



Certificate of Need Program
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Ambulatory Surgical Exemption Application Definitions

The Certificate of Need (CN) Program will use the information you provide to determine if your project meets the applicable review criteria. These criteria are included in state law and rules. Revised Code of Washington ([RCW 70.38](#)) and Washington Administrative Code ([WAC 246-310](#)).

“Primary purpose” is defined as the majority of income or patient visits for the site,* inclusive of all clinical services provided at the site, are derived from the specialty or multi- specialty surgical services. Department of Health website, frequently asked questions, informed by the licensing rules definition for ambulatory surgical facility.

*The site subject to a determination of reviewability is limited to a specific, physical address where an entity under single ownership provides or will provide specialty or multispecialty surgical services. A site whose “primary purpose” is specialty or multispecialty surgical services is required to obtain a certificate of need.

“Ambulatory surgical facility” or “ASF” means any free-standing entity, including an ambulatory surgery center that operates primarily for the purpose of performing surgical procedures to treat patients not requiring hospitalization. This term does not include a facility in the offices of private physicians or dentists, whether for individual or group practice, if the privilege of using the facility is not extended to physicians or dentists outside the individual or group practice. [WAC 246-310-010\(5\)](#)

“Ambulatory surgical center” or “ASC” is also a term used interchangeably with “ASF” to describe a facility that provides ambulatory surgical procedures. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services state that an ASC is a distinct entity that operates exclusively for the purpose of furnishing outpatient surgical services to patients.

“Ambulatory surgical facility” or “ASF” as defined by licensing rules, and relied on by the CN Program for consistency, means any distinct entity that operates for the primary purpose of providing specialty or multispecialty outpatient surgical services in which patients are admitted to and discharged from the facility within twenty-four hours and do not require inpatient hospitalization, whether or not the facility is certified under Title XVIII of the federal Social Security Act. An ambulatory surgical facility includes one or more surgical suites that are adjacent to and within the same building as, but not in, the office of a practitioner in an individual or group practice, if the primary purpose of the one or more surgical suites is to provide specialty or multispecialty outpatient surgical services, irrespective of the types of anesthesia administered in the one or more surgical suites. An ambulatory surgical facility that is adjacent to and within the same building as the office of a practitioner in an individual or group practice may include a surgical suite that shares a reception area, restroom, waiting room, or wall with the office of the practitioner in an individual or group practice. [WAC 246-330-010\(5\)](#)

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“Change of ownership” as defined by licensing rules, and relied on by the CN Program, is defined as (a) A sole proprietor who transfers all or part of the ambulatory surgical facility’s ownership to another person or persons; (b) The addition, removal, or substitution of a person as a general, managing, or controlling partner in an ambulatory surgical facility owned by a partnership where the tax identification number of that ownership changes; or (c) A corporation that transfers all or part of the corporate stock which represents the ambulatory surgical facility’s ownership to another person where the tax identification number of that ownership changes. [WAC 246-330-010\(8\)](#)

“Person” means an individual, a trust or estate, a partnership, any public or private corporation (including associations, joint stock companies, and insurance companies), the state, or a political subdivision or instrumentality of the state, including a municipal corporation or a hospital district. [WAC 246-310-010\(42\)](#)