

GETTING YOUR CLS LICENSE IN CALIFORNIA

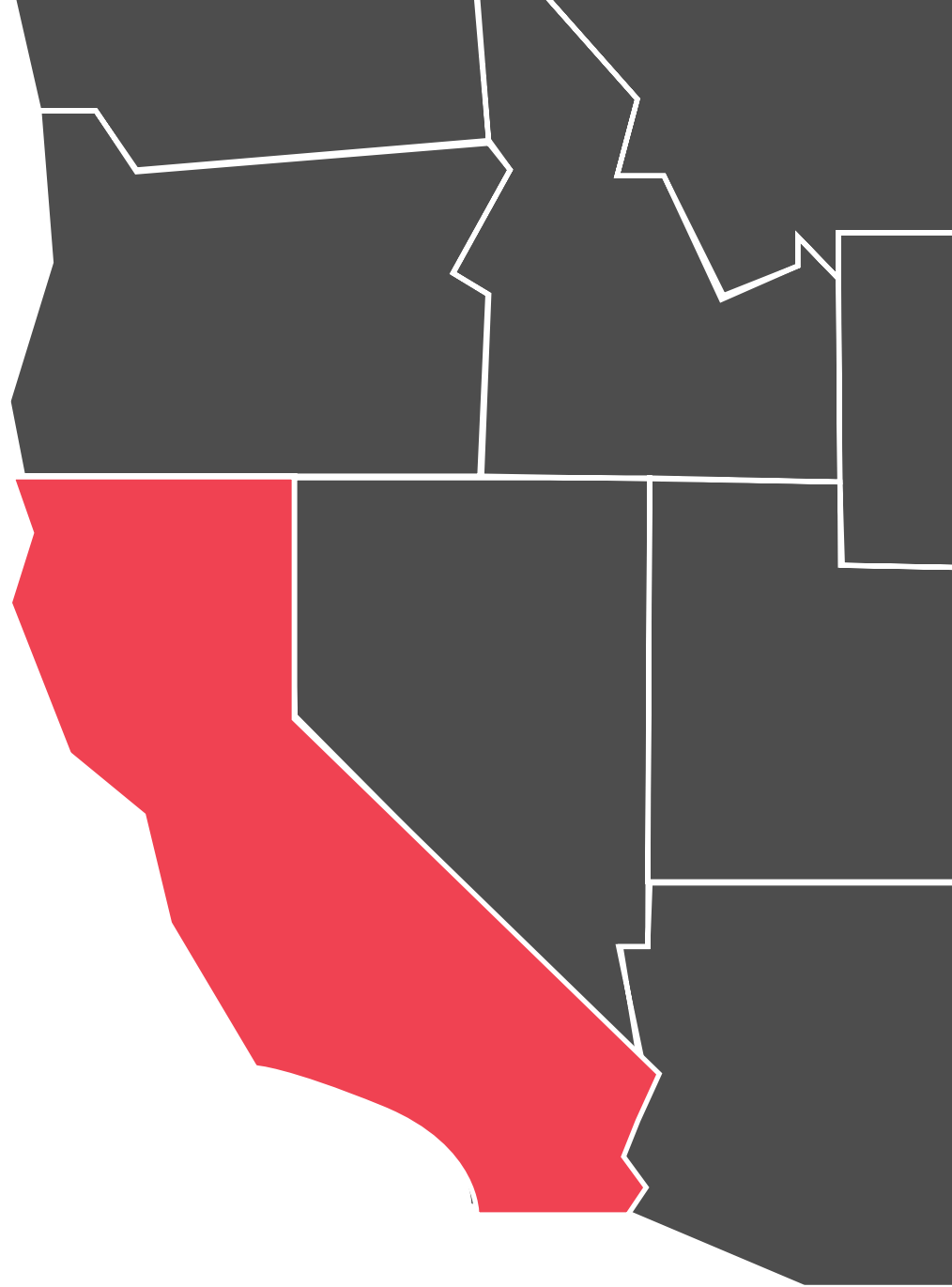
Learn everything you need to know to start living your adventure.

Fusion

KICK-START YOUR CALIFORNIA ADVENTURE

Health care travelers are born adventurers, and no other state offers more opportunities for sightseeing, sun worshipping, scenic getaways and shenanigans than California. The beaches, the mountains, the weather ... and, of course, the wine (so much wine). It can all be yours when you get your CLS (Clinical Laboratory Scientist) license in California.

A California CLS generalist license lets you work in all the specialty areas of a clinical laboratory, studying and analyzing body specimens such as fluid and tissue. But how do you get there from here (wherever that may be)? We'll shed some light on the process and requirements and share stories of how other travelers did it and are now living their own California adventures.



THE ABCs OF CLS

If you're not already familiar with the jargon, the acronyms used to describe roles and licenses in this field may sound like alphabet soup—but hang with us, and we'll sort it out.

The CLS license is the license California requires for Clinical Laboratory Scientists. Not all states require a license, but California is one of 12 states that do.

A CLS is also known as a Medical Technologist (MT) or Medical Laboratory Scientist (MLS). However, here's where things get wonky: They may also be referred to as a Medical Laboratory Technologist, but the MLT acronym is actually reserved for a Medical Laboratory Technician, which is a different role that requires an associate's degree (more on what's required on pages 5 and 6).

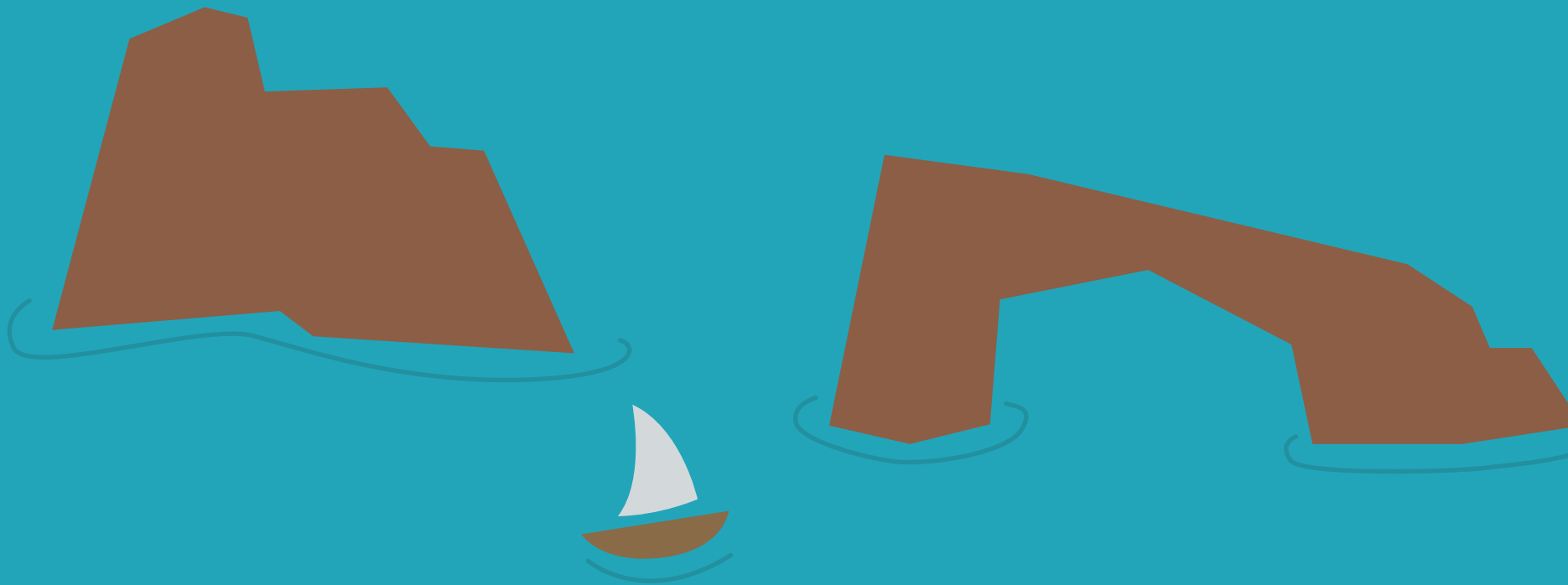
States requiring a Laboratory license

- California
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Louisiana
- Montana
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- New York
- North Dakota
- Tennessee
- West Virginia



CAST YOURSELF AWAY


Sail off the grid for a bit and explore California's five Channel Islands, aka one of the country's most remote national parks.




ON THE ROAD AND IN DEMAND

There are plenty of reasons to consider getting your California CLS license. Jessica Thieschafer, a Laboratory Recruiter at Fusion Medical Staffing, shares why travelers often choose to get their CLS license:

“You can travel forever in California! Not only is there so much to see and do, but there are also so many job opportunities—the turnaround time to find another position in the state is often minimal, as many hospitals have staffing needs that should have been filled ... like yesterday! Plus, the pay is typically higher compared to other many other states.”

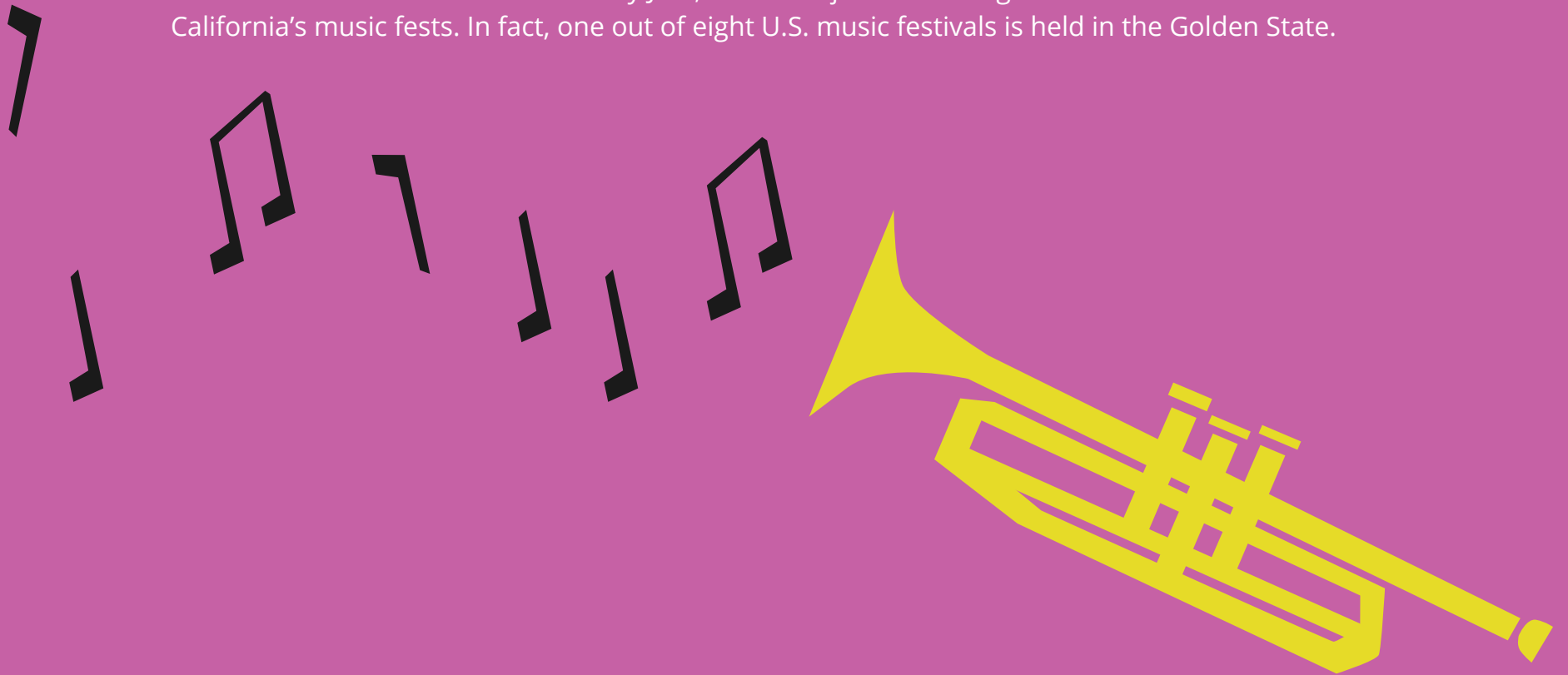


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MORE FESTS THAN THE REST

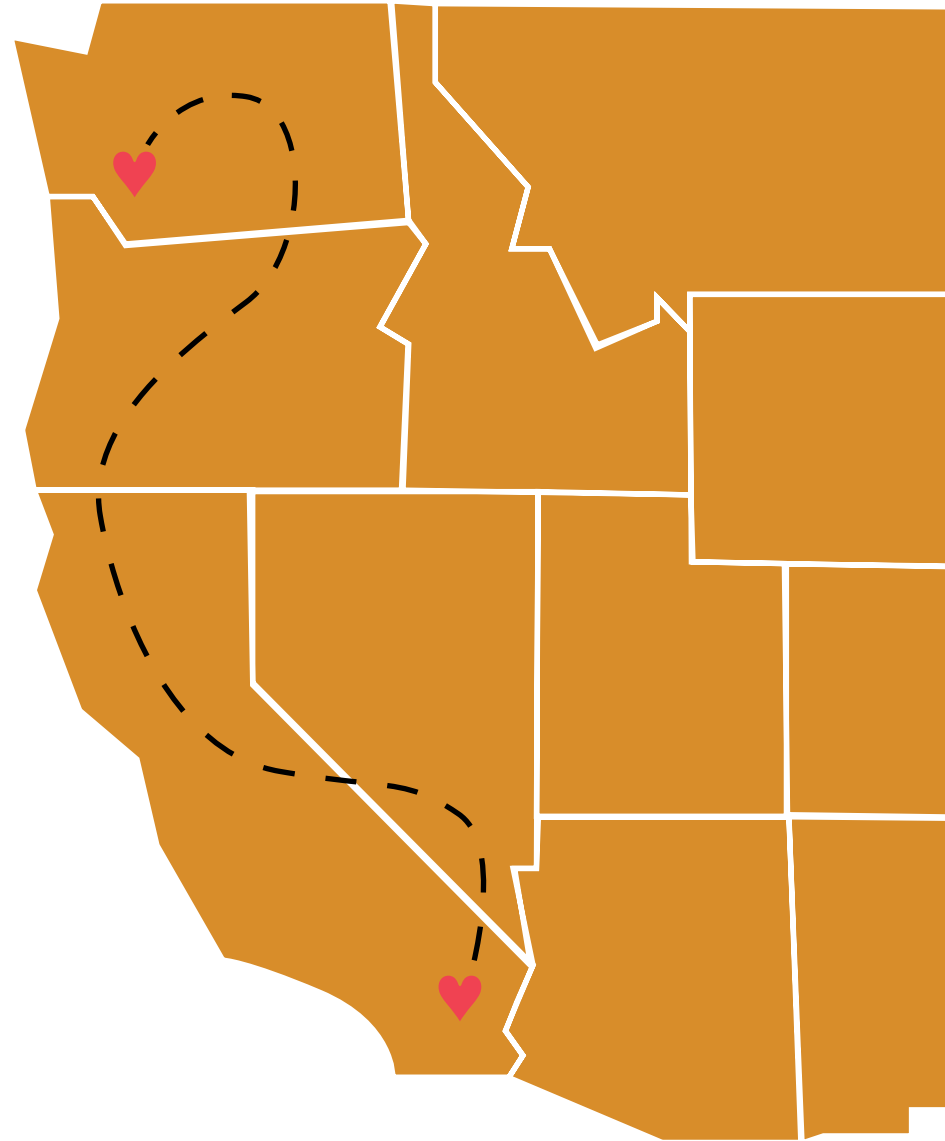
You know about Coachella and Monterey Jazz, but that's just scratching the surface when it comes to California's music fests. In fact, one out of eight U.S. music festivals is held in the Golden State.



WEST COAST = BEST COAST

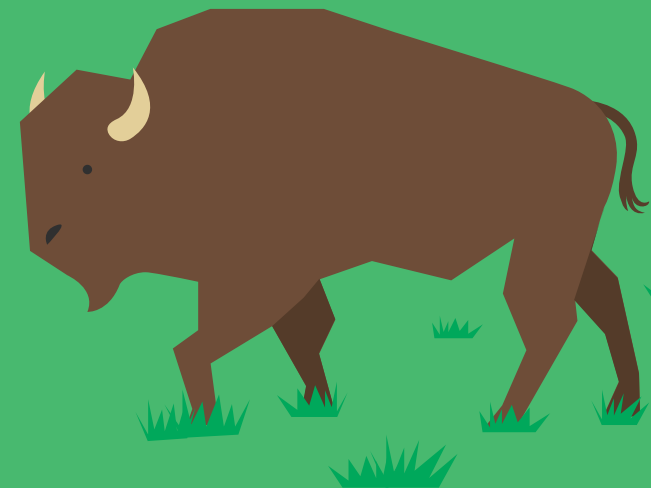
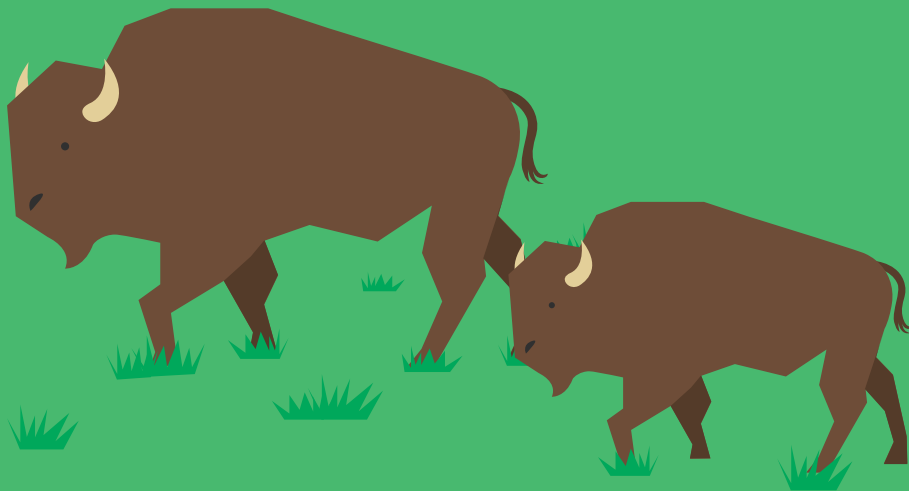
In a December 2016 survey of traveling therapists, nurses, cath lab nurses and lab technicians, California topped the list of favorite states. What's not to love?

- The mild, typically sunny weather
- The gorgeous scenery
- The sheer volume of activities and locales to explore



COME FOR THE VIEWS, STAY FOR THE BISON

Picturesque Catalina Island is known as both a relaxing getaway and popular filming locale. Fun fact: A herd of bison was put on the island back in the 1920s for a movie shoot, and they were never removed. Around 150 still roam the island today.



SO, WHAT'S REQUIRED?

Getting your California CLS license may not be a day at the beach—but think of all the time you'll be able to spend there once you get it! Here's what's required:

✓ A DEGREE

A bachelor's degree in required coursework, including:

- 16 semester units of chemistry, which must include clinical chemistry OR analytical and biochemistry
- 18 semester units of biology, which must include hematology, immunology and medical microbiology
- 3 semester units of physics (light and electricity) or [online physics courses](#) (takes 90-180 days to complete) approved by the state of California

✓ TRAINING

A minimum of one year of post-baccalaureate training OR one year of comprehensive work experience is required.

✓ THE QUIZ

You'll also be required to take an online quiz on state laboratory laws and regulations. (You'll receive notification and instructions for the quiz once you're qualified.)

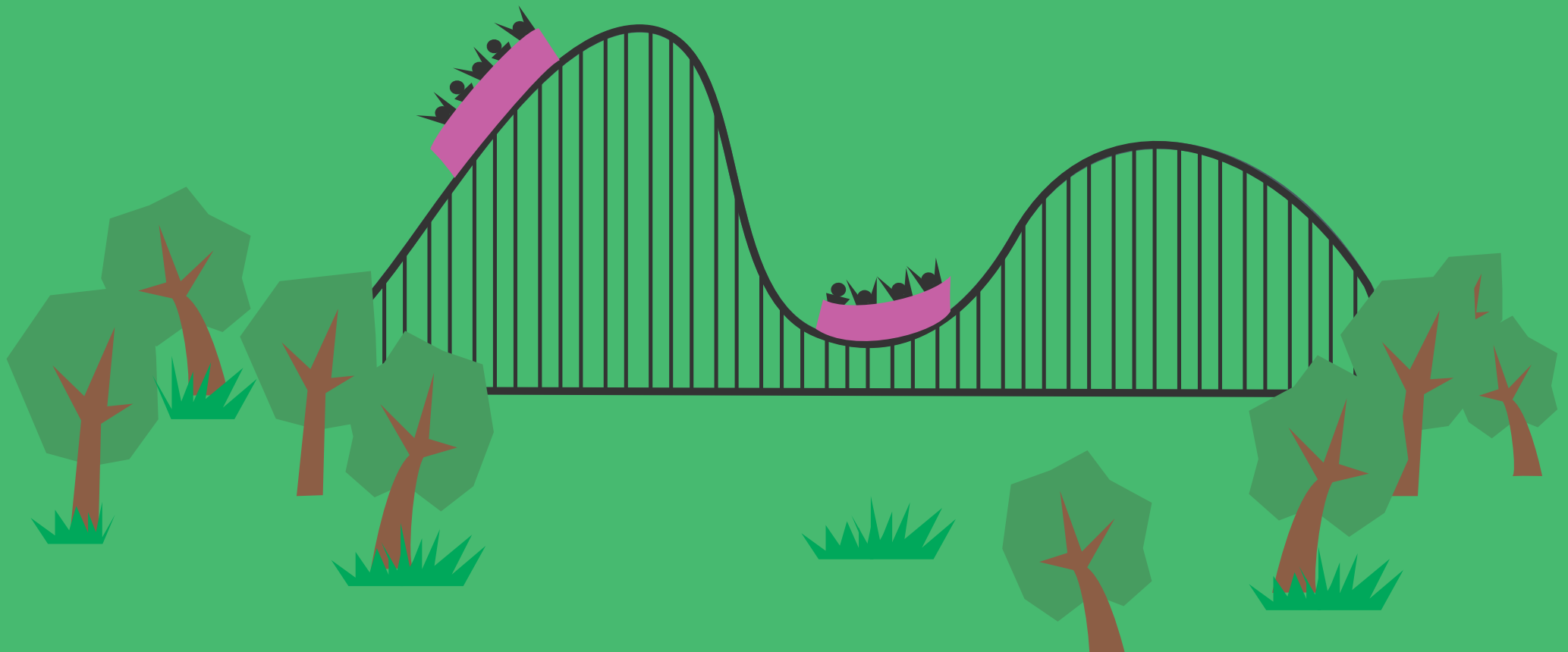
✓ MILITARY EXCEPTIONS

Put your military training to work. Military applicants with a bachelor's degree must have at least one year of clinical training or work experience in the military. (Additional exceptions for military applicants without a degree may apply.)



PARK WHERE YOU LIKE

Whether you prefer parks with rides and mascots or waterfalls and wildlife, from Anaheim to Yosemite, California has you covered.



APPLY YOURSELF

Apply for your CLS license online via the [CDPH website](#). Be sure to round up all your documentation before you get started, as well as your credit card to cover your application fee. You'll need:

- Your official university transcripts
- NACES or AICE course-by-course evaluation
- Verification of one year of post-degree training OR one year of on-the-job experience in a clinical lab
- Verification of your certification exam
- Your online quiz on California lab laws and regulations

NEED A BACKUP PLAN?

Don't meet the requirements yet? Don't sweat it. There are other options to get you headed in the right direction, like getting:

- A CLS trainee license, which lets you train (but not yet work) as a CLS
- An MLT (Medical Laboratory Technician) license, which requires an associate's degree with required coursework and training; to learn more, dive in deeper on CDHP's website



WINE ALL YOU WANT

Whether you're a wine enthusiast or amateur, California's wine country is a must-see on your travel bucket list. The state produces more than 17 million gallons of wine each year, and there are more than 400 wineries in Sonoma County alone. Cheers!



WHAT'S GREAT ABOUT BEING A CLS

Clinical Laboratory Scientists have endless opportunities for work, from hospital and forensic laboratories to medical, biotechnology and industrial research labs. And earning a CLS license can provide incredible career perks like competitive salaries, interesting work and job security, as CLSs are frequently in demand (and just as often in short supply). A CLS can also serve as a stepping-stone in your career path, enriching your knowledge and experience as you work toward other advanced degrees.

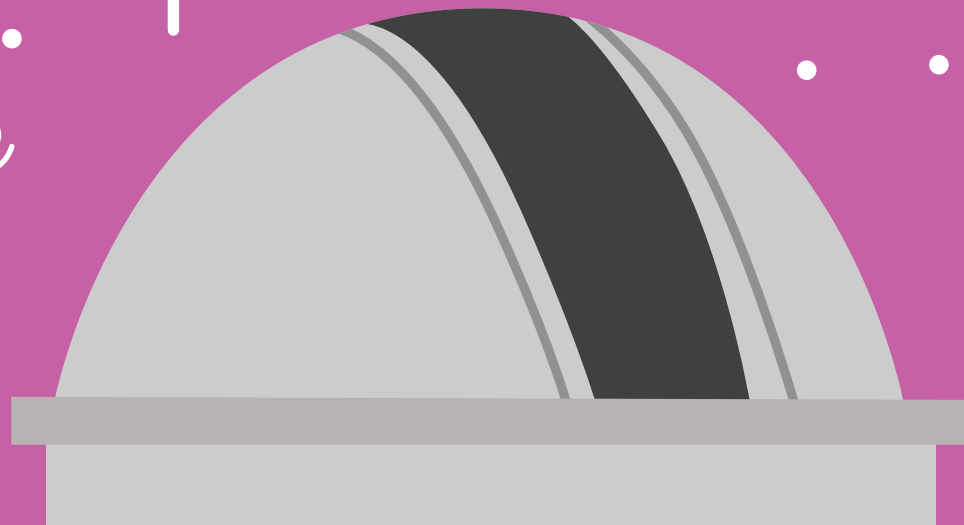
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STAR SIGHTINGS

Hollywood isn't the only place in California where you can get up close and personal with stars. Palomar Mountain Observatory in San Diego is home to the famous Hale Telescope, one of the world's largest and a great spot for stargazing.



THE ROAD TO CLS

Getting your CLS License may take work, but it's well worth it, says Karen, a CLS since 2014.

"Getting my CLS License wasn't easy, partly because my four-year degree is in zoology and not lab science, but I got my MLT certification at a community college, then challenged the AMT MT exam a few years later. After I'd been a traveler for a year, I was able to get some experience in blood banking and take the ASCP MLS exam. I studied for about a year for this, and it was tough! But I passed, and I'm so glad I have my California license!"

A WORD TO THE WISE

"The application process wasn't difficult, but it involved a lot of paperwork and documentation. I strongly recommend that travelers keep track of every form, letter, transcript, payment, etc."

A BIG PAYOFF

"There are lots of jobs to choose from, they pay really well, and there are so many amazing things to see and explore in this incredible state. On my days off, I've hiked trails in the Redwoods and up to Yosemite's waterfalls, sea kayaked through caves in the Channel Islands, rode my bicycle hundreds of miles, seen the wonders of Death Valley, and met friends for life."

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– Karen, CLS since 2014



HAVE LICENSE(S), WILL TRAVEL

"I like having numerous state licenses. It gives me more flexibility and accreditation because all the state boards know you're in good standing. I have six state licenses already and am currently waiting on my Louisiana paperwork to process. Definitely get your California CLS License. You will always get a great assignment there with an excellent compensation package."



- Katie, CLS License since 2013

A PROFESSIONAL WIN/WIN

"I've completed 10 assignments in California since obtaining my license, and while I was able to help facilities that were in need (California continues to have a major shortage of CLS licensees), I also had the opportunity to learn different techniques and methodologies that have broadened my career."



- Norma, CLS License since 2010

NEW HORIZONS

A CLS license in California can really change your viewpoint. Just ask Shaun, a CLS since 2015.

"I've been able to experience new laboratory information systems and qualify to work in many different settings within the state of California. I am only on my second California assignment, but I've been able to work at a hospital that specializes in labor and delivery, as well as in a reference laboratory. Personally, I have been able to (literally) expand my horizons, from experiencing California wine country and Disneyland to kayaking, exploring Hollywood, and immersing myself in the many different cultures. Growing up on the East Coast, I'd never been west of Oklahoma; now that I am out here, I've traveled to Seattle, Las Vegas, Catalina Island, San Diego and Paso Robles, and my list of future trips keeps growing."

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- Shaun, CLS since 2015



**CALIFORNIA HAS A LOT TO OFFER—AND SO DO YOU.
EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES WITH YOUR CLS.**

If you already have your CLS (or you're just curious about job opportunities), check out Fusion Medical Staffing's [job search page](#) and plot your California adventure with your CLS.



RESOURCES

California Department of Public Health

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/lfs/Pages/ClinicalLaboratoryScientist.aspx>

[https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/lfs/Pages/MedicalLaboratoryTechnician\(MLT\).aspx](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/lfs/Pages/MedicalLaboratoryTechnician(MLT).aspx)

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/lfs/Pages/ClinicalLaboratoryScientistTrainee.aspx>

National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Services

<http://www.naacls.org/About.aspx>

The American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

<http://www.ascls.org/>

California Association for Medical Laboratory Technology

<http://camlt.org/clinical-laboratory-scientist-cls>

Chron.com

<http://work.chron.com/states-require-license-work-medical-technology-24098.html>

<http://work.chron.com/mt-mlt-ascp-certification-10084.html>

Fun fact source links:

<http://www.visitcalifornia.com/destination/spotlight-channel-islands-national-park>

<http://www.atlasobscura.com/places/catalinabison>

<http://www.foodreference.com/html/fstatistics-california.html>

<http://www.sonomacounty.com/activities/wineries-wine>

<http://www.astro.caltech.edu/palomar/about/telescopes/hale.html>

https://books.google.com/books?id=JlM2NzM-1oC&pg=PT179&lpg=PT179&dq=One+in+eight+music+festivals+in+the+United+States+is+held+in+California.&source=bl&ots=Q00QBePdks&sig=I-jwm_MlcP21RdAwdSVtNdgAwNg&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewjp_KLZtf3SAhUKxGMKHf0MBYMQ6AEIOTAF#v=onepage&q=One%20in%20eight%20music%20festivals%20in%20the%20United%20States%20is%20held%20in%20California.&f=false

