AORN MODEL BILL
REGISTERED NURSE AS CIRCULATOR

This AORN model bill addresses the AORN legislative priority to achieve patient safety. This priority is achieved by providing that every surgical patient deserves a perioperative registered nurse in the role of circulator for the duration of any operative or other invasive procedure and by actively promoting laws and regulations to ensure the supervisory presence of the professional registered nurse in the perioperative setting both at the state and federal levels.

This model bill addresses an approach to put into law a perioperative registered nurse as circulator. For states that have not addressed this issue, we recommend the entire model bill as outlined below.

A copy of the AORN model bill with "notes" is also available from AORN Government Affairs.

The model bill must be used carefully. While every attempt has been made to highlight key issues and provide suggested language, the specific terminology and use of words must be adapted to the terminology and history within your state. We strongly encourage you to obtain feedback on terminology from your state Board of Nursing and obtain expert advice and review of your specific draft legislative language through your AORN National Legislative Committee (NLC) Regional Coordinator who can bring in other AORN members and staff resources to review the draft language and intent for your state.

Legislative activities require a team effort and the model bill gives us a clear national objective to achieve patient safety through the AORN legislative priorities.

Other resources:

- RN Circulator Policy Brochure

MODEL REGISTERED NURSE AS CIRCULATOR BILL

I. Definitions

1. "Registered Nurse" means an individual licensed and authorized by the state to practice acts for compensation under Chapter _____ (Nurse Practice Act). Any individual practicing on a temporary permit or through provisions of the Interstate Compact for Nursing is held to the standards of Chapter _____.

2. "Circulating registered nurse" means a registered nurse who is qualified by training and experience in operating room nursing.

3. "Invasive procedures" are defined as the puncture or incision of the skin, insertion of an instrument, or insertion of foreign material into the body.

II. Requirements

1. A circulating registered nurse shall be present as a circulating nurse in any and each separate operating room and in any and each separate invasive procedure room in a hospital and ambulatory surgical facility for the duration of the operative procedure. Invasive procedure may be performed for diagnostic or treatment related purposes.

2. Nothing in this section precludes a circulating nurse from leaving the operating room or invasive procedure room as part of the operative or invasive procedure, leaving the operating room or invasive procedure room for short periods, or in accordance with employee rules or regulations, being relieved during an operative or invasive procedure by another circulating nurse assigned to continue the operative or invasive procedure.

3. This Act shall take effect on (Month, Day, Year).