

# Nursing Jurisprudence and Ethics for School Nurses

Laura Kincheloe, Ed.D., MSN, RN, NE-BC  
Director of Nursing Practice



# Disclosures

No relevant relationships

None of this is intended to be legal advice. Any legal questions should be directed to your legal department.



# Dr. Laura Kincheloe, Ed.D., MSN, RN, NE-BC



- 15 years of nursing- Med/Surg-renal, oncology, trauma, pulmonary, unit supervisor, unit manager, house supervisor, academia, independent business owner and consultant, software development
- Passionate about loving nurses
- Fully dedicated to understanding and advocating for nursing practice
- Joined TNA in May 2023
- Hobbies: Athletic Events, Family time, Volunteering & Committee work



# Objectives



**Describe key components of nursing jurisprudence and ethics.**

**Identify BON rules and regulations directly related to nursing jurisprudence and ethics.**



# Nursing Jurisprudence and Ethics



- Jurisprudence = the study and application of law
- Defines legal boundaries of nursing practice
- Establishes professional accountability
- Protects the public through regulation
- Guides nursing decision-making in complex situations

# Jurisprudence in Texas



- Governed by the Texas Nurse Practice Act (NPA)
- Regulated by the Texas Board of Nursing (BON)
- Defines scope of practice
- Establishes standards of nursing practice
- Provides disciplinary authority
- Applies in every nursing setting, including schools

# Why Texas Nurses Must Complete Jurisprudence & Ethics Continuing Education



- Required by the Texas Board of Nursing
- Must be completed every third license renewal cycle
- Supports safe and competent practice
- Addresses changes in laws and regulations
- Reinforces ethical decision-making
- Promotes public protection

# Sources of Authority for School Nurses



- Nurse Practice Act
- BON Rule 217.11
- BON Position Statements
- TEA
- FERPA
- HIPAA
- District Policies
- Professional Standards



# Board Rule 217.11 and School Nursing



- Know and follow applicable laws and regulations
- Promote a safe environment
- Maintain accurate documentation
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Accept only assignments within competency
- Collaborate and communicate appropriately
- Make referrals when needed
- Maintain continuing competence

# Ask Yourself



Would another reasonable and prudent Texas nurse believe I acted to protect the student's safety, practice within my competence, follow the law, and uphold professional nursing standards?

# Legal Accountability vs Ethical Responsibilities



- Legal accountability is defined by the Texas Nurse Practice Act and BON Rule 217.11
- Ethical responsibility is guided by professional nursing values and ethical principles
- School nurses must comply with laws even when facing competing stakeholder demands
- District policies cannot override nursing laws or standards of practice
- Nurses are accountable for their own professional judgment
- Ethical dilemmas often involve balancing student welfare, parental rights, and educational priorities

# Question



A principal tells you to send a student back to class despite your concern that the student needs emergency evaluation. Who has the final decision?

# Ethical Principles



- Autonomy
- Beneficence
- Nonmaleficence
- Justice
- Fidelity
- Veracity

# Student with Diabetes



A middle school student with Type 1 diabetes comes to your office with symptoms of hypoglycemia. The student refuses treatment and insists on returning to class because there is a test.

# Confidentiality in Schools



- Protect student privacy while supporting student safety
- Understand differences between FERPA and HIPAA in school settings
- Share information only with individuals who have a legitimate educational interest
- Follow the minimum necessary principle when disclosing health information
- Protect confidentiality during conversations, documentation, and electronic communication
- Maintain student trust while complying with reporting requirements

# Social Media and Professional Boundaries



- Maintain professional boundaries in all online interactions
- Never post identifiable student information or health information
- Avoid discussing student situations on personal social media accounts
- Separate personal and professional online presence
- Consider how posts may affect public trust in nursing
- Remember that deleted posts may still be recoverable

# Delegation



- Delegation transfers responsibility for performing a task, not accountability
- The nurse remains accountable for nursing judgment and student outcomes
- Tasks delegated must be appropriate for the student and situation
- Training, competency verification, and supervision are essential
- Delegation decisions should prioritize student safety
- Not all nursing tasks are appropriate for delegation

# Mandatory Reporting



- School nurses are mandated reporters under Texas law
- Reports must be made when there is reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect
- The duty to report belongs to the individual nurse
- Reporting cannot be delegated to a principal, counselor, or another employee
- Documentation should include objective observations and student statements
- Student safety takes priority over concerns about family relationships

# Ethical Distress



- Occurs when nurses know the appropriate action but face barriers to acting
- Common in environments with competing priorities and limited resources
- Can contribute to burnout, frustration, and compassion fatigue
- May affect decision-making and job satisfaction
- Recognizing ethical distress is the first step toward addressing it
- Professional support and ethical reflection can reduce distress

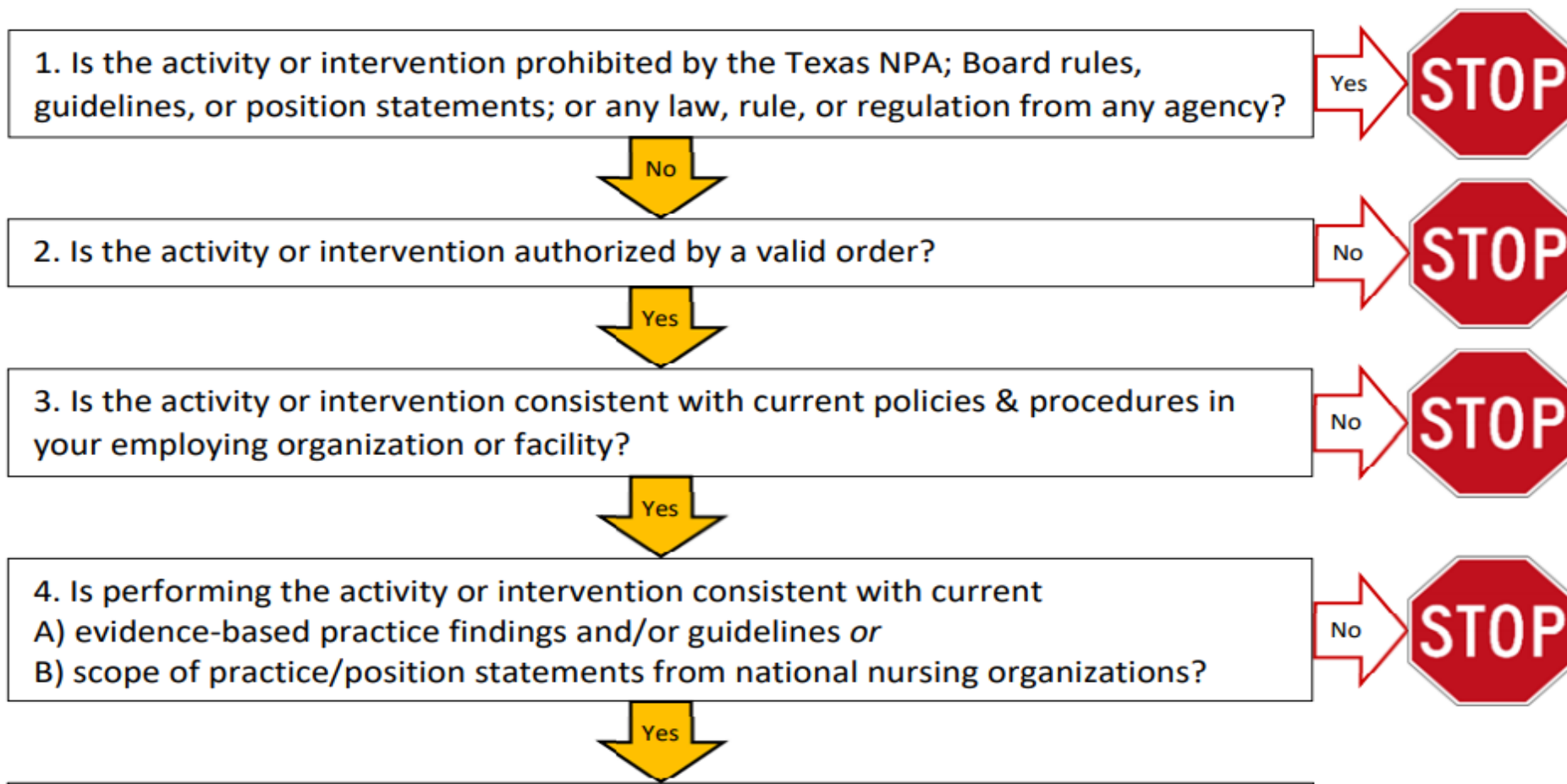


# Decision Making Model



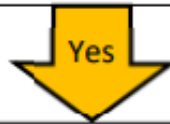
## Texas Board of Nursing Scope of Practice Decision-Making Model

To begin, identify or clarify the activity, task, procedure, role or intervention under consideration.



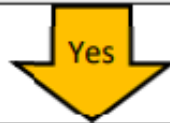
5. Is there documented evidence of your current competence (education, knowledge, skills, abilities, experience, and judgements) to perform the activity or intervention safely & effectively, in accordance the accepted nursing “standard of care”?

No



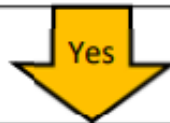
6. Would a reasonable & prudent nurse perform the activity or intervention in a similar circumstance?

No



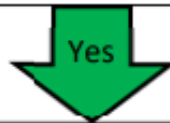
7. Are you prepared to accept accountability for the provision of safe care & the outcome of the care rendered?

No



8. If you are an LVN, will adequate supervision be available? (Skip if you are an RN.)

No



You may proceed with performance of the activity or intervention in accordance with prevailing standards of safe nursing care.

# Code of Ethics

- ❖ **Autonomy**
- ❖ **Beneficence**
- ❖ **Nonmaleficence**
- ❖ **Veracity**
- ❖ **Fidelity**
- ❖ **Paternalism**
- ❖ **Justice**
- ❖ **Respect for others**

# Code of Ethics



**Brand  
New!**

There are 10 statements separated based on relationship:

Nurse to patient (Provisions 1–3)

Nurse to nurse (Provisions 4 and 6)

Nurse to self (Provision 5)

Nurse to profession (Provision 7)

Nurse to others (Provision 8)

Nurse/nursing to society (Provision 9)

Nursing to the global community (Provision 10)



**“The ultimate measure of a nurse is not where they stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where they stand at times of challenge and controversy.”**



# Contact Me!

**Email: [kincheloe@texasnurses.org](mailto:kincheloe@texasnurses.org)**

**TNA Practice Hotline: 1.800.862.2022, ext.132**



**Questions?**

# References

- American Nurses Association. (2025). *Code of ethics for nurses with interpretive statements*. American Nurses Association.
- American Nurses Association. (2011). *Principles for social networking and the nurse: Guidance for registered nurses*. American Nurses Association.
- National Association of School Nurses. (2022). *School nursing: Scope and standards of practice* (4th ed.). American Nurses Association & National Association of School Nurses.
- Texas Board of Nursing. (2025). *Scope of practice decision-making model*. [https://www.bon.texas.gov/pdfs/publication\\_pdfs/Scope%20of%20Practice%20Decision-Making%20Model%20-%20DMM.pdf](https://www.bon.texas.gov/pdfs/publication_pdfs/Scope%20of%20Practice%20Decision-Making%20Model%20-%20DMM.pdf)
- Texas Board of Nursing. (2025). *Delegation resource packet*. [https://www.bon.texas.gov/practice\\_delegation\\_resource\\_packet.asp.html](https://www.bon.texas.gov/practice_delegation_resource_packet.asp.html)
- Texas Board of Nursing. (2025). *Position statement 15.13: Role of the licensed vocational nurse and registered nurse as school nurses*. [https://www.bon.texas.gov/practice\\_nursing\\_practice.asp.html](https://www.bon.texas.gov/practice_nursing_practice.asp.html)
- Texas Board of Nursing. (2025). *Rule 217.11: Standards of nursing practice*. Texas Administrative Code, Title 22, Part 11, Chapter 217. <https://www.bon.texas.gov>
- Texas Board of Nursing. (2025). *Position statement 15.29: Professional boundaries including use of social media by nurses*. [https://www.bon.texas.gov/practice\\_nursing\\_practice.asp.html](https://www.bon.texas.gov/practice_nursing_practice.asp.html)
- Texas Occupations Code, Chapter 301. (2025). *Nurse Practice Act*. State of Texas.
- Ulrich, C. M., Taylor, C., Soeken, K., O'Donnell, P., Farrar, A., Danis, M., & Grady, C. (2010). Everyday ethics: Ethical issues and stress in nursing practice. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 66(11), 2510–2519. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2010.05425.x>