



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 Utah law.

Please note the following provisions in the Utah Medical Practice Act:

58-67-102(9)—“Medical assistant” means an unlicensed individual working under the indirect supervision of a licensed physician and surgeon and engaged in specific tasks assigned by the licensed physician and surgeon in accordance with the standards and ethics of the profession.

58-67-305—...[T]he following individuals may engage in the described acts or practices without being licensed under this chapter:...(6) a medical assistant while working under the indirect supervision of a licensed physician and surgeon, to the extent the medical assistant:

- (a) is engaged in tasks appropriately delegated by the supervisor in accordance with the standards and ethics of the practice of medicine;
- (b) does not perform surgical procedures;
- (c) does not prescribe prescription medications;
- (d) does not administer anesthesia, anesthesia does not mean a local anesthetic for minor procedural use; and
- (e) does not engage in other medical practices or procedures as defined by division rule in collaboration with the board;

It is my legal opinion that the above statutory language permits physicians to delegate a reasonable scope of clinical and administrative tasks (including performing venipuncture; administration of intramuscular, intradermal, and subcutaneous injections; verbatim transmitting of the physician’s orders as specifically authorized by the delegating/supervising physician) to knowledgeable and competent unlicensed health 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 licensed 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



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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.



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