

Terri Quenzer, Ph.D.  
Statewide Director  
Life Sciences/Biotech Initiative  
California Community Colleges

April 6, 2020

Dear DCA Representative:

I am submitting this letter in support of the DCA Waiver Request Form that we are submitting on behalf of myself, John Cordova, RN, BSN, PHN, Statewide Director, Health Workforce Initiative, Keau Wong, MS, Regional Director, Employer Engagement, Life Sciences/Biotech Initiative, San Diego/Imperial Counties, and the Directors of each of the Medical Laboratory Technician Training Programs at Community Colleges in California,

An integral part of the COVID-19 solution centers around laboratory testing. In fact, it is estimated that 80% of all diagnosis come for laboratory and imaging testing. However, our clinical laboratories, already in dire need of staff, will be overwhelmed should the hospital systems become overrun. There simply is not enough staff statewide to have the clinical laboratories manage the increased demand. It has been shown that delays in testing lead to poor patient outcomes, and the fear is that the inability to overcome the current laboratory staffing shortages could have dire implications as our hospital systems grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic. As the Governor calls upon doctor and nursing students to help in the fight against COVID-19, so too should the clinical laboratory student be on everyone's radar. While COVID-19 testing will part of their scope of practice, laboratory workers still have to play a crucial role in non-COVID-19 diagnosis and trauma that occur. Hence there is a critical need to ensure clinical laboratory educators are given the maximum flexibility to choose the pedagogic approach to completing clinical course objectives through both a simulated and practicum environment that will ensure that clinical laboratory students can graduate and join the workforce in 2020. This article highlights lab workers as unseen warriors fighting the coronavirus: <https://abcnews.go.com/Health/lab-workers-unseen-warriors-fighting-coronavirus/story?id=69962475>.


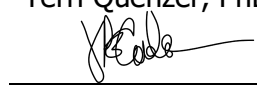
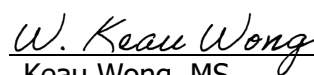
The root cause preventing spring 2020 graduation has three main components:

1. COVID-19 quarantine and suspended clinical rotations compounding too few pre-quarantine clinical spots;
2. Simulated laboratories currently do not count toward practicum hours;
3. CA clinical hour standards are above national averages with no additional observed efficacy.

We are asking for the following waivers to enable clinical laboratory students to graduate on schedule and to accommodate the dire need for clinical laboratory staff:

1. Allowance & specification of the following in Codes 1260.3(a)(1) & 1261.5: modified clinical rotation plan that accepts augmented clinical training (simulated laboratories) for CA licensing hours.
2. Pursuit to CCR 1035.3(b)(2), a formal declaration of a minimum of 80 practicum training hours required in each department: chemistry, blood bank, microbiology, & hematology. In addition, a reduction from 1040 to 840 total program hours.

We thank you for consideration of this request that allows clinical science students to graduate on schedule and help fill the critical need for staff in clinical laboratories to serve COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 needs.

 _____ Terri Quenzer, PhD	_____ April 6, 2020 Date
 _____ John Cordova, RN, BSN, PHN	_____ April 6, 2020 Date
 _____ Keau Wong, MS	_____ 6 April 2020 Date
_____ Jason Pedro, CLS, Folsom Lake College,	_____ Date
_____ Hencelyn Chu, PhD, MLS (ASCP), College of the Canyons and Saddleback College	_____ Date
_____ Deanna Reinacher, Ed.M, CLS, MT (ASCP), Southwestern College	_____ Date
_____ Shinny Duong, CLS, De Anza College	_____ Date
_____ Linda Woods, PhD, San Diego Miramar College	_____ Date