



APRN Scope of Practice Expansion and POLST Protocol

June 30, 2023

Through the passage of House Bill 392 in the 32nd Legislative Session, AS 08.68.700, AS 13.52.065, AS 13.52.390, and AS 18.50.230 were amended to allow advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) and Physician Assistants (PAs) to issue Do Not Resuscitate (DNRs) orders and death certificates.

We're aware the Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) protocol regulations (7 AAC 16.010) state that only physicians can issue these orders/certifications. However, we have confirmed with the Alaska Department of Law that the statutory amendments made by HB 392 expand the authority beyond physicians to include APRNs and PAs. The Department of Health has stated they will update the POLST regulations as soon as they have the capacity to do so, but in the meantime, this statement from the Board of Nursing can be relied upon.

Therefore, APRNs can initiate the POLST protocol based on the change to the statute as noted above.

