

# Differences Between Physician Assistants and Advanced Practice Registered Nurses in Texas

Taralynn R. Mackay, RN, JD

Susan Rodriguez, Texas Medical Board Litigation and Enforcement Manager

JoAnna “Jo” Starr, Texas Board of Nursing, Assistant General Counsel



## TEXAS

MEDICAL BOARD  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT BOARD  
STATE BOARD OF ACUPUNCTURE EXAMINERS

*Safeguarding the public through professional accountability*



1

## PA Pre-Requisites



## TEXAS

MEDICAL BOARD  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT BOARD  
STATE BOARD OF ACUPUNCTURE EXAMINERS

*Safeguarding the public through professional accountability*

- Education:
  - Bachelor's Degree
    - Bachelor's for most PA programs
    - Completion of certain science-based courses, a certain GPA or the GRE
- Licensure/Clinical Experience
  - No licensing requirements in most schools
  - Direct patient healthcare experience required for most PA program (1,000-4,000 hrs)

2



# APRN Prerequisites

- Education Required:
  - Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) **or**
  - Bachelors of Science in Nursing (BSN)
- Licensure as a Registered Nurse (RN)
- Clinical Experience
  - CRNAs – require at minimum a bachelor’s degree and one-year of clinical experience as a RN in critical care
    - This is required by the AANA – the national accrediting organization for CRNAs
  - Other APRN roles are not required to have certain clinical experience by their accrediting organizations
    - Individual schools may require varying amounts of clinical experience

3

# PA School Education



**TEXAS** MEDICAL BOARD  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT BOARD  
STATE BOARD OF ACUPUNCTURE EXAMINERS  
*Safeguarding the public through professional accountability*

- Length:
  - Generally 2-3 years
  - Combined with undergrad, can be 6+ years of education
- Course Requirements:
  - Competencies
  - Learning Outcomes
  - Instructional Objectives
- Clinical Hours
  - About 2,000 hours of supervised clinical practice
- Format
  - Most are in person but some online
  - Clinical rotations in person
- Degrees
  - Master’s
  - Doctoral degrees

4

# APRN Education



- One (1) year long at a minimum (most programs are longer)
- Include a formal preceptorship
- Must include the following:
  - Course in Advanced health assessment
  - Course in Advanced pharmacology
  - Course in Advanced physiology and pathophysiology
  - Diagnosis and management of diseases and conditions across practice settings, including diseases representative of all systems appropriate to the role and population focus area
  - Preparation in the principles of decision making in the identified role:
    - Role preparation in one identified population focus area
    - Legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities of the APRN
- Minimum of 500 supervised clinical hours directly related to the role and population focus area including pharmacotherapeutic management of patients
- Can prepare for two population foci
- Additional requirements for clinical nurse specialists can be found under Rule 221.3(e)
- Classes may be online but clinical hours are in-person
- Degree earned is a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) or a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP)

5

# PA Licensure and Renewal



**TEXAS**

MEDICAL BOARD  
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT BOARD  
STATE BOARD OF ACUPUNCTURE EXAMINERS

*Safeguarding the public through professional accountability*

- Initial Licensure Requirements
  - PA program accredited by the ARC-PA (270+ nationwide)
  - Pass PANCE (gain NCCPA certification)
  - Pass JP Exam
  - Active Practice
  - Any health care licenses held not subject to any type of disciplinary action
  - Good moral and professional character
  - Mentally and physically able to function safely as a PA
  - Fingerprints
  - Other requirements imposed by TPAB

6

Find the full text of this and thousands of other resources from leading experts in dozens of legal practice areas in the [UT Law CLE eLibrary \(utcle.org/elibrary\)](https://utcle.org/elibrary)

## Title search: Differences Between Physician Assistants and Advanced Registered Nurses in Texas

Also available as part of the eCourse

[2021 Advanced Texas Administrative Law eConference](#)

First appeared as part of the conference materials for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Advanced Texas Administrative Law Seminar session "Regulation of Health Care Mid-Level Practitioners"