WABON Explanatory Statement

Anesthesiologist Assistants (AA)

November 2025

Re: Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs) Supervision of AA students.

WAC 246-840-300 ARNP scope of practice.

WABON is not aware of any specific Washington nursing laws or rules regarding CRNAs supervising AAs. However, CRNAs are licensed as Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners (ARNPs)* and are independent practitioners who hold the ability to practice and bill for anesthesia services autonomously. All ARNPs are individually accountable and responsible for the care they provide. Scope of practice is based on their educational preparation, experience, competence, national certification, and practice standards. The ARNP should ensure their practice aligns with national practice standards and guidance, including the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) Position on AAs and the AANA CRNAs Teaching AA Students in the Clinical Setting.

If the national standards do not stipulate, we recommend the ARNP use the Interactive Scope of Practice Decision Tree to determine if a specific activity is within their scope of practice.

*Title is currently ARNP and will be changed to APRN in July 2027

Re: AA Supervision of CRNA students.

The standards for CRNA program accreditation are maintained by the Council of Accreditation (COA). The WABON requires graduation from a nationally accredited program and board certification by the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA) for licensure. The COA states “supervision at clinical sites is limited to CRNAs and physician anesthesiologists who are institutionally credentialed to practice and immediately available for consultation.” (https://www.coacrna.org/).

AAs do not meet the professional or educational criteria required to instruct CRNA residents per the Council of Accreditation (COA). Nurse anesthesia residents may not be supervised or trained by AAs or AA students.

See Chapter 246-921 WAC – Anesthesiologist Assistants—Washington Medical Commission

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