

LEGISLATIVE NEWS

LOCAL INFILTRATION FAQS

Q: What is Rule 115.10?

A: Rule 115.10 pertains to the administration of local infiltration anesthesia by registered dental hygienists (RDHs) in Texas. The new law was passed in May 2024 and allows dental hygienists by delegation and under direct supervision of a dentist to administer infiltration anesthetic (LA) to patients 18 years or older that are not sedated except by nitrous oxide inhalation.

Q: What are the specific educational and certification requirements for Texas RDHs?

A: An applicant must be a dental hygienist with an active Texas license and/or a dental hygiene student enrolled in a Texas Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) dental hygiene course of study; have successfully completed 32-hours of TSBDE-approved didactic and clinical education through a CODA-accredited educational institution; have passed a Texas State Board of Dental Examiners (TSBDE) approved certification examination relating to the administration of local infiltration anesthesia; and hold a current course completion card from the American Heart Association Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers.

Q: When can dental hygienists apply for certification to administer local infiltration anesthesia?

A: They can apply for certification starting after September 1, 2024, due to licensure third-party company restrictions.

Q: What are the requirements for RDHs who hold a LA certificate from another state and seeking certification in Texas?

A: They must meet substantially equivalent educational requirements, have three of the past five years of employment as an RDH, have completed a CODA-accredited program, and provide written documentation of their education and training.

Q: What if you are currently authorized to administer local anesthesia by the military?

A: A hygienist who is authorized to administer local anesthesia by a branch of the United States armed forces during the preceding year of initial application is eligible for certification. Applicant will need to show TSBDE written documentation of education and training.

Q: What does the didactic portion of the LA course include?

A: The didactic portion of the LA course must be no less than 20 hours and can be completed online through self-study modules from a CODA-accredited educational institution.

Q: What does the clinical portion of the LA course include?

A: It includes 12 hours of instruction on local infiltration techniques, patient evaluation, and administration practices, with competency demonstrated on live patients and simulations.

Q: What are the requirements for dental hygiene students?

A: They must be enrolled in a TX CODA-accredited program and complete 32 hours of formal education taught by faculty members who hold a current Texas license and a Texas local anesthetic certificate.

Q: Once a hygienist is certified to administer local infiltration anesthesia, what must he/she do to maintain their certification?

A: Informed consent must be obtained prior to anesthesia from all patients, you must have no less than two (2) extra hours of continuing education every two years in the administration of or medical emergencies associated with local anesthesia. These hours are in addition to the 24-biannual hours required. You must report any hospitalizations or deaths related to the administration of local infiltration anesthesia to TSBDE.

Rule Reference: 22 Texas Admin Code §115.10, Administration of Local Infiltration Anesthesia (Adopted-May 3, 2024).