

Doug Ducey  
Governor



Joey Ridenour  
Executive Director

## Arizona State Board of Nursing

1740 West Adams Street, Suite 2000  
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2607  
Phone (602) 771-7800  
Home Page: <http://www.azbn.gov>

An advisory opinion adopted by AZBN is an interpretation of what the law requires. While an advisory opinion is not law, it is more than a recommendation. In other words, an advisory opinion is an official opinion of AZBN regarding the practice of nursing as it relates to the functions of nursing. Facility policies may restrict practice further in their setting and/or require additional expectations related to competency, validation, training, and supervision to assure the safety of their patient population and or decrease risk.

**OPINION: Decision Tree for Nursing Assistant and the Licensed Nursing Assistant**  
**APPROVED DATE: 9/2020**  
**REVISED DATE:**  
**ORIGINATING COMMITTEE:**  
**SCOPE OF PRACTICE COMMITTEE**

Within the Scope of Practice of  X  CNA, LNA

### ADVISORY OPINION DECISION TREE FOR THE CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT AND THE LICENSED NURSING ASSISTANT

It is the mission of the Arizona State Board of Nursing, to protect the public and act as their advocate by effectively regulating the practice of nursing care.

**SCOPE OF PRACTICE** - Practice responsibilities for the nursing assistant can be defined as the range of nursing care activities commonly delegated to nursing assistants and is influenced by their education, training, experience and population served.

It is NOT within the scope of practice for a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) to perform any task that requires a judgement based on nursing knowledge.

#### GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

- A. The activity (task) must be consistent with generally recognized scope and standards of practice for the certified nursing assistant (Rule of the State Board of Nursing – section RA-19-813) and covered by facility policies.
- B. The nursing assistant must assume accountability for the task and the outcomes of the care provided
- C. The nursing assistant is required to inform the person authorized to delegate the task about his/her ability to perform the task(s) before accepting the assignment.
- D. If the task is a new procedure for the certified nursing assistant, the CNA will be responsible for learning the new task according to the plans established by the employer for education, skills practice and evaluation. The CNA will be responsible for achieving competency to perform the skill and documentation of competency will be kept on file with the employer/agency.

#### RATIONALE

Because the roles and responsibilities of nursing assistants are influenced by the healthcare system which is ever changing and increasing in complexity, it is important for the nursing assistant to understand his/her own scope of practice to which he/she is responsible.

**Scope of Practice Decision Making Tool for the Nursing Assistant (next page):**

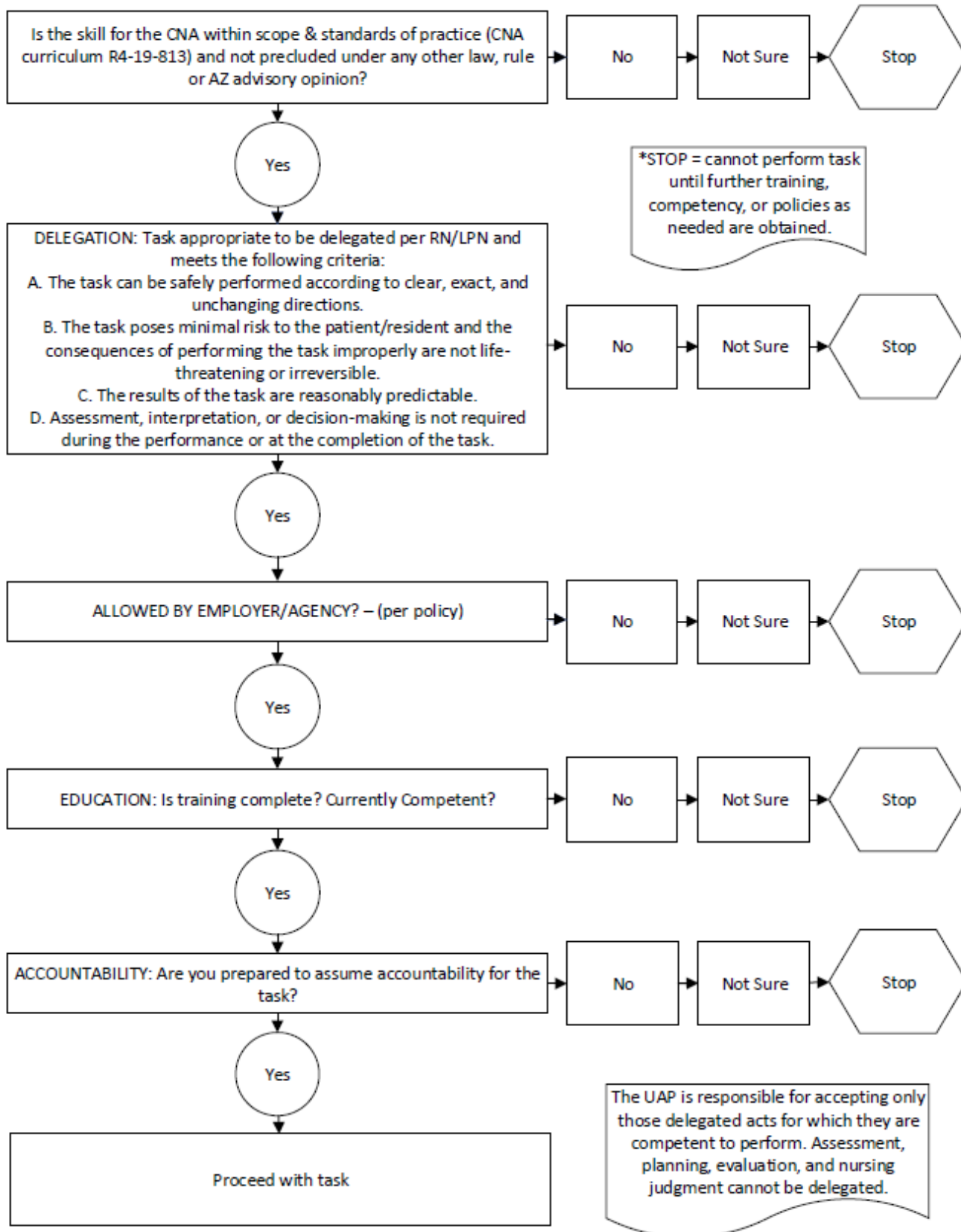
This tool is intended to provide direction in the decision-making process for delegation to the certified nursing assistant or licensed nursing assistant.

**REFERENCES**

American Nurses Association (2010). *Nursing Scope and Standards of Practice (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*. Retrieved from [www.nursingworld.org/nursingstandards](http://www.nursingworld.org/nursingstandards)

Arizona State Legislature (2018). *Rules of the State Board of Nursing*. RA-19-813, section A.

Kentucky State Board of Nursing (2018, June ). *Decision Tree for Delegation to Unlicensed Assistive Personnel (UAP)*. Retrieved from <https://kbn.ky.gov/practice/Documents/DecisionTreeforDelegationtoUAP.pdf>



## Process for Utilizing the Decision-Making Tool

How to use this process/tool: answer each of the questions in the order of the tool, proceed to the next question or stop and follow the instructions to inform the qualified professional.

***Determine if the activity is consistent with the certified nursing assistant (CNA) and licensed nursing assistant (LNA) Rules of the State Board of Nursing – section RA-19-813 and not precluded under any law, rule, Arizona Advisory Opinion or policy.***

**Not sure-** Review RA-19-813 found at [www.azbn.gov/NursePracticeAct.aspx](http://www.azbn.gov/NursePracticeAct.aspx) and employer's policies and procedures, then if yes, continue. If No, Stop.

**No-** Stop. Inform the qualified professional.

**Yes – Continue**

***Is the skill for the CNA, LNA within generally recognized standards of practice?***

**Not sure –** Seek consultation with your institutional leader(s) to research health-related literature to support this activity. If none found, see NO. If supporting data found, continue.

**NO –** Stop. Inform the qualified professional.

**Yes – Continue**

***Has the task been appropriately delegated to you by a licensed nurse?***

**Not sure-** Stop, Inform the qualified professional. (Assessment, planning, evaluation and nursing judgement cannot be delegated. Only the implementation of a task/activity may be delegated.)

**No –** Stop, Inform the qualified professional.

**Yes - Continue**

***Does your employing facility policy allow you to perform the activity/task?***

**Not Sure-** Review policy with qualified professional who delegated the task

**No –** Stop. Inform the qualified professional.

**Yes – Continue,** follow the facility policy or procedure to complete the task

***Is the activity something taught in your basic nursing assistant education program?***

**Not sure-** Stop, Inform the qualified professional that you cannot do the activity/task until additional training can be obtained

**No –** Stop, Inform the qualified professional. Obtain additional training.

**Yes – Continue**

***Do you know how to perform the act? Are you currently competent?***

**Not Sure-** Seek consultation and validation of competency.

**No –** Stop. Inform the qualified professional.

**Yes – Continue**

***Are you (the nursing assistant) prepared to assume accountability for the act and for the outcomes of the care?***

**Not Sure-**Is the outcome reasonably predictable; is the setting one in which there is support for negative outcome with minimal harm to patients? If no Stop and inform the qualified professional.

**No –** Stop. Inform the qualified professional

**Yes –Decide whether to accept, agree to learn, or refuse to accept the newly assigned task or procedure and be aware of the implications of each action.**

**Accept** the newly assigned task. You have now made an agreement with your employer to incorporate this new responsibility, under the conditions outlined in the agency's procedure manual and delegated to you by a licensed nurse. You are accountable to perform the task correctly.

**Agree to learn** the new procedure according to the plans established by the employer for your education, skills practice and evaluation. You will be responsible for achieving competency to perform this skill. Make sure that documentation is in your personnel file validating this additional education. If you do not believe you are competent use your chain of command to develop additional competency. Together you can develop an action plan for gaining competency.

**Refuse** to accept the newly assigned task. You will need to document your concerns for patient safety as well as the process you use to inform your employer of your decisions. Keep a personal copy of this documentation and send a copy to your nurse manager. When you refuse to accept the assigned task, be prepared to offer options such as transfer to another unit (if this new role is just for your unit) or perhaps a change in work assigned tasks with your colleagues. Keep in mind though, when you refuse an assignment you may face disciplinary action, so it is important that you be familiar with your employer's grievance procedure.

**Other Considerations:**

Record of education and supervised clinical practice is maintained.