



## Professional Nursing; Scope of Practice Decision Tree

RN - 1.40 "Professional nursing", pursuant to §5-34-3(h) of the Act, is practiced by registered nurses (R.N.s). The practice of professional nursing is a dynamic process of assessment of an individual's health status, identification of health care needs, determination of health care goals with the individual and/or family participation and the development of a plan of nursing care to achieve these goals. Nursing actions, including teaching and counseling, are directed toward the promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health and evaluation of the individual's response to nursing actions and the medical regimen of care. The professional nurse provides care and support of individuals and families during periods of wellness and injury and incorporates where appropriate, the medical plan of care as prescribed by a duly licensed physician, dentist or podiatrist or other licensed health care provider licensed to prescribe. Each R.N. is directly accountable and responsible to the consumer for the nursing care rendered.

LPN - 1.35 "Practical nursing", pursuant to §5-34-3(g) of the Act, is practiced by licensed practical nurses (LPNs). It is an integral part of nursing based on a knowledge and skill level commensurate with education. It includes promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health and utilizes standardized procedures leading to predictable outcomes that are in accord with the professional nurse regimen under the direction of a registered nurse. In situations where registered nurses are not employed, the licensed practical nurse functions under the direction of a duly licensed physician, dentist, podiatrist, or other licensed health care providers authorized by law to prescribe. Each L.P.N. is responsible for the nursing care rendered.

<p><b>1. Consider the activity/task you have been asked to perform and then review the scope of practice for your license. Does the Nurse Practice Act permit that activity/task to be performed by a person with the license you hold?</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes, continue ↓</p>	<p>No or Unsure →</p>	<p><b>If No. Stop immediately!</b> If Unsure / Not defined Consult qualified individuals such as: supervisor, colleague, professor, Board of Nursing, and additional resources.</p>
<p><b>2. Is the activity/task supported by research, Quality &amp; Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN), the American Nurses Association publications on Nursing's Social Policy Statement, Nursing Ethics, and the Scope and Standards of Practice documents, research on nursing practice, and is consistent with your position?</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes, continue ↓</p>	<p>No. →</p>	<p><b>Stop immediately!</b> This activity is not within your scope of practice Consult chain of command.</p>
<p><b>3. Is the activity/task consistent with organizational policies or procedures?</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes, continue ↓</p>	<p>No →</p>	<p><b>Stop immediately</b> and seek clarification of orders!</p>
<p><b>4. Do you possess the current knowledge and clinical skill required to perform the activity/task safely?</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes, continue ↓</p>	<p>No →</p>	<p><b>Stop immediately!</b> Attain the needed clinical skills. As appropriate, seek assistance from competent colleagues to accomplish skill.</p>
<p><b>5. Would a reasonable and prudent nurse perform this activity in this setting?</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes, continue ↓</p>	<p>No →</p>	<p><b>Stop immediately!</b></p>
<p><b>6. Are you prepared to accept the responsibility for your action?</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Yes, continue ↓</p> <p>Perform the activity/task with a valid order, when required, and in accordance with agency policies and procedures.</p>	<p>No →</p>	<p><b>Stop immediately!</b> Document and communicate your decision to appropriate person(s) in chain of command.</p>

This tool is based on the Rules and Regulations for the Licensing of Nurses and Standards for the Approval for the Basic Nursing Education Programs [R5-34-NUR/ED] promulgated pursuant to the authority conferred under §5-34-7(1) of the General Laws of Rhode Island. If you have further questions read the Rules and Regulations or contact the RI State Board of Nurse Registration and Nursing Education.