



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 New Jersey law.

The New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners has issued a regulation which permits physicians to delegate certain injections to medical assistants who meet the requirements set forth in the regulation. This regulation is available under “State Scope of Practice Laws” near the bottom left of the home page of the AAMA website: www.aama-ntl.org.

My research has not revealed any other language in New Jersey statutes or regulations that addresses what physicians are permitted to delegate to unlicensed professionals such as medical assistants. Nevertheless, it is my legal opinion that common law principles inherent in state licensure authorize physicians to delegate a reasonable scope of administrative and clinical tasks (including venipuncture/phlebotomy, measuring vital signs, performing electrocardiography) to knowledgeable and competent medical assistants working under their direct/onsite supervision in outpatient settings.

Procedures which constitute the practice of medicine, or which state law specifically and unambiguously permits only certain licensed allied health care professionals to perform, however, may not be delegated to unlicensed professionals such as medical assistants.

The question of delegating telephone screening responsibilities is not specifically addressed in NJ law. It is my legal judgment that New Jersey law permits physicians to delegate telephone screening (also referred to as non-triage communication) to competent and knowledgeable medical assistants as long as such delegation: is specifically authorized in writing by the supervising/overseeing/delegating physician; requires the medical assistant to follow physician-approved protocols/decision trees/algorithms; and does not require the exercise of independent clinical judgment or the making of clinical assessments or evaluations by the medical assistant.

See Appendix B of the CAAHEP *Standards and Guidelines for the Accreditation of Educational Programs in Medical Assisting*. Appendix B contains the Core Curriculum of the CAAHEP Standards. You will see the knowledge and skills and professional attributes and behaviors taught in CAAHEP-accredited medical assisting programs.

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