Medical Assistant	Medical Office Assistant	Registered Nurse	Certified Nursing Assistant	Dental Assistant	Physical Therapy Assistant	Surgery Technician
Peninsula College program?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Average WA income*	\$47,958	\$47,170 [†]	\$95,350	\$38,270	\$46,350	\$59,680	\$61,050
Required testing for Washington credential or registration	Must pass one of five exams for certification	Optional exam (no license or registration required to work)	Must pass the exam for licensure	Must pass the exam for certification	Optional exam (not required for state registration)	Must pass the exam for licensure	The exam is required to graduate from an accredited program; exam not required for state registration
Educational requirements	Graduation from a post-secondary training program	Graduation from a post-secondary training program usually required by the employer	Graduation from an accredited program	Completion of a course approved by the state	Graduation from a post-secondary training program is usually required by the employer	Graduation from an accredited program	Graduation from a post-secondary training program is usually required by the employer
Approximate length of the program of study	One quarter of prerequisites, six quarters for an AAS degree	One quarter for prerequisites, six quarters for an AAS degree	One to two years of prerequisites, two years for an AAS degree	Minimum 75 hours of training. On-the-job training programs available	Five quarters for an AAS degree	One year of prerequisites plus two years for an AAS degree	Four to eight quarters of prerequisites, four to six quarters for a certificate or AAS degree
Job setting	Predominantly outpatient care	Inpatient and outpatient care	Mostly inpatient care. Some long-term and outpatient	Inpatient care, long term care facilities	Outpatient dentists' offices	Physical therapists' offices, hospitals, and rehab centers	Hospitals, physicians' offices, outpatient care, surgery centers, dentists' offices
Shift hours	Predominantly days: some positions require weekends	Predominantly days: some positions require weekends	Variable, all shifts	Variable, all shifts	Typically, days; potentially evenings or weekends	Typically, days; potentially evenings or weekends	Variable, all shifts

* Average WA income for medical secretaries. Income does not necessarily reflect local conditions as for medical office assistants. Assistants, for example, Medical Assistants-generally have higher wages than medical office assistants in Clallam County.

Allied Health Occupational Duties Comparison

Occupational Duties Comparison	MA	MOA	RN	CNA	Dental Asst	PTA
Direct patient care	•		•	•	•	•
Take a patient's medical history	•	•			•	
Patient education	•	•	•		•	•
Obtain vital signs	•		•	•	•	
Examine and diagnose			•			
Treatment of illnesses			•			
IV initiation and monitoring			•			
Venipuncture, injections	•		•			
Electrocardiograms	•		•			
Medication administration	•		•			
Assist surgical procedures	•		•			
Collect specimens	•		•	•		
Process lab specimens	•		•		•	
Screen and follow up on abnormal labs	•		•			
Hygienic care			•	•		
Bedside care			•	•		
Help patients follow the plan of care	•	•	•			•
Sterilize equipment	•				•	•
Lift and transfer a patient	•		•	•		•
Meal service				•		
Assist provider during exams	•		•		•	
Develop X-rays					•	
Assist with cast application and removal	•		•			
Suture / staple removal	•		•			
Prepare and clean treatment areas	•		•		•	•
Administrative duties	•	•	•		•	•
Process insurance forms	•	•			•	
Computer skills	•	•	•	•	•	•
Equipment maintenance	•	•	•	•	•	•
Ordering equipment and supplies	•	•	•			
Bookkeeping duties	•	•			•	

Program Overview

Peninsula College's Mission, Core Themes, Vision, and Guiding Principles

Mission

Peninsula College educates diverse populations of learners through community-engaged programs and services that advance student equity and success.

Core Themes

- Advancing Student Success
- Achieving Academic Excellence
- Fostering Equity and Inclusion
- Strengthening Communities

Vision

Peninsula College is a destination of cultural and environmental diversity where academic excellence transforms students' lives and strengthens communities.

Guiding Principles

The college community is guided by the following principles:

- The teaching/learning process is at the center of the mission of Peninsula College.
- Members of the campus community will treat each other with mutual respect and dignity.
- Members of the campus community will be open and honest in their communications.
- Members of the campus community shall promote a positive work environment and avoid adversarial relationships.
- Each member of the campus community shall act ethically and with integrity.
- The campus will engage in collaborative decision-making processes.

Student Learning Outcomes

In our program, students will learn to:

- Function professionally, legally, and ethically as a medical office assistant
- Correctly use medical terminology
- Effectively communicate with other healthcare team members, patients, and physicians
- Procure and distribute office supplies
- Manage paper and electronic documents, in a medical office
- Demonstrate knowledge and competency in ICD-10 coding and electronic medical billing of multiple insurances
- Follow laws and regulations regarding patient privacy and confidentiality
- Format and generate various documents required in a medical office setting

Program Description

Students attending Peninsula College can earn a Medical Office Assisting Certificate or a Medical Office Assisting Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree. The Medical Office Assisting program requires 55 credits of coursework to earn a certificate. The AAS degree requires the same 55 credits of coursework, as well as an additional 37 credits in general education. A sample schedule is posted on the Medical Office Assistant program [website](#). Note that students can complete general education credits before taking MED courses.

Coursework introduces students to the healthcare setting. It covers medical office procedures, medical terminology, and medical billing and coding. Students also learn software skills such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. One quarter will include a capstone course, MED 155, which gives the medical office assisting 100 hours of hands-on experience working in one or more healthcare settings. Students also work on resumes and interview skills in this course.

Student Expenses

There are expenses associated with the Medical Office Assisting Program, other than tuition and other college-related fees. The costs listed below are approximations only.

Item	Estimated Cost
Placement test fee	\$20
Textbooks	\$250-\$300 per quarter (prices determined by the publisher, not the Medical Office Assisting Program)
National exam application fee	\$90-\$300
Background check for the program	\$44-\$55
Immunizations	Varies based on the immunizations/titers needed
Insurance	Varies by individual carrier
Health and liability insurance (optional but recommended before the practicum. Neither Peninsula College nor any affiliated clinical externship sites are responsible for the cost of medical care for injury or illness that occurs because of the classroom, lab, or practicum activities.	Varies by individual carrier and type of coverage but can range from \$35-\$150 annually.

Application Process

Overview of the Application Process

Who can apply for the Medical Office Assisting Program?

People of all ages and experiences are invited to apply for the Medical Office Assisting Program once they have obtained a high school diploma or GED, been accepted as a Peninsula College student, and are eligible to enroll in college level English and Math. You do not need to take or enroll in these courses before applying to the Medical Office Assisting Program. Eligibility to take these courses may be determined by transcript review or by placement testing. Information about testing and test alternatives may be found at <https://pencol.edu/admissions>.

How do I apply for the Medical Office Assisting Program?

Students must complete an application for the Medical Office Assisting Program. This application is separate from the Peninsula College application. The Medical Office Assisting Program application is submitted via drop boxes provided on Canvas, which is Peninsula College's online learning management system. The application will include:

- Demographic information
- Completed immunization records
- Personal essay
- Letter of personal reference
- Acknowledgment forms
 - Confidentiality statement form
 - Background check release of information form
 - Informed consent for invasive/non-invasive procedures form

What if I am accepted to the Medical Office Assisting Program?

Students accepted to the Medical Office Assisting Program must undergo a background check through <https://mycb.castlebranch.com> before their first quarter in the program. These records are confidential and are maintained in a secure location to ensure student privacy. Certain convictions preclude students from completing the program or securing employment in the healthcare sector. Please see RCW 43.43.842: Convictions that Preclude a Career in Healthcare.

Students accepted into the program will meet with the Medical Office Assisting Program Director for an advising appointment. **Advising appointments are not optional.** Students may consult a Student Services Advisor in addition to their program advisor. New students must attend the program orientation meeting that is held once a year before the commencement of the fall quarter. **The Medical Office Assisting Program orientation is not optional.**

Course registration is completed through the Peninsula College website. Students must contact Student Services to acquire a ctclink ID # and be added to the AMOA student group which will provide them access to the application course on Canvas. Students will receive information regarding required textbooks and syllabi from their instructors or the Medical Office Assisting Program Director. **Class attendance is mandatory, and regular attendance is required for students to meet program outcomes.** Please note that specific immunizations are required as part of the application process, and some series may take 5 to 6 months to complete. Applicants are encouraged to plan accordingly, see the (see [Required Immunizations](#)).

Self-Assessment Survey of Essential Functions

Essential functional abilities relate to the behavioral and physical components of student competence. They are abilities essential for safe patient care. Students should evaluate themselves to determine if they can meet the requirements of the profession. Students can contact Student Development to discuss any ADA/AA accommodations they may be eligible to receive that will enable them to meet these essential functions of the profession. The findings of your self-assessment are for your consideration only and have no impact on your application

Visual

1. Observe and discern subtle changes in physical conditions and the environment
2. Visualize different color spectrums and color changes
3. Read fine print
4. Read data displayed on monitors and equipment
5. Detect non-verbal communication

Auditory

1. Distinguish muffled sounds heard through a stethoscope
2. Hear and discriminate high and low frequency sounds produced by the body and the environment
3. Effectively hear to communicate with others

Tactile and Olfactory

1. Discern tremors, vibrations, pulses, textures, temperature, shape, sizes, location, and other physical characteristics
2. Detect body odors and odors in the environment

Communication

1. Verbally and in writing engage in two-way communication in English
2. Use qualified interpreters when appropriate to communicate with non-English speaking patients
3. Interact effectively with others from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds

Interpersonal Relationships

1. Work effectively in groups and teams
2. Interpret non-verbal communication
3. Express ideas and feelings in a clear manner
4. Demonstrate behaviors that are age-appropriate to the patient

5. Convey caring, respect, tact, compassion, diplomacy, and empathy to patients and others

Cognitive Ability

1. Operate a computer to obtain, enter, and transmit data
2. Effectively read, write, and comprehend the English language
3. Consistently and dependably engage in the process of critical thinking to formulate and implement safe and ethical decisions in a variety of situations and settings
4. Demonstrate satisfactory performance on written examinations, including mathematical calculations and medical terminology
5. Function effectively in situations of uncertainty or stress

Motor Function

1. Handle small objects and delicate equipment and objects without extraneous movement, contamination, or destruction
2. Move, position, transfer, and assist with lifting and ambulation without injury to patients, self, or others
3. Maintain balance
4. Coordinate hand/eye movements
5. Lift and/or carry objects weighing up to 25 pounds independently without injury to patient, self, or others
6. Lift and/or carry objects weighing up to 50 pounds with assistance without injury to patient, self, or others
7. Stand, bend, and walk for prolonged periods while performing physical activities requiring energy without jeopardizing the safety of patients, self, or others

RCW 43.43.842: Convictions that Preclude a Career in Healthcare¹

Crimes against children or other persons²

- murder: aggravated, first, or second degree
- kidnapping: first or second degree
- assault: first, second, or third-degree-also, fourth degree³, see below- exception: the offense was simple assault, assault in the fourth degree, and three or more years have passed between the most recent conviction and the date of application for employment
- assault of a child: first, second, or third-degree
- rape: first, second, or third-degree
- rape of a child: first, second, or third-degree
- robbery: first or second degree
- arson: first degree
- burglary: first degree
- manslaughter: first or second degree
- extortion: first or second degree
- indecent liberties
- incest
- vehicular homicide
- promoting prostitution: first degree
- communication with a minor
- unlawful imprisonment
- simple assault
- sexual exploitation of minors
- criminal mistreatment: first or second degree
- endangerment with a controlled substance
- child abuse or neglect⁴
- custodial interference: first or second degree
- custodial sexual misconduct: first or second degree
- malicious harassment
- child molestation: first, second, or third-degree
- sexual misconduct with a minor: first or second degree
- commercial sexual abuse of a minor
- child abandonment
- promoting pornography, selling or distributing erotic material to a minor
- custodial assault
- violation of child abuse restraining order
- child buying or selling
- prostitution-exception: if three or more years have passed since the most recent conviction
- felony indecent exposure
- criminal abandonment

Crimes relating to drugs⁵

- manufacture, delivery, or possession with intent to manufacture or deliver a controlled substance

Crimes relating to financial exploitation⁶

¹ Licensing requirements and exceptions are described by the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 43.43.842.

² "Crimes against children and other persons" is defined by RCW 43.43.830.

³ Conviction of fourth-degree assault, within certain parameters described by RCW 9A.36.041(3), may preclude a healthcare career

⁴ "Abuse or neglect" is defined by RCW 26.44.020

⁵ "Crimes relating to drugs" are defined by RCW 43.43.830.

⁶ Crimes relating to financial exploitation" are defined by RCW 43.43.830.

- extortion: first, second, or third-degree
- robbery: first or second degree
- forgery- exception: the offense was forgery and five or more years have passed between the most recent conviction and the date of application for employment
- theft: first, second, or third-degree-exception: the offense was theft in the third degree and three or more years have passed, or the offense was theft in the second degree and five or more years have passed

Financial exploitation

- Illegal or improper use, control over, or withholding of the property, income, resources, or trust funds of the vulnerable adult by any person or entity for any person's or entity's profit or advantage other than for the vulnerable adult's profit or advantage. "Financial exploitation" includes, but is not limited to:
 - The use of deception, intimidation, or undue influence by a person or entity in a position of trust and confidence with a vulnerable adult to obtain or use the property, income, resources, or trust funds of the vulnerable adult for the benefit of a person or entity other than the vulnerable adult
 - The breach of fiduciary duty, including, but not limited to, the misuse of a power of attorney, trust, or a guardianship appointment, that results in the unauthorized appropriation, sale, or transfer of the property, income, resources, or trust funds of the vulnerable adult for the benefit of a person or entity other than the vulnerable adult
 - Obtaining or using a vulnerable adult's property, income, resources, or trust funds without lawful authority, by a person or entity who knows or clearly should know that the vulnerable cannot consent to the release or use of his or her property, income, resources, or trust funds

Assault in the fourth degree under certain parameters¹

- Domestic violence was pleaded and proven after July 23, 2017
- Domestic violence was a class C felony if the person has two or more prior adult convictions within ten years for any of the following offenses where domestic violence was pleaded and proven after July 23, 2017
- repetitive domestic violence offense²
- crime of harassment³
- assault in the first, second, or third-degree
- an out-of-state comparable offense
- "Domestic Violence" means⁴
 - physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury, or assault, between family or household members
 - sexual assault of one family or household member by another
 - stalking⁵ of one family or household member by another family or household member
 - "family" or "household members" means:
 - spouses
 - domestic partners
 - former spouses
 - former domestic partners
 - persons who have a child in common regardless of whether they have been married or have lived together at any time
 - persons sixteen years of age or older who are presently residing together or who have resided together in the past and who have or have had a dating relationship

¹ Conviction of fourth-degree assault, within certain parameters described by RCW 9A.36.041(3), may preclude a healthcare career.

² "Repetitive domestic violence offense" is defined by RCW 9.94A.030.

³ Crime of harassment" is defined by RCW 9A.46.060.

⁴ Domestic violence" is defined by RCW 26.50.010 (RCW 43.43.830 refers to RCW 9.36.041, which refers to RCW 9.94A.030, which refers to RCW 26.50.010).

⁵ "Stalking" is defined by RCW 9A.46.110.

Required Immunizations

Required Immunization	How to Document Immunity
<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of series of two or three injections AND a titer that demonstrates immunity
<input type="checkbox"/> Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of two doses <u>or</u> Titer that demonstrates immunity
<input type="checkbox"/> Tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis (Tdap)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TDaP within the last ten years <u>or</u> TD booster dose within the last ten years <u>or</u> Titer that demonstrates immunity
<input type="checkbox"/> Varicella	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record of two doses <u>or</u> Titer that demonstrates immunity
<input type="checkbox"/> Tuberculosis (required annually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of a 2-step TB skin test each year <u>or</u> Documentation of QuantiFERON Gold blood test each year If either test comes back positive, a student must <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain a chest X-ray with written results <u>or</u> Obtain a signed statement from a healthcare provider stating a student is asymptomatic and poses no danger to patients
<input type="checkbox"/> Influenza (required annually)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of seasonal influenza immunization is required each year
<input type="checkbox"/> COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of full COVID-19 vaccination and any applicable boosters are required for program entry

Accepted Proof of Immunizations

Only official lab reports will be accepted as proof of titers. Receipts, unless they contain required information, will not be accepted as proof of immunization. Medical exemptions can be provided in certain instances; please contact the Program Director for more information.

Immunization	Acceptable Evidence of Immunity	Not Accepted
Hepatitis B	1) Proof of series of two or three injections AND a positive antibody titer 2) Proof that series of three has been started, with specific dates student is scheduled to receive remaining vaccines. First two shots must be completed prior to the start of the fall quarter's courses.	1) Incomplete records 2) Unofficial lab reports 3) Single booster vaccine without a follow-up titer result
Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)	1) Proof of series of two injections of MMR vaccine 2) Positive antibody titers for each 3) Proof that a series of two has been started, with specific dates the student is scheduled to receive the remaining vaccine. The first shot must be completed before the start of the fall quarter's courses.	1) Incomplete records 2) Unofficial lab reports 3) Single booster vaccine without a follow-up titer result
Varicella	1) Proof of series of two injections of varicella vaccine 2) Positive antibody titer 3) Proof that series of two has been started, with specific dates student is scheduled to receive the remaining vaccine. The first shot must be completed before the start of the fall quarter's courses.	1) Incomplete records 2) Unofficial lab reports 3) Single booster vaccine without a follow-up titer result
Tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis (Tdap)	1) Proof of full Tdap received within the past ten years 2) Complete DPT (4+ vaccines) series within the past ten years 3) Positive antibody titer 4) Proof of Tdap and positive titer	1) Incomplete records 2) Unofficial lab reports
Annual TB test (required annually)	1) Proof of negative two-step skin test 2) Proof of negative QuantiFERON Gold blood test 3) Clear chest X-ray within one year with interpretation 4) Signed statement from a healthcare provider stating a student is asymptomatic and poses no danger to patients	1) Incomplete records 2) Unofficial lab reports 3) Unsigned chart notes or reports without signatures
Seasonal flu shot (required annually)	1) Proof of completed seasonal influenza vaccine	1) Incomplete records 2) Unofficial lab reports 3) Unsigned chart notes or reports without signatures
COVID-19	1) Proof of completed COVID-19 vaccination and any applicable booster doses	1) Incomplete records 2) Unofficial lab reports

Prerequisites for Medical Office Assisting Program

Prerequisite courses include eligibility to enroll in college level English and Math. You do not need to take or enroll in these courses before applying to the Medical Office Assisting Program. Eligibility to take these courses may be determined by transcript review or by placement testing. Information about testing and test alternatives may be found at <https://pencol.edu/admissions>.

Applying to Peninsula College

Apply online at <https://pencol.edu/admissions> or in-person in Building D. There is no application fee. Once your application has been processed, you will receive a response via email or letter that will include your ctcLink ID# and student group named AMOA which will allow to you access class materials on Canvas.

Transcripts Submission

Official transcripts can also be sent to transcript@pencol.edu. For these electronic transcripts to be considered official, they must be sent by the institution you attended. Alternatively, you can request official college transcripts to be mailed to the following address:

Peninsula College
1502 E. Lauridsen Blvd
Port Angeles WA 98362

Financial Aid

Applying for financial aid and scholarships is a process, not a single step. Apply for Financial Aid by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Be aware of the [deadlines](#)! Visit <https://pencol.edu/financial-aid-office/applying-financial-aid> for more details about how to apply for financial aid.

Placement

To enroll in classes, a placement evaluation of your English and math skills is required. There are several options for students to get accurately placed, such as by submitting transcripts (high school or college), standardized test scores, AP credit, or by taking the Accuplacer placement test. Please visit <https://pencol.edu/testing-center/placement-options> to view all the placement options and requirements, or to schedule a placement test. If you have any questions about placement, please call the Testing Center at (360) 417-6346 or email placement@pencol.edu.

Peninsula College New Student Orientation

New students must complete the new student orientation on campus before advising and registering for classes. The online orientation is available at <https://pencol.edu/new-student-orientation> for students who live out of the area. You may schedule an optional campus tour by filling out the online form on the Ambassador's web page or by contacting ambassadors@pencol.edu.

Advising

After placement testing and orientation, schedule an advising appointment with Student Development to discuss classes, create your educational plan, and register for classes. Call (360) 417-6340 to schedule an appointment. If you are considering applying to the Medical Office Assisting Program, contact Student Services to request that your advisor be listed as Rachel Pairsh, Director of the Medical Office Assisting Program. Once accepted, Medical Office Assisting Program students must meet with Rachel Pairsh, quarterly for advising. More details about advising may be found at <https://pencol.edu/advising>.

Registration

Browse the online class schedule at <https://pencol.edu/class-schedule>. Peninsula College does not allow late registration. Registration must happen before the first day of the quarter. After advising, course registration is completed through the Peninsula College website. Course registration is completed through the Peninsula College website. Students must contact Student Services to acquire a ctcLink ID # and be added to the AMOA student group which will provide them access to the application course on Canvas.

Medical Office Assisting Program Application on Canvas

The Medical Office Assisting Program application is completed through the ctcLink student ID# and the student group named AMOA and uploaded to a drop-box on Canvas. The application requests demographic information, a personal essay, a letter of personal reference, and three acknowledgment forms.

Demographic information

Download the demographic information form from Canvas, complete it, and upload the form to a drop-box in the Canvas application course.

Personal essay

Submit your personal essay by uploading it to the drop-box in the Canvas application course. The submission should be in essay form and should answer the five questions listed below. Please make sure that each part of the questions is addressed in your answers. Use 12-point Times New Roman font and double-space the body of the essay. No headers, footers, titles, numbering, dates, or labeling information is necessary on the essay itself.

1. Why do you want to attend the Peninsula College Medical Office Assisting Program?
2. Have you worked in the medical profession? If the answer is yes, where, when, and in what capacity?

Acknowledgment forms

Three acknowledgment forms must be submitted with your application. These forms should be downloaded from Canvas, signed, scanned, and uploaded to the drop-box in the Canvas application course. The forms include:

- Confidentiality Statement,
- Background Check Release of Information,
- Informed Consent for Invasive/Noninvasive Procedures.

Immunization documentation

Immunization documentation should be scanned and uploaded to the drop-box in the Canvas application course. If your immunizations will not be completed by the time you submit your application, you can also upload a document that describes when you are scheduled to complete the unfinished immunizations.

Please refer to **Required Immunizations** for details about immunizations and documentation.

Letter of reference

Obtain a letter of personal reference. Submit this letter uploading it to the drop-box in the Canvas application course. The letter can be from a friend, family member, coworker, supervisor, instructor, or anyone who has known you for at least one year and can address the items below. The letter should speak to your: conduct and attitude, organization and leadership qualities, strengths and dependability, resourcefulness, aptitude, enthusiasm, and plans for overcoming any barriers to your education and/or professional development and/or your ability to adjust to varying situations and expectations. Letters of reference should be addressed (but not mailed) to:

Rachel Pairsh
Director, Medical Assisting Programs
Peninsula College
1502 E. Lauridsen Blvd.
Port Angeles, WA 98362

- Demographics, essay, and letter of personal reference are attached in one submission to Dropbox #1.
- Immunizations are attached in one submission to Dropbox #2
- Acknowledgement forms are attached in one submission to Dropbox #3.

Sample Application Assessment Rubric

Sample Application Assessment Rubric	3 All elements complete	2 Missing at least one element	1 Missing at least two elements	0 No submission, or submission incomplete
Demographics 1) The submitted file is named yourname.demographics.date 2) All data fields are completed				
Essay 1) The submitted file is named yourname.essay.date 2) The submitted essay is written in 12-point Times New Roman font and is double-spaced. The essay has no headers, footers, page numbers, titles, or headings. The student's name is on the essay 3) The submitted essay discusses each part of each question listed in the application checklist				
Letter of Reference 1) The submitted file is in the correct format and is named yourname.reference.date				
Immunizations 1) The submitted file is named yourname.immunizations.date 2) The submitted files are formatted as .pdf, .tiff, or .jpeg files 3) Documentation is submitted for any missing immunizations/titer results 4) Documents are submitted as one file, or as several files that are sequentially numbered				
Acknowledgment Forms 1) The submitted files are named: - yourname.backgroundcheck.date - yourname.privacy.date - yourname.consent.date - yourname.informedconsent.date 2) The submitted files are formatted as .pdf, .tiff, or .jpeg files 3) Documents are submitted as one file, or as several files that are sequentially numbered				
Total score (out of 15 possible):				
Student name and SID:				
Status and date letter sent (application accepted or rejected):				

Program Requirements and Policies

New Student Orientation

New students must attend the Medical Office Assisting Program orientation meeting that is held once a year before the commencement of the fall quarter. **This orientation is not optional.**

Student Responsibilities

All students are responsible for purchasing the following supplies and equipment before the first day of the first clinical competency course:

- Analog watch with a sweeping second hand
- Blue or black ink pens

Standards of Appearance and Behavior in the Classroom and Clinical Settings

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory for all students. Regular attendance is required for students to meet program outcomes. Please schedule outside appointments at times other than class times. If you are unavoidably unable to attend a class, please contact your instructor **before** class with as much notice as possible. You may or may not be allowed to make up missed work depending on the course, assignment, and instructor preference. Students in the program will not be tardy for class.

Class Preparation and Late Work

Preparation for class is expected, and most instructors in the program do not accept late work. Students are responsible for identifying alternative computers for submitting their work in case their primary computer is not functioning when tests, quizzes, or assignments are due. All assignment due dates are listed in the Canvas course modules and students are responsible for ensuring they manage their time efficiently to meet the deadlines for submission.

Dress Code for Laboratory and Clinical Courses

- Students should wear casual office attire or scrubs. Jeans, hoodies, sweatshirts, or other casual clothing are not allowed.
- Shoes must be fully enclosed, no open-toed shoes allowed, and they must be puncture-resistant.
- Long hair must be pulled back or secured to prevent contact with equipment and liquids.
- Gloves, gowns, and other appropriate personal protective equipment must be worn for clinical skills training.

Behavior

Students in this program will comply with all Peninsula College student rights, policies, and procedures as found in the Peninsula College Student Handbook. Policies regarding plagiarism, cheating, ADAAA, non-attendance, and discrimination will be strictly adhered to. Please visit <https://pencol.edu/student-life/student-rights-policies-and-procedures> for a full description of college-wide policies and guidelines.

Failure to comply with these standards of behavior may cause students to lose professionalism points, receive interventional counseling, receive a referral for disciplinary action by Student Services, or may result in failure of a course or dismissal from the program.

Food and Drinks in the Classroom

Some types of food and drinks are allowed in the classroom, depending upon the type of class and the instructor's preferences. There is no class or situation where it is acceptable to place liquids on or near the computers. No food, drink, gum, or candy of any kind is allowed in clinical or laboratory classroom spaces.

Cell Phone and Laptop Use

Students in the program will not text or use cell phones in class; all phones are to be turned off or set to vibrate during class times. **Students will not use classroom computers to visit social media sites or play online games.**

Maintaining Confidentiality

Protecting the confidentiality of patients, protected health information, students, medical facilities, and the program is expected under all conditions, including when using social media. If there is ever an appropriate time to take photographs or video, students will be notified by their instructors. Violation of either HIPAA or FERPA laws can result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Profanity

Students in the program will not curse or use profanity in the classroom. This behavior is extremely unprofessional and will not be tolerated in the workplace or classroom. Failure to comply with standards of behavior and comportment may cause students to lose professionalism points, receive interventional counseling, receive a referral for disciplinary action by Student Services, or may result in dismissal from the program.

Guest Speakers

This program frequently features guest speakers and guest lecturers. These guests are working professionals who take time from their jobs to speak to our classes. They are to be shown the utmost respect, which means arriving on time for their talks or lectures, not interrupting, and exiting quietly if necessary. No food or drink is allowed during guest lectures.

Professionalism Points

Students are expected to maintain high standards of professionalism, and most classes have professionalism points included on the assignments list. Violations of standards of professional conduct will result in deductions of these points, which can significantly lower students' grades.

Infractions typically result in a one- to ten-point deduction of professionalism points for each occurrence of the following actions:

- Using cell phones or texting in class
- Disrupting lectures or lessons excessively for off-topic comments
- Calling fellow students names or being disrespectful of others' opinions and beliefs
- Demonstrating disrespect for the instructor or the instructor's preferences
- Placing drinks or food on lab tables or near computers
- Using profanity in the classroom or during group discussions
- Arriving late for guest lectures, or bringing food or drinks to class when we have guests
- Chronic tardiness
- Violation of dress code in clinical courses
- Improper use or misuse of program supplies and equipment in lecture or lab courses

Submitting late work may result in a zero for the assignment and the loss of professionalism points. Serious infractions such as plagiarism incur higher deductions at the discretion of the instructor, and typically also result in a zero on the assignment in question, and/or failure of the course.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is unacceptable and will be dealt with swiftly and severely. Students who are in doubt about whether work or resources have been cited correctly should consult their instructor.

Drug Testing

Students in the program may be subject to random drug testing, at their own expense, as the result of suspicious behavior in the classroom, lab, or clinical setting. Examples of behavior that suggest drug abuse include alcohol on the breath, inappropriate verbal responses, and unsafe or unusual behavior indicative of intoxication. The clinical practicum facility, according to their policies, may also require drug testing.

Reference Texts

Students in the program have access to a variety of resource texts in the classroom. These texts are not to be removed from the classroom without the express permission of the Program Director and a written receipt signed and dated by the student. Failure to return these reference texts, or destruction of them, will result in the student being required to replace the text at their own expense.

Capstone and Practicum (MED 155)

The Program Director is responsible for capstone placements, and students do not select their own sites. Students are placed in sites based on their geographic location and interests, and the availability of a suitable site. Students spend at least 100 hours performing hands-on duties in the clinic.

Dress Code for the Medical Office Assisting Practicum (Capstone) Course

- Hair must be clean, neat, and combed away from the face. Shoulder-length or longer hair must be tied back and secured, so as not to interfere with patient care.
- Male students must be clean-shaven or maintain well-trimmed facial hair.
- Jewelry may include one ring, such as a simple band or wedding set, and small post earrings in ear lobes only.
- Unacceptable jewelry includes dangling or hoop earrings, multiple or large rings, ear bands, necklaces, bracelets, and visible body piercings other than ear lobes. Facility policies state absolutely no cartilage piercings, nose rings, nose studs, tongue rings, tongue studs, etc.
- Tattoos should be covered by clothing. Tattoos that cannot be covered with clothing should be discussed with the Program Director.
- Fingernails should be clean and short. No nail polish may be worn. Artificial nails and/or long nails are not acceptable.
- Clean hygiene and daily deodorant use are expected. Practicum clothes are to be frequently laundered and unwrinkled.
- No perfumes or colognes. If you smoke, be sure that the odor does not cling to your clothing or skin. Some odors including tobacco, coffee, onions, and garlic may be offensive. Alleviate this problem through brushing teeth, using mouthwash, or consuming breath fresheners.
- Chewing gum is never allowed.
- Name tags are always worn, and student identification is always worn at practicum sites. Student name tags are to be worn together with any ID issued by facilities.

- Professional attire includes appropriate neckline, hemline, and waistline. If cleavage, midriff, torso (front or back), underwear, or lingerie are apparent in the practicum setting, the student will be sent home immediately and may not be allowed to make up their hours.

Grading System

Medical Office Assisting Program students must maintain a 2.0 minimum GPA in all Medical Office Assisting (MED) courses. MED courses are currently offered only once a year, so these courses must be taken in sequential order. Failing one MED course may change a student's entire academic plan and scheduled graduation date because students cannot progress to the next quarter's classes. Students will need to retake the failed course before they can move forward in the program.

All Medical Office Assisting Program students must pass MED 135 to complete their practicum externship, MED 155. Students that have been placed at a practicum site will be removed from the site and administratively dropped from the course by the Program Director if they have failed to complete any requirements. Students that are deemed unsafe for clinical practice also will not be allowed to enter practicum until such time as they have proven clinical competence to the Program Director or Instructors, regardless of course completion or previously anticipated graduation date.

Methods of assessment will vary by class, assignment, and instructor. These methods may include (but are not limited to) quizzes, tests, discussion boards, case studies, in-class activities, research papers, writing assignments, workbook activities, handouts, and group projects. In MED courses, 76% is the lowest grade awarded. Anything less than a 2.0 will be a zero for the course.

The letter grading system for MED courses								
Letter	Percent	Decimal	Letter	Percent	Decimal	Letter	Percent	Decimal
A+	100%	4.0	B+	90%	3.4	C+	80%	2.4
	99%	4.0		89%	3.3		79%	2.3
	98%	4.0		88%	3.2		78%	2.2
	97%	4.0		87%	3.1		77%	2.1
A	96%	4.0	B	86%	3.0	C	76%	2.0
	95%	3.9		85%	2.9	F	75% and below	
	94%	3.8		84%	2.8			
A-	93%	3.7	B-	83%	2.7			
	92%	3.6		82%	2.6			
	91%	3.5		81%	2.5			

Medical, Malpractice and Liability Insurance

Students are temporarily covered by very limited malpractice and liability coverage during their time in the program. The program strongly encourages all students to purchase their insurance coverage, but it is not currently required. Neither Peninsula College nor any affiliated clinical externship sites are responsible for the cost of medical care for injury or illness that occurs because of the classroom, lab, or practicum activities.

Students are responsible for obtaining their medical or health insurance coverage. Neither Peninsula College nor any affiliated clinical externship sites are responsible for the cost of medical care for injury or illness that occurs because of the classroom, lab, or practicum activities. The program strongly encourages all students to purchase their own coverage, but it is not currently required.

Informed Consent and Clinical Skill Practice on Peers

The program complies with the Peninsula College Policy 305 Use of Human Subjects for Experiments. Peninsula College recognizes the responsibility to protect the rights, well-being, and personal privacy of individuals; to assure a favorable climate for the acquisition of practical skills and the conduct of academically oriented inquiry; and to protect the interests of the institution and the student, addressing classroom, laboratory, and clinical activities where learning by students requires the use of human subjects as part of training procedures, demonstrations, or experiments. This is not a designated healthcare center and treatment is not provided here; any treatments must occur at a credentialed and licensed healthcare provider's office or clinic.

Students will be expected to participate in all clinical skill activities, including invasive procedures. Partial disrobing may be required for the practice and performance of certain skills, but appropriate draping and privacy considerations will be maintained in those instances. Declination forms are available in case a student has religious, cultural, or medical reasons that preclude them from having invasive procedures performed on them. However, there is no declination for the performance of these, as training students to perform these skills is the purpose of this program.

Students will be trained in standard precautions and are expected to always comply with all CDC and OSHA requirements and standards.

Student Records

Administrative, enrollment and Student Services records are separate from student records for the Medical Office Assisting Program. All records are confidential. Some of the items in your Medical Office Assisting Program records may include, but not be limited to, the following documents:

- Application to the program
- Background check results
- New student orientation attendance record
- Unofficial and official transcripts
- CPR/first aid certification
- Confidential files on student conduct
- Copies of tests, competencies, work products, and certain assignments
- Correspondence
- Counselor recommendations for ADAAA and SSD accommodations
- Recommendations from DVR, WRT, WorkSource, and other worker retraining programs
- References and check-off lists from practicum sites
- Survey and evaluation responses and results
- Immunization records

Program Re-Entry

For all students seeking re-entry following **any break in enrollment in the program**, the following requirements may apply:

- Faculty and/or Program Director advising
- Compliance with any new Peninsula College or program requirements that are in place at the time of program re-entry
- Compliance and adherence to the program curriculum in place at the time of re-entry, even if students must repeat course numbers previously completed on prior degree checklists

Advanced Placement, Experiential Learning, and Transfer Credit

Peninsula College has a general Academic Credit for Prior Learning policy for students, but this policy applies only to general education courses or pre-requisites and does not normally apply to core curriculum courses.

The Peninsula College Medical Office Assisting Program will evaluate each applicant request for advanced placement, experiential learning credit, or the acceptance of transfer credits from other institutions on a case-by-case basis to meet the requirements for our core curriculum (MED) courses, including practicum.

On-the-job experience or previously completed course credits will not be applicable or accepted if they are “out of date,” typically meaning more than five years prior to the date of application to the Peninsula College Medical Office Assisting Program, or if the student scored less than a 2.0 overall in the course.

Student Resources

Medical Office Assisting Program Staff

Rachel Pairsh, MA-C, NCMA, CPI, BSHCM, MHL
 Director, Medical Assisting Programs
rpairsh@pencol.edu
 (360) 417-6414
 Office: K-207

Laura Little, MA-C, CMA (AAMA)
 Instructor
llittle@pencol.edu
 (360) 417-6382
 Office: K-206

Courtney Kacouros, MA-C, CMA (AAMA)
 Laboratory and Classroom Support Technician
ckacouros@pencol.edu
 (360) 417-6267
 Office: K-208

Ireland Judge, BA
 Allied Health Programs Coordinator
ijudge@pencol.edu
 (360) 417-6264
 Office: K-208

Integrated Basic Skills Teachers (I-BEST)

We are privileged to have Integrated Basic Skills Teachers in several of our courses. These instructors are here to assist any student with basic skills such as mathematics, English, computers, and writing. I-BEST Instructors collaborate with lead instructors and may present lectures.

There will be assignments such as research papers and writing assignments in several courses that will require grading by both the core curriculum and I-BEST Instructors. Our I-BEST Instructors are fellow instructors, not tutors, who assist students with mastering elements of basic educational skills.

Student Services

Pirate Central is Peninsula College's student center. The portal <https://pencol.edu/student-center> offers helpful links to academic calendars, class catalogs and schedules, unofficial transcripts, and important forms. It allows you to update your personal information, check your schedule, register for classes, and pay your tuition. The website also has links that provide information about parking, financial aid, learning assessments, and worker retraining.

Tutoring

Peninsula College offers a variety of tutoring resources. Details and hours of operation may be found at <https://pencol.libguides.com/c.php?g=855081>.

Library

The library offers textbooks on reserve as well as a quiet place to study. Library hours may be found at <https://pencol.edu/library>.

Access Services

Peninsula College provides a campus that is accessible, equitable, and inclusive to all. Access Services works with students, instructors, staff, administration, and the community to ensure that the accommodations necessary to create equal access are provided to all Peninsula College students with documented disabilities. Access Services staff can be reached at ssd@pencol.edu or (360) 417-6373.

The role of Access Services is to determine reasonable accommodations for qualified students with documented disabilities:

- Provide accommodation services support to students and faculty.
- Assist in the development of self-advocacy skills and disability awareness.
- Maintain and protect the confidentiality of student records as required by HIPAA and FERPA

To set up accommodations, please complete the online registration form found at https://pencol.formstack.com/forms/ssd_ask_registration.

Once the registration form is completed, you will receive an email with the link to the Access Services calendar to book an appointment. Bring your documentation to this appointment, if possible. If you are not able to provide documentation at the appointment, you will be provided provisional accommodation for the quarter; you must provide documentation prior to the next quarter.

Documentation includes information on the present impact of the diagnosis and the treatment plan if there is one. Documentation must come from a professional who is licensed or certified in the area for which the diagnosis is made. The documentation required to determine accommodations may be specific to the diagnosis. Medical documentation can be submitted as: a letter on letterhead stationery, official medical records with medically relevant test results, or completed verification form, accompanied by medically relevant test results.

It is best to start this process before the start of the quarter.

Support for Students – Workforce Programs

Peninsula College is committed to encouraging the success of its students and provides holistic support through the Workforce Programs. The goal is to provide students with the assistance they need to persist through obstacles and move forward toward graduation. We work with students on overcoming situations that impact their academic performance. Students can receive help with study skills, searching for financial assistance, arranging for a tutor, and much more. Available programs include Basic Food Employment and Training (BFET), Basic Food (SNAP), and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Work First work program. Please find a list of useful links below.

Basic Food Employment and Training: <https://pencol.edu/dshs-programs/basic-food-employment-and-training-program-bfet>

Work First: <https://pencol.edu/workfirst-programs-tanf/workfirst-program>

Worker Retraining: <https://pencol.edu/financial-aid/worker-retraining>

If you are interested in receiving support, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Maitland Peet, Student Success Manager at (360) 417-6576 or mpeet@pencol.edu.

Worker Retraining

The Worker Retraining Program at Peninsula College is designed to provide instruction and training that can lead to family-wage employment. It assists students with:

- Tuition and fees.
- Book expenses.
- Child and/or dependent care costs.
- Transportation.
- Educational supplies/tools.

The Worker Retraining Program can assist the following individuals:

- Dislocated workers. Those eligible for unemployment, are currently collecting unemployment, or who have exhausted their unemployment benefits within the last 48 months.
- Stop-gap employed. Those who were on unemployment or have exhausted their unemployment benefits.
- Within the last 48 months and who have accepted temporary employment but make less than 80% of their prior earnings.
- Displaced homemakers. People who provided unpaid services within the home and relied upon another person's income, but no longer have access to that income due to an event within the last 24 months such as separation or divorce, death, or disability, etc.
- Formerly self-employed. Previous business owners who are no longer self-employed due to economic downturns or natural disasters.
- Vulnerable workers. Students with less than 45 college credits who are at risk of losing their current job due to a need for additional skills, or whose job is considered "not in demand."
- Veterans who have been honorably discharged from service within the last 48 months.
- Active-duty military members who have received official separation orders.

Please visit <https://pencol.edu/financial-aid/worker-retraining> for more details.

Feel free to email Brian Kneidl at bkneidl@pencol.edu for more information or call (360) 417-6263 to set up an appointment.

Financial Aid

Applying for financial aid is a process that should be started as soon as possible. Work on your financial aid file at the same time as you are completing other college application requirements. New students are required to complete an admission application before applying for financial aid. It is important that you are signed up for the correct degree or certificate you intend to complete at Peninsula College.

If you need assistance, please call Student Services at (360) 417-6340.

You must meet the financial aid requirements for eligibility. More information about applying for financial aid can be found at <https://pencol.edu/financial-aid-office/applying-financial-aid>.

Book List

MED 102: Medical Terminology for Medical Assistants

- *Exploring Medical Language*, 12th Ed., ISBN 9780443264559
- *Mosby's Medical Dictionary*, 11th Ed., ISBN 9780323639156

MED 135: Medical Office Procedures

- *Kinn's The Medical Assistant*, 15th Ed., ISBN 9780323871167
- *Kinn's The Medical Assistant Study Guide/Procedure Checklist Manual*, 15th Ed., ISBN 9780323874243
- *Effective Communication for Health Professionals*, 2nd Ed., ISBN 9780323625456
- EHR Go! Access

MED 140: Medical, Ethical, Legal Communication

- *Law & Ethics for Health Professionals*, 10th Ed., ISBN 9781260021943
- *Effective Communication for Health Professionals*, 2nd Ed., ISBN 9780323625456

MED 150 and 151: Medical Billing & Coding I and II

- *Fordney's Medical Insurance and Billing*, 17th Ed., ISBN: 9780443108785
- *Workbook for Fordney's Medical Insurance and Billing*, 17th Ed., ISBN: 9780443110528
- *Kinn's The Medical Assistant*, 15th Ed., ISBN 9780323871167
- *Kinn's The Medical Assistant Study Guide/Procedure Checklist Manual*, 15th Ed., ISBN 9780323874243
- *ICD-10-CM Complete Official Codebook, (ICD-10 Clinical Modification)* **Most recent edition**
- *Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) Professional Edition*, **Most recent edition**

MED 155: Medical Office Assistant Externship and Test Preparation

- Review of Kinn's text (optional)
- NCCT interactive or other Review Package pertinent to the exam that the student wishes to challenge

Proceed to next page

Peninsula College

CONSENT TO USE NAME, PHOTOGRAPHS, LIKENESSES, TESTIMONIALS

Name: _____
(please print)

City: _____

Program: Medical Assisting, Medical Office Assisting, and Phlebotomy Programs

Activity: Any related to MA, MOA, or Phlebotomy Programs

I hereby authorize Peninsula College and the Medical Assisting, Medical Office Assisting, and/or Phlebotomy Programs to use my name, photograph, likeness, and/or testimonial in college- and program-related advertising, displays, publications, posters, or any other college-related promotions, which could include (but is not necessarily limited to) the college catalog, program brochures, group photographs, slide or video productions, television and radio advertising, and the Peninsula College website.

Signature

Date