

POSITION STATEMENT

Best Practices for Legislation and Regulation that Affect Midwifery in the United States

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the national professional organization that represents certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs). CNMs and CMs are certified by the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB) and graduate from education programs accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME). ACNM establishes and updates core competencies and standards that guide the practice of CNMs and CMs.^{1,2} These national, standard setting documents should be referenced in legislation and regulation that refer to scope of practice of AMCB certified midwives.

ACNM supports:

Legislation and regulation that adheres to the standards of the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) for the education, regulation, and association of midwives.³

- Legislation and regulation that defines the scope of practice of the midwife based upon the definition and scope of practice established by the midwifery associations and the national certifying bodies,⁴ rather than outlining specific allowed or prohibited practices. Laws and regulations that include specific practices or procedures do not retain long-term relevance because the evidence base for practice changes frequently.
- Proposed legislative and regulatory language that defines the standards of practice and ethical conduct based upon those established by the professional midwifery association and the national certifying bodies.^{2,5}

ACNM is committed to establishing the midwifery model of care as the standard for primary care for the individuals midwives serve. The principles of this model guide the involvement of midwives in legislative and regulatory actions at the state and federal levels and have resulted in efforts to create a more cohesive midwifery presence in the United States. This presence is informed by the global midwifery standards and competencies adopted by the ICM.³

REFERENCES

1. American College of Nurse-Midwives. Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice. Published 2020. Accessed January 12, 2021.
https://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/acnmlibrarydata/uploadfilename/000000000050/ACNMCoreCompetenciesMar2020_final.pdf

2. American College of Nurse-Midwives. Standards for the practice of midwifery. Published 2022. Accessed February 16, 2024.
https://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/acnmlibrarydata/uploadfilename/000000000051/2022_ps_standards-for-the-practice-of-midwifery.pdf
3. International Confederation of Midwives. ICM Professional Framework for Midwifery (2021). International Confederation of Midwives. Published 2021. Accessed August 7, 2024. <https://internationalmidwives.org/resources/professional-framework-for-midwifery-2021/>
4. American College of Nurse-Midwives. Definition of midwifery and scope of practice of certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives. American College of Nurse-Midwives website. Published 2021. Accessed October 13, 2022.
[http://www.midwife.org/ACNM/files/ACNMLibraryData/UPLOADFILENAME/000000000266/Definition of Midwifery and Scope of Practice of CNMs and CMs Dec 2011.pdf](http://www.midwife.org/ACNM/files/ACNMLibraryData/UPLOADFILENAME/000000000266/Definition%20of%20Midwifery%20and%20Scope%20of%20Practice%20of%20CNMs%20and%20CMs%20Dec%202011.pdf)
5. American College of Nurse-Midwives. Code-of-Ethics. American College of Nurse-Midwives. Published 2013. Accessed August 7, 2024.
<https://www.midwife.org/acnm/files/ACNMLibraryData/UPLOADFILENAME/000000000048/Code-of-Ethics.pdf>

Note: Midwifery and midwife as used throughout this document refer to the education and practice of certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) who have been certified by the American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB).

Approved by the ACNM Board of Directors: December 2015

Revised: January 2025