



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF MEDICAL ASSISTANTS®

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Thank you for your inquiry concerning what tasks are delegable legally to medical assistants according to Oklahoma law.

The Oklahoma Allopathic Medical and Surgical Licensure and Supervision Act, Title 59, Section 492, E, states the following:

Nothing in the Oklahoma Allopathic Medical and Surgical Licensure and Supervision Act shall prohibit service rendered by a physician's trained assistant, if such service is rendered under the supervision and control of a licensed physician, or the service of any other person duly licensed or certified by the state to practice the healing arts.

It is my legal opinion that this language authorizes physicians to delegate a reasonable scope of clinical and administrative tasks (including performing venipuncture; administering intramuscular, intradermal, and subcutaneous injections—including immunizations/vaccinations; verbatim transmission of the physician's orders [as specifically directed by the delegating physician) to knowledgeable and competent unlicensed professionals such as medical assistants working under their direct/onsite supervision in outpatient settings. Tasks which constitute the practice of medicine, or which state law permits only certain health care professionals to perform, however, may not be delegated to unlicensed professionals such as medical assistants.

I define triage as a communication process with a patient (or patient representative) during which a health care professional is required to exercise independent clinical judgment and/or to make clinical assessments or evaluations. It is my legal opinion that it is not permissible for medical assistants to be delegated triage (as I define the term). I define non-triage communication as a process during which a non-provider health care professional follows provider-approved protocols or decision trees in verbatim receiving and verbatim conveying of information. In non-triage communication, the health professional does not exercise independent clinical judgment. It is my legal opinion that it is permissible for knowledgeable and competent unlicensed professionals such as medical assistants to be delegated non-triage communication.

To my knowledge, there is nothing in Oklahoma law that forbids supervising physicians from delegating tasks to medical assistants through licensed professionals such as physician assistants, nurse practitioners, or registered nurses.



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The supervising physician (as well as the medical assistant herself/himself) is responsible for any negligent acts of the medical assistant done within the scope of the medical assistant's employment.



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