**Nurse Practice Act in Ohio**

**Introduction**

The Nurse Practice Act in Ohio is an act that provides guidelines upon which the Nurses are licensed, their duties and responsibilities stipulated, their relationship with patients discussed as well as circumstances under which disciplinary measures can be taken against a nurse upon violation of the code of conduct (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). The Act defines terms relating to the nursing professions and regulates the Nursing practice in Ohio.

According to the Ohio Nurse Practice Act, Registered Nurse refers to any individual who possess an updated and valid license that is given out based on the provision of the Ohio Nursing Act and gives authority to the bearer to engage in the nursing practice as a Registered Nurse (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). A Registered Nurse in this regard has to possess the license given out according to the provisions of the Act. Being a Registered Nurse involves the provision of nursing care to groups and individuals and using special knowledge and skills obtained through studying behavioral, biological, social, nursing and physical sciences and includes execution of nursing regimen amongst others. A licensee is required to be a registered nurse in Ohio State because it gives proof that the person has met all educational requirements necessary of RNs and that the person has satisfied the requirement of the board and thus is a reliable and competent nurse. Nurses deal with human beings, and only the best-qualified persons should be allowed to take up the demanding role. The licensing of nurses ensures that only qualified and competent persons enter the nursing profession thus ensuring quality healthcare for patients.

Assessment of health status refers to the collection of relevant data for the purpose of providing nursing care using nursing techniques such as observation, interviews and physical evaluations. Registered Nurses should do assessments of the health status of their patients (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). Licensed Practice Nurses do not have the mandate to conduct assessments. LRN refers to persons with an updated and valid license that is given out to them according to the provisions of the Nurse Practice Act and that allows them to take nursing as licensed practice nurses (RN and LPN Scope of Practice, 2018). The roles and responsibilities of Registered Nurses and Licensed Practice Nurses are closely related but differ in some pertinent aspects.

The Licensed Practice Nurses are, for example, answerable to the Registered Nurses in the delegation of tasks that the RN directs to them. The roles of Registered Nurses as stipulated in the Nurse Practice Act include the identification of the trends of patient response to health challenges, execution of nursing regimen, conducting health status assessments, giving out health counseling and teaching, authorized administration of treatment and medication, and teaching, delegating, supervising and conducting nursing practice evaluations (RN and LPN Scope of Practice, 2018). Licensed Practice Nurses, on the other hand, have been tasked with responsibilities such as patient observation, teaching, and care, taking part in planning, execution, and evaluation of nursing, authorized administration of treatment and medications and authorized administration of adult therapies. LRNs also undertake nursing duties as directed by RNs as well as educating nursing duties to individuals or other LPNs as authorized by a registered nurse.

Unlicensed practice of nursing is not permitted in Ohio, and the Act provides that no individual without a license shall offer nursing services as a Registered Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse and Advanced Practice Nurse amongst others (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). The Nursing Act provides rules and guidelines explicitly that stipulate that unlicensed nursing practices are not allowed in Ohio. The Act further stipulates the accepted initials that the variously licensed nurses can use in the delegation of their duties and responsibilities. For example, a person who has been licensed by the board as a Registered Nurse is allowed to use the initial R.N., while an individual who has been licensed as a Licensed Practice Nurse is allowed to use the initials L.P.N (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). The Ohio Board of Nursing undertakes the responsibilities and exercises powers given to it by the Nurse Practice Act and is made up of thirteen members who are expected to be citizens of the United States and residents of Ohio.

The function of Ohio Board of Nursing is to enforce and administer all the dictates and provisions of the Ohio Nurse Practice Act including enforcing disciplinary actions for violation of the mandates of the Act (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). The board is also charged with the responsibility of formulating rules and criteria that individuals must meet for them to be eligible to undertake examinations that allow for the provision of licensees of the RN and the LPN. Additionally, the board stipulates the minimum educational requirements necessary for individuals to attain or qualify for the nursing license examination as well as issuing of license renewals for Registered Nurses, Licensed Practice Nurses and any other nursing licenses (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). Licensure from another state can only allow an individual to operate as a Registered Nurse after validation and approval of the board. Should the board deny the request on any basis, the individual shall not practice nursing as a Registered Nurse until they undertake the licensing examination in Ohio, passes it and satisfies the other requirements for licensed nursing practice in Ohio (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). The Nurse Practice Act additionally stipulates the requirements for continuation of education and license renewal.

The Ohio Board of Nursing has the power to approve continuing education programs. The board approves of continuation of education programs and upon satisfaction of certain conditions even offers grants to the nursing individuals who desire to continue their education programs (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). Before a licensed nurse in Ohio undertakes the continuing education programs, however, the interested individual has to approach the board with the issue through an application after which the board can approve the request and the individual then proceed to begin the educational continuation program. For license renewal, a nurse is required to pay a certain renewal fee to the board. The board additionally has to approve the renewal request before it is processed. The license renewal fee to practice nursing as a registered nurse or a licensed practice nurse stands at sixty-five dollars. License renewal for registered nurses is to be done every odd year, and the requests for renewal should be submitted before the fifteenth day of September of the odd year (Lawriter – ORC, 2018). Renewal for Licensed Practice Nurses is to be done every even year and should be made before 15th of September. Renewal for advanced nursing licenses is also done in the odd years. Nurses who are on continuing education programs should also complete the scheduled program hours before renewal of licenses.

Before approval for licensing as a nursing practitioner in Ohio State, the licensing board requires a criminal background check of the applicants. The background check is necessary to ascertain that the particular individual is not impaired and is not evil so that they can be trusted to offer safe nursing care to patients (Ohio Board of Nursing / Discipline Page, 2018). The background check also helps the board to determine if an individual is subject to following instructions or not. Absolute bars for licensure include crimes such as murder, aggravated murder, rape, robbery, kidnapping and sexual battery among others (Criminal\_History\_Fact\_Sheet, 2018). Absolute bars for licensure also include individuals who have been determined as impaired mentally in their judgments. This is since nurses should be capable of making judgments and decisions that are not impaired since their patients’ well-being depend on it.

The effect of convictions before joining nursing school may have an effect on an individual’s ability to be allowed to sit for the NCLEX exam depending on the nature of the conviction. Convictions for a minor offense may not affect enrollment, but certain offenses may lead to a person being denied exams. Offences such as murder, robbery, aggravated assault, aggravated robbery, crime involving immorality such as rape and aggravated arson among others will bar an individual from sitting the NCLEX exams.

The alternative discipline programs of Ohio Board of Nursing include its policy on minor violations of the ORC charter and the criminal history fact sheet. The provision on minor violation provides guidelines to be followed for minor violations by nurses or nursing students while the criminal history fact sheet highlights the absolute bars for licensure among other dictates. The booklet ‘Creating a Culture of Safety and accountability’ is a patient safety initiative that aims at increasing patient safety through championing for effective reporting, system modification, accountability, and remediation. This initiative affects the registered nurses since it provides methods of reporting of assessments to the relevant authority and presents a platform for review of practice complains.

**Conclusion**

The Nurse Practice Act of Ohio provides guidelines for managing nursing services and nurses in Ohio. It defines registered nurses as an individual with a valid license to practice nursing as a Registered Nurse. A license ascertains an individual’s qualification for the role. An RN is licensed to do health assessments. LPN is a person with a license allowing nursing participation as an LPN. The Ohio Board of Nursing is charged with ensuring that the provisions of the Nursing Practice Act are implemented and followed. The board issues licenses, performs criminal background checks to ensure people who receive nursing licenses can offer safe healthcare services and approves education continuation and license renewals. RN license renewal is done every odd year while LPN is done every even year. Absolute bars to licensure include murder, rape, and robbery among other serious crimes.

**References**

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