



# CODE OF ETHICS and STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

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COLLEGE OF  
**LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES**  
OF ALBERTA

## CODE of ETHICS

The purpose of the Code of Ethics is to describe the standards for ethical practice and conduct expected of the LPN based on the values of the profession. The statements describe the ethical commitments of LPNs toward their clients and families, their colleagues, their employers and themselves. The Code provides a framework against which moral and ethical performance may be measured by self and others and applies to nurses in any role.

### **The Licensed Practical Nurse:**

- Provides safe, competent and ethical nursing care and accepts accountability for own nursing judgments and actions
- Provides care with integrity, compassion and dignity respecting the rights, values and beliefs of the individual, family and community
- Advocates for safe, competent and ethical care for all clients
- Manages confidential information in accordance with current legislation and employer policy
- Assesses own nursing practice and maintains competence through lifelong learning
- Fosters respectful collaborative relationships with clients, colleagues and other health care stakeholders
- Promotes the profession through excellence in mentorship
- Maintains standards of professional conduct which enhance public confidence

### ■ INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses of Alberta (CLPNA) has been entrusted, under the Health Professions Act, with a mandate to protect the public through Regulation of the Licensed Practical Nursing Profession. The College has the responsibility of establishing, monitoring and enforcing standards of education, registration and practice.

Standards for nursing practice reflect the philosophical values of the profession and clarify what the nursing profession expects of its members.

Standards of Practice provide overall guidelines for the Licensed Practical Nurse and describe the required level of performance against which actual practice can be measured. These Standards of Practice apply to every setting and outline the minimum standard of safe LPN practice. They represent the criteria against which LPN practice is measured by clients, employers, and the profession. Professional standards of practice are delineated into more specific expectations through the profession's Code of Ethics, Regulation, By-laws, Competency Profile, and employer policies and procedures.

It is the responsibility of individual LPNs to understand the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice and apply them to their practice, regardless of their setting, role or area of practice. The policies of employers do not relieve LPNs of accountability for their own action or their obligation to meet these standards.

The CLPNA is responsible for assuring that the profession as a whole carries out its commitment to the public. This is achieved in part through establishing and regularly reviewing the Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice and providing support for LPNs and employers in understanding and applying them.

# CLPNA STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

## ■ STANDARD 1: KNOWLEDGE

The Licensed Practical Nurse integrates knowledge of nursing science, arts and humanities acquired through basic education and continuous learning.

### Indicators:

#### The LPN:

1. Demonstrates an understanding of the knowledge, critical thinking and clinical judgment required for the provision of safe, competent and ethical nursing care.
2. Demonstrates awareness of and practices in accordance with accepted infection prevention and control standards.
3. Evaluates, reports and documents effectiveness of nursing care in relation to client responses and expected outcomes.
4. Accesses resources when needed to support the provision of safe, appropriate client care.
5. Uses health promotion and health teaching appropriate to the client's need.
6. Demonstrates awareness of evidence based practice and applies this understanding to provision of client care.
7. Participates in research and quality improvement activities to enhance nursing practice and health outcomes.

## ■ STANDARD 2: ACCOUNTABILITY

The Licensed Practical Nurse maintains standards of nursing practice and professional conduct as determined by the CLPNA and the practice setting.

### Indicators:

#### The LPN:

1. Demonstrates accountability and responsibility for own nursing actions and professional conduct.
2. Practices within applicable legislation, Regulation, By-laws, Code of Ethics Standards of Practice and own level of competence.
3. Delivers nursing care in a manner that preserves and protects client autonomy, dignity and rights.
4. Maintains appropriate boundaries between professional therapeutic relationships and non-professional personal relationships.
5. Identifies and questions situations where directions, policies or procedures maybe unclear or potentially unsafe and reports such situations to an appropriate person, agency or professional body.
6. Is accountable for monitoring and maintaining own fitness to practice.

## ■ STANDARD 3: PATIENT SAFETY

The Licensed Practical Nurse takes responsibility for own safe nursing practice and patient safety.

### Indicators:

#### The LPN:

1. Acts to prevent or minimize adverse events through identification and reporting of situations that are unsafe or potentially unsafe for clients or health providers.
2. Reports unsafe practice, abusive behavior or unprofessional conduct to the appropriate authority.
3. Advocates for improved safety within nursing practice and health care delivery.

## ■ STANDARD 4: CONTINUING COMPETENCE

The Licensed Practical Nurse engages in self assessment of practice identifying strengths, and learning needs requiring ongoing professional development.

### Indicators:

#### The LPN:

1. Assumes primary responsibility and accountability for maintaining competence.
2. Participates in the Continuing Competency Program of CLPNA.
3. Demonstrates commitment to lifelong learning.
4. Maintains awareness of trends, issues and changes in nursing and health care.

## ■ STANDARD 5: COLLABORATION

The Licensed Practical Nurse collaborates with clients, health care providers and stakeholders in the delivery of health care services.

### Indicators:

#### The LPN:

1. Establishes and maintains an environment that promotes effective relationships in planning, implementing and coordinating the delivery of nursing care.
2. Utilizes effective interpersonal and therapeutic communication skills.
3. Uses constructive feedback and mediation strategies to resolve conflicts and facilitate collaboration.
4. Mentors students, colleagues and others, and shares own experience and knowledge to advance the profession.
5. Acknowledges and respects the role and competencies of other health providers in the delivery of health services.

## ■ STANDARD 6: LEADERSHIP

The Licensed Practical Nurse demonstrates effective leadership knowledge and skill in own practice, as well as in the management and supervision of others.

### Indicators:

#### The LPN:

1. Models professional values, beliefs and attributes that promote the profession to clients, learners, peers and other health care professionals.
2. Evaluates safety, effectiveness and efficiencies when planning nursing care and/or assigning duties to unregulated providers, in accordance with established CLPNA guidelines.
3. Promotes innovation and an openness to new ideas which may enhance or support nursing practice.
4. Contributes to the development of policies and procedures for the delivery of safe competent and ethical nursing care.
5. Advocates for clients, healthy practice environments and the nursing profession.

## ■ GLOSSARY

**Accountability:** an obligation to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions and to achieve desired outcomes.

**Client:** individual, family or group who is the recipient of nursing care.

**Clinical judgment:** the reasoning processes that rely on critical thinking to reflect the complex, intuitive and conscious thinking strategies used to make nursing decisions.

**Collaboration:** working in partnership with members of the interdisciplinary health care team to provide nursing care to the client.

**Competence:** the ability to integrate and apply the knowledge, skills and judgment required to practice safely and ethically in a designated role and setting.

**Continuing Competency Program:** a system of assessing the ongoing knowledge, skills, attitudes and judgment of a professional practitioner for purposes of planning professional development and maintaining competence.

**Critical thinking:** analysis used to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions.

**Evidence-based practice:** the identification, evaluation and application of current research findings to guide practice decisions.

**Nursing diagnosis:** a statement about the client's actual or potential health concerns that can be managed through independent nursing interventions.

**Nursing research:** the disciplined quantitative and qualitative study of phenomena related to nursing used to support nursing practices which improve outcome for clients.

**Professionalism:** a set of internalized character strengths and values directed toward high quality service to others through competent application of expertise, knowledge and skills.

**Restricted activities:** means a restricted activity and a portion of a restricted activity, within the meaning of Schedule 7.1 to the Government Organization Act.

**Scope of practice:** the roles and responsibilities of the Licensed Practical Nurse to perform safe, competent and ethical nursing care as defined by education, legislation and the regulatory authority. Under HPA (2000) this is described as Area of Practice.

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