# POSITION STATEMENT

# The Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse in Occupational and Environmental Health

**INTRODUCTION**

The American Association of Occupational Health Nurses (AAOHN) believes that the need for nursing services in occupational and environmental settings should be met by registered professional and licensed occupational and environmental health nurses. The registered professional occupational and environmental health nurse has the skills, knowledge, and competencies essential for the development and implementation of a comprehensive health program. Licensed practical or vocational nurses (LPN/LVNs) have the skills, knowledge, and competencies to provide technical nursing services in an occupational setting.

AAOHN recommends that:

- LPN/LVNs be assigned those duties and responsibilities that their skills, knowledge, and competencies warrant as defined within their state and that
- LPN/LVNs work in health organizations staffed with medical or nursing personnel who can provide professional supervision as defined within their state licensure.

**RATIONALE**

To perform effectively, the LPN/LVN working in an occupational health setting needs knowledge, skills, and competencies beyond those acquired through initial nursing educational preparation and licensing procedures.

LPN/LVNs serve as members of health care teams that:

- determine real and potential health problems and hazards
- develop and implement programs to deal with identified health problems and hazards
- verify that health programs comply with federal, state, and local regulations
- evaluate and monitor outcomes and design programs to meet the health needs of employees and employers
- develop professional rapport with employees
- promote and facilitate continuity of care
- assist the employee in selecting appropriate and cost-effective health care resources (National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses [NFLPN]).

Disease prevention and health promotion among workers form the cornerstones of an effective occupational and environmental health program. LPN/LVNs play a collaborative role with registered nurses, medical, and other health care professionals in:

- promoting improved employee health
- decreasing health-related costs
- improving employee morale
- increasing productivit;
- decreasing absenteeism
- facilitating continuity of care. (NC BON)

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## CONCLUSION

The role of the registered professional nurse in occupational and environmental health nursing is ever-expanding. The LPN/LVN has and continues to play a critical role in this expansion through the assumption of technical responsibilities and by being a collaborative member of the health care team.

## REFERENCES


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