Virginia Board of Nursing

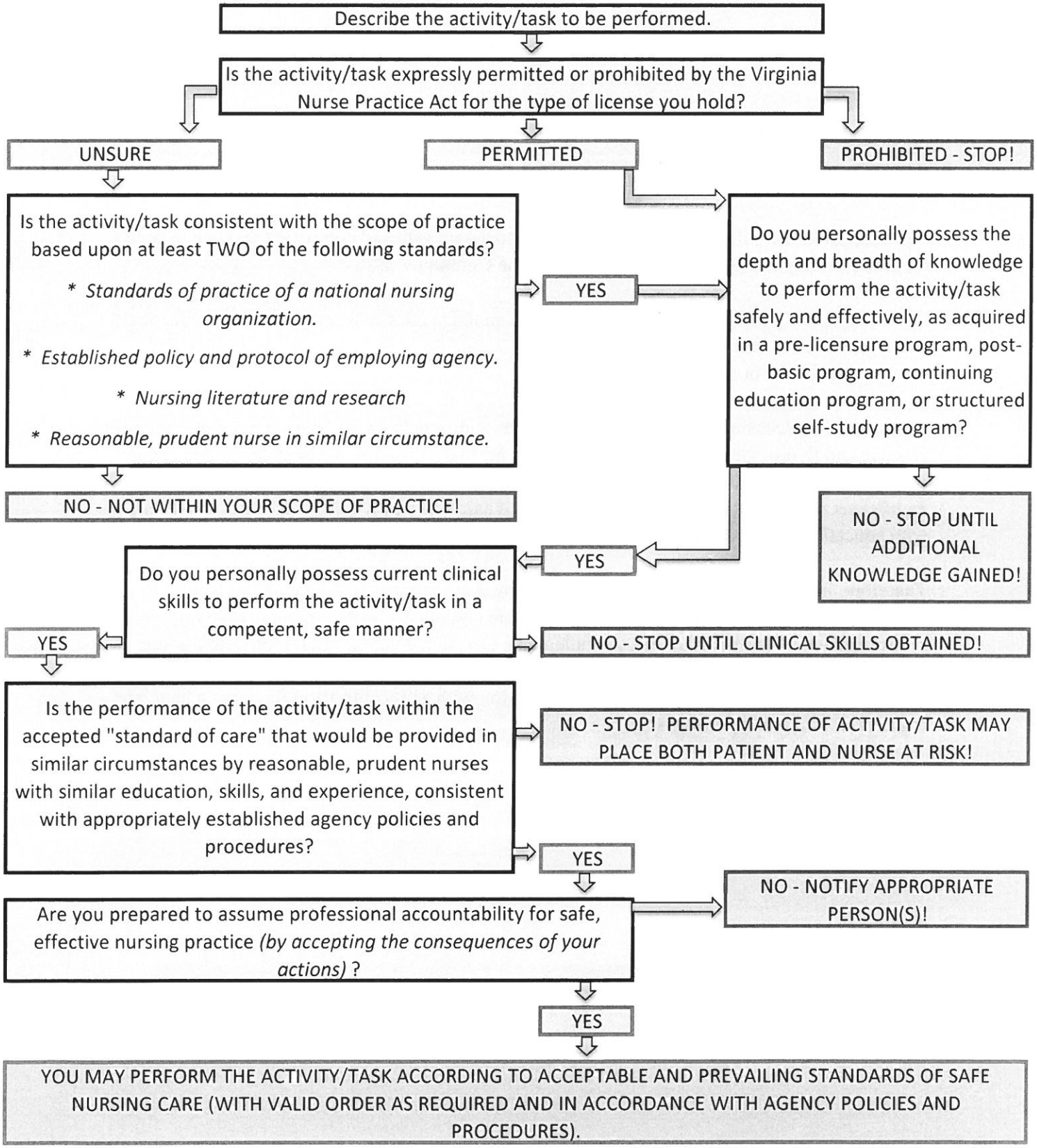
Decision-Making Model for Determining RN/LPN Scope of Practice

The mission of the Virginia Board of Nursing is to assure safe and competent practice to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the Commonwealth.

In the practice of nursing, professional issues and practice questions arise that require the nurse to apply education, experience and professional judgment and to be legally responsible and accountable for the outcome(s).

The role of the licensing board is to establish minimum standards for education, licensure and practice and to provide information to practicing nurses. However, the licensing board cannot and should not make decisions for its licensees. The law (Code of Virginia) and Board regulations require the licensee to provide nursing care services within parameters consistent with education, skills, experience, and current competence.

Therefore, in an effort to ensure safe, competent nursing services to the public, as well as to educate and provide direction to nurses to facilitate clinical decision-making in determining legal scope of practice, the Board of Nursing adopted a Decision-Making Model for Determining RN/LPN Scope of Practice on September 24, 1996 and re-adopted it on September 11, 2012. The following model may be utilized in conjunction with applicable Virginia nursing laws and regulations in a given practice situation.

Adopted: September 24, 1996
Revised: September 11, 2012
Reaffirmed: November 13, 2018

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A DECISION-MAKING MODEL FOR DETERMINING RN/LPN SCOPE OF PRACTICE