

**LAC+USC MEDICAL CENTER  
DEPARTMENT OF INFECTION PREVENTION AND CONTROL  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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<b>Policy No. IPC-16</b>	

<b>Subject: Sterile Field Failure</b>	Original Issue Date: 01/2012	<b>Effective Date:</b> Oct 2022
	Supersedes: 04/2016	
<b>Departments Consulted:</b> Epidemiology Hospital Administration Surgical and OR Services	<b>Reviewed &amp; Approved By:</b> Paul Holtom MD, Hospital Epidemiologist Noah Wald-Dickler MD, Associate Hospital Epidemiologist Chair and Vice-Chair, Infection Control Committee	<b>Approved By:</b> Brad Spellberg, MD Chief Medical Officer

**PURPOSE**

To provide high quality and safe healthcare to patients undergoing sterile procedures in Operating Rooms located in the Diagnostic & Treatment Tower (D&T).

**POLICY & PROCEDURE**

Position Statement: Sterile Field Failure

- Operating room personnel observe for, recognize, and immediately correct breaks in sterility or failures of sterile operative fields. Breaks in technique or potential cross-contamination of sterile fields and/or surgical instruments can expose patients to microbial contaminants which increase the risk of surgical site infections.
- If a sterile surgical field has been compromised or cross-contamination is suspected, corrective action must include removal of the entire surgical instrument set and any other items that may have come in contact with the potentially contaminated material.
- An assessment of the individual sterile field failure event will be conducted to address underlying contributing factors (OR traffic, physical set-up, staff knowledge deficits etc.) that led to the sterile field breach and so that appropriate corrective actions may be taken.
- The Infection Control and Prevention Department should be notified at 323-409-6645 if further consultation surrounding a breach in sterile field is required.

**RESPONSIBILITY**

Operating Room staff

**REFERENCE**

\*AORN 2014 Perioperative Standards Position Statement: Sterile Field Failure

**Policy Revision Dates:** Jan 2012, Apr 2016, Oct 2022