



**ASCP BOARD OF  
CERTIFICATION**

# **PROFESSIONAL NOMENCLATURE TOOLKIT**

**A Resource for Professionals and Organizations  
to Advance Standardized Laboratory  
Nomenclature and Terminology**

Together, we can ensure consistent, accurate designations and citations that enhance the professionalism and recognition of laboratory professionals worldwide.

## Advancing Professional Nomenclature Together How You Can Contribute to Meaningful Improvements

### Identify Possible Inaccuracy



#### Verify the Inaccuracy

Confirm that a discrepancy in nomenclature or terminology exists using ASCP BOC resources.

### Respond Professionally



#### Share Resources

Share links using the email templates provided in [this toolkit](#) for guidance. Direct individuals to the [“I am MLS”](#) campaign and other support materials.

### Progress Check



#### Follow-Up

Ensure that accurate, unifying nomenclature changes are implemented and used consistently in all communications.

Together we can enhance the global  
visibility and recognition of laboratory professionals.

The digital badges below represent ASCP BOC credentials  
elevated by accurate, unified nomenclature.

One value of digital badging is that accurate nomenclature of  
“Scientist” or “Cytologist” is consistently evidenced.



To learn more about the value  
and impact of digital badging,  
scan the QR code.

## Why Optimal Credential Nomenclature Matters

### Patient Care

Precise terminology ensures clarity for healthcare teams and patients, supporting better communication and understanding.

### Science is Foundational

Transitioning to and advancing “Scientist” nomenclature for professionals elevates the identity, and the collective impact of public health, laboratory medicine, pathology, and adjacent specialties.

ASCP BOC has led the way on this critical journey path forward toward advancing unified recognition, professional identity, and the collective advancement for the professional community.

### Credibility and Professionalism

Accurate nomenclature of credentials reinforces the credibility of laboratory professionals, highlighting their expertise, and gaining visibility as well as clarity with regulatory agencies. For organizations and hiring managers, this clarity supports trust in the knowledge and value that ASCP BOC credentialed professionals bring to patient care.

### Global Identity

Standardized nomenclature and terminology strengthen professional identity, fosters unity, and enhance recognition across the healthcare community, elevating the profession’s standing globally.

## Credential Nomenclature Guidelines

### What does the ASCP BOC mean by accurate, unified nomenclature?

- Use **“Scientist”** instead of “Technologist”
- Use **“Cytologist”** instead of “Cytotechnologist”
- Use **“MLS”** don’t say or use “MT”
- Avoid using outdated terminology such as “techs” or “med techs”

### As a leader, how can you approach accurate credential formatting, and what steps do you take to ensure consistency?

- For the most up-to-date and complete list of ASCP BOC credentials, please visit the [“Explore Credentials section of the ASCP BOC website.”](#)

### What does the ASCP BOC mean by best practices in professional terminology?

- For inclusivity, use “laboratory professional” when specific credentials are unclear or not applicable.
- Avoid abbreviations or outdated terms such as “techs” in formal communications.

## Promoting Unified Nomenclature in Your Organization

### **Educational Resources**

Organizations are invited to share the ASCP BOC resources created to support accurate and unified nomenclature on their website and social media platforms. Access to FAQs, the [“I am MLS”](#) pledge, job descriptions, and other materials can be found on the [ASCP BOC website](#).

### **Training Opportunities**

Create awareness at your organization or institution by organizing “Lunch and Learn” sessions or other awareness events focusing on accurate professional nomenclature.

### **Visual Aids**

Emphasize the importance of accurate credential representation, as demonstrated by [ASCP BOC digital badges](#).

### **Create Recognition Programs**

Celebrate individuals and teams in your organization who exemplify accurate nomenclature usage. Work with your Human Resources or Talent Department to update name badges or contact information to the accurate professional nomenclature, then celebrate your shared successes via email or social media!

## Contact Us

For questions or additional requests related to professional nomenclature, please contact us at [ASCPBOC@ascp.org](mailto:ASCPBOC@ascp.org).

## Stay Connected

Follow and engage with the [ASCP BOC on social media](#) for updates, insights, and ongoing discussions related to professional nomenclature and laboratory medicine.

# Sample Communications

The appendices include sample letters and emails intended to guide responses and promote consistent communication. These templates are designed to be adapted for use by and shared with organizational stakeholders, constituents, external partners, and others across the laboratory community to support the adoption of standardized professional nomenclature.

For questions or additional support, please contact  
ASCP BOC [ASCPBOC@ascp.org](mailto:ASCPBOC@ascp.org).

## APPENDIX A: Email to External Stakeholders

**Subject:** Transition to [insert appropriate Scientist/Cytologist terminology] Nomenclature

Dear [Recipient's Name],

I hope this message finds you well. We have noticed that you are using outdated nomenclature in your communications. We are reaching out today to strongly encourage transitioning to American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification's (ASCP BOC) accurate, unified [insert appropriate Scientist/Cytologist terminology] nomenclature as soon as possible to help elevate our profession's recognition and respect within the healthcare field.

This transition represents far more than a change in terminology for laboratory medicine, pathology, and adjacent specialties; it reflects a deliberate commitment to accurate nomenclature, a unified presentation of the laboratory profession, and the recognition that science is foundational to all laboratory medicine, pathology, and adjacent specialties.

As part of an overall advancement by the ASCP BOC, the federated ASCP BOC Board of Governors, and other professional partners, the alignment of ASCP BOC credentials with accurate, unified titles marks a critical step forward in advancing unified recognition, strengthening regulatory clarity, elevating professional identity, and reinforcing the collective visibility, credibility, and value of laboratory professionals. These changes not only propel the profession forward but also support workforce sustainability and enhance the quality of care delivered to patients.

Your assistance is vital in ensuring this change is universally implemented. Also, if you notice outdated or inaccurate nomenclature being used by colleagues, partners, volunteers, or anyone within your network, please encourage them to adopt [insert appropriate Scientist/Cytologist terminology] nomenclature.

To assist you in this transition, the ASCP BOC has created a suite of resources that can be found on the [ASCP BOC website](#).

Thank you for your cooperation and commitment to advancing our field. Together, we can ensure a brighter, more unified future for the profession and the patients we serve.

Best regards,  
[Your Name]

For a current list of credentials and related  
links go to the [ASCP BOC website](#)

## APPENDIX B: Bandwagon Social Media Posts Professional Nomenclature Advancement

### **Medical Laboratory Scientist Nomenclature Advancement**

Step into the future with **Medical Laboratory Scientist** nomenclature!

Join [YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] in adopting accurate, unified nomenclature. It's more than a change from technologist to scientist; it's an upgrade to your professional identity, aligning with the latest standards and fostering greater recognition in the field of laboratory professionals. Don't miss out on being part of this pivotal movement. Update all instances of 'technologist' to 'scientist' in your professional references, including your e-signature, and help lead the way towards a more unified, recognized profession. For a comprehensive guide and additional resources on adopting scientist nomenclature, visit the [ASCP BOC website](#). Join the movement toward a brighter future for the laboratory. Together, we can ensure our profession gains the recognition it deserves!

[Suggested tags: **#IamMLS #ASCPBOC #ASCP<sup>i</sup>** (or create your own tags inclusive of your organization)]

### **Cytologist Nomenclature Advancement**

Step into the future with Cytologist nomenclature!

Join [YOUR Organization's NAME] in adopting accurate, unified nomenclature!

It's more than a change to Cytologist; it's an upgrade fostering greater recognition in the field. Don't miss out on being part of this pivotal movement. Update all instances of 'cytotechnologist' to 'cytologist' in your professional references, including your e-signature, and help lead the way towards a more unified, recognized profession. For a comprehensive guide and additional resources on adopting scientist nomenclature, visit the [ASCP BOC website](#). Join the movement toward a brighter future for the cytology profession. Together, we can ensure cytology gains the recognition it deserves!

[Suggested tags: **#ASCPBOC #Cytologist** (or create your own tags inclusive of your organization)]

For a current list of credentials and related  
links go to the [ASCP BOC website](#)

### **Scientist in Histotechnology Nomenclature Advancement**

Step into the future with **Scientist in Histotechnology** nomenclature!

Join [YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] in adopting accurate, unified histotechnology nomenclature. It's more than a change from Histotechnologist to Scientist in Histotechnology; it's an upgrade fostering greater recognition in the field. Don't miss out on being part of this pivotal movement. Update all instances of 'histotechnologist' to 'scientist in histotechnology' in your professional references, including your e-signature, and help lead the way towards a more unified, recognized profession. For a comprehensive guide and additional resources on adopting scientist in histotechnology nomenclature, visit the [ASCP BOC website](#). Join the movement toward a brighter future in histotechnology. Together, we can ensure histotechnology gains the recognition it deserves!

[Suggested tags: **#ASCPBOC #ASCP<sup>i</sup>** (or create your own tags inclusive of your organization)]

### **Laboratory Medicine, Pathology, and Adjacent Specialties Advancement**

Step into the future with [insert appropriate Laboratory Medicine, Pathology, or Adjacent Specialties terminology, go to the [ASCP BOC website](#) for a current list of credentials and related links]!

Join [YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] in adopting accurate, unified nomenclature. It's more than a change to [BLANK]; it's an upgrade fostering greater recognition in the field. Don't miss out on being part of this pivotal movement. Update all instances of '[BLANK]' to '[BLANK]' in your professional references, including your e-signature, and help lead the way towards a more unified, recognized profession. For a comprehensive guide and additional resources on adopting [BLANK] nomenclature, visit the [ASCP BOC website](#). Join the movement toward a brighter future for the profession. Together, we can ensure the laboratory gains the recognition it deserves!

[Suggested tags: **#ASCPBOC #ASCP<sup>i</sup>** (or create your own tags inclusive of your organization)]

### **Still seeing opportunities to advance "Scientist" Nomenclature?**

Join [YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NAME] and the ASCP BOC in adopting accurate and unified nomenclature. If you are using tech or technologist in your everyday conversation, lead the way towards a more unified and recognized profession by using "scientist." Join the movement toward greater recognition for the laboratory profession. Visit the [ASCP BOC website](#) for additional information and resources.

[Suggested tags: **#ASCPBOC #ASCP<sup>i</sup>** (or create your own tags inclusive of your organization)]

For a current list of credentials and related links go to the [ASCP BOC website](#)

## APPENDIX C: Email to C-suite and Executive Leaders

Subject: Advancing Unified Professional Nomenclature Across the Medical Laboratory Workforce Dear

[Recipient's Name],

As part of the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification's (ASCP BOC)'s continued commitment to strengthening professional identity and regulatory clarity across the laboratory workforce, we are writing to request your leadership in aligning organizational communications with current ASCP BOC credential nomenclature.

We have observed the use of outdated nomenclature in certain materials and respectfully encourage adoption of the standardized designation: [Insert appropriate credential designation]. The current credential listing is available on the [ASCP BOC website](#).

This alignment reflects a strategic decision approved by the ASCP BOC Board of Governors, its partners, and other professional laboratory organizations and stakeholders. The transition is intentional and forward looking. It reinforces:

- Clear and consistent regulatory language
- Unified professional identity across practice settings
- Accurate recognition of the scientific foundation of laboratory medicine, pathology, and adjacent specialties
- Strengthened workforce visibility, credibility, and sustainability

For executive leaders, consistent adoption of accurate credential nomenclature supports institutional clarity, enhances workforce branding, and reinforces the scientific expertise essential to high-quality patient care.

We respectfully request that our organization update internal and external communications, position descriptions, credential references, marketing materials, and digital assets to reflect. Additionally, we welcome your partnership in encouraging affiliated stakeholders, departments, and collaborators to adopt the unifying accurate terminology.

To support implementation, the ASCP BOC has developed a comprehensive suite of resources available within the Laboratory Professional Titles & Resources section of the [ASCP BOC website](#).

We appreciate your leadership and collaboration in advancing a unified, accurate, and future-focused professional identity for the laboratory workforce.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Title]

[Department]

For a current list of credentials and related links go to the [ASCP BOC website](#)

## APPENDIX D: Email to Human Resources (HR) Personnel

Subject: Action Requested: Update to ASCP BOC Credential Nomenclature in Human Resources (HR) Systems and Position Documentation

Dear [Recipient's Name],

The American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification (ASCP BOC) is implemented standardized nomenclature across select credentials, and we are reaching out to ensure alignment within our organization's human resources systems and workforce documentation.

We respectfully request that HR teams transition to the current credential designation: [Insert appropriate credential designation: [Insert appropriate credential designation]]. The current credential listing is available on the ASCP BOC website.

This update was approved by the ASCP BOC Board of Governors, its partners, and other professorial laboratory organizations and stakeholders. The change aligns credential titles with the scientific foundation of laboratory medicine, pathology, and adjacent specialties and supports consistency across regulatory, licensure, and accreditation environments.

From an HR perspective, accurate credential nomenclature supports:

- Clear and compliant job descriptions
- Accurate credential verification and onboarding processes
- Consistency across human resource information systems (HRIS) and applicant tracking platforms
- Alignment with licensure language and regulatory frameworks
- Improved workforce recognition and recruitment messaging

We encourage review and update of the following materials, as applicable:

- Job descriptions and postings
- Offer letters and employment contracts
- Credential verification workflows
- HRIS credential fields
- Career pathway documents
- Marketing and recruitment materials

To support this transition, the ASCP BOC has developed resources within the Laboratory Professional Titles & Resources section of the [ASCP BOC website](#).

We appreciate your partnership in ensuring accurate, standardized credential representation across workforce documentation. Please do not hesitate to reach out if additional clarification or implementation guidance would be helpful.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Title]

[Department]

For a current list of credentials and related links go to the [ASCP BOC website](#)

## APPENDIX E: Standardized Professional Nomenclature

2026	<p><a href="#">MLS and MLT Comparison Document for Human Resources Nomenclature Slide Deck for Pathologists</a></p>
2025	<p><a href="#">Unified Nomenclature Toolkit</a>: A Quick Reference Guide for Accurate Laboratory Professional Credentials</p> <p><a href="#">Scientist Adopted as New Credential Terminology</a> : at the ASCP BOC Board of Governors (BOG) fall 2025 meeting, the BOG approved a number of changes to titles of ASCP BOC credentials from Technologist to Scientist.</p>
2024	<p><a href="#">Medical Laboratory Job Titles and Descriptions for the 21st Century</a>: this document explains the national effort led by the ASCP BOC and the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science (ASCLS) to standardize laboratory job titles.</p>
2023	<p><a href="#">Unification of Nomenclature</a> article explains that using consistent professional titles in the medical laboratory field helps improve recognition, clarity, and professional identity. It also notes that inconsistent terminology can cause confusion and undervalue the work of laboratory professionals, while standardized titles better reflect their expertise and support clearer communication.</p> <p><a href="#">The ASCP Board of Certification transitions all MT(ASCP) to MLS(ASCP)</a>: this review explains efforts by the ASCP BOC to standardize credential titles to improve consistency and clarity across the medical laboratory field. It highlights that unified naming strengthens professional identity, visibility, and advocacy while reducing confusion about roles and training.</p> <p><a href="#">Take the “I am MLS” pledge</a>: launched in 2023, the “I am MLS” campaign is committed to fostering professionalism and accuracy of medical laboratory professional credentials through the adoption of standardized and unified nomenclature.</p>
2022	<p><a href="#">Promoting the Medical Laboratory Science Profession through Standardized Titles</a>: this paper from the ASCP BOC explains that updating titles from Medical Technologist (MT) to Medical Laboratory Scientist (MLS) helps improve consistency and better reflect the role of laboratory professionals. It emphasizes that standardized titles support clearer communication, stronger recognition, and greater visibility for the profession.</p>
2020	<p><a href="#">Standardizing the Professional Title of Medical Laboratory Professionals</a>: this is the original position paper from (December) 2020.</p> <p>The ASCP BOC Board of Governors (BOG) adopted “Cytologist” as a new certification moniker, approving updated credential titles, advancing Cytologist, as part of a broader effort to standardize professional nomenclature and remove outdated terminology. This change was intended to better reflect the expertise of medical laboratory professionals, align naming conventions across credentials, and support a more modern, unified professional identity that enhances clarity, recognition, and consistency across the field.</p>
2009	<p><a href="#">MT(ASCP) and CLS(NCA) become MLS(ASCP)</a>: ASCP Board of Registry (BOR) and National Credentialing Agency (NCA) form a single certification agency – the Board of Certification. The certification, Medical Technologist (MT), is changed to Medical Laboratory Scientist, MLS(ASCP)/ MLS(ASCP). A vision statement was adopted. BB(ASCP), SBB(ASCP), H(ASCP), and SH(ASCP) certification examinations are approved for CA state licensure. Certification examinations are made available at military test centers in the U.S. and military bases worldwide.</p>