



# Standards of Practice for Health Care Aides on Restricted Activities and Supervision Requirements

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College of LPNs and HCAs of Alberta



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## INTRODUCTION

The College of Licensed Practical Nurses and Health Care Aides of Alberta (CLHA) has the **authority** under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA) to carry out its activities and **govern** Health Care Aides (HCAs) in a manner that protects and serves the public interest. Part of carrying out this mandate is to ensure that HCAs provide care that is safe, competent, and ethical.

Terms defined in the definition section are **bolded** where they appear for the first time in this document.

## Standards of Practice and the HPA

Under the HPA, HCAs must follow their profession's standards of practice. Standards of practice set out the minimum level of behaviour that HCAs are expected to meet in their professional practice. Standards of practice are **enforced** under the HPA. Any action or behaviour that does not follow these standards of practice could be considered **unprofessional conduct** and may result in disciplinary action by the CLHA.

The purpose of these *Standards of Practice for Health Care Aides on Restricted Activities and Supervision Requirements* is to outline the expectations every HCA must meet, including supervision requirements, when performing a restricted activity. These Standards of Practice apply to HCAs in all practice settings when working in their role as an HCA.

## Understanding HCA Restricted Activities

### Definition of Restricted Activities

Under the HPA, restricted activities are high-risk health services or procedures that can only be performed on another person by **regulated health professionals** if they are authorized and competent to perform them. All restricted activities are listed in section 1.3 of the HPA.

### Legal Authorization to Perform Restricted Activities

A regulated health professional can only be authorized to perform a restricted activity by the *Health Professions Restricted Activities Regulation* (HPRAR), section 23.1, and must perform it in accordance with the standards of practice of a regulatory college.

When performing a restricted activity, an HCA must follow the expectations in this Standard of Practice.

HCAs must follow all legal requirements and CLHA **regulatory documents** to provide safe, competent, and ethical care. HCAs must always follow these Standards of Practice even if they conflict with directions from an employer or other regulated health professionals' standards or guidance documents. HCAs should consult their supervisor or the CLHA Professional Practice

Team if they have concerns about any tasks that contravene the HPA or their standards of practice. Please see the *Determining Health Care Aide Scope of Practice* document for more information.

## Restricted Activities and Activities of Daily Living

Activities of daily living (ADL) are activities that individuals normally perform on their own to maintain their health and well-being. When an HCA is performing an ADL, it is not considered a restricted activity.

For more information, please see the CLHA practice guideline, *Health Care Aides Performing Activities of Daily Living*.

## Understanding Supervision Requirements

### Three Levels of Supervision

HCAs are required to be supervised by an authorized **supervising health professional** while performing restricted activities. Different restricted activities may require different types of supervision. The three types of supervision are listed below.

HCAs may require direct, indirect, or remote supervision to perform a restricted activity depending on their level of experience or if they have not performed the activity in some time.

- **Direct supervision:** a supervising health professional is physically present at the point of care. This means the supervisor is in the same physical location as the HCA and **client** during the performance of the restricted activity.
- **Indirect supervision:** the supervising health professional is available for consultation and guidance but is not required to be physically present at the point of care. The person providing indirect supervision is readily available on-site and can provide assistance when needed. This means the supervising health professional is in the same workplace and can assist and/or attend to the HCA and client within a short period of time.
- **Remote supervision:** the supervising health professional is available for consultation and guidance, but is not required to be physically present at the point of care. This means the supervisor can be easily contacted through technology, i.e., by phone or video conference, when assistance is needed.

## STANDARD 1: PERFORMING RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

1.0 An HCA must only perform the restricted activity listed in 1.1 in this Standard of Practice under supervision.

### Performance Expectations

An HCA

1.1. may perform the following restricted activity per section 23.1(2) of the HPRAR:

- a) to insert or remove instruments, devices, fingers, or hands beyond the:
  - (i) labia majora, or
  - (ii) anal verge.

**NOTE:** For example, HCAs may perform the restricted activity of inserting or removing instruments, devices, fingers, or hands beyond the labia majora or anal verge for the purpose of fecal evacuation (e.g., suppositories or fleet enemas), management of menstruation, or inserting vaginal medication.

1.2. may perform the restricted activity in 1.1 only if:

- a) there is a client-specific order from an authorized health professional in the client's care plan,
- b) the HCA has reviewed the client's care plan and understands and follows any additional instructions provided, and
- c) the HCA is performing the restricted activity under the supervision of an authorized health professional. See Standard 2 for more information.

1.3. must get further information, direction, education, or training from an authorized health professional if they do not understand the order or directions on the care plan.

1.4. must not assign a restricted activity to another HCA, any student, or any other person.

1.5. must not supervise another HCA, any student, or any other person performing a restricted activity.

1.6. must not perform the restricted activity in 1.1 for the purposes of performing an assessment.

## STANDARD 2: SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

2.0 To perform the restricted activity authorized for HCAs under section 23.1(2) of the HPRAR, an HCA must be supervised by an authorized health professional.

### Performance Expectations

An HCA must not perform the restricted activity unless:

- 2.1. they are supervised by an authorized health professional who has communicated **consent** to supervise the HCA performing that restricted activity.
- 2.2. the authorized health professional has determined the appropriate level of supervision (direct, indirect, or remote).
- 2.3. the HCA performs the restricted activity in accordance with the level of supervision determined to be appropriate by the supervising health professional.

## STANDARD 3: PERFORMANCE OF RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

3.0 An HCA must ensure they have the knowledge, training, skills, judgment, and **competence** required to perform a restricted activity safely.

### Performance Expectations

An HCA must:

- 3.1. identify any gaps in knowledge and acquire the necessary education, training, skills, and assistance before performing a restricted activity.
- 3.2. not perform a restricted activity unless they are competent to do so.
- 3.3. have the training, skills, and competence to use any equipment and technology required to perform the restricted activity.
- 3.4. be aware of the reason, relevant observations they should be making, and **outcomes** of any medication or intervention used, as indicated on the care plan, when performing a restricted activity.
- 3.5. have client-specific education or training provided by an authorized health professional, where a client has unique care needs, preferences, or circumstances, before performing the restricted activity.

## STANDARD 4: PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

4.0 An HCA must follow relevant legislation, regulations, CLHA regulatory documents, and employer requirements when performing restricted activities.

### Performance Expectations

An HCA must:

- 4.1 obtain consent from the client or a legally authorized representative before performing a specific restricted activity.
- 4.2 identify associated risks and take required precautions before performing the restricted activity.
- 4.3 confirm that the employer has authorized the HCA to perform the restricted activity.
- 4.4 follow employer requirements and best practices related to performing the restricted activity.
- 4.5 apply infection prevention and control best practices following legislative requirements, CLHA documents, and employer requirements. See the CLHA *Infection Prevention and Control* practice guideline for more information.
- 4.6 document care, supervision, and any other relevant information according to legislation, regulatory, and employer requirements.
- 4.7 identify and report any **adverse event** or other relevant information to the supervising health professional in a timely manner.



## DEFINITIONS

**Adverse event:** a harmful and negative outcome that happens to a client as a result of a drug or professional service that they have received.

**Authority:** refers to the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience. It can also mean the appropriate person to give orders or make decisions.

**Authorized health professional:** a health professional who is authorized to perform a restricted activity without supervision under the HPRAR and their standards of practice. Authorized health professionals have the education, training, and approval through regulations to perform a particular high-risk professional service.

**Care plan:** the plan of care to be provided to an individual client. The client's abilities, physical, social, and emotional needs, as well as cultural and spiritual preferences, are considered part of the care plan.

**Client:** an individual who receives a professional service from the HCA. The term client is interchangeable with patient and resident, depending on the work setting.

**Client-specific order:** an instruction or order given by an authorized health professional (such as a doctor) to provide certain care services for a specific client. A client-specific order must be recorded in the client's permanent record and/or care plan, detailing all necessary information needed to perform the restricted activity safely.

**Competence:** the ability to apply the knowledge, skills, behaviours, judgments, and personal attributes required to practice safely and ethically. Personal attributes include attitudes, values, and beliefs.

**Consent:** agreement to what is being done by another person, such as an authorized health professional consenting to supervise the HCA or the client approving of the proposed actions of the HCA. Consent also means an agreement to do something.

**Direct supervision:** a supervising health professional is physically present at the point of care. This means the supervisor is in the same physical location as the HCA and client during the performance of the restricted activity.

**Enforced:** making sure people follow a law, rule, or obligation.

**Govern:** to lead, control, or manage an organization or group, often by creating rules and making decisions that guide their actions.

**Indirect supervision:** the supervising health professional is available for consultation and guidance but is not required to be physically present at the point of care. The person providing indirect supervision is readily available on-site and can provide assistance when needed. This means the supervising health professional is in the same workplace and can assist and/or attend to the HCA and client within a short period of time.

**Outcomes:** the responses and events that happen following the care provided to the client.

**Regulated health professional:** any individual who is a regulated member of a regulatory college.

**Regulatory documents:** rules and guidance documents made by a regulatory body, such as the CLHA, that govern the practices of its regulated members. Some examples of regulatory documents include CLHA standards of practice, code of ethics, policies, and practice guidelines.

**Remote supervision:** the supervising health professional is available for consultation and guidance but is not required to be physically present at the point of care. This means the supervisor can be easily contacted through technology, i.e., by phone or video conference, when assistance is needed.

**Supervising health professional:** a regulated health professional (other than an HCA) who assigns a task to the HCA, is authorized to perform the restricted activity without supervision, and is responsible for providing supervision to the HCA for that task.

**Unprofessional conduct:** according to the HPA, unprofessional conduct includes displaying a lack of knowledge, skill, or judgment in the provision of professional services; contravening the HPA, code of ethics, or standards of practice; engaging in conduct that harms the integrity of the profession; or any other behaviour that is defined as unprofessional conduct under section 1(1)(pp) of the HPA.