



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

ATTORNEY GENERAL OPINION  
2026-36A

Jenny Barnhouse, Executive Director  
Oklahoma Board of Nursing  
P.O. Box 52926  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73152

July 7, 2026

Re: Goodman, Case No. 3.2024050300.26

Dear Executive Director Barnhouse:

This office has received your request for a written Attorney General Opinion regarding action that the Oklahoma Board of Nursing (“Board”) intends to take in the above-referenced case. Mary Lee Goodman (“Respondent”) is currently licensed with a single-state registered nurse (“RN”) license number R0074993, and a lapsed single-state licensed practical nurse (LPN) license number L0037052.

The Oklahoma Nursing Practice Act (“Act”) authorizes the Board to impose discipline when a nurse “[f]ails to adequately care for patients or to conform to the minimum standards of acceptable nursing;” “[i]s guilty of unprofessional conduct as defined in the rules of the Board;”<sup>1</sup> “[i]s guilty of any act that jeopardizes a patient’s life, health or safety;”<sup>2</sup> and “[f]ails to maintain professional boundaries with patients, as defined in the Board rules.”<sup>3</sup> 59 O.S.Supp.2023 §§567.8(B)(3), (B)(7), (B)(8) and (B)(12).

On May 16, 2023, Respondent, while working as a charge nurse at a hospital, violated the professional boundaries of the nurse-patient relationship when Respondent allowed and encouraged a patient in the intellectual disabled unit of the hospital to kiss Respondent on the lips. On May 16, 2023, Respondent was suspended pending an investigation. On May 22, 2023,

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<sup>1</sup> Unprofessional conduct means “conduct detrimental to the public interest[.]” OAC 485:10-11-1(b)(3)(H).

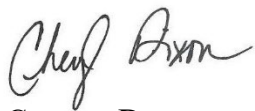
<sup>2</sup> Conduct which jeopardizes a patient's life, health or safety shall include, but not be limited to, “[f]ailure to utilize appropriate judgment in administering safe nursing practice or patient care assignment based upon the level of nursing for which the individual is licensed or recognized[.]” OAC 485:10-11-1(b)(4)(D).

<sup>3</sup> Conduct that violates professional boundaries is “behavior that jeopardizes or could impair the relationship of trust that should exist between nurse and patient. Nurses must be able to recognize the appropriate interpersonal boundaries in all places and at all times for the duration of any therapeutic relationship. It is immaterial whether the boundary violation is instituted by the nurse or the patient; the nurse is the professional in the nurse-patient relationship.” OAC 485:10-11-1(b)(5).

Respondent resigned before being terminated from her employment at a hospital for “Violation of Zero Tolerance Policy.” On September 24, 2025, Respondent, with legal counsel present, during a telephonic investigative conference with Board staff, admitted to Board staff that the patient kissed the Respondent at least twice.

After a hearing on May 21, 2026, the Board proposes to issue a severe reprimand against Respondent’s RN and LPN licenses, require completion of education courses to include Nursing Jurisprudence, Nursing Ethics to include professional boundaries, and Roles and Responsibilities of the RN, and payment of an administrative penalty of \$500.00.

It is, therefore, the official opinion of the Attorney General that the Oklahoma Board of Nursing has adequate support for the conclusion that this action advances the State’s policy to protect public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring nurses meet minimum standards of professional conduct.



CHERYL DIXON  
*Deputy General Counsel*