

Arizona Board of Nursing Scope of Practice APRN Questions & Answers
SCOPE OF PRACTICE
Certified Nurse Midwife

1. What is the definition of a certified nurse midwife?

According to [A.R.S. 32-1601 \(5. \(a\)-\(d\)\)](http://www.azleg.gov/ars/32/01601.htm)

(<https://www.azleg.gov/viewdocument/?docName=http://www.azleg.gov/ars/32/01601.htm>), Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNM) are Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRN) who have acquired the formal education, extended knowledge base and clinical skills beyond the registered nurse level to practice in an advanced role as direct health care providers.

"Certified nurse midwife" is a registered nurse who:

- (a) Is certified by the board.
- (b) Has completed a nurse midwife education program approved or recognized by the board and educational requirements prescribed by the board by rule.
- (c) Holds a national certification as a certified nurse midwife from a national certifying body recognized by the board.
- (d) Has an expanded scope of practice in the provision of health care services for women from adolescence to beyond menopause, including antepartum, intrapartum, postpartum, reproductive, gynecologic and primary care, for normal newborns during the first twenty-eight days of life and for men for the treatment of sexually transmitted diseases.

2. What is the certified nurse midwife scope of practice?

In accordance with [A.R.S. § 32-1601 \(5. \(d.\)\)](http://www.azleg.gov/ars/32/01601.htm)

(<https://www.azleg.gov/viewdocument/?docName=http://www.azleg.gov/ars/32/01601.htm>), the certified nurse midwife has an expanded scope of practice in the provision of health care services for women from adolescence to beyond menopause, including antepartum, intrapartum, postpartum, reproductive, gynecologic and primary care, for normal newborns during the first twenty-eight days of life and for men for the treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. The expanded scope of practice under this subdivision includes:

- (i) Assessing patients, synthesizing and analyzing data and understanding and applying principles of health care at an advanced level.
- (ii) Managing the physical and psychosocial health care of patients.
- (iii) Analyzing multiple sources of data, identifying alternative possibilities as to the nature of a health care problem and selecting, implementing and evaluating appropriate treatment.
- (iv) Making independent decisions in solving complex patient care problems.

(v) Diagnosing, performing diagnostic and therapeutic procedures and prescribing, administering and dispensing therapeutic measures, including legend drugs, medical devices and controlled substances, within the scope of the certified nurse midwife practice after meeting requirements established by the board.

(vi) Recognizing the limits of the nurse's knowledge and experience by consulting with or referring patients to other appropriate health care professionals if a situation or condition occurs that is beyond the knowledge and experience of the nurse or if the referral will protect the health and welfare of the patient.

(vii) Delegating to a medical assistant pursuant to section 32-1456.

(viii) Performing additional acts that require education and training as prescribed by the board and that are recognized by the nursing profession as proper to be performed by a certified nurse midwife.

3. Can a **certified nurse midwife** order regional analgesia in labor management?

Yes, according to the [Advisory Opinion: Certified Nurse-Midwives Ordering Regional Analgesia in Labor Management](https://www.azbn.gov/sites/default/files/advisory-opinions/ao-certified-nurse-midwives-ordering-regional-analgesia-in-labor-management.pdf) (<https://www.azbn.gov/sites/default/files/advisory-opinions/ao-certified-nurse-midwives-ordering-regional-analgesia-in-labor-management.pdf>), it is within the scope of practice for nurse-midwives to order epidural and regional analgesia for laboring patients to be provided by Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists or anesthesiologists.

4. Is a **certified nurse midwife** required to have a supervising physician?

Arizona does not require physician supervision or collaboration for independent practice of nurse practitioners (NP) (regardless of specialty). According to the Nurse Practice Act, [R4-19-508](https://www.azbn.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/RULES.Effective.June3_.2019.pdf) (https://www.azbn.gov/sites/default/files/2020-03/RULES.Effective.June3_.2019.pdf), the requirement is for an NP to consult with or refer clients to other health care providers, to a physician or another health care provider if the referral will protect the health and welfare of the patient and consult with a physician or other health care providers if a situation or condition occurs in a patient that is beyond the RNP's knowledge and experience. However, institution policy may require physician supervision.