

KENTUCKY BOARD OF NURSING
312 Whittington Pky, Ste 300
Louisville, KY 40222-5172

RN/LPN SCOPE OF PRACTICE DETERMINATION GUIDELINES

The *Kentucky Nursing Laws* (KRS Chapter 314) define “licensed practical nursing practice,” “registered nursing practice,” and “advanced practice registered nursing practice,” and holds each nurse individually accountable and responsible for his/her nursing decisions and actions.

The Kentucky Board of Nursing (KBN) interprets statutes, promulgates regulations to implement statutes/laws and issues advisory opinions¹ as guidelines as to what constitutes safe nursing practice.

When the performance of a specific act is not definitively addressed in the *Kentucky Nursing Laws* or in an advisory opinion of the Board, the nurse must exercise professional judgment in determining whether the performance of the act is within the scope of practice for which the individual nurse is licensed. The KBN has developed a decision making model that provides guidelines to nurses in determining whether a selected act is within an individual nurse’s scope of practice.

***KRS 314.021(2)** imposes individual responsibility upon nurses. Acts which are within the permissible scope of practice for a given licensure level may be performed only by those licensees who personally possess the educational preparation and clinical competence to perform those acts in a safe, effective manner.*

Statutory Definitions

KRS 314.011(10) defines “licensed practical nursing practice” as:

- ...The performance of acts requiring knowledge and skill such as are taught or acquired in approved schools for practical nursing in:
- a) The observing and caring for the ill, injured, or infirm under the direction of a registered nurse, advanced practice registered nurse, physician assistant, a licensed physician, or dentist.
 - b) The giving of counsel and applying procedures to safeguard life and health, as defined and authorized by the board.
 - c) The administration of medication or treatment as authorized by a physician, physician assistant, dentist, or advanced practice registered nurse and as further authorized or limited by the board which is consistent with the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses or with standards of practice established by nationally accepted organizations of licensed practical nurses.
 - d) Teaching, supervising, and delegating except as limited by the board.
 - e) The performance of other nursing acts which are authorized or limited by the board and which are consistent with the National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses’ Standards of Practice or with standards of practice established by nationally accepted organizations of licensed practical nurses.

KRS 314.011(6) defines “registered nursing practice” as:

...The performance of acts requiring substantial specialized knowledge, judgment and nursing skill based upon the principles of psychological, biological, physical and social sciences in the application of the nursing process in:

- a) The care, counsel, and health teaching of the ill, injured, or infirm.
- b) The maintenance of health or prevention of illness of others.
- c) The administration of medication and treatment as prescribed by a physician, physician assistant, dentist, or advanced practice registered nurse and as further authorized or limited by the board, and which are consistent either with the American Nurses’ Association Standards of Practice or with standards of practice established by nationally accepted organizations of registered nurses. Components of medication administration include, but are not limited to:
 1. Preparing and giving medication in the prescribed dosage, route, and frequency;
 2. Observing, recording, and reporting desired effects, untoward reactions, and side effects of drug therapy;
 3. Intervening when emergency care is required as a result of drug therapy;
 4. Recognizing accepted prescribing limits and reporting deviations to the prescribing individual;
 5. Recognizing drug incompatibilities and reporting interactions or potential interactions to the prescribing individual; and
 6. Instructing an individual regarding medications.
- d) The supervision, teaching of, and delegation to other personnel in the performance of activities relating to nursing care.
- e) The performance of other nursing acts which are authorized or limited by the board, and which are consistent either with American Nurses’ Association Standards of Practice or with standards of practice established by nationally accepted organizations of registered nurses.

KRS 314.011(8) defines “advanced practice registered nursing” (APRN) as:

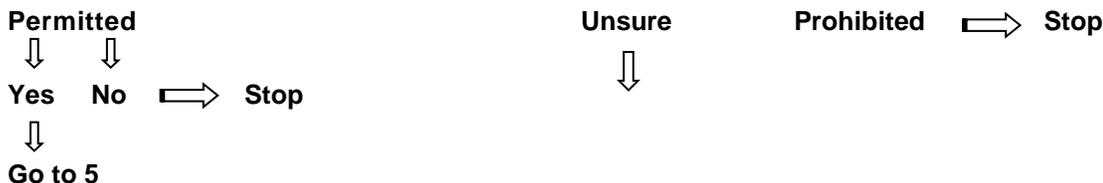
...The performance of additional acts by registered nurses who have gained advanced clinical knowledge and skills through an accredited education program that prepares the registered nurse for one (1) of the four (4) APRN roles; who are certified by the American Nurses’ Association or other nationally established organizations or agencies recognized by the board to certify registered nurses for advanced nursing practice. The performance of these additional acts shall be consistent with national accepted organizations or agencies’ scopes and standards of practice recognized by the board by regulations.

DECISION-MAKING MODEL FOR DETERMINING SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR RNS/LPNS

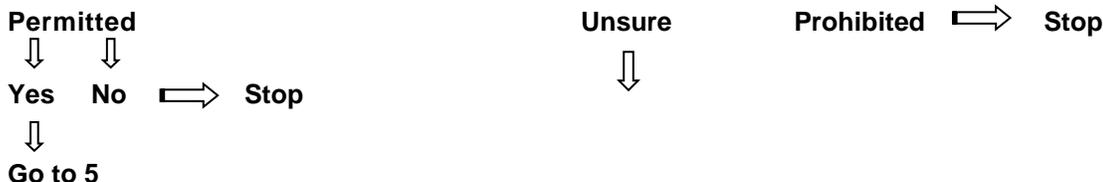
1. Describe the act being performed.



2. Is the act expressly permitted/prohibited by the *Kentucky Nursing Laws* for license which you hold or by any other applicable Kentucky Law?



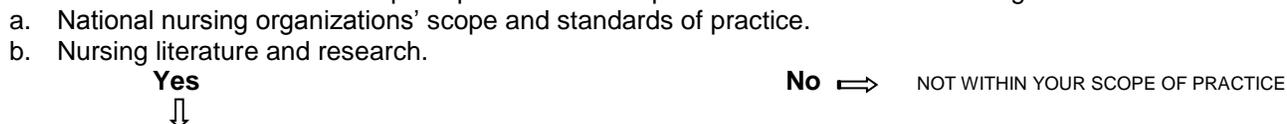
3. Is the act permitted/prohibited by your employing facility/organization policy?



4. Does the act require application of substantial specialized nursing knowledge, skill, and independent judgment?



5. Is the act consistent with the scope of practice based upon at least one of the following factors?



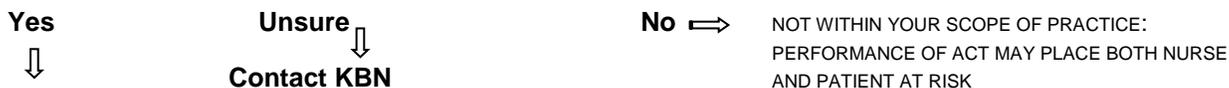
6. Do you personally possess the depth and breadth of knowledge to perform the act safely and effectively as demonstrated by knowledge acquired in a prelicensure program, post licensure program, or continuing education program? (Can you provide evidence of education?)



7. Do you personally possess current clinical competence to perform the act safely? (Can you provide evidence of competency validation?)



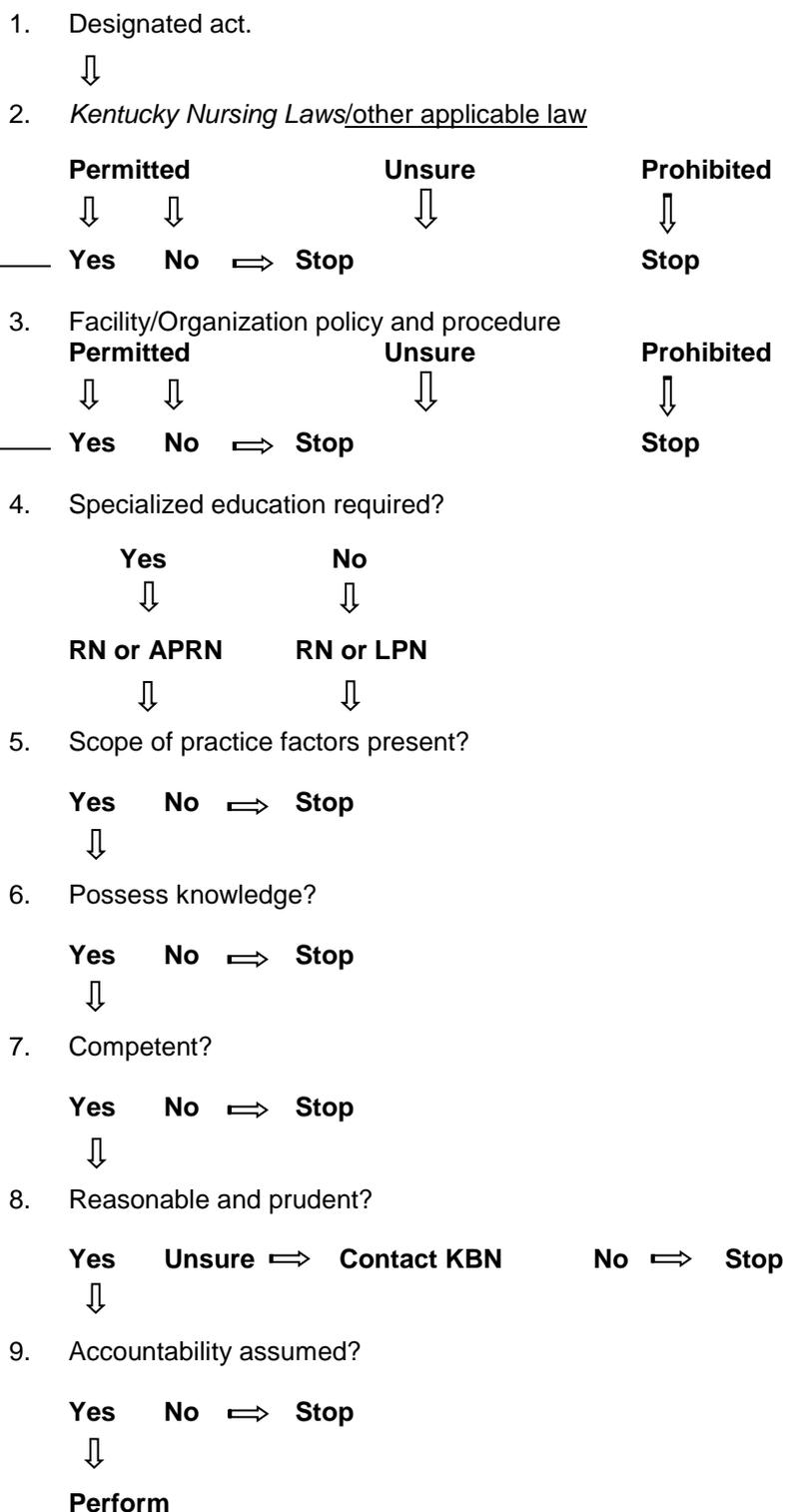
8. Is the performance of the act within the accepted "standard of care" which would be provided in similar circumstances by reasonable and prudent nurses who have similar training and experience?



9. Are you prepared to accept the consequences of your action?



GUIDELINES SUMMARY: DETERMINING SCOPE OF PRACTICE FOR RNS/LPNS



- 1 An advisory opinion is not a regulation of the Board and does not have the force and effect of law. It is issued as a guideline to licensees who wish to engage in safe nursing practice and who wish to minimize the possibility of being subjected to discipline and/or malpractice litigation. (Copies of advisory opinion statements and the *Kentucky Nursing Laws* are available from the Kentucky Board of Nursing website <http://kbn.ky.gov/Pages/default.aspx>)
- 2 The legal scope of advanced practice registered nursing is defined by a) advanced clinical knowledge achieved through an accredited educational program; b) certification as an advanced practiced registered nurse in a specific advanced practice role and population foci; and c) the national nursing organization's published scope and standards of practice.