

9. Medical Laboratory Technician

Nicole, 30, recently received her two-year degree from a local community college. She always wanted a job in the medical field, but wasn't interested in interacting with patients. Instead, she majored as a Medical Laboratory Technician, where she could run and analyze tests taken by nurses and other specialists. She can work independently but still make a big impact on patient health.

After receiving her degree, she was hired by a large hospital. At first, she could only get part-time work, and only overnight. But Nicole was determined to prove herself. She covered shifts when asked and took every opportunity for professional development. When a fulltime med lab tech left, Nicole was hired to fill the position. At the same time, she discovered that she was pregnant with her and her husband's first child. Once she was off maternity leave, Nicole returned to work, but she was still required to work regular overnight shifts. Her husband works day shifts, so they have to find a way to coordinate time together, as well as childcare when their shifts overlap.

Despite these challenges, Nicole's loves knowing that her work helps people get and stay healthy, which she knows makes a direct difference in the community. She hopes that her experience and work ethic will again help her move ahead in her career.