

**The American Nurses Association
Summary of Laws Protecting the Title “Nurse”**

Updated 1/07

Arizona

Title 32. Professions & Occupations. Chapter 15. Nursing. Article 2. Licensing A.R.S. 32-1636 (2003)

Only a person who holds a valid and current license to practice professional nursing in this state or in a party state pursuant to section 32-1668 may use the title “**nurse**”, “ registered nurse, “graduate nurse” , or “professional nurse” or the abbreviation “**RN**”

California

Business & Professions Code. Division 2. Healing Arts. Chapter 1. General Provisions. Article 7.5. Health Care Practitioners Cal Bus & Prof Code 680 (2003)

Except as otherwise provided in this section, a health care practitioner shall disclose, while working, his or her name and practitioner’s license status, as granted by this state, on a name tag in at least 18-point type. A health care practitioner in a practice or an office, whose license is prominently displayed, may opt to not wear a name tag. If a health care practitioner or licensed clinical social worker is working in a psychiatric setting or in a setting that is not licensed by the state, the employing entity or agency shall have the discretion to make an exception from the name tag requirement for individual safety or therapeutic concerns. In the interest of public safety and consumer awareness, it shall be unlawful for any person to use the title “**nurse**” in reference to himself or herself and in any capacity, except for an individual who is a registered nurse or a licensed vocational nurse, or as otherwise provided in Section 2800. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a certified nurse assistant from using his or her title.

Colorado

Colorado Section 21. 12-38-117. Colorado Revised Statutes (2006), is amended by the addition of the following new paragraphs containing relocated provisions, with amendments to read:

12-38-117. Grounds for discipline (1) “ Grounds for discipline” as used in this article means any action by a person who:

(w)(I) represents himself or herself to an individual or general public by use of any word or abbreviation to indicate or induce others to believe that he or she is a licensed practical or professional nurse unlicensed licensed as a practical or professional nurse respectively OR,

(II) uses the title “**nurse**”, “registered nurse” , “RN” , “ practical nurse”, “trained practical nurse”, licensed vocational nurse”, “licensed practical nurse” , or “LPN” unless the person is licensed by the board.

Florida

Title 32. Regulation of Professions and Occupations Chapter 464. Nursing.
Part 1. Nurse Practice Act Fla. Stat. 464.016 (2002)

464.016. Violations and Penalties

Each of the following acts constitutes a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083:

- (a) Using the title **“Nurse”**, “Registered Nurse”, “Licensed Practical Nurse”, “Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner”, or any other name or title which implies that a person was licensed or certified as same, unless such person is duly licensed or certified.
- (b) Knowingly concealing information relating to violations of this part.

Hawaii

Division 2. Business Title 25. Professions and Occupations Chapter 457. Nurses
HRS 457-7 (2003)

457-7. Registered nurses; qualifications; licenses; fees; title; existing licensed nurses; verification of licenses; eligibility.

(2d) Any person who holds a license to practice nursing as a registered nurse in this State shall use the title “Registered Nurse” and the abbreviation “RN”. No other person shall assume the title **“nurse”** or in any manner imply that the person is a nurse except as provided in sections 457-8 and 457-8.5 or use the abbreviation “RN” or any other words, letters, signs, or devices to indicate that the person using the same is a registered nurse.

Idaho

2003 Ida. ALS 188; 2003 Idaho Sess. Laws 188; 2003 Ida. Ch. 188; 2003 Ida. HB203
Amending Section 54-1401; Idaho Code

(2) Representation to the public only a person who holds a valid and current license to practice professional nursing in this state or a party state pursuant to sections 54-1409 and 54-1418, Idaho Code, may use the title **“Nurse”**, “Registered Nurse”, “Graduate Nurse”, or “professional Nurse” or the abbreviation “RN” or any other designations, titles or abbreviations to indicate that the person is practicing nursing in this state. Only a person who holds a valid and current license to practice practical nursing in this state or a party state pursuant to sections 54-1407 and 54-1418, Idaho Code, may use the title **“Nurse”**, “Licensed Practical Nurse”, or the abbreviation “LPN” or any other designations, titles or abbreviations to indicate that the person is practicing nursing in this state.

Kentucky

An Act relating to health care practitioners. New Section of KRS Chapter 311 is created to read as follows: (2006)

(1) Section 1-14 of this Act does not authorize a person who holds a certificate under Section 1-14 (apples to Surgical Assistants) of this Act to engage in the practice of

medicine as defined in KRS 311.530 to 311.620 or the practice of registered nurses as defined in KRS 314.011 to 314.161.

Maryland

(2005) Repealing and Reenacting, with amendments; Article – Health Occupations
Section 8-710 (a)(6)

- (b) unless authorized to practice registered nursing or licensed practical nursing under this title, a person may not use the word “ nurse” to describe the profession of the person.
- (c) unless authorized to practice registered nursing under this title, a person may not use the words or terms “ registered nurse” , the abbreviation “ RN” , or any other title, symbol, abbreviation, sign, card, device, or other representation with the intent to represent that the person practices registered nursing.
- (d) unless authorized to practice licensed practical nursing under this title, a person may not use the words or terms “licensed practical nurse” , the abbreviation “LPN” , or any other title, symbol, abbreviation, sign, card, device, or other representation with the intent to represent that the person practices licensed practical nursing.

Minnesota

Sec. 6. Minnesota Statutes 2002, Section 148.281, Subdivision 1. amended to read:
Subdivision 1. (Violations Described.)

It shall be unlawful for any person, corporation, firm, or association to:

(4) use the professional title “**Nurse**” unless duly licensed to practice professional or practical nursing under the provisions of sections 148.285, except as authorized by the Board of Rule.

Nebraska

Chapter 71. Public Health and Welfare Article 1. Licenses; Professional & Occupational (p)
Practice of Nursing R.R.S. Neb. 71-1,132.17 (2002)
71-1,132.17. Nursing; use of title; restriction

- (1) In the interest of public safety and consumer awareness, it is unlawful for any person to use the title “**nurse**” in reference to himself or herself in any capacity, except individuals who are or have been licensed as a registered nurse or a licensed practical nurse. A Christian Science nurse may refer to himself or herself only as a Christian Science nurse.

New Mexico

Chapter 61. Professional & Occupational Licenses Article 3. Nursing N.M. Stat, Ann. 61-3-5
(2002)

61-3-5. Licenses required. (Repealed effective July 1, 2004.)

- A. No person shall use the title “**nurse**” unless the person is licensed or has been licensed in the past as a registered nurse or licensed

practical nurse under the Nurse Practice Act (61-3-1 to 61-3-30 NMSA 1978).

New York

(2006) Section 6903 of Title VIII Education Law as amended by Chapter 994 of the laws of 1971, and renumbered by Chapter 50 of the laws of 1972 is amended to read as follows:

6903 No person shall use the title “**nurse**” or any other title or abbreviation that would represent to the public that a person is authorized to practice nursing unless the person is licensed or otherwise authorized under this article.

North Dakota

43-12.1-03. License required – Title – Abbreviation.

Any person who provides nursing care to a resident of this state must hold a current license or registration issued by the board. It is unlawful for a person to practice nursing, offer to practice nursing, assist in the practice of nursing, or use any title, abbreviation, or designation to indicate that the person is practicing nursing or assisting in the practice of nursing in this state unless that person is currently licensed or registered under this chapter. A currently licensed advanced practice registered nurse or specialty practice registered nurse may use titles approved by the board; a currently licensed registered nurse may use the abbreviation “RN”; a currently licensed practical nurse may use the abbreviation “LPN”; and an unlicensed assistive person with current registration may use the title identified by the employer. A person may not use the title “**nurse**” or be referred to as a “nurse” unless licensed by the board.

Rhode Island

Agency 14. Department of Health. Sub-agency 140. Office of Health Professionals Regulation. Chapter 022. Licensing of Nurses and Standards for the Approval of Basic Nursing Education Programs. CRIR 14-140-022. Part II Section.

2.1 It shall be unlawful for any person to practice or offer to practice nursing in this state or use any title, sign, abbreviation, card or device indicating authority to practice nursing unless such person has been duly licensed and registered in accordance with statutory provisions of the Act and the rules and regulations herein, except persons exempt in accordance with section 5-34-31 of the Act.

2.1.1 Professional “registered” nurse title; any person who holds a license to practice as a professional nurse in this state shall have the right to use the title “registered nurse” and the abbreviation “RN”.

South Carolina

Title 40. Professions & Occupations. Chapter 33 Nurses. Article 1. Nurse Practice Act.

40-33-30 (C) A person may not use the word “**nurse**” as a title or use an abbreviation to indicate that the person is practicing in this State as a nurse, unless the person is actively licensed as a nurse provided for in this chapter. If

the term “ nurse” is part of a longer title, such as “ nurse’s aide”, a person who is entitled to sue that title shall use the entire title and not abbreviate the title to “nurse”. This does not prohibit the use of the title “ nurse” by persons who hold a temporary permit pending licensure by endorsement from another jurisdiction, and it does not prohibit the use of the title “nurse” by persons enrolled in a board-approved refresher course for the purpose of obtaining an active South Carolina license.

Tennessee

Tennessee Code Annotated Section 6-3-7-107 and Section 6-3-7-112 relative to use of the title “ nurse” . Tennessee Code Annotated Section is amended by deleting the current section in its entirety and substitution instead the following language: (2004)

Section 1. Any person who holds a license to practice professional nursing under this chapter shall, during the effective period of such license, be entitled to use the title “**nurse**”, “registered nurse”, or abbreviation “ RN”. No other person shall assume such titles or use such abbreviation or any other words, letters, or signs to indicate that the person using the same is a professional or registered nurse.

Section 2. Any person who holds a license to practice practical nursing under this chapter shall, during the effective period of such license, be entitled to use the title “**nurse**”, “licensed practical nurse” , or abbreviation “LPN” . No other person shall assume such titles or use such abbreviation or any other words, letters, or signs to indicate that the person using the same is a Licensed practical nurse.

Texas

Section 1. Subchapter D, Chapter 301, Occupations Code Section 301.1606.

(4)(d) Unless the person holds a license under this chapter or as a vocational nurse under Chapter 302, a person may not use, in connection with the person’s name: (1) the title “**nurse**”; or (2) any other designation tending to imply that the person is licensed to provide nursing care.

Section 301.415. Use of Certain Nursing Titles

Unless the person is practicing under the delegated authority of a registered nurse or is otherwise authorized by state or federal law, a person may not use, in connection with the person’s name: (1) the title “ nurse aide”, “nurse assistant” , or “ nurse technician” or (2) or any other similar title.

Wisconsin

Chapter 441. Subchapter I Regulation of Nursing. 441.001 Definitions

(2) Nurse. Except as provided under s. 441.08 (temporary permit), “**nurse**”, when used without modification or amplification, means only a registered nurse.