



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**

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Division of Public Health

February 10, 2022

POSITION STATEMENT: Bulk packaged sterile bandages/dressings used in tattooing

PURSUANT TO: 15A NCAC 18A .3209

SOURCE: Alice Isley, Pools Tattoos, and State Institution Program

QUESTION: Can sterile bandages/dressings purchased in bulk packages be used by Tattoo artists?

ANSWER: Yes

DISCUSSION AND RATIONALE: The Pools, Tattoos, and State Institutions Program is aware of differing opinions as to what type of sterile dressing meets the requirements of 15A NCAC 18A .3209. Sterile bandages may be purchased individually wrapped or in bulk rolls and sheets. While non-stick gauze type bandages typically are individually wrapped, some other types of bandages such as Saniderm© come in a bulk roll, sterilized by ethylene oxide gas, and sealed as a bulk unit.

RESPONSE AND INTERPRETATION: The tattoo rules do require the use of a sterile dressing, however, the rule does not specify that the bandages must be individually wrapped.

PUBLIC HEALTH JUSTIFICATION: The tattoo artist is required to maintain all supplies associated with tattooing in a clean and aseptic manner. The bulk bandages should be stored in a clean, covered container and a pair of scissors used only for cutting the bandages should be stored in a similar manner and periodically disinfected. Clean gloves should be worn when the bulk bandages are being handled. The bandages/dressings must be designed for use in direct contact with an open wound. Proper use of the bandages/dressings should be discussed with the artist to ensure the manufacturer's instructions are being followed.

This guidance replaces any guidance given in previous written or verbal communications.

NOTE: Position statements are policy documents to clarify how to interpret or enforce a law or rule. They are not enforceable on their own but are intended to promote uniform interpretation and enforcement of the underlying law or rule.

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PUBLIC HEALTH**

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