

The College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Alberta

Continuing Competence Program Manual

CMLTA

*The College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Alberta (CMLTA) Continuing Competence Program
approved as amended by Council and in force effective September 15, 2024.
This document replaces any previous versions.*



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The CMLTA acknowledges Treaty 6 territory, the ancestral and traditional territory of the Cree, Blackfoot, Nakota Sioux (“Na-ko-ta Soo”), Iroquois (“ear-uh-kwaa”), Dene (“Den-nay”), Ojibway (“Oh-jeeb-way”)/Saulteaux (“So-toh”)/Anishinaabe (“ah-neesh-ih-NAW-bay”), as well as the Metis (“May-tee”). The CMLTA acknowledges Treaty 7 territory, the ancestral and traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy: Kainai (“Gigh-nigh”), Piikani (“Beh-gun-ee”) and Siksika (“Sik-sik-ah”), as well as the Tssu T’ina (“Soo-tin-ah”) and Stoney Nakota First Nations. The CMLTA acknowledges Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and traditional territory of the Cree, Dene, as well as the Metis. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for generations. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us. We recognize the land as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory we reside on or are visiting.



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Continuing Competence Program

The CMLTAs' Continuing Competence Program (CCP) is a self-directed professional development program that allows the CMLTA to monitor ongoing knowledge, skills, judgments, and attitudes voluntarily undertaken by medical laboratory technologists (MLTs) (Health Professions Act, RSA 2000, c H-7). Along with ensuring MLTs meet standards in the provision of professional services to the public, the CCP provides benefits to the individual MLT, such as professional integrity, personal growth, career advancement, and the increased utilization and application of knowledge, skills, judgments, and attitudes in a professional capacity (Health Professions Act, RSA 2000, c H-7).

In response to regulatory, legal, and ethical expectations, the CCP has evolved to serve the public interest best. Now that Bill 46 is in force, the CCP is outlined in the Continuing Competence Program Standard of Practice. The CCP Standard of Practice applies to all MLTs regardless of role or job title and outlines the framework, timeline, audit process, and consequences of non-compliance with the CCP. The CMLTA has based the most current CCP on the C.A.R.E Model, where every year, all MLTs in Alberta will Create, Act, Reflect, and Enact.

CREATE: The MLT reflects on their current/anticipated professional practice environment, the CMLTA Standards of Practice, and Code of Ethics, assessing and creating a Learning Plan in an area in which they would like to advance their current knowledge, skills, judgments, and attitudes.

Act: Throughout the registration year, the MLT participates in various learning opportunities that impact their professional practice and the public, some planned and some unplanned.

Reflect: After participating in Learning Activities, MLTs reflect on the learning experience and identify key takeaways, the impact on their professional practice, and the impact on their service users.

Enact: The goal of the CCP is for MLTs to not only identify impacts on professional practice and service users but also apply the knowledge, skills, judgments, and attitudes to their professional practice daily, improving public safety in Alberta.



C

Create

- Reflect on current/anticipated professional practice environment
- Review the CMLTA Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics
- Complete the Self-Assessment
- Create ONE Learning Plan based on Standards of Practice/Code of Ethics (Learning Plan Goal)



A

Act

- Participate in at least THREE different Learning Activities
 - ONE activity must meet the Learning Plan Goal
 - TWO other planned/unplanned Learning Activities



R

Reflect

- Log ONE activity that meets the Learning Plan Goal
- Log at least TWO more different planned/unplanned Learning Activities in the Activity Log
- Reflect on the Learning Activities and their impact on professional practice and service users



E

Enact

- Identify and apply the knowledge, skill, judgment and/or attitude in practice, improving public safety in Alberta.

CCP Legislation and Regulation

The Health Professions Act (HPA) and Medical Laboratory Technologists Profession Regulation

The HPA establishes the foundational framework for Alberta's health regulatory colleges to ensure practitioners provide safe, competent, and ethical healthcare services to the public. It sets out common rules for healthcare professionals to self-govern and establish standards for:

- registration
- professional practice
- mandatory continuing education
- formal conduct and discipline processes

HPA Part 1: Governance

3(1) a college

(c) must establish, maintain and enforce standards for registration and of continuing competence and standards of practice of the regulated profession



[Click Here for the Health Professions Act](#)

HPA Part 3: Continuing Competence and Practice Visits

50 (2) A continuing competence program

(a) must provide for regulated members or categories of regulated members to maintain competence and to enhance the provision of professional services by participating in a program for self-directed professional development, and
(b) may provide for practice visits, examinations, interviews or other competence assessments of the regulated members or categories of regulated members.



[Click Here for the Medical Laboratory Technologists Profession Regulation](#)

On March 1, 2002, Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs) became the second group of professionals to come under the HPA, with the proclamation of the Medical Laboratory Technologists Profession Regulation.

Together these two pieces of legislation govern the practice of the MLT profession in Alberta.

The CMLTA Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics defines basic expectations for Medical Laboratory Technologists (MLTs) and acts as an ethical guide that governs the professional conduct of all MLTs. The CMLTA Code of Ethics holds every MLT accountable and is used in conjunction with the Standards of Practice in guiding an MLT's practice and decision-making.



[Click Here for the
CMLTA
Code of Ethics](#)

The CMLTA Standards of Practice

The Standards of Practice apply to all MLTs regardless of role or job title and set the standards of professional practice, behavior, and conduct for the profession. There are two different types of standards in the Standards of Practice: Practice Standards and Legislated Standards.



[Click Here for the
CMLTA
Standards of Practice](#)

Practice Standards outline what an MLT must do in their practice.

1. Professional Accountability
2. Legislative Responsibility
3. Confidentiality and Record Maintenance
4. Professional Knowledge
5. Safety and Quality
6. Consent
7. Communication and Collaboration
8. Culturally Safe Practice

Legislated Standards are standards that the Government of Alberta specifically mandates through the *Health Professions Act*.

1. Continuing Competence Program
2. Ensuring Professional Boundaries and Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Sexual Misconduct
3. Preventing Female Genital Mutilation

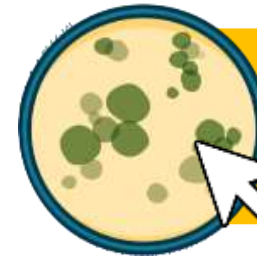
CMLTA CCP

Previously, the Medical Laboratory Technologist Profession Regulation outlined the Continuing Competence Program, but with Bill 46 in force, the CCP is now set out in the Continuing Competence Program Standard of Practice.

CCP Framework

All MLTs on the General, Diagnostic Cytology, Clinical Genetics, and Provisional registers must complete a self-directed continuing competence program on an annual basis that includes:


- A Self-Assessment
- A Learning Plan
- An Activity Log



[Click Here for the
CCP
Standard of Practice](#)

Self-Assessment of Practice

The Self-Assessment of Practice is designed to assist Regulated Members in self-reflection, recognize potential areas for continued or new learning, and establish an annual Learning Plan to guide the maintenance and/or development of competence in the workplace. Regulated Members self-assess by reflecting on their current/anticipated professional practice environment, the CMLTA Standards of Practice, and Code of Ethics, identifying weaknesses/gaps and areas in which they could increase their knowledge, skills, judgments, and attitudes. After describing their current/anticipated job title, role, service users, environment, and identifying trends (short and long term), challenges, changes, and/or risks in their professional practice environment, the MLT selects ONE Practice Standard/Code of Ethics they intend to focus on for that year. This Practice Standard/Code of Ethics becomes the Learning Plan Goal.

 NOTE: Legislated Standards are standards that the Government of Alberta specifically mandates through the *Health Professions Act*. Their format is different from the Practice Standards to meet the requirements of the Government of Alberta. These Standards are fundamental to any Learning Goal and cannot be selected for use in a Learning Plan.

Learning Plan

Along with the Self-Assessment, MLTs must participate in creating and completing a Learning Plan and Activity Log on an annual basis. The CCP cycle starts September 15 and ends December 31 the following year, for example, from September 15, 2024, until December 31, 2025. During this time, MLTs are required to participate in Learning Activities. The new CCP allows MLTs to report planned and unplanned Learning Activities impacting their professional practice in their Learning Plan and Activity Log, respectively. At registration renewal, the MLT addresses both the Learning Plan and an Activity Log. The Learning Plan is based on the Regulated Member's assessment of their current or anticipated professional practice environment, the CMLTA Standards of Practice, and Code of Ethics. Over the course of the CCP Cycle, it is the MLT's responsibility to participate and document learning activities undertaken.

Creating a Learning Plan

The MLT must:

- Select ONE Practice Standard/Code of Ethics in which they would like to advance their current knowledge, skills, judgments, or attitudes.
- Provide a detailed reason why that particular Practice Standard/Code of Ethics was chosen and identify potential outcomes or benefits to professional practice through the completion of the Learning Plan Goal.
- Identify 1 to 3 projected learning activities – it is recognized that learning is achieved through many avenues, dependent upon the preferred learning style of the MLT. These learning activities, the tools an MLT plans to use to develop their learning objectives, may include people, literature, courses, policies, procedures, etc. When developing a Learning Plan, potential learning opportunities are often unknown. As such, MLTs are required to select projected learning activities, but the CMLTA recognizes these activities may vary from those ultimately utilized to complete a learning objective.

Completing a Learning Plan

The MLTs must:

- Provide the necessary information regarding the Learning Activity
 - Date(s)
 - Topic
- Identify at least ONE key takeaway from the Learning Activity.
- Identify at least ONE impact the Learning Activity had on the MLTs' Professional Practice.
- Identify at least ONE impact the Learning Activity had on the MLTs' service users.
- Provide at least ONE application of the learning in the MLTs' professional practice.

For acceptable activity guidelines, please refer to Page 7 of this document.



[Click Here for A Guide
On Creating and Completing a
Learning Plan](#)

The term "service user" refers to any individual who uses the MLT's services, including patients, clients, students, employees, or any other group.

Activity Log

A fundamental component of the CCP is recording TWO additional DIFFERENT Learning Activities in the online CCP Activity Log. The Activity Log exists because the CMLTA recognizes that not all learning opportunities are known a year in advance, but those unexpected learning opportunities can be just as impactful on professional practice. The CCP cycle starts September 15 and ends December 31 the following year, for example, from September 15, 2024, until December 31, 2025. During this time, MLTs are required to participate in Learning Activities. The CCP Activity Log requests information to validate completed Learning Activities and the resultant impact on a Regulated Member's professional practice.

Activity Log Components

MLTs must complete the following for a minimum of TWO different Learning Activities:

- Provide the necessary information regarding the Learning Activity
 - Date(s)
 - Topic
- Relate the Learning Activity to a Standard of Practice
- Identify at least ONE key takeaway from the Learning Activity.
- Identify at least ONE impact the Learning Activity had on the MLTs' Professional Practice.
- Identify at least ONE impact the Learning Activity had on the MLTs' service users.
- Provide at least ONE application of the learning in the MLTs' professional practice.



[Click Here for A Guide
On Logging Activities in
The Activity Log](#)

The term "service user" refers to any individual who uses the MLT's services, including patients, clients, students, employees, or any other group.

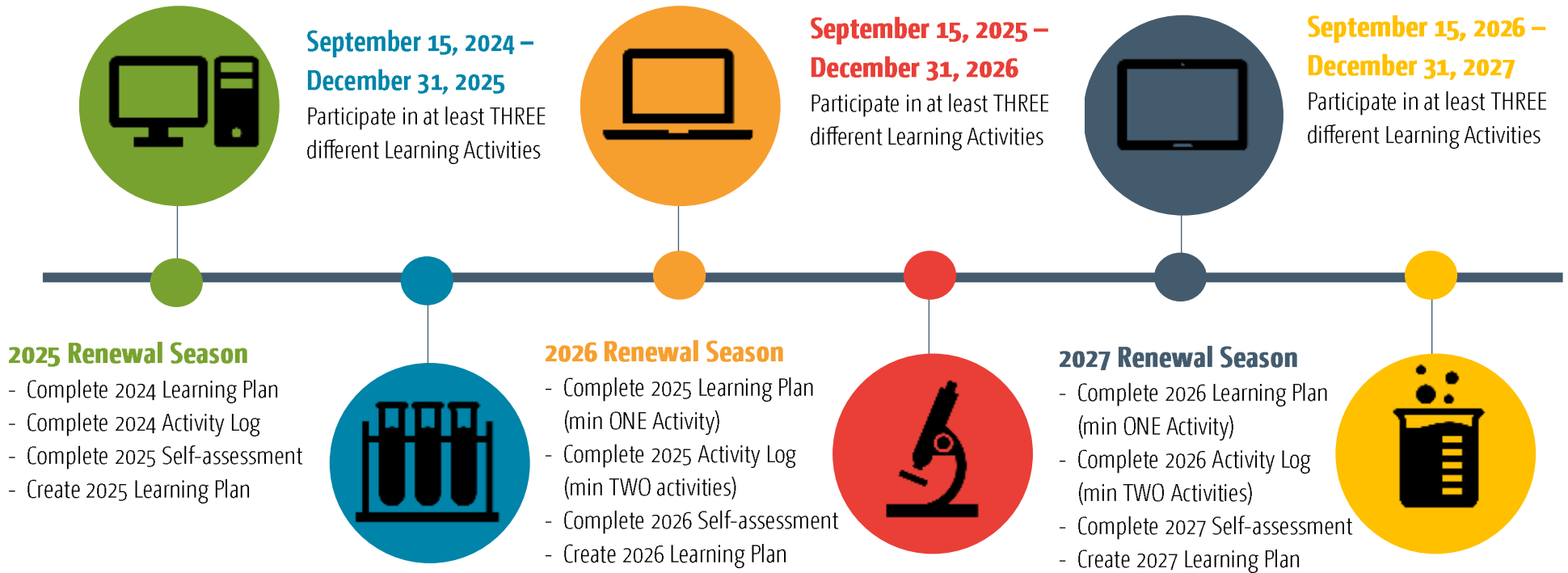
Acceptable Activity Guidelines:

To ensure that MLTs' Learning Activities advance competence, not reaffirm:

- MLTs may use the same Standard/Code and the same Learning Activity provided the key takeaway, impact on professional practice, impact on service users, and application are different from the previous year. For example, an MLT may use the Practice Standard: Professional Knowledge, and share knowledge and/or expertise as a trainer/mentor/preceptor each year provided the key takeaway, impact on professional practice, impact on service users, and application is different from the previous year. An MLT taking the same Safety Module each year with the same key takeaway, impact on professional practice, impact on service users, and application yearly, would not be acceptable. If selected for audit and the MLT is found not compliant, the MLT will be required to complete additional learning activities, and/or provide relevant information or evidence of continued learning and competence within a specific period of time.
- The CMLTA requires Learning Activities that are not part of MLTs regular work activities. For example, reviewing a Standard Operative Procedure (SOP) for a process that outlines a regular work activity does not constitute a Continuing Competence Learning Activity. If an employer provides learning opportunities that are not mandatory or part of an MLTs regular work activities, such as a lunch and learn, courses, etc.; those can be used as a Continuing Competence Learning Activity. If selected for audit and the MLT is found not compliant, the MLT will be required to complete additional learning activities, and/or provide relevant information or evidence of continued learning and competence within a specific period of time.

CCP TimeLine

The Continuing Competence Program must be completed annually. Completion is due before the MLTs can renew their practice permit for the upcoming year as per the Continuing Competence Standard of Practice. The CCP cycle starts September 15 and ends December 31 the following year, for example, from September 15, 2024, until December 31, 2025. Below outlines the Continuing Competence Program timeline:



Continuing Competence Audit

The Continuing Competence Standard of Practice states that all MLTs (General, Diagnostic Cytology, Clinical Genetics, and Provisional registers) must complete a self-directed continuing competence program on an annual basis. The Continuing Competence Program Compliance Audit is a tool that monitors the conformance of Regulated Members and is used to review and improve the current CCP. The CMLTA randomly selects up to 20% of Regulated Members from the previous year's registration roster to participate in the CCP Compliance Audit. All of those who are notified must participate in an audit and will remain outstanding on an individual's file, restricting MLT registration and annual Practice Permit Renewal until the individual has successfully complied with the request.

At registration renewal, the MLT is required to submit a completed Learning Plan and log at least TWO different Learning Activities in their Activity Log, which, along with the self-assessment, will be used if randomly selected for the CCP Compliance Audit.

CCP Audit Process

Notification: All MLTs are notified by email that they have been selected for the CCP Audit. If there are extenuating circumstances preventing an individual from complying with the CCP Audit and its specified deadlines, the CMLTA must be notified immediately to avoid escalation to a potential complaint of professional misconduct.

Submission: Within the initial CCP Compliance Audit notice email, the MLT will see details regarding the audit process. The MLT no longer must review and submit the Self-Assessment, Learning Plan, and Activity Log as that was submitted during the previous renewal season. The CMLTA also no longer requires MLTs to complete a Verification of MLT Practice Hours form or a declaration.

CMLTA Review and Potential Re-submission: The CMLTA will review and render the audit complete or incomplete based on the Self-Assessment, Learning Plan, and Activity Log. If found incomplete, the CMLTA will request the MLT complete outstanding requirements, complete additional learning activities, and/or provide relevant information or evidence of continued learning and competence within a specific period of time. If the CCP audit is still incomplete after the subsequent deadline, the MLT may be fined, and/or the matter may be referred to the Complaints Director as a complaint of unprofessional conduct.



[Click Here for the
CMLTA CCP Audit
Rubric](#)

CCP Summary

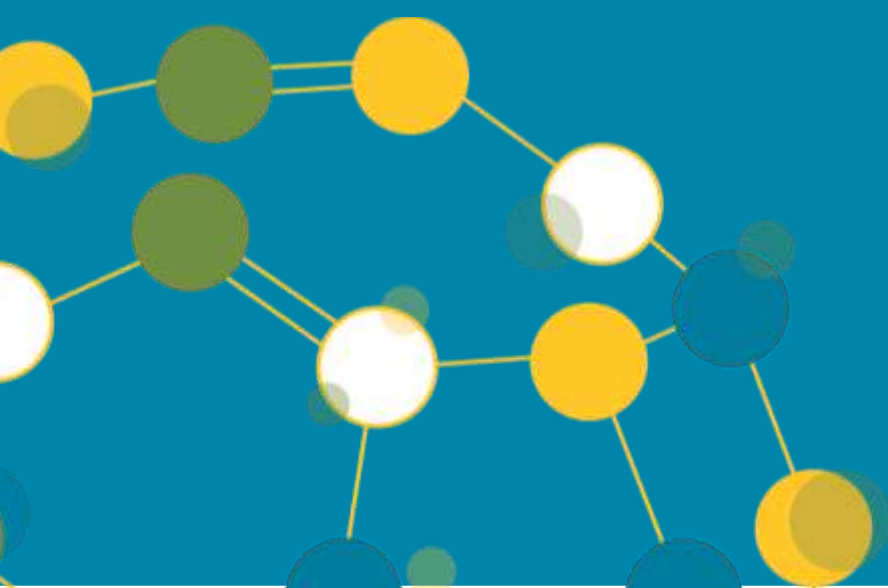
All regulated health professionals are required to participate in a standardized Continuing Competence Program pursuant to the HPA. A mandatory structured professional development program is only one measure to ensure patient safety and public protection. All MLTs must assume personal accountability in professional practice to remain skilled, knowledgeable, and competent practitioners. This document outlines the fundamental elements of the CMLTA CCP. The CMLTA reviews this document annually and communicates revisions and new requirements to Regulated Members via the website and eNewsletters.

Comments or questions are welcome and can be directed to the Continuing Competence Program:

Somarly Siek

Phone. 780 435 5452

email. ssiek@cmlta.org



CCP Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How can MLTs access their CCP Learning Plan and Activity Log?

The CMLTA utilizes an interactive online format for Regulated Members to record the information necessary to meet the CCP requirements. MLTs can access the CCP Learning Plan and Activity Log throughout the year through their Member Login on the CMLTA website.

Where can MLTs and members of the public get additional resources regarding the CCP?

The CMLTA website is regularly updated with resources that are available to both MLTs and the public. These resources are found under the resource tab on the CMLTA website. Within this tab, MLTs and members of the public can browse the many different resources, such as the CMLTA Podcasts, CMLTA Videos, CMLTA Educational Webinars, and CMLTA PDF documents.

Why do MLTs need to create a Learning Plan?

With Bill 46 in force, the CCP is set out in the Continuing Competence Program Standard of Practice, which requires all MLTs to participate in a Self-Assessment, Learning Plan, and Activity Log. The new CCP allows MLTs more flexibility to report planned and unplanned Learning Activities impacting their professional practice.

Do the two Learning Activities in the Activity Log need to be related to the same Practice Standard/Code of Ethics in the MLTs Learning Plan?

No, the MLTs' activities in the Activity Log do not have to be related to the same as the Practice Standard/Code of Ethics in the Learning Plan. For example, the Learning Plan Goal could be related to the Professional Knowledge practice standard, while the two other learning activities in the Activity Log can be related to the Legislative Responsibility practice standard and Consent practice standard. The CMLTA also allows the same Practice Standard/Code of Ethics for all learning activities, provided that the learning is different. For example, the Learning Plan Goal and the Activity Log activities can be related to Professional Knowledge provided the learning was different. For example, an MLT participated in a webinar regarding a new analyzer being implemented in the lab, read an article related to their professional practice, and discussed a policy/process in the laboratory to improve their professional practice environment.

MLTs attend many continuing education activities. Does the CMLTA recognize these additional activities?

The new version of the CCP is designed to capture both planned and potentially unplanned learning activities in both the Learning Plan and Activity Log. The CMLTA CCP requires MLTs' to participate and record at least three different learning activities (one learning activity that meets the Learning Plan and two additional learning activities in their Activity Log). The CMLTA encourages individuals to attend all learning events that enhance one's professional development, but the CCP requirements capture only the minimum mandatory education required to ensure compliance with the HPA.

Why doesn't the CMLTA simply require specific course completion rather than a Self-Assessment and a completed Learning Plan each year?

The CMLTA considers the new CCP, using the Self-Assessment of Practice based on their Professional Practice Environment and the CMLTA Standards of Practice, and Code of Ethics, to assess the MLTs' individual learning needs as a more practical and applicable tool for MLTs to remain competent in their unique practice settings.

Why can't MLTs change their CCP log when selected for a CCP Audit?

Previously, MLTs selected for CCP audit were allowed to edit their Activity Logs before submitting to the CMLTA CCP Compliance Audit. The new CCP requires MLTs to complete and submit their CCP and complete the CCP Audit Declaration upon renewal. This is to ensure MLTs are not only adequately meeting the CCP requirements at renewal but also allows the CMLTA to conduct the CCP audit in a timely fashion.

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