

FAQs: CAMLPR, Exams, and Regulation in Alberta

Introduction:

In August 2024, CAMLPR announced it would take over the development and administration of competency profiles, exams, and prior learning assessments for MLTs in Canada. Most provinces have approved CAMLPR as their exam provider; however, Alberta has chosen to continue using CSMLS as we monitor the implementation of CAMLPR exams in other provinces.

[Click here](#) to read the announcement and the reasons behind the decision.

The following questions were received regarding the announcement.

General Questions

Who is CAMLPR, and how are they taking over the exam process from CSMLS?

CAMLPR (Canadian Alliance of Medical Laboratory Professionals Regulators) started as an information-sharing group made up of MLT regulatory colleges across Canada. CAMLPR members decided to develop and offer their own exam. Since the MLT colleges are CAMLPR's members, their councils approved CAMLPR as the exam provider.

Is CMLTA still involved with CAMLPR?

No. When CAMLPR transitioned from a collaborative group to a business entity managing exams and hiring staff, the CMLTA chose to withdraw. Alberta's legislation and financial accountability requirements did not align with CAMLPR's new structure.

Is there oversight over CAMLPR? Can their takeover of exams be challenged?

CAMLPR itself does not have any authority under any provincial health regulatory legislation or government oversight, as it is only a service provider. It is the individual regulatory bodies that have the authority and oversight. They are responsible for providing exams according to their legislation and are overseen by their provincial governments.

Do other provinces have legislation comparable to Alberta's Health Professions Act (HPA)? If they do, how were they able to join CAMLPR so quickly?

Yes, provinces that regulate MLTs have their own legislation, similar to Alberta's HPA. As each individual college is responsible for following their province's legislation, we cannot speak to their adoption of CAMLPR. Any questions regarding other provinces should be directed to their regulatory colleges.

Registration and Exams

Will CSMLS continue offering the national certification exam after CAMLPR's exam is adopted elsewhere?

The CSMLS and CMLTA currently have a contract for CSMLS to provide the certification exam and Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) services. Like any business contract, this agreement includes a termination clause that allows either party to end the contract by giving a set amount of advance notice. Both organizations are working toward an agreement about how long these services will continue.

What is CSMLS's role moving forward?

CSMLS remains the national professional advocacy organization for MLTs, representing and promoting the interests, values, and advancement of the profession with the public, government, and industry.

Will CMLTA accept CAMLPR-certified applicants moving to Alberta? Do they still need to graduate from an MLS program to be registered through labour mobility?

Yes, candidates registered in another province can move to Alberta under labour mobility laws. However, they must have completed an approved MLT program or one that has been deemed substantially equivalent to those programs to be placed on Alberta's registers. They must also have passed exams in all fields of practice required for the register they are applying to. Under the CAMLPR framework, the following exams would be required for each register:

- **General:** Hematology, Histology, Clinical Microbiology, Transfusion Medicine, and Clinical Chemistry
- **Clinical Genetics:** Cytogenetics and Molecular Diagnostics
- **Cytology:** Cytology and Histology

This means that those registered in other provinces under CAMLPR's "flexible pathways" process who have not completed medical laboratory science programs, or who are only registered in a single field of practice, will be denied registration in Alberta.

Education and Training

How much time would educational institutions have to adapt if CAMLPR's exam were adopted?

One of the main reasons CMLTA chose to stay with CSMLS was to give Alberta's three MLT education programs enough time to adapt to any future changes. The CMLTA cannot guarantee a specific amount of notice at this time; however, it will continue to maintain a close relationship with Alberta's educational institutions and update them as soon as information becomes available.

Practice and Regulation

What happens to the people restricted to a specific subject in Alberta registered under previous substantial equivalency processes? Can we bring back this process?

These individuals are registered through legacy processes and policies, which have not been in place for many years. They will remain registered as long as they maintain continuous registration. If they allow their registration to lapse, they must meet current education and exam requirements to reapply.

These processes do not align with Alberta's legislation, and we would require legislative change to bring them back. When the CMLTA assesses an individual for substantial equivalence, we must measure their education against the Canadian education requirements for the General, Clinical Genetics, or Cytology registers to comply with legislation. If their education is not substantially equivalent to those programs, they cannot be approved.

Will Medical Laboratory Assistants (MLAs) be regulated in Alberta?

The CSMLS has submitted an application for MLA regulation in Alberta, but the Government of Alberta has not yet decided on their application. There has been some positive traction with MLA regulation in other provinces, with Nova Scotia becoming the first province to approve MLA regulation.

What is the CMLTA doing about unregulated practice (e.g., Point-of-Care Testing by non-MLTs)?

The CMLTA's mandate, under the *Health Professions Act*, is to regulate MLTs and protect the public receiving MLT services. It has no authority over unregulated health providers. Although the CMLTA continues to keep stakeholders, such as the Government of Alberta, informed of changes occurring, it cannot advocate on behalf of the profession, as this is outside the college's mandate. This type of advocacy would be the role of an association, such as the CSMLS.

Does being a self-regulated profession mean members directly vote on major decisions?

No, being a self-regulated profession does not mean members directly vote on major decisions. Instead, members elect a Council of peers who are granted the legal authority—under the *Health Professions Act*—to make regulatory and governance decisions on behalf of the profession. This elected Council acts in the public interest and is accountable for upholding professional standards and ensuring safe, ethical practice. In jurisdictions without self-regulation, all council or board members are appointed by the government, and members have no say in their representation.