AORN Guideline Audit Tool: Sterilization

[Insert facility name or a header]

Audit Item	Yes	No	Comments/Action
Monitors and records room temperature, humidity, and ventilation in the sterile processing department according to facility policy.			
Ensures manufacturers' instructions for use (IFU) are accessible to sterile processing personnel.			
Verifies that a device to be reprocessed is not labeled for single use.			
Performs sterilization in an area intended, designed, and equipped for sterilization processes.			
Adheres to functional workflow patterns from high contamination areas to clean areas.			
Inspects items for cleanliness and functionality before sterilization.			
Packages items to be sterilized by following manufacturers' instructions for package preparation, configuration, and sterilization.			
Transports sterile items to the point of use or storage in a contained sterile barrier system.			
Complies with federal, state, and local regulations when transporting contaminated reusable medical devices for processing off-site.			
Does not store sterile items under sinks.			
Allows sterilized items to cool before use to prevent thermal injuries to personnel or patients.			
Inspects packages for integrity, moisture, and change of the external chemical indicator (CI) before moving them from the cooling rack for transport or storage.			
Performs immediate use steam sterilization (IUSS) only when the device and sterilizer manufacturers' written instructions for use include instructions for IUSS.			
Sterilizes items undergoing IUSS in a containment device that has been validated for IUSS by the US Food and Drug Administration.			
Decontaminates instrument before items undergo IUSS.			
Takes measures to prevent contamination of instruments processed by IUSS during removal from the sterilizer and transfer to the sterile field.			
Does not store instruments processed by IUSS for future use.			
Uses IUSS for implantable devices only in cases of a defined emergency.			
Investigates wet loads or wet packs in a terminal sterilization cycle or short-cycle sterilization and takes corrective action according to the organization's policy.			
Follows the sterilizer manufacturer's instructions for use.			
Uses physical, chemical, and biological indicators (BIs) to monitor sterilization processes.			
Checks physical indicators before placing a sterilized item on the sterile field.			
Reviews the physical monitors at the end of each cycle and ensures the sterilization parameters have been met.			
Records the following information for each load:			
• Identification of the sterilizer and type			
• Type of cycle			
• Load control number			
• Contents			
• Operators' identification			
• Results of chemical, physical, and biological monitors			
Uses BIs specific to each sterilization method and exposure time.			
Performs a Bowie-Dick test each day a dynamic air-removal steam sterilizer is used.			

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Audit Item	Yes	No	Comments/Action
Correctly interprets chemical, physical, and biological monitoring results.			
Records the following for every sterilization cycle:			
• Contents			
• Load identification			
• Exposure parameters			
• Operators' identification			
• Results of physical monitors			
• Results of CIs and BIs			

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