



South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

South Carolina Board of Nursing

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ADVISORY OPINION # 13

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QUESTION: Is it within the role and scope of responsibilities of the registered nurse (RN) to perform the duties of the Registered Nurse First Assistant (RNFA) in the operating room setting?

The State Board of Nursing for South Carolina acknowledges that it is within the role and scope of responsibilities of the RN to perform the duties of the Registered Nurse First Assistant (RNFA) as described in the current Association of Perioperative Registered Nurses (AORN) Official Statement on Registered Nurse First Assistants, and as the “expanded role” is defined in the Laws Governing Nursing in South Carolina, Chapter 33, Section 40-33-20. The RNFA practices in collaboration with the health team and at the direction of the surgeon during the intraoperative phase of the perioperative experience. The RN performing such functions must be recognized as an RNFA by the appropriate certification body (AORN).

The Board recognizes this responsibility is an additional act of the RN requiring specialized continued education and training beyond a generic nursing curriculum. The Board recommends that the nursing department develop written policies, procedures, and guidelines in accordance with the current AORN Official Statement on Registered Nurse First Assistants.

This statement is an advisory opinion of the Board of Nursing as to what constitutes competent and safe nursing practice.