The RNFA/CRNFA/CNOR must have equivalent qualifications, competence and function in the same role as employed individuals performing the same or similar services at the facility, as defined by facility job description.

Definition of Care or Service:
The CRNFA/RNFA/CNOR is a specifically trained individual who provides assisting services for the surgeon in pre-, intra- and post-op patient care. These services include, but are not limited to, tissue handling, wound retraction/exposure, positioning, providing hemostasis and suturing of tissue, as directed. Scope of Service may include:

- Determine specific equipment needed
- Review consent to confirm procedure and any special needs and participate in “time out” session prior to surgery
- Select and place x-rays for reference
- Assist in moving and positioning of patient
- Insert and removal of Foley urinary bladder catheter
- Place a pneumatic tourniquet
- Drape patient within surgeon’s guidelines
- Provide retraction of tissue and organs for optimal visualization with regard to tissue type and appropriate retraction instrument/technique
- Assist in maintaining hemostasis by direct pressure, use of appropriate surgical instrument for task, placement of ties, placement of suture ligatures, application of chemical hemostatic agents, or other measure as directed by the surgeon
- Use electrocautery mono and bi-polar
- Clamp, ligation and cutting of tissue per the surgeon’s directive
- Harvest of saphenous vein and radial artery including skin incision per surgeon’s directive
- Maintain integrity of sterile field
- Close subcutaneous tissue and skin per the surgeon’s directive
- Insert drainage tubes per surgeon’s directive
- Select and apply wound dressings
- Assist with resuscitation of patient during cardiac arrest or other life-threatening events in the operating room.
- Does not include dissection down to the area to be repaired, replaced, etc., which is done by the surgeon.
- As a general rule when assisting the surgeon, the SFA may share a single surgical site with that surgeon. The SFA may not independently perform a procedure on an opposite site except subcutaneous tissue and skin closure. For example, the surgeon and SFA may not work bilaterally, i.e., surgeon working on one side of the patient while the SFA is working on the opposite site.
- Place a screw or manipulate a tool when manipulation and positioning of the hardware must be held in such a specific position that that particular maneuver can only be accomplished by the orthopedic surgeon. All prosthetic placements, use of tools (drills, saws, etc.) and measurement to determine prosthetic size is performed by the orthopedic surgeon.
- Prepare a tendon for grafting. (Orthopedic surgeon harvests the tendon for grafting).
**Setting(s):**
- Surgical services areas including but not limited to hospitals and outpatient surgery centers.

**Supervision:**
- Direct supervision by surgeon
  - Indirect supervision by surgery department director, site manager or designee

**Evaluator:** Surgeon/supervising physician in conjunction with surgery department director or designee

**Qualifications:**
- Graduation from a school of surgical technology approved by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) and completion of a First Assistant Program approved by the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) or approved by the National Surgical Assistant Association (NSAA), **OR** graduation from a school of nursing **AND** successful completion of an RNFA program that meets the “AORN standards for RN first assistant education programs” and is accepted by the Competency and Credentialing Institute (CCI).
- Certification as a CNOR or CRNFA through the Competency and Credentialing Institute (CCI) **OR** as a surgical first assistant through the American Board of Surgical Assistants (as a SA-C), National Surgical Assistant Association (as a CSA) or National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) **OR**
- An alternative to certification exists if the applicant meets the following criteria:
  - Practice in one specialty
  - Employed by/works with one physician group
  - Provides evidence of 350 cases/700 hours within the last two years
  - Provides evidence of appropriate continuing education
  - Receives a positive performance evaluation from the supervising physician
- Current license/registration as an RN in the State of Colorado
- For DaVinci Robot – evidence of additional training and proctoring per facility requirements.

**Experience:** Two hundred (200) cases within the past 12 months.

**Competencies:**
The CRNFA, RNFA or CNOR will demonstrate:
- Safe environment for patients
  - Participates in the preprocedure process to verify the correct procedure, for the correct patient, at the correct site / side and involves the patient in the verification process when possible.
  - Participates in a time-out immediately before the start of an invasive procedure
  - Labels containers used for blood and specimens in the presence of the patient
  - Labels all medications and solutions on and off the sterile field in perioperative and procedural settings
- Surgical First Assistant Skills
  - Assist with positioning, prepping, draping of patient
o Provide visualization of the operative field by the use of retraction, scissors, or electrocautery, as directed by the surgeon

o Assists the surgeon in providing hemostasis by:
  • Applying electrocautery tip to clamp or tissue in a safe manner, as directed by surgeon
  • Sponging and utilizing pressure
  • Providing suction
  • Applying clamps on vessels and the tying or electrocoagulation of them, as directed by the surgeon
  • Placing hemoclips on vessels, as directed by the surgeon (in cardiac surgery only)

o Provides closure of subcutaneous and skin layers

o Performs suturing and stapling (external staples only)

o Assists the surgeon at the completion of the procedure by:
  • Affixing and stabilizing drains
  • Cleansing the wound and applying the dressing
  • Assist with application of cast, splints, and other devices

o Inserts and removes urinary catheter

o Harvests and prepares graft tissues (in cardiac surgery only)

• Infection prevention
  • Practices consistent hand hygiene
  • Uses personal protective equipment (PPE)
  • Maintains current immunization for influenza
  • Complies with isolation precautions
  • Complies with required surgical attire
  • Maintains sterile field

References:
Credential Resources Clinical Privilege White Paper on Surgical Assistants