



Specialist in Blood Bank Technology Program

LifeSouth Community Blood Centers  
Specialist in Blood Banking Technology /  
Transfusion Medicine (LS SBB) Education  
Program

## Student Handbook

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Education Coordinator

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## I. Welcome to the LifeSouth Blood Center Specialist in Blood Bank Technology / Transfusion Medicine (LS SBB) Education Program

Thank you for choosing our program. LifeSouth Community Blood Centers, Inc. (LS) wants to provide with you with the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills that will enhance your personal and professional growth.

This Student Handbook provides answers to common questions about the LS SBB Education Program by describing policies and procedures and your responsibilities to LS as a participant. If anything is unclear, please discuss the matter with the LS Education Coordinator.

**You are responsible for reading and understanding this Student Handbook.**

From time to time, the information included in the Student Handbook may change. Changes may be communicated to you via e-mail.

## II. Introduction

The policies, and procedures described in this Student Handbook (“Handbook”) apply to all students of the LS SBB Education Program.

Important things to keep in mind about this Handbook.

- The Handbook may not address all the possible applications of, or exceptions to, the policies and procedures described herein. For that reason, if you have any questions, you should address your specific questions with the LS SBB Education Coordinator or Program Director.
- This Handbook and the information in it should be treated as proprietary and confidential. No portion of this Handbook should be disclosed to others, except LS SBB students and others affiliated with LS whose knowledge of the information is required in the normal course of the program.

### LifeSouth Blood Center

LifeSouth Community Blood Centers is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving our customers with a safe blood supply and a variety of lifesaving services. Our mission is to provide a safe blood supply that meets or exceeds the needs in each community we serve, and to provide a variety of services in support of ongoing and emerging blood and transfusion-related activities. Our state-of-the-art laboratories include an AABB IRL-accredited reference laboratory, a donor testing laboratory serving over one million donors per year, a CAP-accredited HLA laboratory, a quality control laboratory, and a molecular laboratory. With more than 30 donor centers, 45 blood mobiles, and 2,000 blood drives a month, our LifeSouth team serves more than 100 hospitals in Alabama, Florida, and Georgia by providing the highest quality blood components and services.

### **Details about the LS SBB Education Program**

The LS SBB Education Program aims to provide a comprehensive educational program in transfusion medicine. This program has received provisional accreditation from the AABB Committee on Accreditation of SBB Programs (AABB CoA-SBB) and the Committee for the Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP).

The LS SBB Education Program is an independent distance learning program. Students will access online lectures and exams using online content hosted by the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB). The clinical experiences and rotations required will be completed at designated facilities or coordinated through LS. The LS SBB Education Program provides in-depth training in all aspects of blood banking, including blood procurement and product manufacturing; transfusion medicine practice; immunohematology and specialized laboratory testing; quality systems and process control; education and management.

At the completion of the 12-month LS SBB Education Program, the successful student will receive a certificate of completion and will be eligible to sit for the Specialist in Blood Banking examination given by the American Society of Clinical Pathologists (ASCP).

### **LS SBB Education Program Goals**

1. Provide an engaging educational experience which enhances the knowledge base and skills of students with the goal of personal and professional development, as well as preparation to pass the ASCP SBB accreditation exam.
2. To utilize feedback from our students and communities of interest to update and improve our services.

### **The LS SBB Education Program Minimum Expectation Statement**

Our mission is to provide students with educational content and empirical opportunities that will challenge their cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) to prepare them to pass a national accreditation exam and be able to provide a variety of services in support of ongoing and emerging blood and transfusion-related activities at an entry-level for Specialists in Blood Banking.

### **Admission Requirements**

- Have a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university in medical laboratory science, biology, or a related science.
- Have a minimum of three full years post-baccalaureate work experience relevant to an immunohematology area within an institution accredited by a recognized accrediting agency.
- Complete an application for admission, including official transcripts of undergraduate and graduate coursework from all institutions attended.
- Have a minimum grade point average of 2.75 (on a scale of 4.0).
- Identify a mentor (preferably SBB or MD) who is willing to assist with answering questions, locating facilities for the required clinical experience and to monitoring student progress through the SBB training.
- Submit two letters of recommendation.

### III. LS SBB Education Program Review

#### Student File/Record

Keeping student files up to date is the responsibility of the LS SBB Education Coordinator. The student file contains at a minimum:

- Student Application
  - LS SBB Education Program Application
  - Facility Information Form
  - Mentor Agreement
- Email address

You may view your own student file, and you may request and receive a copy of the LS SBB Education Program's documents you have signed. Contact the LS SBB Education Coordinator to request copies of documents from your student file.

#### Open-Door Policy of the LS SBB Education Program

Our goal at LS is to provide a pleasant and welcoming educational environment for all students. We want to develop and maintain a cooperative relationship among students based on mutual respect and understanding. We believe that students' opinions, thoughts, and feedback are important, and we recognize the need for procedures that will allow students to voice their questions, suggestions, and concerns. We have an open-door policy for students to be able to share their concerns with the SBB Education Coordinator.

The LS SBB Education Program open-door policy is in effect during each working day. If at any time students are not comfortable speaking directly with the Education Coordinator, they may contact the LS SBB Program Director for assistance.

#### LS SBB Education Program Student Safety/cGMP Training Policy

Due to the various rotations that are required during the program, it is important for the LS SBB Education Program student to have documented safety training. This training is available for the LS SBB Education Program student at LS and will be completed during orientation week.

The LS cGMP Training Classes will be made available to the students to review safety, cGMP, and health issues. If a student does not attend the LS cGMP Training Classes, they must submit documentation of annual safety training to the LS SBB Education Program officials.

Documentation of safety training will be kept in the student's file. This documentation will be retained in the student record until the student's completion of the program.

### IV. Summary of Student Expectations

#### Orientation Attendance

All LS SBB Education Program students are required to participate in a four-day program orientation at the student's expense. This orientation is held at LS Corporate offices located in Gainesville, FL. The orientation may be held remotely when necessary to accommodate extraordinary circumstances (exception need approval by the Program Director).

### **Rotation Attendance**

Regular and prompt attendance is essential for all LS SBB Education Program students. You are required to complete rotations; however, there are no specific attendance requirements for these self-directed rotations. It is the program's expectation that you will have regular and prompt attendance with all established rotation sites and complete these activities during the 12-month program.

### **Exceptions for required LS SBB Education Program Tasks (Exams, Rotations and Professional Development Tasks)**

Exams, clinical rotations, and professional development tasks are outlined with deadlines at the beginning of each class. If you need to apply for an extension of a deadline or an exception to a task, please contact the Education Coordinator as soon as possible. These exceptions must be "pre-approved" by the LS SBB Education Coordinator for a student to be excused and to re-schedule required tasks.

- **Jury Duty for the LS SBB Education Program Student**  
It is your civic duty to report for jury duty whenever called. LS students shall be granted excused time off for mandatory jury duty and for court hearings in which they are a plaintiff or defendant. A leave of absence for jury duty shall be granted to any student who has been notified to serve. Upon receipt of the notice to serve jury duty, the student shall immediately notify the LS SBB Education Coordinator. A copy of the notice to serve jury duty shall be submitted to the LS SBB Education Coordinator.
- **Military Leave of Absence Policy for the LS SBB Education Program Student**  
LS encourages students to serve their country by participating in the uniformed services. A student who is a member of the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, National Guard or Reserves shall be granted a leave of absence for military service, training, or related obligations in accordance with applicable law. At the conclusion of the leave, under the Uniform Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), a student generally has a right to return to the same position they held prior to the leave.

### **Assignments**

The assignments tab in the online education system is used to document rotations, professional development tasks, and other assignments that may be required.

At end of the 12 months, the education coordinator will perform a final assignment review.

- If the assignment review is acceptable to the education coordinator as complete, then the student meets this requirement for the completion of the program.
- If the assignment review is not acceptable to the education coordinator, then the student fails to meet this requirement for the completion of the program

### **Exams**

There are 12 online exams within the program. In addition, there is a mid-term exam and a final exam.

The exams are scheduled approximately every two–four weeks from the beginning of the program. The exams are typically open for a period of nine days.

Exams not completed by the due date will be assessed a 15% penalty.

### **Minimum Expectation for Exam Completion**

The LS SBB Education Program student is required to complete exams, including the mid-term and final within each stated exam period. If an individual fails to complete an exam, no credit will be given for the exam.

Exceptions may be applied on a case- by-case basis with the approval of the LS SBB Education Coordinator's permission.

### **Minimum Grading Expectation**

A LS SBB Education Program student must maintain an average of >75% on all module exams and >80% on the midterm and final exams to successfully complete the program. See grading policy for further details.

### **Expectations for Rotations**

#### **Dress Code/Personal Appearance Policy**

LS considers it very important that you are well groomed, neat, and dressed appropriately for your job function and the work environment.

#### **Minimum Expectation**

LS SBB Education Program students must complete clinical, technical, and administrative rotations as assigned. Students are also required to complete a minimum of 80% of the tasks on each rotation checklist and 100% of each assigned study guide.

Completion of clinical, technical and administrative rotations requires that students do the following;

- Appropriately signed LS SBB Memo of Understanding. This document is to be signed by the person or persons responsible for the student's rotation. The student must upload this to the On-line education system (Blackboard Assignments tab).
- Upload the appropriate LS SBB Student Rotation Checklist for the rotation. The checklist must have been completed by the individual(s) responsible for having reviewed its contents with the student. The student is responsible for uploading the completed checklist.
- Complete the Rotation Study Guides for each rotation checklist as indicated.
- Complete Clinical Rotation Evaluation form.

#### **LS SBB Professional Development Tasks**

In addition to the lecture/exam and rotation responsibilities, each student is required to complete tasks related to professional development. The purpose of this expectation is to broaden the experience, understanding, and appreciation of transfusion medicine by the student.

Students must submit a summary of the completed professional development task to the Education Coordinator via the Assignments tab in Blackboard.

#### **Homework/Lab Assignments:**

- Homework Assignments (from Blackboard) – Completion of completion of homework assignments is strongly recommended, but not mandatory.
- Laboratory Assignments – Required lab assignments must be completed during Transfusion Service and Reference Lab rotations.

### **Discussion board**

There is a discussion board on Blackboard. Several discussion questions may be posted throughout the program year. Participation in the discussions is required to earn the Group Participation grade. Students are also encouraged to use this place to ask questions or opinions or help with problems at work.

### **Research Project**

All SBB Education Program students must satisfactorily complete a Research or Literature Search and Abstract project. Details will be available within the course materials.

## **V. LS SBB Education Program Grading**

### **Policy Written Examinations**

Students must take the exams online within the scheduled time. The instructor will inform the students in advance of the exam schedule. The SBB Education Program student must maintain an average of >75% for all module exams.

- For any exam score <75%, students must review all missed exam questions. The student must provide the correct answer as well as the source for the material used.
- Students not maintaining a >75% exam average will be counseled, and the counseling sessions documented. Any student maintaining <75% exam average after exam five may be removed from the program.
- A student must achieve a minimum grade of 80% on the midterm and final written exams.
- For those interested in applying to the UTMB Masters in Transfusion Medicine Program, a minimum exam average of 80% is required.
- A student not passing the final written exam will be allowed to repeat the exam after coaching and reviewing the exam with the SBB Education Coordinator.
- The repeat final exam will be as comprehensive as the initial final exam but will contain different test questions. If a student fails both written exams and does not take the repeat exam, they will not complete the LS SBB Education Program.

### **Student Grade Appeal Process**

#### **Academic Appeal**

The student has the right to prove to the SBB Education Coordinator that a question on a written exam was marked incorrectly. The student must show written evidence on which they based their conclusions. If this does not give the student satisfaction, they can discuss the question with the lecturer of that material. If the lecturer agrees that the question was marked incorrectly, the Education Coordinator will change the mark.

Students may request recalculation of their grade to the SBB Education Coordinator. They may also ask for their grade to be reviewed by SBB Education faculty. The findings of SBB Education faculty will be final.

#### **Filing a Grievance**

If a student is encountering personnel, safety related, quality concerns or deems an evaluation as unfair or discriminatory, the issue/complaint is to be documented in writing. The [Student Statement](#) form is recommended to document the grievance or appeal. To prevent misunderstanding and avoid confusion, all official communications and appeals must be submitted in writing and signed. to the LS SBB Program Director. The issue/complaint will be

reviewed by the program officials and forwarded to the LS SBB Advisory Committee for review. A written response is to be completed and review with the student within a reasonable amount of time. Students may also submit a complaint directly to CAAHEP using the following link: <https://www.cognitofrms.com/CAAHEP2/FileAComplaint>.

## **LS SBB Student Withdrawal or Dismissal Process**

### **Student Withdrawal or Dismissal**

A student may be terminated by: Self-withdrawal (or) Dismissal

#### **Causes for Dismissal**

- Failure to maintain > 75% on examinations.
- Failure to regularly attend scheduled classes, seminars, meetings, and/ or failure to participate in an acceptable manner as determined by the Education Coordinator. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated.
- Failure to meet deadlines for payment of LS SBB program.
- Failure to follow the procedures or policies that the student signed and agreed to at the outset of the LS SBB program.
- Failure to complete required assignments

#### **Method of Removal / Dismissal**

- The student will be verbally counseled.
- If after documented verbal counseling there is no improvement in performance or participation, the student will be placed on a written corrective action plan.
- A follow-up evaluation will take place no later than one month after the written warning notice. If the student fails to demonstrate improvement, they will be dismissed from the LS SBB program.

#### **Results of Dismissal from the LS SBB Education Program include:**

- Removal of access to the on-line portion of the LS SBB program.
- Removal of access to the LifeSouth Blood Centers facility.
- Certificate of completion will not be granted.

#### **Appeals Process**

Students may submit in writing the reasons why they believe they should not be dismissed to the LS SBB Medical Director and LS SBB Program Director.

#### **Participant Work Policy**

As a distance program, we do not have jurisdiction over you at your workplace. But, time at LS is committed to program tasks and objectives; it is not used to do patient care.

You should speak with your supervisor/manager before the program begins about the possibilities for time off and/or switching work hours in order to fulfill the rotation requirements. You are informed of the amount of work required BEFORE the program starts to allow you to plan ahead. All course information is given online so it is possible to work full-time and plan to complete the course requirements on your own time outside of work.

If the program becomes too much work, you can take a Leave of Absence. The Leave of



Absence means you will quit taking exams and come back at the beginning of the next program year.

## **VI. LS SBB Education Program Financial Summary**

Two types of LS SBB Education Program Students

- External Students that are not employed by LS
  
- Internal Students that are employed by LS  
See LS SBB Education Program HR Policy

**Fees for Internal and External Students = \$5,000 per year**

### **Collection of Fees**

- External Students will be invoiced by LS's Accounting Department
  
- All funds collected will be submitted to LS's Accounting Department as collected via check, credit card or money order.

### **Payment Plan**

\$ 2,500 Due no later than the last Friday in August of the program year.

\$ 2,500 Due at half-way point of program. (Second Friday of December of the program year)

### **Consequence of Non-payment**

If the student does not pay the initial fee prior to the due date, they will be dropped from the program. There is no allowance for late payment.

If the student does not pay the second installment

- They will be dropped from the program.
- The password for the student will be changed so that they will not have access to the program.

If the student pays the second installment within ten (10) days after the due date:

- They will be given the new password and be allowed to re-join the program.

### **Refund Policy**

No refunds will be given.

## **Receipt & Acknowledgment of LS SBB Education Program Student Handbook**

This Student Handbook is an important document intended to help you become acquainted with the LS SBB Education Program. This Handbook will serve as a guide, but it is not the final word in all cases. Individual circumstances may call for individual attention.

The contents of this Handbook may change at any time at the discretion of LS. No changes in any policy, or rule will be made without due consideration of the mutual advantages, disadvantages, and responsibilities such changes will have on you as a student in the LS SBB Education Program and on LS.



