



State of Arizona Acupuncture Board of Examiners
1740 West Adam Street, Suite 3005, Phoenix, Arizona 85007
(602) 542-3095 FAX (602) 542-3093

Substantive Policy Statement

Training and Supervision Requirements for Acupuncture Assistants

September 28, 2022

This Substantive Policy Statement is advisory only. A Substantive Policy Statement does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal procedures of the agency and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on the regulated parties or include confidential information or rules made in accordance with the Arizona Administrative Procedures Act. If you believe that this Substantive Policy Statement does impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties, you may petition the State of Arizona Acupuncture Board of Examiners (the "Board") under Arizona Revised Statutes ("A.R.S.") Section 41-1033 for a review of the statement. See A.R.S. § 41-1091.

A.R.S. § 32-3901(1) defines "Acupuncture Assistant" (AA) as "an unlicensed person who has completed a training program approved by the board, who assists in basic health care duties in the practice of acupuncture under the supervision of a licensed acupuncturist and who performs delegated duties commensurate with the acupuncture assistant's education and training, but who does not evaluate, interpret, design or modify established treatment programs of acupuncture care."

Training Requirements

The modalities practiced by AAs require specific training and oversight in order to protect patient safety. The Board recognizes that an increasing number of states are recognizing AAs and hopes that national exams and educational standards will be developed. However, without these in place, it recognizes the need to evaluate and approve programs of training on a State level.

The Board is working with acupuncturists and other stakeholders throughout the State of Arizona to develop rules prior to the legislative deadline of January 1, 2024, as stated in Laws 2022, chapter 23, section 8. This Substantive Policy Statement will develop temporary training guidelines until those rules can be promulgated.

The Board approves the following programs for the training of AAs:

- a. Having passed a certification exam for AAs provided by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM);
- b. Having taken and passed a program of training in auricular acupuncture approved by the Board along with four (4) hours of training in moxibustion and four (4) hours of training in herbs;
- c. Having taken and passed a program of training as an AA provided by an accredited college or university;
- d. Being currently enrolled in a Board-approved program of acupuncture designed to prepare the student to become a licensed acupuncturist; or
- e. Having taken and passed a program of training provided by a licensed acupuncturist.

To apply for approval under item (e) above, a program of training provided by a licensed acupuncturist must meet the following criteria:

- a. A training program shall be no shorter than forty (40) hours and shall include, at a minimum, a combination of the following:
 - i. Sterilization procedures and techniques;
 - ii. Preventing bruising and bleeding post needle removal;
 - iii. Needle removal protocols including what to do with stuck, broken, or missed needles;
 - iv. Bloodborne pathogens;
 - v. What to do in the event a medical emergency arises during or after treatment;
 - vi. Cupping and scraping;
 - vii. Moxibustion;
 - viii. History taking and recordkeeping; and
 - ix. Professional standards of conduct.

Supervision

A.R.S. § 32-3901(6) defines “Supervision” to mean “that the supervising licensed acupuncturist is present in the facility where the [AA] is performing services and is available for consultation regarding procedures that the licensed acupuncturist has authorized and for which the licensed acupuncturist remains responsible.”

An AA may not insert acupuncture needles or evaluate, interpret, design or modify established treatment programs of acupuncture care. The Board will seek a statute and/or rule change to clarify the above supervision and training requirements