

Nurse Responsibilities when an Error Occurs



This chart is to help the nurse understand what to do and what may happen following a nursing error. While every error might not be considered a minor incident, this flow chart may provide insight into steps that might be taken for patient safety and in examining an error. A minor incident is conduct by a nurse that does not indicate the nurse's continued practice poses a risk of harm to a patient or another person. This term is synonymous with minor error or minor violation of the Nursing Practice Act or Board Rule [[NPA 301.401\(2\)](#); [Rule 217.16 \(a\)](#)].

Nurse error

The nurse has a duty to ensure safe patient care is delivered. Steps to ensure the patient is safe may include notifications to the physician and/or collaboration with the health care team in the interest of the patient and taking measures to prevent complications and/or stabilize the patient [please see Board [Rule 217.11, Standards of Nursing Practice](#)]. There are a number of steps that may be required in the employment setting, such as notifications up the chain of command and filling out an event or incident report.

Once the immediate patient needs are taken care of, what happens next? The employer may have decision points such as an evaluation by the nurse's supervisor to determine if the conduct is a minor incident and/or is required to be reported to the facility's nursing peer review committee (NPRC) or the Board of Nursing (BON).

The Nurse

The nurse may choose to self-evaluate the event and the nurse's contribution to identify any gaps in knowledge, skill, or decision-making and self-remediate. Completed self-remediation may be one method of demonstrating competency to the supervisor, NPRC, and/or BON [Board [Rule 217.11 \(1\)\(R\)](#)].

The nurse should be aware of the [minor incident rule](#), and the [incident-based nursing peer review rule](#). In addition, there are resources for [incident-based nursing peer review](#) and information on [what happens when a complaint gets filed](#), [frequently asked questions](#) (FAQs), and other information under *Discipline & Complaints & FAQs* on the BON website.

Nurse's Supervisor

The supervisor will evaluate to determine if the error meets the criteria of a *minor incident* **or** meets criteria to *be reported* either to the NPRC or to the BON.

Please see the [Flow Chart for Determining if an Error is a Minor Incident](#) and follow requirements for:

- remediation and documentation if the error is a minor incident **or**
- reporting (to either the NPRC or BON) if the error does not meet the minor incident criteria.

Board of Nursing (BON) website:
www.bon.texas.gov

There may be a simultaneous employment process (such as through human resources or quality assurance), but that process does not supersede or replace the BON requirements related to the evaluation of minor incidents and reporting to either the BON or to the NPRC.